

Suggested Guidelines for Service Work in Treatment Facilities

The following guidelines for carrying the AA message into treatment facilities were formulated and suggested by the **Area 48 Treatment Committee**.

Remember, non-AA professionals cannot be expected to be aware of AA's Traditions. AA members are invited guests in the facilities. Cooperation is the key to successful Twelfth Stepping in treatment facilities.

- 1) Acquaint yourself with the following AA conference approved pamphlets: *AA Tradition- How it Developed, AA in Treatment Facilities, Bridging the Gap, and How AA Members Cooperate*.
- 2) Personal appearance is vital. Look as neat and well-groomed as possible.
- 3) Personal conduct is also important while inside these facilities. We are ladies and gentlemen, and our behavior reflects this. Be there early to set up the meeting, put out literature, greet the patients and introduce yourself. Refrain from using foul language in any group situation. Be polite and respectful to the patients and staff. We are there as guests.
- 4) Cooperate with the facility. Although we have our own Traditions, which guide us, when we are inside any facility or institution, we follow their rules to the letter. The reasons for their rules may not seem clear to us, but it is not up to us to question them. We cooperate fully.
- 5) The deeper and broader our understanding of all aspects of our Fellowship (including all three of our Legacies: Recovery, Unity, and Service), the more we have to offer the troubled newcomer.
- 6) No 7th Tradition is observed in Treatment meetings.
- 7) Do not talk about medication, psychiatry, or scientific theories of alcoholism. This is the territory for professionals. Our own personal spiritual life does not make us experts on religion. The emphasis of our sharing should be our personal experience, strength, and hope with regard to alcoholism (What it used to be like, what happened, and what it's like now)

8) Never argue with a patient. If there is a problem beyond your control, quietly leave the meeting and ask a staff member to take care of the situation. We never argue with staff.

Some of these guidelines may seem strongly stated, and for some very good reasons. In many cases, many months of hard work have gone into establishing the relationship which enables us to be invited into a facility. Careless action on any level by any AA member could destroy that trust, and we would no longer be permitted to carry the AA message into that facility.

When we are carrying the AA message into a treatment facility, we are not just one drunk talking to another. In their eyes, we represent the entire fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. How we look, act and talk is all they are going to know about AA. This is a very important responsibility. Remember, we already know that the AA program works. They don't. Let our new friends see, hear, and talk to a winner.

It is always a good idea to go over the paper of what AA is and what it is not. This is also somewhat reiterated in the non-affiliation statement.

Strongly referenced from the Treatment Facilities Workbook issued by The General Service Office of New York 1997 and AA in Treatment Facilities Pamphlet.