

Presentations

Preparing for a C.P.C. presentation: Presentations can take place at the invitation of an outside organization, possibly as part of one of its regular meetings. Often, the C.P.C. committee takes the initiative through a letter, phone call, or face-to-face, offering to make information on A.A. available. The pamphlet “Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings” is essential reading for those planning such a presentation.

Basic guidelines for C.P.C. presentations: Here are two suggested formats for presentations: first, with a speaker and one or two supporting members; and second, with a panel of two to four people.

A.A. participants include a moderator, and one or two A.A. members experienced in speaking about A.A. Sometimes, a knowledgeable, nonalcoholic friend of A.A. may also be invited to take part. In either case, the points listed below can be useful:

- Introduce yourself and ask other A.A.s to follow suit; read or summarize the Anonymity card for public meetings; read or paraphrase the A.A. Preamble, emphasizing relation to Traditions.
- Discuss A.A. history. Cover our beginning with Bill and Dr. Bob’s meeting in Akron (1935), emphasizing the empathy that was present between these men. As the result of this first meeting, A.A. has grown throughout the world. Mention estimated number of members and groups in your locality.
- Briefly explain A.A.’s Twelve Steps, and briefly summarize their application in your own experience.
- At this point consider showing videos, such as the C.P.C. video “A.A. Cooperation With the Professional Community,” “Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous,” “A.A. Videos for Young People,” or other videos appropriate for the audience.
- Explain that A.A. meetings may follow a variety of formats—speaker, discussion, etc., but that there are two basic types:

Open: Guests are welcome; if practical, mention that individual members are available to take a professional friend to a meeting.

Closed: For A.A. members or those with a desire to stop drinking.

- It’s important to have information on local meetings available, whether the central office A.A. meeting directory or a listing of local “open” meetings. Be prepared to offer the names and phone numbers of one or two committee members to the guests.
- Discuss what A.A. does and does not do (refer to “Fact Sheet,” p. 27 in CPC workbook).
- Give a brief version of your story, emphasizing recovery in A.A.
- Allow time for a Question and Answer period:

Our credibility is determined by the way we respond to questions. “I don’t know” is often the best answer. If you are uncertain of an answer, research the question and contact the person later. Avoid commenting on issues outside of A.A., including remedies or treatments for alcoholism used by others.

- After the meeting, handle literature requests promptly. Requests from professionals to be added to the *About A.A.* mailing list are sent to G.S.O. A letter expressing appreciation for the visit is sent to the host.