

Grapevine and La Viña:

Our Meetings in Print
and Other Media

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS® is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

- The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions.
- A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes.
- Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

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Mail address:
Box 459, Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163

www.aa.org

Grapevine: www.aagrapevine.org

La Viña: www.aagrapevine.org/español

AA Grapevine Statement of Purpose

Grapevine is the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous in print, digital and audio. Written, edited, illustrated, and read by A.A. members and others interested in the A.A. program of recovery from alcoholism, Grapevine is a lifeline linking one alcoholic to another.

Often referred to as our “meeting in print,” Grapevine communicates the experience, strength, and hope of its contributors and reflects a broad geographic spectrum of current A.A. experience with recovery, unity, and service. Founded in 1944, Grapevine does not receive group contributions, but is supported entirely through magazine and web subscription sales and additional income derived from the sale of subscriptions and related items.

The awareness that every A.A. member has an individual way of working the program permeates the pages of Grapevine, and throughout its history the magazine has been a forum for the varied and often divergent opinions of A.A.s around the world. As such, articles are not intended to be statements of A.A. policy, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by either A.A. or AA Grapevine, Inc.

As Bill W. expressed it in 1946, “The Grapevine will be the voice of the Alcoholics Anonymous movement. Its editors and staff will be primarily accountable to the A.A. movement as a whole.... Within the bounds of friendliness and good taste, Grapevine will enjoy perfect freedom of speech on all matters directly pertaining to Alcoholic Anonymous.... Like the Alcoholics Anonymous movement it is to mirror, there will be but one central purpose: The Grapevine will try to carry the A.A. message to alcoholics and practice the A.A. principles in all its affairs.”

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La Viña Statement of Purpose

La Viña is often referred to as “our meeting in print” for Spanish-speaking members of A.A. and contains stories, interviews and articles written in Spanish, as well as some writings translated from Grapevine. Written, edited, illustrated and read by A.A. members and others interested in the A.A. program of recovery from alcoholism, La Viña is a lifeline linking one alcoholic to another.

La Viña communicates the experience, strength and hope of its contributors and reflects a broad geographic spectrum of current A.A. experience with recovery, unity, and service.

The awareness that every A.A. member has an individual way of working his or her A.A. program permeates the pages of La Viña and the magazine is a forum for the varied and often divergent opinions of A.A.s around the world. Articles are not intended to be statements of A.A. policy, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by either A.A. or AA Grapevine, Inc.

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Grapevine and La Viña: Magazines, Website and Other Media

Grapevine has been an integral part of Alcoholics Anonymous since 1944. AA Grapevine, Inc., through its magazines, apps, website, books and audio publishes articles that reflect the full diversity of experience and thought found within the A.A. Fellowship, as does La Viña, the bimonthly Spanish-language magazine, first published in 1996. No one viewpoint or philosophy dominates their pages, and in determining content, the editorial staff relies on the principles of the Twelve Traditions. Each issue carries a statement of purpose, which states a fundamental truth about Grapevine and La Viña, that each is “a lifeline linking one suffering alcoholic to another.”

A mirror of the Fellowship

From its beginning, in June of 1944, Grapevine’s history has run parallel to that of A.A. as a whole, and many of the critical events in the evolution of the Fellowship have been chronicled in the pages of Grapevine. The Twelve Traditions were first presented to the Fellowship by Bill W. in an April 1946 article entitled “Twelve Suggested Points for A.A. Tradition.” The A.A. Preamble was written by one of Grapevine’s first editors, based on the Foreword to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, and was published in the June 1947 Grapevine. Throughout the years many nonalcoholic friends of A.A. have shared their experience and insight with the Fellowship through Grapevine — such friends as Sister Ignatia, Rev. Sam Shoemaker, Dr. William Silkworth, and others.

Today, Grapevine and La Viña reach an A.A. population that’s dramatically different from the population of the early 1940s. (La Viña grew out of Grapevine’s endeavor to meet the needs of the growing Spanish-speaking membership of A.A.) There are many more diverse groups rep-

resented throughout A.A. now, including young people, women and members who speak different languages. These changes all point to an ongoing need for increased communication between different segments of the A.A. community, and that's just what readers find in Grapevine and La Viña.

The Grapevine and Conference approval

Grapevine and La Viña are the International Journals of Alcoholics Anonymous. A question often asked about Grapevine is whether or not it is "Conference-approved." General Service Conference approval is a lengthy review process, and Conference-approved literature represents the widest possible consensus of A.A. experience. The process can take years for longer projects, with several stages of committee evaluation along the way. Ultimately, the General Service Conference as a whole must approve the final product before it can be published with the "Conference-approved" statement.

Since Grapevine magazine is published 12 times a year, and the Conference meets only once a year, the magazine would never go to press if it had to go through the Conference review process. However, the Conference has always supported the concept of Grapevine and, in 1986, a Conference Advisory Action specifically addressed the issue of Conference approval for the first time with the following statement: "Since each issue of the Grapevine cannot go through the Conference-approval process, the Conference recognizes the Grapevine as the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous."

In addition, the Conference Charter guarantees the right of the Grapevine editor to accept or reject material for publication; there is a Grapevine Conference Committee formed in 1954; and any Grapevine or La Viña matter of importance to the Fellowship as a whole is brought to the Conference through that committee. Over the years a number of Conference Advisory Actions have encouraged the Fellowship to use Grapevine and La Viña. These items are often displayed alongside other A.A. literature.

So, while each issue of the magazine cannot be individually approved, the concept of the Grapevine has been recognized by the

Conference as a whole and the use of the Grapevine and its publications as recovery tools has been encouraged throughout the Fellowship year after year.

La Viña and Conference approval

The Conference supported the idea of publishing a Spanish-language article in Grapevine in 1991. Then in 1995, the General Service Conference endorsed the idea of a Spanish-language edition of Grapevine and asked the General Service Board to undertake the financing of this project for an experimental period not to exceed five years. After reviewing a plan presented by the Grapevine board, the trustees approved the project, and Grapevine published the first bimonthly edition of La Viña in 1996.

Many subscriptions were received from Spanish-language groups as well as from correctional and treatment facilities committees, and the magazine was well received throughout the Fellowship. Mindful of this and of the magazine's effectiveness as a Twelfth Step tool, the 2001 General Service Conference recommended that "La Viña continue to be published by the AA Grapevine, Inc., and supported by the General Service Board as a service to the Fellowship." La Viña is the only hybrid entity in the structure that is a service while also generating revenue to work toward self-support. La Viña earns close to half of the revenues needed to operate. Any additional funds required to close the gap are funded by the General Fund of the General Service Board. A bimonthly magazine, La Viña publishes mostly original articles in Spanish and some translations from the Grapevine, which A.A.s have found helpful for encouraging newcomers, supporting Spanish groups in their areas, and for working with A.A. service committees on cooperation with professional communities, public information, treatment, and correctional facilities.

Structure and finance

Grapevine is incorporated as one of the two independent arms of A.A.'s General Service Board, with its own corporate board, staff, and financial operation separate from that of the General

Service Office. Grapevine staff, directors, and trustees are voting members of the General Service Conference, and there is a Conference Committee on Grapevine which also serves for La Viña. A volunteer Editorial Advisory Board is also an important part of Grapevine and La Viña. Its members, A.A.s with expertise in publishing, communications, digital media and graphic arts, act in an advisory capacity to the staff.

Financially, Grapevine is supported entirely through sales of the magazine and related items. Individuals and groups may sponsor gift or “carry-the-message” subscriptions for individuals, groups, hospitals, correctional facilities, or other institutions. In contrast to G.S.O., which receives group contributions to support group services, Grapevine does not accept contributions from the Fellowship. AA Grapevine, Inc. finances are reviewed by the trustees’ Finance Committee, and on an annual basis funds in excess of current operating needs are transferred and invested with the General Service Board Reserve Fund.

Editorial selection

All articles for the magazine are contributed by A.A. members, with the exception of a few by nonalcoholics who know and love the Fellowship. Articles are evaluated by A.A. members on the editorial staff, and while some editing is done for purposes of clarity, styling, and length, the editors encourage all writers to express their own experience in their own unique way. Articles are selected for publication only after discussion and the consensus of the editorial staff.

Both Grapevine and La Viña receive several hundred submissions per month and every contributor receives a reply from the editorial department, whether or not the work is published.

www.aagrapevine.org

www.aagrapevine.org/español

Like the magazines, Grapevine and La Viña’s websites are lifelines linking one alcoholic to another as well as sources of information for A.A.’s many friends. Grapevine began reaching out to alcoholics online in 1998 with a description of the magazine. The website now carries the message of A.A. by offering a digital maga-

zine, new Grapevine articles, audio stories, the Grapevine Story Archive, with thousands of articles and cartoons dating back to 1944, and an audio magazine (in downloadable MP3 format). In addition, the website provides information for Grapevine and La Viña representatives, and about submitting work to the magazine, a calendar of events, the Grapevine Daily Quote, La Viña Weekly Quote, a sobriety counter, a catalog, and links to the A.A.W.S. website. Grapevine's website includes a Spanish-language section, featuring articles from La Viña, and more.

Related items

Grapevine and La Viña items, ranging from books of collected articles to an annual trilingual wall calendar featuring member-submitted photographs, are produced from works that have appeared in Grapevine and La Viña. Primary among these related items is the 434-page collection of Bill W.'s work, entitled *The Language of the Heart: Bill W.'s Grapevine Writings* (in three languages), along with signs of the Serenity Prayer and the Preamble, which were introduced to the Fellowship in early issues of the magazine. Grapevine makes a significant number of magazine articles available in audio format for A.A.s who cannot read, who cannot get to meetings, who simply want a meeting between meetings, or who do not have web access at home or on the road. Grapevine also publishes Spanish- and French-language items. A list can be found at the back of this pamphlet or online at www.aagrapevine.org/store.

Grapevine and La Viña representatives

Grapevine representatives (GVRs) and La Viña representatives (RLVs) perform a service for their group and districts, bringing them two vital tools of recovery — Grapevine and La Viña. GVRs and RLVs are engaged in practical, hands-on work. Their basic job is to make the magazines available to the group, to encourage A.A.s to read them, contribute to them, subscribe to them, and use them in Twelfth Step work.

A.A. members become Grapevine or La Viña reps by volunteering or being elected to the posi-

tion by their groups. After election, they are listed online or with AA Grapevine, Inc. The position can also be a gateway to wider circles of service, as GVRs and RLVs in many areas meet with district Grapevine/La Viña reps and area coordinators/chairpersons and attend Regional Forums and area assemblies. In some districts, the GVR represents both magazines. In 1962, an Advisory Action stated that rotating delegates become Grapevine representatives in their areas with the objective of establishing a GVR in each group. La Viña is included by extension.

The Grapevine office

The Grapevine's paid staff includes an executive editor/publisher, controller, senior editor, operations manager, La Viña editor, production coordinator, customer relations coordinator, freelance art directors and a freelance web coordinator. The work of the Grapevine office is primarily distributed into four departments: 1) editorial; 2) circulation; 3) finances; and 4) fulfillment. The executive editor/publisher has oversight responsibility for the entire organization and reports directly to the Grapevine board chairperson.

How Grapevine began

In the spring of 1944, just nine years after the Fellowship's founding, a small group of A.A. members living in and around New York City began an A.A. magazine, with the goal of providing news of A.A. to members hungry for information about the growth of the Fellowship and the A.A. program of recovery. As one of the original editorial staff of Grapevine recalled, "It's hard to remember that in 1944 A.A.s themselves had little opportunity of communicating with each other outside of their own small groups; that an A.A. group in Arkansas had little idea of how an A.A. group in Ohio or New Jersey conducted its meetings; that many A.A. groups were so small and anonymous they couldn't be found by traveling A.A.s...; that there were no A.A. publications beyond the Big Book and one or two pamphlets."

So, with the blessings of A.A.'s co-founder Bill W., the first issue of Grapevine — whose title was meant to suggest an informal but powerful way to

communicate — was published in June 1944 as a large-format newsletter. In an effort to get the newsletter off to a good start, a copy of the first issue was sent to every group (totaling only about 300 at that time), as well as to all known A.A. members in the armed services overseas. It was hoped that a monthly A.A. paper would be especially helpful to these overseas members, as they were usually cut off from group meetings and direct contact with other members. Each month, an entire page was devoted to publishing the letters received from these members, with the heading, “Mail Call for All A.A.s in the Armed Forces,” and they soon began to refer to Grapevine as their “meeting in print.” This designation has remained over the years, and current issues of Grapevine and La Viña still carry the words “Our Meeting In Print” on the cover.

How to contact Grapevine and La Viña

For editorial correspondence, write to Grapevine at: 475 Riverside Drive, 11th floor, New York, NY 10115. Email for submissions to Grapevine: gveditorial@aagrapevine.org or La Viña: lveditorial@aagrapevine.org. You can also visit the website at: www.aagrapevine.org or www.aagrapevine.org/espa%C3%B1ol to subscribe, sign up for the Grapevine Daily Quote, La Viña Weekly Quote, other newsletters or access to the Story Archive, the digital Grapevine magazine, the Audio magazine, and an online catalog.

For ordering information, or current subscription information, please visit www.aagrapevine.org. For assistance in English: 800-631-6025; for Spanish: 800-640-8781; for French: 818-487-2093.

THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable.

2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.

4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.

2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.

4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.

5. Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.

12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

AA GRAPEVINE PUBLICATIONS Items are available via aagrapevine.org or by calling 800-631-6025. (US/Canada)

AA Grapevine Books/E-Books

In Our Own Words: Stories of Young AAs in Recovery
Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier Vols I & II
*†*The Language of the Heart: Bill W.'s Grapevine Writings*
*†*The Best of Bill: Most frequently requested articles by Bill W.*
**Spiritual Awakening: Journeys of the Spirit Vols. I & II*
*†*The Home Group*
***Best of the Grapevine; Volume I*
I Am Responsible: The Hand of AA
A Rabbit Walks Into a Bar: Best Jokes & Cartoons from GV
**Beginners' Book: Getting and Staying Sober in AA*
**Young & Sober: Stories of Those Who Found AA Young*
**Voices of Long-Term Sobriety*
**Step By Step*
**Into Action: How AA Members Practice the Program in Their Daily Life*
*†*Happy, Joyous and Free: The Lighter Side of Sobriety*
*†*One on One: AA Sponsorship in Action*
**No Matter What: Dealing with Adversity in Sobriety*
Thank you for Sharing: 60 Years of Letters to the Grapevine
**Grapevine Daily Quote Book*
**Sober & Out*
**Forming True Partnerships*
**Our Twelve Traditions*
**Voices of Women in AA: Stories of experience, strength and hope from Grapevine*
**Making Amends: Finding a new freedom*
**AA in the Military*
**One Big Tent: Atheist and Agnostic AA Members share their experience strength and hope*

AA Grapevine CDs

The Best of Bill: Reflections on Faith, Fear, Honesty, Humility and Love
It Works If We Work It: Practicing the Principles of AA
The Twelve Traditions: What Experience Has Taught Us
What It Was Like: Early AAs Tell Their Stories
Not For Newcomers Only: Basic principles to deal with everyday problems
Classic Grapevine: Volumes II and III: Timeless articles from the pages of AA Grapevine
Emotional Sobriety Vol. II
The Home Group: Heartbeat of AA, Vols. I, II
Language of the Heart (MP3 CD)

AA Grapevine Books in Spanish

Lo mejor de La Viña (The Best of La Viña)
El Grupo Base (The Home Group)
El Lenguaje del Corazón (The Language of the Heart)
**Lo mejor de Bill (The Best of Bill)*
**Felices, Alegres y Libres (Happy, Joyous and Free)*
**Frente a Frente (One on One)*
**Un día a la vez*

AA Grapevine CDs in Spanish

La Historia de AA (The Story of AA)
Historias de La Viña: Volumes I, II y III
Despertares Espirituales: Viajes del Espíritu Vols. I y II
Las Doce Tradiciones y El Bienestar de AA Vols. I y II
El Grupo Base: Corazón de AA Vols. I y II
Lo mejor de Bill

AA Grapevine Items

Calendar — One Day at a Time — (English/Spanish/French)
Pocket Planner — One Day at a Time — (English/Spanish/French)
AA Preamble (English/Spanish)
Serenity Prayer (English/Spanish)
Traditions Checklist (English/Spanish)
Slogans — Set of 5 (English/Spanish/French)
Man on the Bed (English/Spanish/French)
Victor E. Posters (English/French)
First Edition Facsimile
Co-Founders Memorial Issue — Dr. Bob and Bill W. (English & French)

*Also available as e-book. **Only available as e-books.

†Also available in French.

A.A. PUBLICATIONS Below is a partial listing of A.A. publications. Complete order forms are available from the General Service Office of ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163. Telephone: (212) 870-3400; Website: aa.org.

BOOKS

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS
DAILY REFLECTIONS
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS COMES OF AGE
AS BILL SEES IT
DR. BOB AND THE GOOD OLDTIMERS
'PASS IT ON'

BOOKLETS

LIVING SOBER
CAME TO BELIEVE
A.A. IN PRISON: INMATE TO INMATE

PAMPHLETS

Experience, Strength and Hope:

WOMEN IN A.A.
A.A. FOR THE BLACK AND AFRICAN-AMERICAN ALCOHOLIC
A.A. FOR THE NATIVE NORTH AMERICAN
YOUNG PEOPLE AND A.A.
A.A. FOR THE OLDER ALCOHOLIC — NEVER TOO LATE
LGBTQ ALCOHOLICS IN A.A.
THE "GOD" WORD: AGNOSTIC AND ATHEIST MEMBERS IN A.A.
A.A. FOR ALCOHOLICS WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES —
AND THEIR SPONSORS
ACCESS TO A.A.: MEMBERS SHARE ON OVERCOMING BARRIERS
A.A. AND THE ARMED SERVICES
DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DIFFERENT?
MANY PATHS TO SPIRITUALITY
MEMO TO AN INMATE
IT SURE BEATS SITTING IN A CELL
(An illustrated pamphlet for inmates)

About A.A.:

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT A.A.
IS A.A. FOR ME?
IS A.A. FOR YOU?
A NEWCOMER ASKS
IS THERE AN ALCOHOLIC IN YOUR LIFE?
THIS IS A.A.
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON SPONSORSHIP
THE A.A. GROUP
PROBLEMS OTHER THAN ALCOHOL
THE A.A. MEMBER—MEDICATIONS AND OTHER DRUGS
SELF-SUPPORT: WHERE MONEY AND SPIRITUALITY MIX
THE TWELVE STEPS ILLUSTRATED
THE TWELVE TRADITIONS ILLUSTRATED
THE TWELVE CONCEPTS ILLUSTRATED
HOW A.A. MEMBERS COOPERATE WITH PROFESSIONALS
A.A. IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES
A.A. IN TREATMENT SETTINGS
BRIDGING THE GAP
A.A. TRADITION—HOW IT DEVELOPED
LET'S BE FRIENDLY WITH OUR FRIENDS
UNDERSTANDING ANONYMITY

For Professionals:

A.A. IN YOUR COMMUNITY
A BRIEF GUIDE TO A.A.
IF YOU ARE A PROFESSIONAL
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS AS A RESOURCE
FOR THE HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL
A MESSAGE TO CORRECTIONS PROFESSIONALS
IS THERE A PROBLEM DRINKER IN THE WORKPLACE?
MEMBERS OF THE CLERGY ASK ABOUT A.A.
A.A. MEMBERSHIP SURVEY
A MEMBER'S-EYE VIEW OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

VIDEOS (available on aa.org)

A.A. VIDEOS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
HOPE: ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
A NEW FREEDOM
CARRYING THE MESSAGE BEHIND THESE WALLS

For Professionals:

A.A. VIDEO FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS
A.A. VIDEO FOR LEGAL AND CORRECTIONS PROFESSIONALS
A.A. VIDEO FOR EMPLOYMENT/HUMAN RESOURCES PROFESSIONALS

PERIODICALS

AA GRAPEVINE (monthly)
LA VIÑA (bimonthly, in Spanish)

A DECLARATION OF UNITY

This we owe to A.A.'s future: To place our common welfare first; to keep our fellowship united. For on A.A. unity depend our lives and the lives of those to come.

I am responsible...

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there.

And for that: **I am responsible.**

