THE PSYCHOLOGY OF AA AND NA
AND THEIR ROLE IN CLINICAL CARE

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Dr. Galanter has no conflicts to disclose

Contents
What is AA
How do you refer
How does it work
Long term – Spiritual awakening
NA/buprenorphine
AA PARTICIPATION

Members
- U.S.: 1,162,112
- Outside U.S.: 931,761

Groups
- U.S.: 51,735
- Outside U.S.: 46,527

NA PARTICIPATION

Meetings worldwide: 68,100

TWELVE STEPS OF AA [NA] (selected)

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol [addiction] – 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.
STEPS, CONTINUED

4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
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.

STAGES OF CHANGE

Precontemplation (denial)
Contemplation
Preparation
Action
Maintenance

Prochaska and Diclemente
Amer Psychol 1992

AA/NA: SOME PRACTICAL TIPS

Most suitable: severe, or even moderate: 5-6/11 DSM-5 criteria
Listings on the internet, Intergroup availability by phone
Good to have patient accompanied by a member
Expect attendance at 3 meetings
Discuss
It’s a cult
Uncomfortable in groups
They’re sicker than me
Sponsor – to work the Steps
In conjunction with meds
Meds between you and your doctor
You, the doctor, should go to a few meetings yourself
TWELVE STEP PROGRAMS MECHANISMS OF ACTION

Social Cohesion
meetings (90/90)
sponsors

Behavioral Programs
attendances qualifying
working the steps

Belief System:
“Big Book”
spirituality

Cognitive:
triggers people, places, things

ILLUSTRATIVE STUDIES: AA AND Spirituality

- Unrelated to quantity of treatment. Moos & Moos, 2006
  628 VA alcoholics did better at 16 years, related to AA attendance, but not
treatment, after the first 6 months.

- Unrelated to prior motivation. McKellar et al., 2003
  2319 VA patients AA participation at 1 year. Post treatment predicted (+)
  outcome independent of initial motivation.

- Unrelated to prior religiosity. Kaskutas et al., 2003
  Among SRT alcoholics, spiritual beliefs at baseline did not predict abstinence at
  three-year follow-up, but a spiritual awakening by 3 years was associated with 3x
  higher abstinence rates.

- Related to acquisition of spirituality. Tonigan, 2003
  AA practices at 3 years (+) association with spirituality, which in turn predicted
  AA practices at 10 years, which in turn predicted abstinence at 10 years.

DOCTORS IN AA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N= 144</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age 57.9 (SD 9.9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ever enrolled in CPH 69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problems with drugs, not just as alcohol 54%</td>
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<tr>
<td>History of hospitalization for alcohol or other drugs 50%</td>
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</table>
| Treated for “general psychological problem – not specifically
  substance abuse” 66% |
| Duration of abstinence, months 139.6 (SD 117.8) |
| Ever had a sponsor (currently have one) 95% (82%) |
| Have ever been a sponsor 72% |
| Service in last month 88% |
| BSI Depression score relative to community sample +1 SD |

(Catalano et al., Am J Addic, 2013)
INTERNATIONAL DOCTORS IN AA
SPIRITUALITY IN IDAA

Compared to (community sample)
Religious 37% (64%)
Spiritual 97% (79%)
Belief in a
personal God 60% (74%)
higher power 22% (13%)
Church or Worship Service/mo. 36% (73%)
Feel God's presence most days 71% (57%)

SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The terms “spiritual experience’ and ‘spiritual awakening’ are used many times in this book which, upon careful reading, shows that the personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism has manifested itself among us in many different forms...

Most of us think this awareness of a Power greater than ourselves is the essence of spiritual experience.

-Alcoholics Anonymous, 2001

STEP TWELVE
Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps

SPIRITUAL AWAKENING (IDAA)

Step 12: Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these Steps…
Ever had a spiritual awakening 81%
Had awakening (Did not):
Mean months sober 155.5 (83.0)
No alcohol/craving 79% (59%)
God’s presence most days 81% (35%)
A year after treatment OR: 3.9
Awakening: Gradual, Multiple

Martine, retired social worker, 9 years sober:
It is not a big epiphany but along the way little epiphanies. Like once, I was walking along the beach in Nantucket and it was 5:00pm and I realized that I didn’t have the compulsion to run home and have a drink. I go to AA every morning at 6:30 am and see the sunrise, so every morning I have a spiritual experience.

Awakening: White Light Experience

Tom, a psychiatrist, 10 years sober:
I went outside the rehab building and all of a sudden a sense of peace came over me and in my mind Jesus. I was sort of embarrassed. I felt this presence, a sense of peace for no more than 3-4 minutes. This seemed to be the message; it is time to come in from the cold. I somehow felt lighter, the war was over and I was there and I’m still here. I had the chance to start living a new way.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN AA

| Attendance | 4975 |
| Number surveyed under 30 y/o | 185 |
| Problems with drugs, not just alcohol | 77% |
| History of hospitalization for alcohol or other drugs | 47% |
| Treated for “general psychological problem – not specifically substance abuse” | 63% |
| Referred to AA by a professional | 40% |
| Have been abstinent for at least 18 months | 75% |
| Ever had a sponsor | 99% |
| Have ever been a sponsor | 59% |
| Service in last month | 98% |
| Have had a spiritual awakening | 92% |

(Galanter et al., JAD, 2012)
THE ROLE OF LONG-TERM MEMBERS

SOCIAL STRUCTURE
Giving Back
Sponsorship
Group Support, eg Phone Numbers
Broader Identification
Governance
District/Area/GSC

COGNITIVE
Control over communication context
Transmission of Step Instructions
Schema Modeling
Defining Traditions, eg Anonymity
Grapevine

BACKGROUND OF NA

1940s – USPHS, adapting AA for narcotics
1950s – First meeting in NY
Another in LA
Current Status:
On 6 continents
61,800 NA meetings
Includes all drugs/alcohol
Some groups accept methadone maintained

NA: DEMOGRAPHY AND SUBSTANCE PATTERNS
(N=396)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character/5%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Drug of Greatest Concern</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age (yrs)</td>
<td>38.1 (12.95)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Sex</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race (%)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Hispanic</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>SUD Treatments (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannabis</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Methadone</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
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Galanter et al., J Stud Alc Drugs 2013
NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS RELATED CHARACTERISTICS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>MEAN (SD) OR (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age First Joined NA</td>
<td>26.9 (9.6) years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Referred by a Professional</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>NA Meetings Prior Year</td>
<td>189.9 (283.5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ever Had NA Sponsor</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Designation, Religions</td>
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<tr>
<td>NA Sample</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>US Sample</td>
<td>64%</td>
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<tr>
<td>God's Presence Most Days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA Sample</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Sample</td>
<td>57%</td>
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AA/NA BUPRENORPHINE

1. Explain value of social support for recovery
2. Don’t mention buprenorphine at meetings
3. Get a sympathetic sponsor
4. Silver Hill Hospital example
5. Hazelden example

REFERENCES

2. www.AA.org
7. www.NA.org