
Integrating the AA Principles to Enhance Treatment Effectiveness

Phil Diaz MSW
Vice President
Aspire Behavioral Health INC.
Winter Park, FL

Professional's view of AA

- 24/7 Case Management
- Natural Helpers Key Providers
- Utilizes peer counseling and mentors
- Manualized Interventions
- Community-based
- Specific Guidelines for Interacting with each other and Professional Community
- Is Service- Based
- Is Based on a Spiritual Model

A Consumers View of the Current Substance Abuse Treatment System

- Time limited usually 9-5
- Utilizes specialist who are paid to perform a specific service
- Not manualized but specific to each client and model used by therapist
- Is based on financial reimbursement instead of service
- Is based on a medical model
- Is not community based, it is facility based.
- Tends to create dependence on therapists
- Often counters the natural helpers goal
- Is based on reimbursement

What Works in Treatment

Research shows what works is:

A motivated client and a supportive therapist.

George Vaillant
M.D.

Inpatient

Reviews both by the Institute of Medicine (1889) and Lindshom (1992) indicate that:

- Inpatient treatments of a few weeks to a few months produce no better outcome than a brief inpatient stay.
- Day treatment, a partial hospitalization, is as effective as inpatient treatment.
- In general, outpatient treatment produces long-term result comparable to those of inpatient treatment.

Homelessness is not a disease

ASAM criteria will often find homeless a factor in seventy index, we make homeless people into sick people and hospitalize them for Economic Factors.

Outcomes

Valiant- Natural History of Alcoholism Revisited

Outcome in alcoholism depends very little on the treatment given but largely on the individual factors relating to each patient and upon the natural history of the condition

Recovery

Valiant- Natural History of Alcoholism Revisited

Recovery is associated with the alcoholic discovering:

- A substitute dependency
- External Reminders (pain, legal, abuse)
- Increased sources of un-ambivalently offered social support.
- A source of inspiration, hope, and enhanced self-esteem (such as religious activity)

Recovery

Exploring Spiritual Needs

- Onset of new hope
- Appreciating the possibilities of a new way of life
- Diminishing fears of the unknown future
- Connectedness:
to family, new friends, higher power sensitivity to others
needs rebirth of ideals & values.
- Sense of responsibility
- Facing facts with courage
- Contentment in abstinence
- Seeking further enlightenment

AA Uses Reaction formation

“A.A. transforms conflict solution via direct expression of impulses(acting out) into reaction formation(turning instinctual wishes in their opposites); alcoholism instead of being a source of instant gratification, becomes the cause of all life’s pain”

George Vaillant MD

“The Natural History of
Alcoholism Revisited

Basic AA Insights

1. We have to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics.
2. No real alcoholic ever recovers control
3. We will be absolutely unable to stop drinking on the basis of self- knowledge.
4. Our defense must come from a higher power.

More Key Insights of AA

- The main object is to enable you to find a power greater than yourself which will solve your problem
- Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics
- Replace self-centeredness with service orientation
- Make restitution / take responsibility for your actions.

Three pertinent Idea's

- A. That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives.
- B. That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism
- C. That God could and would if he was sought.

page 60

Alcoholics Anonymous

4th edition

Alcoholics Anonymous

We can see how the use of a spiritual context and the application of simple principles of service to others impacted millions of people.

The program of AA is based on a series of simple steps. It is a process anyone who is motivated can follow. The steps of AA are:

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

A.A.- continued

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 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 another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have god remove all these defects of character.

A.A.- continued

7. Humbly asked him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all the people 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.

A.A.- continued

11. Sought through prayer and mediation to improve our conscious contact with god as we understood him, praying only for the knowledge of his will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awaking as result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all out affairs.

Why Spirituality works

- Provides hope and enhances self
- Conversion allows for a total personality change
- Provides forgiveness & new beginnings
- Surrender to a higher power allows for commitment to a new life

Vaillant MD

Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness, light;

And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master,

Grant that I may no so much seek

To be consoled as to console;

To be understood as to understand;

To be loved as to love;

For it is in giving that we receive;

It is pardoning that we are pardoned;

And it is in my dying that we are born to eternal life.



Clinical Considerations

Outpatient with Housing:

- Allows for a gradual reduction in treatment intensity
- Allows for a gradual reduction in the degree of structure and support
- Allows the client to assume increasing independence and responsibility based on his or her treatment progress
- Provides a system to motivate clients to work harder in treatment.

Financial Considerations

- There is a limited amount of funding available for the treatment of clients
- Residential funding is more costly than Outpatient treatment funding
- If clients are appropriately placed in **Outpatient** with housing; there would be a cost savings to providers and purchasers of this service
- It may be possible to treat up to twice as many clients for the same dollars now being spent for Level 2 Residential

Some Core Concepts

- Individualized Course of Action
- Community Based Treatment
- Community Based Relapse Prevention
- Utilization of AA and other Natural Helper System
- Wrap Around Service
- Housing and Employment
- Trauma Treatment

New Model 1

- Supportive housing based
- Psychiatric evaluation
- Motivational interview
- Overlay services- outpatient as needed
- Case management
- Peer counseling

New Model 2

- AA/NA Sponsorship
- Trauma Treatment
- Job Training
- Relapse Prevention
- Service Work

New Model 3

- Residential Levels 1 & 2
- Room and Board with Overlay Services

Day/ Night

Intensive Outpatient

Traditional Outpatient

Case Management

Aftercare

AA/NA Communities

New Model 3 (cont'd)

This can be accomplished by:

- Using room and board beds, Outpatient treatment, and AA
- Shortening the length of stay in Residential/ Inpatient programs
- Bringing the AA community into the treatment process earlier.

We have reached the limits of institutional problem-solving, we are only beginning exploring the possibility of the new vision for the community.

Jim McKnight

P. D. MSW

Community Guides

“Effective guides do not just introduce one person to another; they bring a person into the web of associational life that can act as a powerful force in that persons life.”

John McKnight
The Careless Society

Therapeutic Vision

The Careless Society

This vision sees the well-being of individuals
As growing from an environment composed
Of professionals and their services. It envisions a
world where there is a professional to meet every
need and where the fee to secure each professional
service is a right.

The vision is epigrammatically expressed by those
who see the ultimate liberty as “the right to treatment.”

Jim McKnight

P.D. MSW

Advocacy Vision

This approach sees the world as a place in which labeled people will be in an environment protected by advocates and advocacy groups. It conceives an individual whose world is geared by legal advocates, support people, job developers, and housing locaters. Unlike the therapeutic visions, the advocacy approach conceives a defensive wall of helpers to protect an individual against an alien community. It seeks to ensure a person's right to be a functioning individual.

Jim McKnight

P.D. MSW

Community Vision

It sees the goal as “the communalization” of exiled and labeled individuals. It understands the community as the basic context for enabling people to contribute their gifts. It sees community associations as contexts in which to create and locate jobs, provide opportunities for recreation and multiple friendships; and become the political defender of the right of labeled people to be free from exile.

Those who seek to institute the community vision believe that beyond therapy and advocacy is the constellation of community associations. They see a society where those who were once labeled, exiled, treated, counseled, advised, and protected are instead; incorporated into community, where their contributions, capacities, gifts, fallibilities will allow a networking on relationships, involving work, recreation, friendships, support, and the political power of being a citizen.

Community Vision Cont'd

The Careless Society

Those who seek to institute the community vision believe that beyond therapy and advocacy is the constellation of community association.

They see a society where once those who were labeled, exiled, treated, counseled, advised, and protected are instead incorporated into community. Their contributions, capacities, gifts, and fallibilities will allow a network of relationships involving work, recreation, friendship, support, and the political power of being a citizen.

John McKnight

Transference

The Client's unconscious shifting to the therapist of feelings, attitudes, and fantasies that stem from reactions to significant individuals from the past.

Counter transference

The therapists unconscious emotional responses to a client, resulting in a distorted perception of the clients behavior; unresolved conflicts of the therapist that are projected onto the client.

Paradoxical Commandments of Leadership

1. People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered: love them anyway.
2. If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives: do good anyway.
3. If you are successful, you win false friends and true enemies: succeed anyway.
4. The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow: do good anyway.

Paradoxical Commandments of Leadership Cont'd

5. Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable: be honest and frank anyway.
6. The biggest men (women) with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men (women) with the smallest minds: think big anyway.
7. People favor underdogs, but follow only top dogs: fight for a few underdogs anyway.
8. What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight: build anyway.

Paradoxical Commandments of Leadership Cont'd

9. People really need help, but may attack you if you do help them: help them anyway.
10. Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the feet: give the world the best you have anyway.

God grant me the serenity
to accept the things
I cannot change,



the courage to change
the things I can,

and the wisdom
to know the difference
