

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.

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THIRD TRADITION CHECKLIST

Dear Fellow AAs,

The first quarter of 2012 is just rushing past me it seems. What with all the public holidays and recovering from the festivities of December, it seems like January has flown by and we are well on our way. The wonderful thing is the first quarter reminds me to work the first 3 steps again.

Step One, in which I admit powerlessness over alcohol, never grows old for me. It was the one step I did 100 %. Now as I look to the New Year ahead I recall the emotional, mental and physical anguish I was in when I finally did Step One. It worked all those 24-hours past and still does for me one day at a time. I have nothing profound to add to this. As I was told "Keep It Simple" and keep on walking the Talk.

Today I have a life that is full of amazing opportunities all thanks to working the Steps and making them part of my life. Steps Two and Three have been the rest of this waltz that my Sponsor and I did for a while. One, two, three, one, two, three, one, two, three... I needed a good foundation to know that I was not able to manage my life and that I have God to be my Director. When I finally took Step Three on my knees I was able to agree with Bill. "This concept was the keystone of the new and triumphant arch through which we passed to freedom!"(1)

So Happy New Year and let's all stick together as we 'trudge the road of Happy Destiny' (2). May 2012 be a year of spiritual growth and a time of deepening our AA programs!

Peace,

Sharmini

The First Tradition Check List: Practice These Principles

Tradition One: Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on A.A. Unity.

- 1. Am I in my group a healing, mending, integrating person, or am I divisive? What about gossip and taking other members' inventories?
- 2. Am I a peacemaker? Or do I, with pious preludes such as "just for the sake of discussion," plunge into arguments?
- 3. Am I gentle with those who rub me the wrong way, or am I abrasive?
- 4. Do I make competitive A.A. remarks, such as comparing one group with another or contrasting A.A. in one place with A.A. in another?
- 5. Do I put down some A.A. activities as if I was superior for not participating in this or that aspect of A.A.?
- 6. Am I informed about A.A. as a whole? Do I support, in every way I can A.A. as a whole or just the parts I understand and approve of?
- 7. Am I as considerate of A.A. members as I want them to be of me?
- 8. Do I spout platitudes about love while indulging in and secretly justifying behaviour that bristles with hostility?
- 9. Do I go to enough A.A. meetings or ready enough A.A. literature to really keep in touch?
- 10. Do I share with A.A. all of me, the bad and the good, accepting as well as giving the help of the fellowship?
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Alcohol and I fought. Alcohol won.

It sounds so simple, but it took 30 years of my life to play out.

At first it was just a flirt. After a few drinks I could relax and enjoy myself, and situations involving other people (i.e. most of life) were easier and more fun with alcohol. This phase of our relationship only lasted briefly. Soon I figured out that with alcohol I could do and say things I couldn't otherwise do or say. That's when our relationship deepened and I started to depend on the 'courage' it gave me. It was at this point that the denial started. All the family drunks that had preceded me were forgotten. What I was doing was nothing like that and I wasn't hurting anybody else. Besides, I could stop if I wanted to. I just didn't want to!

Why should I? Everybody else drank and used whatever drug was trendy at the time. We could afford it, we had fun, and we got up and went to work in the morning. Where was the harm? Where indeed! I knew I drank differently than other people. I knew and at the same time I didn't - because denial had become my second best friend. And denial became stronger and stronger as I became sicker and weaker.

Time passed and I started to lose things: Friends, the ability to drive, my relationship with my husband, my self respect, memory, concentration, etc etc And when I finally thought I'd had enough, I decided to fight back. What weapons did I have? Anti-depressants, doctors, special diets, analysts. I didn't know that I had NO chance of winning. Nobody told me!

So I fought for 10 more years and when, inevitably, I had to admit defeat I knew that I was powerless over alcohol. And that my life was unmanageable.

Thank God for Step 1. It's strong enough to gather up the defeated people that land in the rooms of AA once the fight is over and there's no place else to go. And it's simple enough for us to hold on to, even in that ruined state, until we're ready to take the next Step, and then the next one.

Twelve Traditions

The Traditions are the means by which we organise ourselves as a Fellowship and without them we would have no mechanism for resolving disputes within groups or service bodies.

I sometimes say they are not a set of theoretical constructs but are based on 11 years of group experience and indeed other experience, such as that of the Washingtonians Movement which was founded by six self-declared drunks in Baltimore in 1840, with the aim of sobering up drunks. After 3 years they claimed that 100,000 'drunkards' had signed the pledge to remain abstinent. They were involved in the temperance movement at the time. Some people joined the movement because they believed in its aims and wanted to support it. Others with political ambitions joined to further their own aims. They eventually became more involved with the temperance movement and then the slavery issue and lost sight of their original aim. In 1848 the whole movement collapsed. A salutary lesson for AA!!

With the growth of AA in the 1940s and the vast amount of enquiries that were being received from AA Groups as well as people in the medical profession, members of the clergy, employers, etc., it was clear to Bill W. that we needed some set of principles which "could offer tested solutions to all our problems of living and working together and of relating our society to the world outside" (AA Comes of Age p203). Bill felt that the time had arrived when a set of principles could be written, covering matters pertaining to unity, group conscience, membership, group autonomy, non-affiliation/endorsement, self-support, professionalism, avoiding controversy, anonymity in all its aspects.

When Bill completed writing the Traditions he had them published in the 'Long Form' in the AA Grapevine 6 May 1946.

It took a good many years for the Traditions to be recognised as being as important to the Fellowship's survival as the Twelve Steps are

to each individual member's life.

I would suggest that Traditions 1 and 12 encapsulate what is written in-between them, putting the Fellowship first in all our AA involvement. Tradition one brings the Traditions a lot closer to individual recovery than is sometimes appreciated in the Fellowship. I am mindful of this in my service involvement and therefore don't just have an altruistic motive in mind when looking to uphold the Traditions but a personal one as well.

The guiding principle for me is putting the whole of AA before any of its constituent parts.

When I think about personal anonymity at the public level, I can see how it is there to protect the individual member as well as the Fellowship.

A lot of non-AAs have contributed in supporting the Fellowship over the years and I always think about John D. Rockefeller and his associates' advice not to professionalise AA and not to look to accumulate any great wealth as this may get in the way of carrying out our primary purpose. I believe the principle of corporate poverty was adopted following this advice.

The Traditions were adopted by the Fellowship at the first International Convention in Cleveland in July 1950, with over 3,000 in attendance.

Although he was terminally ill at the time, Dr. Bob gave a short talk at the Convention. He mentioned the simplicity of our programme and said "Lets not louse it all up with Freudian complexes and things that are interesting to the scientific mind, but have very little to do with our actual AA work". He said the Twelve Steps can be simmered down to two words 'love' and 'service'.

He died in November of the same year.

To the A.A. fellowship of Singapore

Nine months ago I came to your rooms shattered, broken and disheartened with my life.

You all opened your arms and embraced me with your warmth, encouragement, love and friendship.

You told me to keep coming back. For my future you shared with me your experience, strength and hope and from your stories I built an understanding of what I needed to do to change my life.

You gave me the tools to find solutions' to my problems; getting a sponsor, working through the 12 steps, to be of service to my fellowship, to call other alcoholics.

You showed up for meetings and shared with me your amazing knowledge of this program. That it was not just about my drinking anymore but about the way I responded to life.

The most amazing experience for me was knowing that even if I didn't make the changes you suggested, that you would have loved me anyway.

You all encouraged me as I got more involved. I have found many positive attributes within myself by being of service to the fellowship.

When I made mistakes that felt huge and overwhelming to me, you were honest and said," I was making a mountain out of a mole hill". I was hurt and offended at the time but you were right. Your honesty shrunk my ego and allowed my Higher Power to break through.

To my Home group, the Serenity Sisters, you are like family to me now. You have shown me a life I could only dream about and here I am living it. You are my earth Angels and will be forever etched in my soul.

'Stick with the winners' is my favourite line from one of my favourite people.

You all made me feel respected, part of the gang, that I was worth something and that I meant something to you.

You have changed my life. I am a better mother, wife, sister, daughter and friend.

I will repay my gratitude to you by always helping the newcomer.

I could not leave with out telling you all how grateful I am to have met you and to call you my friends

Sam

X

Principles before Personalities

I am grateful to the couple of members at my early meetings that 'encouraged' me to read the AA literature and start working on the Steps right at the outset of my AA journey. They told me in unambiguous terms that half-measures were not good enough if I wanted recovery. It was also 'suggested' that I get to as many meetings as I could and try to identify a 'home group'. This being a group where I felt more at home and one that I was prepared to make a commitment to over time. I remember buying a copy of the 'Big Book' spending the equivalent of a week's spending money. When I came to the Fellowship I had not long taken redundancy from the job I was in and my wife and I were in a poor financial state. My investment in the Big Book was the best investment I have ever made.

In more recent times I get concerned when I hear new members say they have been told to get to 90 meetings in 90 days, which is not in any of our literature. I recall reading about the need for balance in sobriety, between work, home and AA. I am not suggesting that I always got the balance right (or indeed that I always get it right

today!). However in sobriety I need to take my place in society and take care of whatever responsibilities I have in life. This Fellowship has enabled me to do that. Meetings alone have never been responsible for my sobriety. They are an important element in my continued sobriety, but it is the practice of the 12 Steps and the principles enshrined in them that are at the foundation of my sobriety.

I have been privileged to have been involved in service throughout most of my 30 years of continuous sobriety to date. During that time I have come across some great examples and have enjoyed lasting relationships with members far and wide. I often share at meetings about my love for this Fellowship and my gratitude for it, saving me from an alcoholic death. It would be difficult for me to envisage how I could be anything but grateful when I look back at the extremely poor physical and mental state I was in when I came to the Fellowship. My involvement in service is an expression of that gratitude in action, no more or less than that. Over the years I have been involved in some, what I ambiguously call 'animated discussions' at service meetings. Thankfully, this has not resulted in too many damaged relationships. The key principle for me in all service matters is to put the whole of AA first, thinking particularly about Traditions 1, 4 & 12.

When sharing at meetings or in print I look to use, what I call, the language of responsibility, which means me taking responsibility for what I say. As an active alcoholic I was unable to stand up for myself and let myself down badly in many situations. Today I consider myself to be a person of integrity, which is very important to me. I sometimes say that 'I would rather be disliked for what I am than to be liked for what I am not'.

Kevin M. (Coventry)

The Second Tradition Check List: Practice These Principles

Tradition Two: 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.

- 1. Do I criticize or do I trust and support my group officers, A.A. committees and office workers? Newcomers? Old-timers?
- 2. Am I absolutely trustworthy, even in secret, with A.A. Twelfth Step jobs or other A.A. responsibilities?
- 3. Do I look for credit in my A.A. jobs? Praise for my A.A. ideas?
- 4. Do I have to save face in group discussion, or can I yield in good spirit to the group consensus and work cheerfully along with it?
- 5. Although I have been sober for a few years, am I still willing to serve my turn at A.A. chores?
- 6. In group discussions, do I sound off about matters on which I have no experience and little knowledge?

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If the alcoholic can truly accept the presence of a power greater than himself, he, by that very step modifies, at least temporarily and possibly permanently, his deepest inner structure. And when he does so without resentment or struggle, then he is no longer 'typically alcoholic'. And the strange thing is, that if the alcoholic can sustain that feeling of acceptance, he can and will remain sober for the rest of his life.

-Harry M. Tiebout M.D. (AA Comes of Age p311)

I was furious. I looked up at the ceiling and screamed: 'I don't believe in you and I think you're a jerk!' Then I realised, if I didn't believe in God, who in the hell was I yelling at? Then, being a good ex-Catholic, I waited for three weeks to see if I was going to be punished for calling Him a jerk.

-Ken D.

The difference between God and me is that God doesn't think he's me.

-Anonymous

The power behind me is greater than the problem in front of me.

-Anonymous

Social Club News 2011

Well the year 2011 was our inaugural year for The A.A. Social club of Singapore.

What a year it has been for all who attended our functions.

WE ARE NOT A GLUM LOT and are always the loudest and proudest at any venue.

A.A. Monthly Dinners

Our 1st event on the social calendar was The Monthly AA Dinner.

Twenty of our members sat down to yum-cha and talked and laughed the night away, with the inclusion of many partners too.

Debra even brought a mysterious tasting cake which resulted in a few of us having a check of the ingredients! But lucky for us it was only the strong chocolate flavouring.

Our 2nd Event was at Al Forno Restaurant on East Coast Park Rd.

Wow! What a turn out we had! Even needing to double the size of our table due to all of our fellow members wanting to share this fun night with each other.

The night was celebrated by visitors from out of town, new comers, old timers and of course the regulars (you know who you are).

These events are so important for new comers as it helps them to practice not drinking when going out on the town.

Sept 3rd saw us eating at Sammi's Curry House @ Dempsy Hill.

Beautiful, authentic Indian food was served on large banana leaves and was shared by 2 large tables of members.

The night was once again shared by some of our partners who are now becoming great mates!

We all then headed out for coffee and sweets.

5th November had us eating American food and the turn out was the best yet!!

How we love our American hot dogs and burgers.

We also celebrated Stephanie's 1st birthday and had the whole table singing with cake and candles!

Once again a few of the members headed out for a late night coffee.

SINGAPORE'S 1st SPEAKERS EVENT

What an honor it was for The Social Club Committee to bring our fellowship its 1st Speakers Event.

We were all so privileged to hear the stories from our four speakers.

Our first speaker was Des from A.A. who helped us once again to look at the most important step in our program, Step 1. Des had worksheets and information for all who attended.

Our speakers event would not have been so successful without Des's enthusiasm for his recovery and the recovery of others.

The 2nd speaker was from Al-Anon and her story was so authentic, touching us all, it had many of us in tears.

Marcus from AA, our third speaker, celebrated his 1st year by sharing his experience strength and hope with us all. He was very honest with his share that the crowd warmed to him immediately.

Kim AA our final Lady speaker was inspirational as always with her truthfulness and knowledge of our program. She inspires us to be closer to our Higher Power and to align with God's will through sharing her life experiences and her conscious contact with God.

Elis, the president of the social club was M.C. for the day and what an impeccable job she did.

Elis, Debra, Terri, Dawn you ladies were the heart and soul of this event and the success is purely yours.

BURLESQUE

Burlesque was fun and what a way to get our sexy back!

The moves and steps we learnt will remain with us for quite sometime and I'm sure if you ask the ladies who attended they will not be shy in showing you a few of their favorite moves.

To all who attended our functions the AA Social Club of Singapore thanks you.

Your support and encouragement for us to be of service to you, has been the highlight of our year.

Please continue to support you Social Club and to pass on suggestions for outings as they are so important to us.

Social Coordinator,

Samantha

"God, I offer myself to Thee—to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!" (p. 63 BB)

Simple words to say and yet not so simple to live everyday. On my knees saying this prayer daily upon waking helps me focus on what my responsibilities are as a recovering alcoholic—to be of service to others as God would have me be.

When I was a practicing alcoholic this was not my daily spiritual ritual. I had no daily spiritual ritual other than how can I get through my day to make myself feel good and/or control those around me. And if that benefited anyone, so be it. My intention was not necessarily to altruistically serve others unless it made me look good.

My bondage to self was rather strong. Of course I was prideful of this characteristic, rationalizing that this was a good trait to have. I could focus on achieving my goals because it was important to take care of me with little regard for others unless I needed to be 'nice' to someone to get my way. I remember many occasions giving co-workers my opinion on a subject that I assumed I was a SME (subject matter expert) only to find out that they found it offensive. I mean, really, I was here to help them. If they were going to be successful in their career, they needed to listen to me and take my advice. I was only trying to help them achieve their goal, which translated into helping them achieve my goal by justifying what I told them to do was the best thing for them professionally.

This mentality of telling people what is best for them without solicitation also translated into my personal life with my now exhusband and children. I remember early on in my marriage telling my ex-husband that he needed to give his boss a piece of his mind

because of the boss' poor management skills and have my ex take control of his career. Wow! How insane is that? Looking back on that situation makes me wonder how anyone would want to live with me. Even with my children there were plenty of examples where I would have them do things school related because it would make me 'in' with the important families in town.

It is with sadness as I look back over the years and realize how insane I was in my thinking of self and how little I thought of others. It is with joy that today I am aware of my insanity and know I have a program to help me understand and correct my insanity by directing me to do God's will—to be of service to others as God would have me be.

God, Take my will and my life. Guide me in my recovery. Show me how to live. AMEN (p. 59 BB)

The following is a short summary from Doreen (Chairperson for H&I and PI work) regarding the AA workshop held as a Public Information Session for Professionals. There were several counsellors, psychologists and one doctor present.

(*H&I- Hospital and Institutions. PI- Public Information)

Hello my name is Doreen. I am an alcoholic.

I do service work for H.I &P.I for inter-group. I have been in this position for over a year now.

On the 18th.November we did an AA workshop for professional and medical people.

We had 18 turn up for it.

It was held at Damien Center.

We started off with an AA female member, sharing her experience, strength and hope.

Then we had a panel of 3 AA members.who were asked questions by the professionals and medical people.

This was followed by a male AA member sharing his experience, strength and hope.

The whole evening was very successful and we will do another Workshop next year.

We handed out many many books, in Tamil and in Mandarin, and also many pamphlets.

Everyone who attended filled out a feedback sheet and I responded to each one individually.

In the new year 2012 we have been asked to do an AA workshop at the premises of one of the professionals who attended.

If any members are interested in taking part in this, please get in touch with me.

The cost of the evening was about \$650

Thanks to all members for their 7th.tradition because without tradition 7 it would not have been possible to carry the message in this way.

This is all very new for Singapore .It is also all very new for me in my sobriety and it helps to keep me sober on a daily basis.

I am always looking for members to help out with P.I & H.I. work, whether it be school talks or IMH hospital talks.

Some of it is during the day and some of it is in the evenings.

So if you can help out in any way.

Please get in touch with me.

I would also like to give all AA members who helped out in the evening of the workshop a big, big thank you, because without all of you none of this would of been possible.

I do wish every one all the best.

From a very grateful alkie,

Doreen

Australian National Convention 2012

Melbourne: A Design for Living 5 to 9 April

For more info:

http://www.melbourne2012.org/index.html

The Third Tradition Check List: Practice These Principles

Tradition Three: The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.

- 1. In my mind do I prejudge some new A.A. members as losers?
- 2. Is there some kind of alcoholic whom I privately do not want in my A.A. group?
- 3. Do I set myself up as a judge of whether a newcomer is sincere or phoney?
- 4. Do I let language, religion (or lack of it), race, education, age or other such things interfere with my carrying the message?
- 5. Am I over-impressed by a celebrity? By a doctor, a clergyman, an exconvict? Or can I just treat this new member simply and naturally as one more sick human, like the rest of us?
- 6. When someone turns up at A.A. needing information or help (even if he can't ask for it aloud), does it really matter to me what he does for a living? Where he lives? What his domestic arrangements are? Whether he had been to A.A. before? What his other problems are?

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

- 1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA 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 AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.
- 4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.
- 5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
- 6. An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
- 7. Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
- 8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
- 9. AA, 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 AA 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.

Answer YES or NO to the following questions

If we answered YES to four or more questions, we were in deep trouble

with our drinking. See how you do. Remember, there is facing up to the fact that you have a problem.	no	disgra	ce in
1 - Have you ever decided to stop drinking for a week or so, but only last	ted fo	or a coup	ole of
Most of us in A.A. made all kinds of promises to ourselves and to our familion keep them. Then we came to A.A. A.A. said: "Just try not to drink today." (I today, you cannot get drunk today.)			
	0	Yes C	No
2 - Do you wish people would mind their own business about your drink you what to do?	cing-	- stop te	lling
In A.A. we do not tell anyone to do anything. We just talk about our own d we got into, and how we stopped. We will be glad to help you, if you want u	s to.	C	
	0	Yes C	No
3 - Have you ever switched from one kind of drink to another in the hop keep you from getting drunk? We tried all kinds of ways. We made our drinks weak. Or just drank beer. O cocktails. Or only drank on weekends. You name it, we tried it. But if we dralcohol in it, we usually got drunk eventually.	r we	did not o	drink
	0	Yes C	No
4 - Have you had to have an eye-opener upon awakening during the past Do you need a drink to get started, or to stop shaking? This is a pretty sure s drinking "socially."	•		ire not
	О	Yes C	No
5 - Do you envy people who can drink without getting into trouble? At one time or another, most of us have wondered why we were not like mo really can take it or leave it.	st pe	ople, who	0
	0	Yes C	No

6 - Have you had problems connected with drinking during the past year?

Be honest! Doctors say that if you have a problem with alcohol and keep on drinking, it will get worse -- never better. Eventually, you will die, or end up in an institution for the rest of your life. The only hope is to stop drinking.

0		\circ	
	Yes		No

7 - Has your drinking caused trouble at home?				
Before we came into A.A., most of us said that it was the people or problem us drink. We could not see that our drinking just made everything worse. It				iade
problems anywhere or anytime.				
	0	Yes	0	No
8 - Do you ever try to get "extra" drinks at a party because you do not ge Most of us used to have a "few" before we started out if we thought it was go of party. And if drinks were not served fast enough, we would go some place	oing to	o be tl		
	_	Yes	_	
9 - Do you tell yourself you can stop drinking any time you want to, eve getting drunk when you don't mean to?	n tho	ugh y	ou ke	eep
Many of us kidded ourselves into thinking that we drank because we wante into A.A., we found out that once we started to drink, we couldn't stop.				
	0	Yes	0	No
10 - Have you missed days of work or school because of drinking? Many of us admit now that we "called in sick" lots of times when the truth hung-over or on a drunk.	was th	ıat we	were	
	0	Yes	0	No
11 - Do you have "blackouts"? A "blackout" is when we have been drinking hours or days which we cannot we came to A.A., we found out that this is a pretty sure sign of alcoholic dri			. Wh	en
		Yes	0	No
12 - Have you ever felt that your life would be better if you did not drin Many of us started to drink because drinking made life seem better, at least time we got into A.A., we felt trapped. We were drinking to live and living sick and tired of being sick and tired.	for a v to dri	nk. W	e wei	re
	0	Yes	0	No
Call +65 6475 0890 for further assistance				
Or smail us at help @singaporess org				

Call +65 6475 0890 for further assistance
Or email us at help@singaporeaa.org
See details and meeting schedules at www.singaporeaa.org