

What do medical authorities think of A.A.?

Also see pamphlet: "A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional" From its earliest days, A.A. has enjoyed the friendship and support of doctors who were familiar with its program of recovery from alcoholism. Doctors, perhaps better than any other group, are in a position to appreciate how unreliable other approaches to the problem of alcoholism have been in the past. A.A. has never been advanced as the only answer to the problem, but the A.A. recovery program has worked so often, after other methods have failed, that doctors today are frequently the most outspoken boosters for the program in their communities. Some measure of the medical profession's attitude toward A.A. was suggested in 1951 when the American Public Health Association named Alcoholics Anonymous as one of the recipients of the famed Lasker Awards in "formal recognition of A.A.'s success in treating alcoholism as an illness and in blotting out its social stigma." A.A. is still new (or unknown) in some communities, and not all doctors are familiar with the recovery program. But here are excerpts from comments on A.A. by leading medical authorities: In 1967, the American Medical Association stated that membership in A.A. was still the most effective means of treating alcoholism and quoted Dr. Ruth Fox, an eminent authority on alcoholism and then medical director of the National Council on Alcoholism: "With its thousands of groups and its 300,000 recovered alcoholics [now upwards of 2,000,000], A.A. has undoubtedly reached more cases than all the rest of us together. For patients who can and will accept it, A.A. may be the only form of therapy needed." "I have the utmost respect for the work A.A. is doing, for its spirit, for its essential philosophy of mutual helpfulness. I lose no opportunity to express my endorsement publicly and privately where it is of any concern." Karl Menninger, M.D. Menninger Foundation "Perhaps the most effective treatment in the rehabilitation of the alcoholic is a philosophy of living

which is compatible with the individual and his family, an absorbing faith in himself which comes only after he has learned to understand himself, and a close association with others whose experiences parallel his own. The physician's cooperation with Alcoholics Anonymous is one way of obtaining these things for his patient." Marvin A. Block, M.D., member of the American Medical Association's Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence