

# Alcoholics Anonymous

## *Helping Alcoholics one step at a time*

30% of the Indian population suffer from Alcoholism with 4-13% of them being daily consumers and about 50% of them fall under the life threatening category. \*

Not many would agree, but Alcoholism is a leading lifestyle disorder that has taken control of thousands of people, who begin early and continue the habit late up till their middle age or even longer, with an increased capacity and augmented degree of drinking.

Recognising & taking steps to curb the deadly effects of intoxication and its impact, is difficult.

But one support group called Alcoholic Anonymous or AA, has taken up the challenge to help such victims overcome their alcohol dependency in Dehradun. It aids fellow alcoholics recognise, understand and reach out to other alcoholics in a bid to cure themselves of the disease and lead a better life.

AA was first founded in the year 1957 in Delhi and expanded to other cities including Dehradun in 1998. Gradually it picked up in other metropolitan cities where people suffering from alcoholism unified to support the noble cause.

*“Most alcoholics fail to stop drinking because they envision long-term goals of leaving behind an addictive intoxicant like alcohol in one swift go. But that never happens because the cure of alcoholism lies in fighting the addiction each day, everyday, one day at a time”*, commented Ravi Bhatia, a Dehradun based advocate.



*“What started as a small step to fight the habit in Ohio in 1935 has its presence in 184 countries currently, AA is extensively reaching out to all those who are battling alcoholism because most addicts do not realise the negative impact it casts not only themselves but on other people too who are a part of their life.”*  
*My husband was an alcoholic who was a member of the AA group here. He suffered from alcoholism and his struggle became mine for 14 long years”*, mentioned Sunita Singh, a resident from Rajpur Road.

*“I came to know about AA here in Dehradun and cajoled him to attend its meeting. We became regular attendees for AA gatherings for 10 years that positively imprinted his life. Soon we realised that*

*there is dearth of alcoholic treatment centres in Dehradun where apt treatment and counselling could be provided to alcoholics that led to my husband opening Dehradun's first Alcoholic Rehabilitation Centre where he received treatment himself for 8 long years. He has left behind a strong legacy for all those who suffer from this damaging habit which can be accessed by anyone fighting addiction in Dehradun", she stated further.*

Touching briefly upon the topic of impact alcohol afflicts on victims, Ravi said, *"There is a difference between abstinence and continuing the effort to stay sober on a day-to-day basis in your life. My family members suffered due to my alcoholic problem that brought a dark phase in my life where I was left alone and deserted due to my addiction. The real cure for alcoholism lies in the mind. You must change the way you think about it in order to initiate the process of getting rid of the habit in the long run. One must practice detachment from alcohol and not find their solutions in booze. A person must learn to find other means to deal with stress, anger or other problems related to their respective lives and not resort to alcohol or any other intoxicant for that matter", quipped Ravi encouragingly.*

*"The struggle is real and a long one and groups like these help us talk about our addiction and understand our problems better in the company of like-minded individuals who don't judge based on pre-conceived notions or prejudices", he summed up.*

**\*WHO Statistics**