

II.

**COOPERATION
WITH THE
PROFESSIONAL
COMMUNITY**

AGENDA

Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community

Monday, April 23, 2018 – 9:00 a.m. - Noon

Room 406

Chairperson: Thomas B

Secretary: Jeff W

Conference Committee Members

Panel 67

Thomas B
Bruce C
Ed S
Ian S
Linda W

Panel 68

Chuck B
Kathi C
Colleen H

- ◆ Discussion and acceptance of trustees' Committee report.
- A. Review the trustees' committee report regarding LinkedIn as a platform for reaching professionals.
- B. Consider revisions to the pamphlet "A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional."
- C. Consider revisions to the pamphlet "Members of the Clergy Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous."
- D. Consider revisions to the pamphlet "If You Are a Professional..."
- E. Review contents of C.P.C. Kit and Workbook.

Note: 1989 Conference Advisory Action

Each Conference Committee carefully consider their agenda items and strive to make their recommendations for Advisory Actions to the Conference at the policy level. To be more financially responsible, when a Conference Committee recommendation involves a substantial expenditure of money, an estimate of cost and its impact on the budget be part of that recommendation.

2018 Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community

Agenda Item A: Review the trustees' committee report regarding LinkedIn as a platform for reaching professionals.

Background notes:

July 30, 2018 report of the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment/Accessibilities:

The committee discussed the Conference Committee's Additional Consideration requesting a complete exploration of all aspects of LinkedIn. The chair appointed a subcommittee composed of Beau B., chair; Deborah A., Brianna G., and Nancy McCarthy to continue discussion on developing a LinkedIn C.P.C. presence and bring back a progress report to the October 2017 meeting.

2017 Additional Committee Considerations of the Conference C.P.C. Committee:

The committee discussed development of a LinkedIn page for Cooperation with the Professional Community (C.P.C.) committees and requested that the Trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities continue to explore establishing a presence on LinkedIn as a tool for C.P.C. efforts. The committee requested that the trustees' develop a full report that includes a complete exploration of all aspects of this social media tool as outlined in the minutes of the September 16, 2016 conference call of the trustees' Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities subcommittee, and, if feasible within our Traditions, provide an implementation plan to the 2018 Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community that addresses the overall implications of such a presence, including sample content and estimates for implementation cost and maintenance.

The committee further requested that the trustees' report address the following items:

- Clarify what type of presence, for example, a "company" page for A.A. and/or some type of page for C.P.C. committees, would be the most effective C.P.C. tool(s).
- Determine if LinkedIn is the optimal platform for area and district committee nonpublic group page(s) to interact with each other.
- Clarify how "messaging" works for the type(s) of presence suggested.
- Explore premium options and the associated costs.
- Determine how to reach non-followers, and how to get "followers."

- Fully explore the Traditions issues presented by LinkedIn actions including “endorsements,” “followers,” “comments” and “pushing sponsored links” and determine if these actions can be accomplished within the Twelve Traditions.
- Determine whether or not comments can be disabled or blocked and if not, the feasibility of effectively moderating comments.
- Explore if and how the Fellowship and/or C.P.C. committees might be asked to interact with the LinkedIn page.

July 31, 2016 report of the trustees’ Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment/Accessibilities:

The committee discussed the feasibility and potential implementation of an official LinkedIn page for C.P.C. Committees. The chair appointed a subcommittee consisting of Josh E., chair: Ivan Lemelle and David N. to continue discussion on the feasibility of the creation of a LinkedIn C.P.C. presence.

January 30, 2016 minutes of the trustees’ Committee on Public Information:

That the trustees’ P.I. Committee forward to the trustees’ Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee a request to explore the feasibility and potential implementation of an official LinkedIn page for C.P.C. purposes.

Background:

1. 1.28.18 trustees’ Committee on C.P.C./T-A Subcommittee report on LinkedIn as a platform for reaching professionals.

1.28.18 “Trustees’ Committee Report on LinkedIn as a Platform for Reaching Professionals”

(23 Pages)

LINKEDIN AS A PLATFORM FOR REACHING PROFESSIONALS

The 2017 Subcommittee on LinkedIn was comprised of Beau B., chair, Deborah A., Brianna G., Nancy McCarthy, and Jeff W., secretary. The subcommittee met by conference call four times between September 20, 2017 and December 18, of 2017.

The scope of the subcommittee was to explore in greater detail how LinkedIn might be used to reach out to professionals and the implications of a presence on LinkedIn, including potential conflicts with our Twelve Traditions.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The subcommittee feels that there is a continuing need to inform professionals about what A.A. is and is not, and to remind them of our presence.

According to the LinkedIn site, “LinkedIn is the largest global community of business professionals. They come to LinkedIn with purpose and consume a range of professional content. This includes industry news, expert advice, professional learning, peer insights, and recommendations. This is a very different mindset and intent from other social media platforms.”

The report contains many statistics about LinkedIn, from the total number of users (476 million) to the percentage who use LinkedIn daily (40%). Here is a sampling for specific job titles:

- 138,055 Nurse Practitioners
- 90,522 Psychotherapists
- 38,160 Addiction Medicine Specialists
- 49,754 Probation Officers
- 4,443 Parole Board Members

There are also broader classifications such as:

- 540,641 people in the field of Corrections
- 94,100 people who do some kind of training in the Probation field

There are also organizations such as:

- The U.S. Department of Veteran’s Affairs with 253,840 followers
- Society of Human Resource Management with 231,454 followers

The subcommittee was pleased to learn that comments can be disabled on LinkedIn pages and posts. Unfortunately, “promoted content” cannot be eliminated and generally appears on the far-right column of pages. However, the majority opinion of the subcommittee is that professionals on LinkedIn have enough familiarity with digital media to recognize that promoted content is not affiliated with the “owner” of the page.

The majority opinion of the subcommittee is that Alcoholics Anonymous should have a Company Page on LinkedIn to enhance our cooperation with the professional community for the following reasons:

- It would offer another digital resource in addition to our website where professionals could find accurate information about A.A.
- It would broaden the reach of *About A.A.* our newsletter for professionals
- It could offer a venue for our professional friends to recommend us which is significant given the impact of peer to peer communication
- It could raise awareness of national and local professional conferences where A.A. would be exhibiting
- It could reinforce the continuing relevance and efficacy of our Program.
- It could expand the network of professional friends which could deepen the pool of Class A candidates.

The majority opinion is that a presence on LinkedIn is not in conflict with Tradition 11. To quote one member, "While some may say this is promotion, it appears instead to be moving from invisibility to the possibility of attraction. To be attracted, people need to see us and have a sense of what we are."

The minority opinion is that our presence on LinkedIn would be in conflict with Traditions 6, 10, and 11. The minority opinion is that affiliation and endorsement *are* implied by promoted content as well as by publishing our presence at other organizations' conferences. The minority opinion feels that by pushing content out about ourselves we are not staying true to the spirit of Tradition 11. There's also concern that the LinkedIn effort usurps what should be the domain of group members and local committees.

THE FULL REPORT

PROFESSIONALS TODAY

The subcommittee agreed that there is a continuing need to educate professionals about A.A. This was borne out by recent interactions subcommittee members have had with professionals at conferences and elsewhere. Some professionals still know very little about A.A. and others have serious misconceptions about us.

The subcommittee discussed how professionals currently access and consume information in the digital age. One member spoke with a former colleague who is the Training Director for the Missouri Department of Corrections regarding current training trends. The Director stated that the business world seeks quick, brief, and to-the-point SOCO's (training term meaning "Single Overriding Communication Objective.") If the subject presented catches their interest and fits with their organizational goals they will explore it further. The Director noted that they are pursuing short "training bursts" which may be ten minutes or less and can be delivered via computer or at the onset of a meeting. The intent is for the material to be delivered in a quick

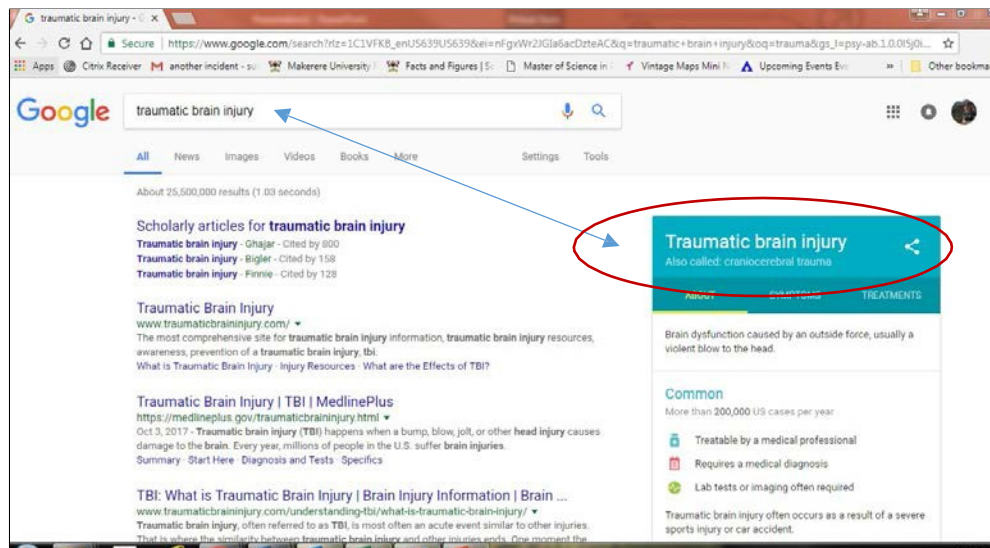
manner and still get the message across. This has led to the popularity of Ted Talks and articles/information shared on LinkedIn.

SEARCH PROCESS OF PROFESSIONALS

A subcommittee member prepared the illustration below of the process professionals use to search based on her experience in the healthcare field.

“Digital search is the fastest way to gather information. For *definitions*, we search the topic and we typically look to reputable sources; e.g. Mayo Clinic pages, National Institutes. For *resources*, we typically look to national associations or large, well known programs, and from there narrow the search to local resources if needed. Often, we will direct consumers (patients, clients) to national resources for education and information because we know them to be reputable, and then to local resources for direct support (or we let the parent national resource direct clients to local resources).”

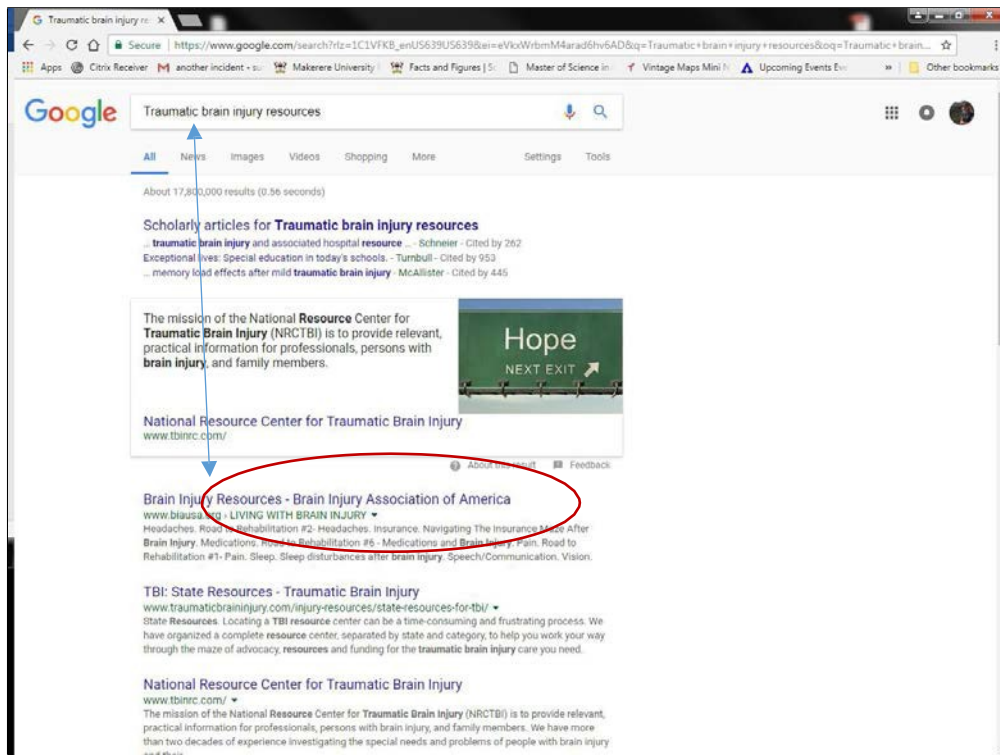
Step one: Topic



Searching a Topic

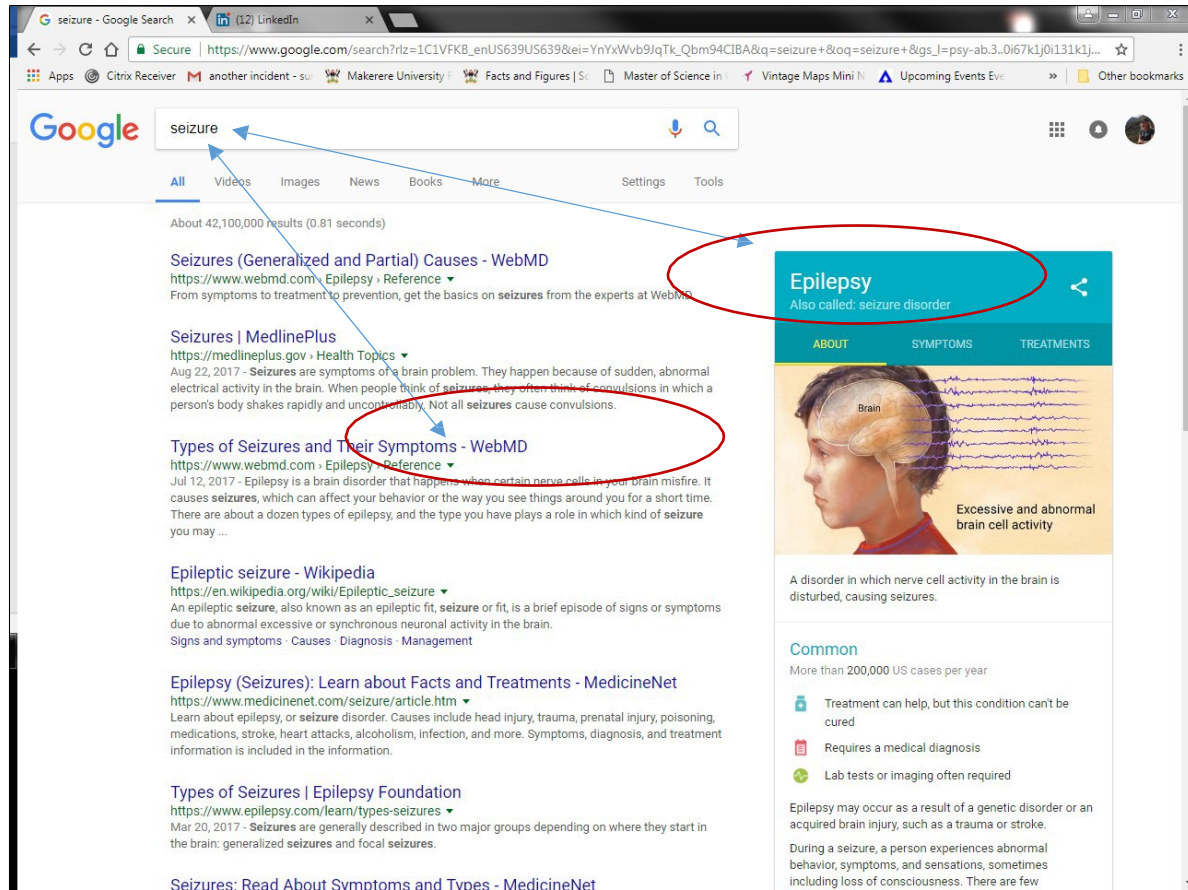
https://www.google.com/search?q=traumatic+brain+injury&rlz=1C1NHXL_enUS748US748&oq=traumatic+brain+&aqs=chrome.0.0j69i57j0l4.3391j1j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

Step Two: Resource Search



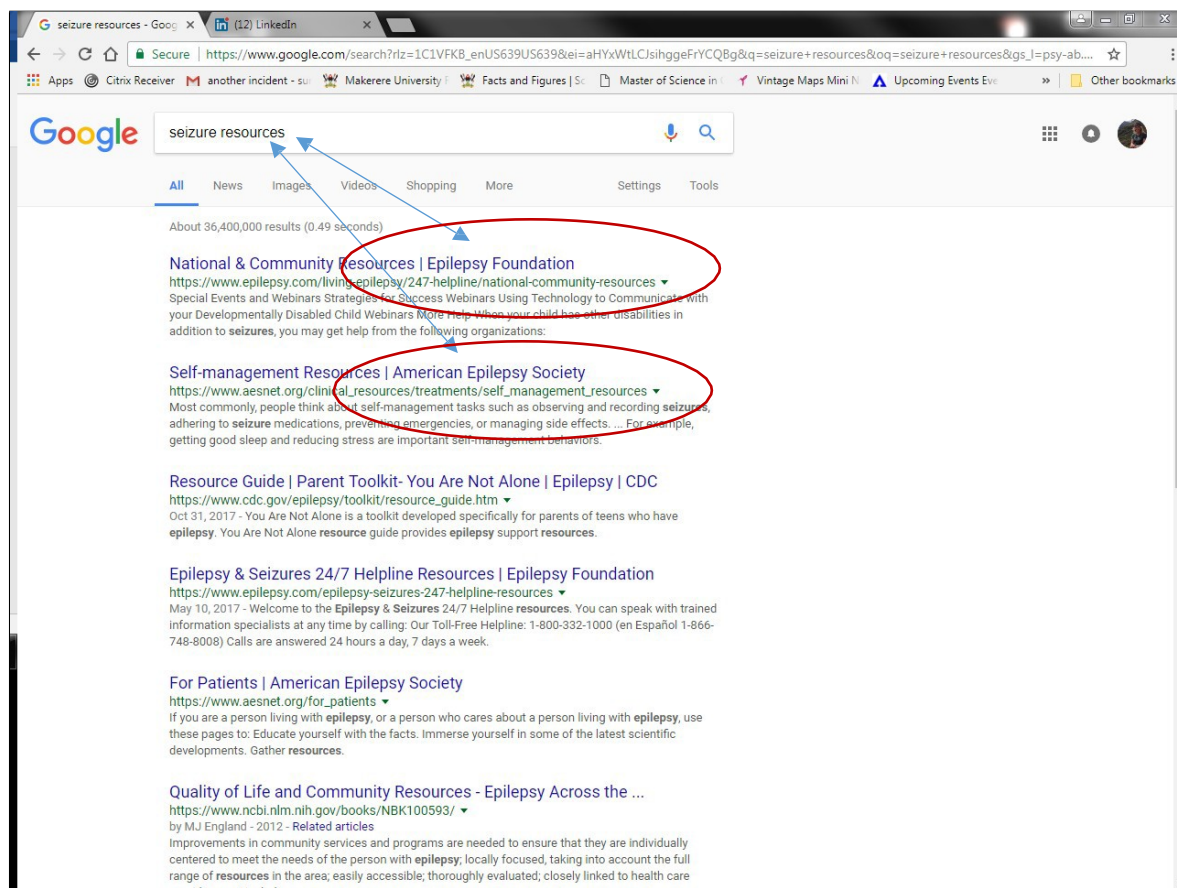
Finding Reputable Resources

https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1NHXL_enUS748US748&ei=NwNNWvTNloer_QaV5leYCA&q=traumatic+brain+injury+resources&oq=traumatic+brain+injury+resources&gs_l=psyab.3..0l6j0i22i30k1l4.72731.72731.0.73753.1.1.0.0.0.104.104.0j1.1.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..0.1.103....0.w3sAh9Fiu2c



Deepening the Search

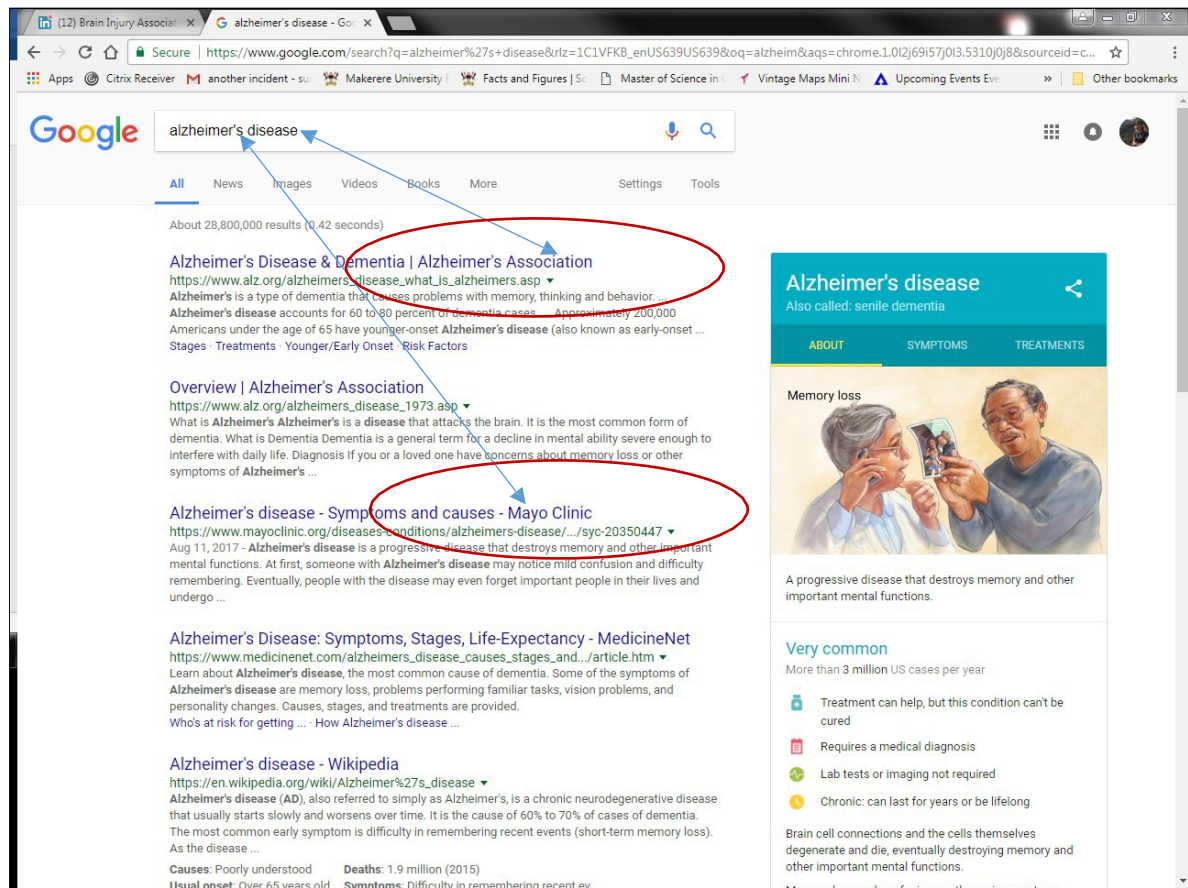
https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1NHXL_enUS748US748&ei=7gNNWvnlEMS1ggfWiJalBg&q=seizure+&oq=seizure+&gs_l=psyab.3..0i67k1j0j0i20i263k1j0i7.111604.112393.0.112626.2.2.0.0.0.77.77.1.1.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..1.1.76....0.vG6Qk2evZO8



Finding Reputable Resources

https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1NHXL_enUS748US748&ei=gwtNWtbYI-OF_QaymZqQCw&q=seizure+resources&oq=seizure+resources&gs_l=psy-ab.3..35i39k1j0i22i30k1.3279727.3281114.0.3281241.10.10.0.0.0.84.695.10.10.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..0.10.692...0j0i67k1j0i20i264k1.0.GwSI73Cgb8A

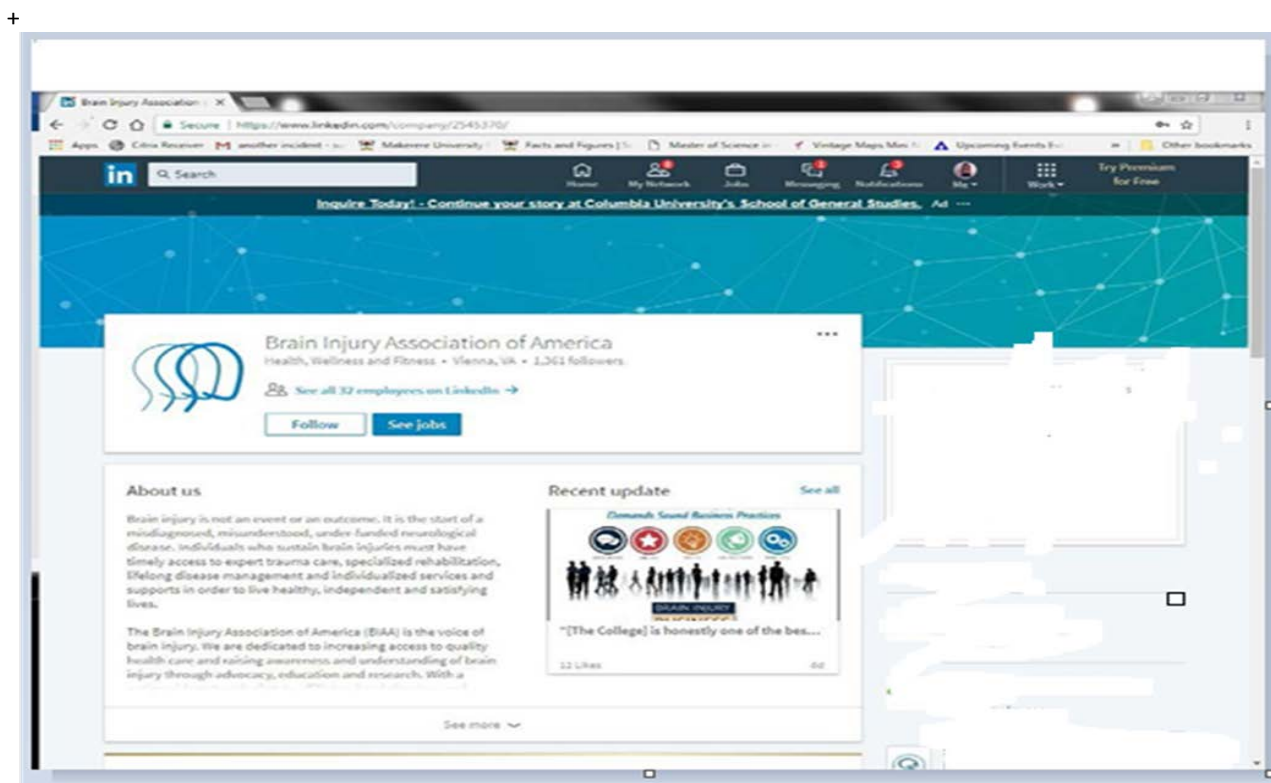
Sometimes one search will yield both definition and resources



Finding Both Definition and Resources

https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1NHXL_enUS748US748&ei=VRhNWqW9LoSnggeFqbG4Dw&q=alzheimer%27s+disease&oq=alzheimer%27s+disease&gs_l=psy-ab.3..0i131i67k1j0l9.269030.275750.0.276703.19.9.0.10.10.0.90.650.9.9.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..0.19.704...46j35i39k1j0i67k1j0i131k1j0i131i20i264k1j0i3k1j0i46k1j0i20i264k1.0.VLsdm7MJtqA

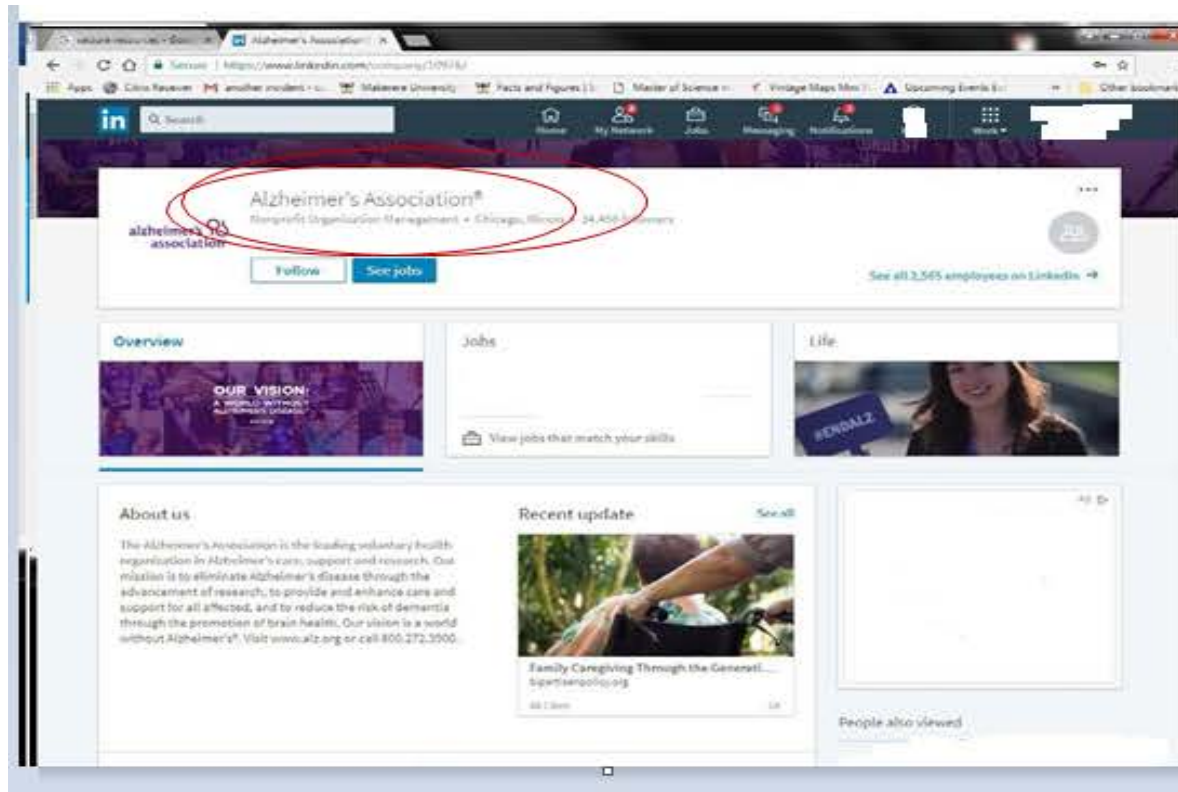
"I checked to see if these national associations had a LinkedIn presence. These national resources are typically not for profit agencies that provide education and resources for people; like A.A., they are not selling anything. All of them had a LinkedIn presence."



Resources/Organizations Generally Have Linked in Pages

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/2545370/>

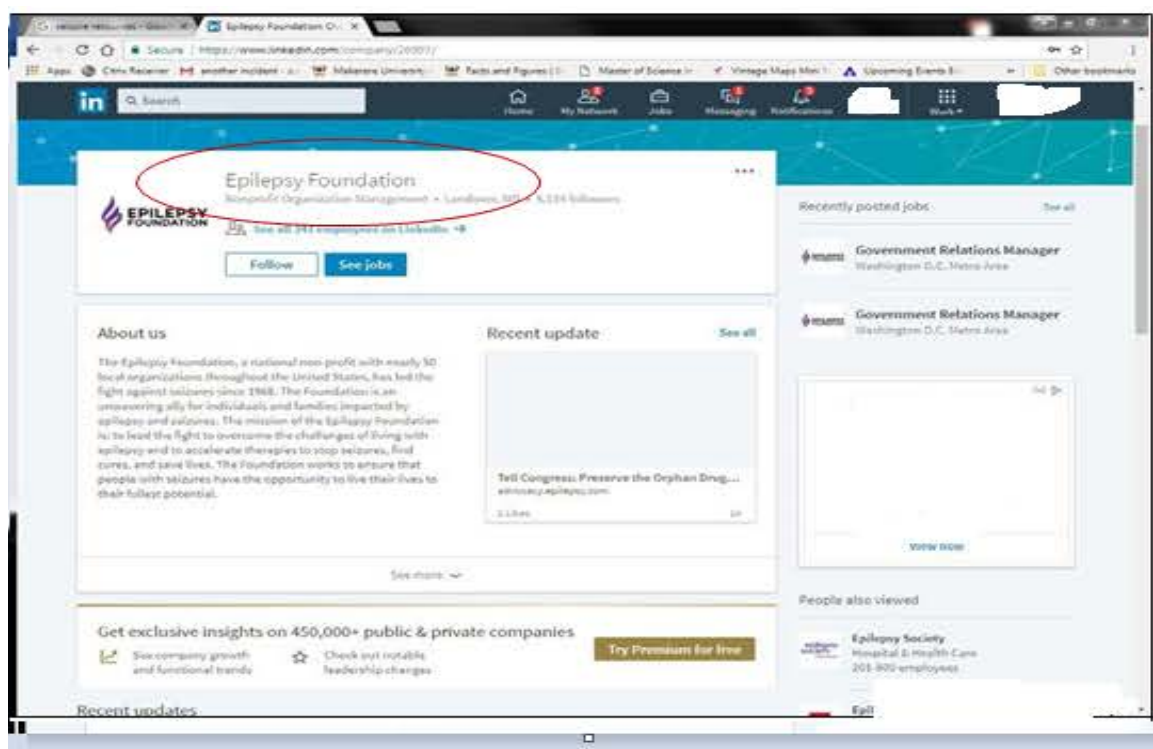
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Resources/Organizations Generally Have Linked in Pages

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/10976/>

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Resources/Organizations Generally Have Linked in Pages

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/26907/>

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ABOUT LINKEDIN

From the LinkedIn website: “LinkedIn is the largest global community of business professionals. They come to LinkedIn with purpose and consume a range of professional content. This includes industry news, expert advice, professional learning, peer insights, and recommendations. This is a very different mindset and intent from other social media platforms.”

The following is from “LinkedIn By The Numbers: 2017 Statistics.”

- 467 million - Total Number of LinkedIn Users (up from 450 million in the preceding quarter.)
- 106 million - Total Number of Monthly Active LinkedIn Users
- 133 million - Total Number of LinkedIn Users from the U.S. (12 million from Canada)
- 1.5 Million - The total number of LinkedIn Groups.
- 40% of users use LinkedIn daily
- 40 million students and recent college graduates are on LinkedIn.
- 1 million professionals have published a post on LinkedIn.
- 71% of professionals feel that LinkedIn is a credible source for professional content.
- There are currently about 13 million Company pages on LinkedIn.
- The use of LinkedIn company pages grew from 24% to 57% YOY.

HOW LINKEDIN WORKS

LinkedIn began as a way for job seekers to find out more about employment opportunities and for employers to find potential employees. Members could discover if someone they knew worked at a company and contact them for information or a recommendation. In addition to those “first degree” connections, LinkedIn made it possible to use “second degree” connections (someone at a company who knows someone you know) and even “third degree” connections. Members’ networking capability increased exponentially, and the more people who joined LinkedIn, the more connections were possible.

Many LinkedIn members just have a minimal profile so that employers can find them. However, other LinkedIn members have a very developed profile with their resume, recommendations and endorsements from colleagues, and even links to examples of their work. They actively market themselves on the platform, posting content to their newsfeed, commenting on the posts of others, trading endorsements with colleagues, soliciting recommendations, and sending out connection requests to professionals they want to meet. Members can also “follow” certain companies which means that they automatically receive the updates those companies post on their LinkedIn newsfeed. Many business people generate leads through LinkedIn activity, especially B2B marketers. LinkedIn has evolved to much more than just a site for job seekers. It’s also a very mobile-friendly site.

LINKEDIN PROFESSIONAL GROUPS

As cited above, LinkedIn has about 1.5 million professional groups. LinkedIn members join these groups to network with other professionals: to establish connections, exchange information, and keep up on the latest developments. LinkedIn members can have the groups they belong to listed at the bottom of their page to show they are active in their field.

COMPANY PAGES

Just as member profiles vary from simple to more robust, Company Pages also vary. Some are basic, simply establishing a presence on LinkedIn so a company is easier to find. Company Pages are SEO-friendly which means they can also make a company easier to find through search engines like Google. Some Company Pages are simply there to help recruit employees. Other Company Pages are highly developed marketing tools.

Individuals on LinkedIn can accumulate “connections” and those are the real currency of LinkedIn. They can lead to endorsements, recommendations, business leads, and jobs. Members can ‘connect’ with individuals from a company. Company Pages are less interactive, though you can follow a company, and by following them it ensures you will see on your newsfeed whatever that company posts, from updates to articles.

To create a Company Page, LinkedIn suggests that you start with a simple description of your company - what you do, what makes you unique. The next step they suggest is adding a “Follow” button to your website so it’s simple for visitors to click and follow your Company Page. While it is up to the company to decide how much time and energy they invest in their Company Page, LinkedIn encourages the following:

“Posting daily company updates is the most effective way to start a conversation, drive word of mouth, and directly engage with your target audience. Share company news, industry articles, or thought leadership pieces—or ask followers to weigh in on hot topics. Posts will appear on your Company Page and in the news feed on the homepage of each of your followers across all devices and platforms.”

WHAT YOU CURRENTLY GET WHEN YOU SEARCH FOR ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS ON LINKEDIN

If you are on LinkedIn and type “Alcoholics Anonymous” into the search bar you get a list of the following pages:

Alcoholics Anonymous Chicago Area Service Office

Alcoholics Anonymous Eastern Area of Missouri

Alcoholics Anonymous of Oakland County (Michigan)

These are all very basic pages, listing a handful of employees and followers, and offering a link to a website. These pages were actually created by LinkedIn. An explanation for this is on the LinkedIn site: “A LinkedIn Company page may exist for your company even if you or someone else at your organization didn't create it. LinkedIn may automatically generate Company Pages when a member adds that company or organization as their work experience on their LinkedIn profile or when a job is posted on LinkedIn for that company or organization.”

In addition to the above pages, there is a page created by an A.A. office in Australia, for Alcoholics Anonymous Victoria. It lists 7 employees and 72 Followers. It has a photo of Bill and Bob, several lines from the preamble, a link to their website, and a few company details.

If you search for A.A.W.S. you get a listing of about 50 individual profiles, mostly people who currently work or have worked at the General Service Office.

ADVERTISEMENTS ON LINKEDIN

Web ads (called “promoted content” by LinkedIn) appear on the far-right column of LinkedIn pages. Often there is a small box with an ad, then below that a “People also viewed...” list with links to half a dozen other pages, and below that another small box with additional promoted content.

When we queried the LinkedIn Help Center about whether or not these could be disabled we received the following communication:

“At this time, ads will appear on all Company Pages (even the Company Page for LinkedIn). We don't currently have the functionality available to prevent Ads from appearing on a Company Page. I'm truly sorry for any inconvenience this might cause. I've sent your suggestion to our product team for consideration. When many of our members ask for the same improvement, we try our best to get it done. Your feedback is extremely helpful in shaping how new features are developed.”

THE AL-ANON COMPANY PAGE

Al-Anon has had a Company Page on LinkedIn for several years and shared their experience in a call with the secretary of the subcommittee. What follows is a summary of that call:

Their goal in joining LinkedIn was to create a place where professionals could get together and talk about Al-Anon. They started a LinkedIn Group but they found that the ‘conversation’ never really took off. They haven’t been able to connect with many professionals through LinkedIn so far but they feel that it is due to their focus being on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. They will soon be taking a fresh look at how to better utilize LinkedIn. They are hoping over the next 6-8 months to create content specifically for LinkedIn – for example research and articles they can post to stimulate more interest in their page and in Al-Anon.

Al-Anon is comfortable with professionals following them, that it doesn't imply affiliation, and that they don't feel professionals are using Al-Anon to promote themselves, they are simply showing what they believe in. They said that "following" on LinkedIn is not declaring your Al-Anon membership, especially if you are a professional. On their Facebook page they feel that just because someone "likes" or "friends" Al-Anon, it doesn't mean they are declaring their membership. The example they used was: you may "like" an organization on Facebook that combats child abuse but that doesn't mean you were abused as a child. You are simply signaling that you value their work.

Their policy is not to follow any other company's pages. They see that as too close to affiliation. They also do not add links to any other organization's website. They do hope to eventually cooperate with other Al-Anon G.S.O.'s around the world.

The Al-Anon team feels that being on LinkedIn is much like being at a health fair. In the digital age this is how you make sure that professionals can find you; it's a way to demonstrate that you are open to cooperating with professionals.

Regarding ads appearing on their page, there were concerns about that early on but they said that the longer they are on social media the less fear there seems to be about it. They did not recall getting negative comments from members about ads appearing on any of their social media pages.

They do recall some members were upset that by being on social media they were 'promoting' Al-Anon. They feel that they are just trying to make information about Al-Anon available in the channels that people are using. They see it as Public Information. They said that Lois W. felt that "unless we tell people who we are, what we do and how to find us, we're not making recovery available to those who deserve it and need it." They felt that we live in an age where information is carried in a certain way and if we stand still and don't share information that way we're sliding backwards and not fulfilling the spirit of Step Twelve. They feel that the words "marketing" and "promotion" are not synonymous. What they are doing is "content marketing" – creating content that people can find and using the platforms and channels that are available.

The subcommittee reviewed the experience of Al-Anon noting that they are a different Fellowship than A.A. with different views on social media.

The subcommittee decided to look at specific uses of LinkedIn for increasing communication with professionals and evaluate each of these specific uses in terms of opportunities and challenges (especially concerning our Traditions.) Here are the uses that were looked at and evaluated.

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One: Use LinkedIn to educate professionals about what A.A. is and is not.

Currently local C.P.C. committees and members share information about A.A. with professionals through presentations at events like breakfasts, exhibits at conferences, mailings, and by one-on-one interactions with clergy, H.R. people at their job, or their personal physicians. Information about A.A. is also available on www.aa.org, especially on the “Information for Professionals” page.

If A.A. had a LinkedIn Company page:

- We could use the page provide accurate descriptions of what A.A. is and is not, available for professionals searching on LinkedIn. The LinkedIn page would also come up in organic searches of “Alcoholics Anonymous” and related terms. The Company Page would also feature links to resources on aa.org.
- In addition to the description of A.A. we could provide the kind of material we feature on our “Information for Professionals” webpage as well as contact information for the various desks at G.S.O.
- There could also be content from the “What’s New” section of aa.org, such as press releases, information on new publications from A.A.W.S. and Grapevine, and other updates deemed relevant to professionals.
- In addition to publishing this content on our page, we could push the information out by posting it so it would appear on the newsfeed of our followers. We could also have our administrator(s) join LinkedIn Groups and post relevant information to those groups.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- There are many sources of inaccurate information about A.A. on the web. A Company Page would be an accurate source, geared toward professionals and widely accessible to them.
- This information could address misconceptions about A.A. and help professionals understand aspects of our Traditions such as anonymity, singleness of purpose, non-affiliation, and our non-professional status.
- Links could bring more professionals to our website so they can see its potential as a resource for themselves and their clients/patients.
- Our presence on LinkedIn could reinforce the relevance of A.A.
- A LinkedIn page is a low cost way to reach international professionals (there is more on this later in the report.)

CHALLENGES

- Creating the page, maintaining it, and especially posting updates require a time

commitment from whoever is the administrator.

QUESTIONS

- At what point does pushing communications out cross the line from attraction to promotion?
- Is a LinkedIn presence usurping responsibility from local C.P.C. committees or discouraging face-to-face interactions with professionals?

Two: Use LinkedIn to broaden the reach of our *About A.A.* newsletter

Currently we send our *About A.A.* newsletter to members in the service structure and to professionals who have requested it. Professionals request it by filling in a short form on our website or by filling out a blue card, usually at professional conferences where we exhibit. Professionals are often surprised to hear that we produce a newsletter for them.

If A.A. had a LinkedIn Company page:

- We could post a description of the current issue on our Company Page with a link.
- We could post descriptions of past issues on our Company Page with links.
- We could push the information out by posting excerpts to our followers.
- We could request that the professionals who are quoted or profiled in the issues post about the newsletter to reach their LinkedIn connections.
- We could post excerpts of issues to appropriate LinkedIn Groups.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- We would raise awareness of *About A.A.* among professionals
- We would likely gain subscribers and readers of *About A.A.*
- Links would bring more professionals to our website so they can see its potential as a resource.

CHALLENGES

- We may not want to open the door to comments on our newsletter, but according to LinkedIn we have the option of disabling comments.
- Again, at what point does pushing communications out cross the line from attraction to promotion?

Three: Use LinkedIn to broaden the search for Class A Trustees.

Currently our approach for seeking Class A trustees is to send out notices through the conference structure, including posting the position in *Box 459* and *About AA*. Typically, we have about 30 resumes to review for each Class A trustee position.

If A.A. had a LinkedIn Company page:

- We could feature openings for Class A Trustees on our Company Page
- We could push the information out by posting the opening to all our followers
- We could push the information out by posting the opening to LinkedIn Groups. Depending on the skill set the board would be looking for we could target certain professions.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Increase the number of applicants for Class A Trustees.
- Increase awareness of AA and our interaction with the professional community.
- Provide another channel for posting what A.A. is and what it is not.

CHALLENGES

- We would need to ensure we do not appear to have any affiliations or opinions on outside issues.

QUESTIONS

- Individual A.A. members who are LinkedIn members can do this currently. Do we need a Company page in order to do this?
- Will increasing the quantity of resumes necessarily increase the quality?

Four: Use LinkedIn to post pieces from current and past Class A Trustees and other professionals who are friends of A.A.

Currently we have Dr. Fromson's *Open Letter to Health Care Professionals* on our Professionals page on www.aa.org and we have made it available to C.P.C. committees as a service piece. Professionals tell us it's a very effective communication. We have Class A Trustees, past and present, and other friends of A.A. who have expressed a willingness to create similar pieces. Some of these friends have already appeared in videos that are streaming on our site and are sold through our catalogue on DVD.

If A.A. had a LinkedIn Company page:

- We could develop more pieces like Dr. Fromson's letter and feature them on our Company Page with links.
- We could post these pieces to our followers.
- We could post these pieces to specific LinkedIn Groups.

OPPORTUNITIES

- We know that professionals today value peer to peer communications. Thought pieces and things like Dr. Fromson's letter are powerful methods to reach professionals who

encounter problem drinkers in their work. LinkedIn would provide a venue for these pieces, ensuring they have a broad audience.

- In addition to written pieces we could create videos using these friends of A.A. Videos are popular on LinkedIn.
- This content would help our Company page gain followers which would further expand our outreach to professionals.
- Links would bring even more professionals to our website and introduce them to more of our tools and resources.

QUESTIONS

- Tradition 11 (long form) says, in part, “Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us.” These pieces would be from our friends; however, by posting them are we violating the spirit of this Tradition? Or is it no different than publishing Dr. Silkworth’s “Doctor’s Opinion” in the Big Book?

Five: Use LinkedIn to announce national, state, and local conferences where A.A. will be exhibiting.

Currently, A.A. exhibits at 25-30 national conferences each year in order to reach professionals from a variety of fields. The 23rd General Service Conference (1973) reaffirmed that “the furnishing of information about Alcoholics Anonymous to professional societies is not in violation of the Traditions.”

The booths are paid for by G.S.O. and staffed by local C.P.C. Committee members. Some area and district C.P.C. committees also pay for booths and exhibit at state and local conferences. There is currently no medium where we convey information to professionals about upcoming exhibits.

About 60% of the organizations whose national conferences we will be exhibiting at in 2018 have Company pages on LinkedIn and many have their own groups. The American Psychological Association (APA) has the largest presence with 154,269 followers, and their own LinkedIn Group comprised of 13,177 members. The total number of these organizations’ followers on LinkedIn is about 400,000, and the organizations host groups totaling about 57,000 members.

If A.A. had a LinkedIn Company page:

- We could list the professional conferences where we will be exhibiting on our page.
- Post the professional conferences where we will be exhibiting to our followers, some of whom will be members of the organization holding the conference.
- Post the professional conferences where we will be exhibiting to the LinkedIn Groups

that would find the information most relevant.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- We could make more professionals aware of our presence at these conferences. Those attending the conference might be more inclined to visit our booth. Those not attending would still learn of our presence and perhaps be reminded of A.A. as a potential resource.
- Our LinkedIn page would gain followers which would expand our outreach to professionals.
- This is a way we can support local C.P.C. committees who are exhibiting at state and local conferences, by letting professionals know they will be there.

CHALLENGES:

- We would want to reinforce with professionals that exhibiting is a sign of our cooperation but not affiliation.

QUESTIONS:

- By posting that we will be exhibiting at a professional conference are we promoting that conference? Keep in mind that the audience, by and large, would be professionals who are already followers of that organization.

Six: Use LinkedIn to post studies, new findings, and new resources that might become available from reputable sources such as JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association) NIAAA (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism) and SAMHSA (Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration).

Currently Grapevine has a one-page section in most issues called "Alcoholism At Large." On the page are one or two summaries of recent studies related to alcoholism. The page begins with the following disclaimer: "The purpose of this page is to offer information that may further readers' understanding of the medical, legal and social aspects of alcoholism; the severity and international scope of the illness; and the worldwide efforts being made to combat it. Publication here does not imply endorsement or affiliation. A.A. does not conduct or participate in research, nor does it hold any opinion on research conducted by others."

The Board and G.S.O. maintain close liaison at the national level with publications and news networks, as well as national and international organizations interested in alcoholism, but no studies or similar material is currently posted on aa.org.

If A.A. had a LinkedIn Company page:

- We could feature links to studies and articles related to alcoholism from reputable sources on our page, with appropriate disclaimers similar to what Grapevine uses.

- We could post these studies and articles to our followers.
- We could post these studies to the appropriate LinkedIn Groups.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Posting material by reputable sources shows professionals that Alcoholics Anonymous is a subject matter expert on alcoholism.
- It helps A.A. assert its relevance and enhance its reputation among professionals.
- The information referred to might help professionals better understand the disease of alcoholism.
- The authors of the articles or studies might be more inclined to become Class A Trustees because of our support of their work.

CHALLENGES

- The information we would be providing would not be the message of Alcoholics Anonymous. We would be straying from our primary purpose.
- Information provided by outside entities might express an opinion on outside issues such as alcohol reform or rehabilitation. The long form of Tradition 10 says, in part, “No A.A. group or member should ever, in such a way as to implicate A.A., express any opinion on outside controversial issues – particularly those of politics, alcohol reform, or sectarian religion.”

QUESTIONS

- We can have a useful and helpful presence on LinkedIn without going this far, so why would we want to go this far?
- The long form of Tradition 6 says, in part, “While an A.A. group may cooperate with anyone, such cooperation ought never to go so far as affiliation or endorsement, actual or implied.” The disclaimer may remove actual endorsement or affiliation, but does it remove the implication? Posting studies or articles implies that we agree with or endorse the content – why would we post articles or studies we did not agree with?

There are certainly other ways to use LinkedIn, but the subcommittee felt this represented a good sampling.

ALTERNATIVES TO LINKEDIN

LinkedIn is certainly not the only digital network for professionals. However, for companies just beginning to reach out to the digital world, many tech consultants recommend starting with the largest and most established networks first, for the broadest reach, and then exploring smaller niche networks. Also, many of the alternatives have more of the interactive/social media features that are problematic in terms of our Traditions

The Subcommittee appreciates that there is a wealth of information for professionals on

www.aa.org and one of the goals of the website redesign is to make that content even more attractive to professionals. The subcommittee also supports developing an App, as a companion to the website. With an App, professionals could opt in for information and resources specific to them. However, there is still a need to let professionals know that these resources like a new App exist. That is why LinkedIn is being considered.

INTERNATIONAL

There are over 200 countries with LinkedIn users. After the United States, countries with the next highest numbers of LinkedIn users are: India, Brazil, Great Britain and Canada. LinkedIn allows you to create secondary profiles in up to 24 languages: English, French, Spanish, German, Portuguese, Arabic, Indonesian, Romanian, Polish, Turkish, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Japanese, Italian, Russian, Czech, Korean, Swedish, Danish Malay, Tagalog, Dutch, Norwegian, and Thai. It is up to the company to provide translations of the material on their company site. The content would then appear in the interface language of the person viewing it. This would be a low-cost way to provide accurate information about A.A. to an international audience of professionals.

IMPLEMENTATION:

If the Conference votes to have a LinkedIn Company page, creating such a page is not overly complicated. We may want to incorporate design elements and content from the website redesign. We may also want to consult with the company who helped set up our Google YouTube page. LinkedIn advises, "Always include an image or some type of rich media. Images generally result in a 98% higher comment rate. Links to YouTube videos play directly in the LinkedIn feed and usually result in a 75% higher share rate."

From a staffing perspective, we would most likely have the C.P.C. coordinator and the C.P.C. assistant be the page administrators. The Company page administrators need to be LinkedIn members and use their real first and last names, but profile photos are not required. The current C.P.C. assistant is a non-alcoholic so there are no anonymity issues there. The C.P.C. coordinator is a member of A.A., but no mention would be made of that in the profile or elsewhere. It is generally not implied that if someone is an employee of A.A.W.S. they are a member of the A.A. Fellowship. It is easy to replace administrators when it is time to rotate.

A Company page can start its own LinkedIn Group, but a Company page cannot join other LinkedIn Groups. If we wanted to post information to a specific LinkedIn Group, either followers of our Company Page would have to do that for us, or one of our administrators would have to join the Group.

The time commitment required to maintain the page depends upon how much we want to do with the page in terms of posting updates, creating content, and reaching out to professionals. At this point G.S.O. Management is planning on the workload being handled within the current

assignment but that would be regularly reviewed.

In terms of cost, none of the opportunities explored above require the “premium” features on LinkedIn. Not to say there is no “cost” for LinkedIn, but it is more in the realm of privacy compromised and data collection allowed. LinkedIn is currently owned by Microsoft.

The subcommittee discussed that employees should have the option of following the Company page and being listed but that would certainly not be mandatory.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS (PSA’s)

Regarding concerns about attraction vs. promotion, some on the subcommittee felt an analogy could be made between a presence on LinkedIn and PSA’s.

The General Service Conference, the closest thing A.A. has to a group conscience, has voted since 1971 to produce PSA’s to be aired on radio and television for over forty years. In 2000, the Public Information committee discussed a suggestion to discontinue television PSA’s as the group felt that they promote A.A. The committee concluded that the current practice is in accordance with the spirit and letter of our Traditions.

A.A. members, being a diverse population, will not necessarily agree on where the line lies between attraction and promotion. However, the Eleventh Tradition serves as a guideline for us all. On LinkedIn we would want to maintain personal anonymity and, as it shares in the Long Form of the Tradition, we would want to “avoid sensational advertising.”

CONCLUSIONS:

The majority opinion of the subcommittee is that Alcoholics Anonymous should have a Company Page on LinkedIn to enhance our cooperation with the professional community.

It would offer another digital resource in addition to our website where professionals could find accurate information about A.A. and where we could address misconceptions; it would broaden the reach of *About A.A.*; it could offer a venue for our professional friends to recommend us which is significant given the impact of peer to peer communication; it could expand the network of professional friends which could deepen the pool of Class A candidates; it could raise awareness of national and local professional conferences where A.A. would be exhibiting; and our presence on LinkedIn could reinforce the continuing relevance and efficacy of our Program.

While those in the majority wish promoted content didn’t appear on Company pages they feel that professionals on LinkedIn would have enough familiarity with digital media to recognize that the content is not provided by A.A. and they would not misinterpret it as

affiliation or endorsement.

The subcommittee discussed adding a disclaimer on the Company Page along the lines of, “Alcoholics Anonymous does not endorse and is not affiliated with any of the advertisers featured in promoted content that may appear in the right column of this page.” The Google Not-For-Profit page is facing similar challenges and may provide helpful experience.

Likewise, the majority opinion is that the opportunities explored do not cross from attraction to promotion. As one member of the subcommittee put it, “While some may say this is promotion, it appears instead to be moving from invisibility to the possibility of attraction. To be attracted, people need to see us and have a sense of what we are.”

The majority opinion is that A.A. *can* have a presence on LinkedIn without compromising Traditions 6, 10, and 11. Also, that without a presence on LinkedIn we may be compromising Tradition 5, since making A.A. more accessible to professionals is part of our primary purpose—to carry the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

The minority opinion is that our presence on LinkedIn would be in conflict with Traditions 6, 10, and 11. The minority opinion is that affiliation and endorsement *are* implied by promoted content as well as by publishing our presence at other organizations’ conferences.

The minority opinion is that by pushing content out about ourselves we are not staying true to the spirit of Tradition 11: “There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us.” While the letters or thought pieces would be authored by our friends, it is we, Alcoholics Anonymous, who would be publishing them, and therefore praising ourselves.

Another concern voiced as part of the minority opinion is that the LinkedIn effort usurps what should be the domain of group members and local committees. “We have two million members. That should be an adequate resource to carry the message to professionals. If we show up and keep with our primary purpose of helping alcoholics, then we don’t need to promote ourselves and professionals will respond accordingly.”

Regarding the need for more recommendations of Class A Trustees, “rather than depending on LinkedIn we should be improving lines of communication within the Fellowship to make members more aware of this need and how to answer it.”

The minority opinion is that if we deployed an App properly it would preclude the need for dealing with social media platforms. An App is far more acceptable because it “could be used to direct specific people to specific pieces of literature and we would have complete control over the content and would not be affiliated with any other entity.”

2018 Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community

Agenda Item B: Consider revisions to the pamphlet "A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional."

Background notes:

From the January 29, 2018 report of the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment/Accessibilities:

The committee reviewed and agreed to forward to the 2018 Conference Committee on C.P.C. the following revised pamphlets: "A.A. as a Resource for the Healthcare Professional" (P-23); "Members of the Clergy Ask About A.A." (P-25); and "If You Are a Professional" (P-46).

2017 Advisory Action of the Conference C.P.C. Committee:

The committee recommended that the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community review the pamphlet, "A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional" and develop text to include information for professionals who come in contact with veterans and active members of the Armed Services, including information on how to contact A.A. worldwide, and bring back a report or draft text to the 2018 Conference Committee for review.

Background:

1. Proposed revisions.

Suggested new text for “A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional”

There are three proposed additions to this pamphlet.

At the bottom of page 7, the pamphlet currently reads:

Wherever he or she lives, there is sure to be an A.A. meeting nearby for help in maintaining sobriety.

The proposed change is:

Wherever he or she lives, there is sure to be an A.A. meeting nearby for help in maintaining sobriety – even in jails, institutions or on military bases.

Near the bottom of page 9, the pamphlet currently reads:

Sharing experience as peers is the unique service Alcoholics Anonymous offers. In most instances, health care professionals find A.A. members not only willing but eager to introduce newcomers to the A.A. program.

The proposed change is:

Sharing experience as peers is the unique service Alcoholics Anonymous offers and with no membership requirements beyond the desire to stop drinking, members are on an equal footing – military rank, educational achievement, work status are irrelevant. What’s important is getting the help that is needed, and in most instances, health care professionals find A.A. members not only willing but eager to introduce newcomers to the A.A. program.

On page 10, in the section “How to Contact A.A.” the pamphlet currently reads:

A.A. is listed in most telephone directories or local newspapers, and a phone call is all that is needed for help.

The proposed change is:

Alcoholics Anonymous can be found on the Internet at www.aa.org and in most telephone directories by looking for “Alcoholics Anonymous.” Additionally, online A.A. meetings are available, which members of the military and others often use when they are deployed in places where there are no meetings nearby.

2018 Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community

Agenda Item C: Consider revisions to the pamphlet “Members of the Clergy Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous.”

Background notes:

From the January 29, 2018 report of the trustees’ Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment/Accessibilities:

The committee reviewed and agreed to forward to the 2018 Conference Committee on C.P.C. the following revised pamphlets: “A.A. as a Resource for the Healthcare Professional” (P-23); “Members of the Clergy Ask About A.A.” (P-25); and “If You Are a Professional” (P-46).

2017 Advisory Action of the Conference C.P.C. Committee:

The committee recommended that the trustees’ Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community review the pamphlet, “Members of the Clergy Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous,” develop text to include information for professionals who come in contact with veterans and active members of the Armed Services, including information on how to contact A.A. worldwide, and bring back a report or draft text to the 2018 Conference Committee for review.

Background:

1. Proposed new text

Suggested new text for “Members of the Clergy Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous”

On page 16, between the section **“Why Would the Clergy be Concerned with A.A.?”** and **“Do Any of the Clergy Belong to A.A.”** the following text is proposed:

What if you are a Chaplain in the Military?

Like other members of the clergy, military chaplains are often the “safest” person a problem drinker can approach. Chaplains can help direct alcoholics to available A.A. meetings, either on or near the base. Additionally, if no meetings are available, chaplains may be able to connect interested alcoholics with other A.A. materials, such as books and pamphlets or A.A.’s monthly magazine, Grapevine. Online meetings are also available for those members of the military who may be deployed, and chaplains can help get them connected electronically through correspondence groups. (A.A.’s General Service Office can provide information on such resources.)

2018 Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community

Agenda Item D: Consider revisions to the pamphlet “If You Are a Professional...”

Background notes:

From the January 29, 2018 report of the trustees’ Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment/Accessibilities:

The committee reviewed and agreed to forward to the 2018 Conference Committee on C.P.C. the following revised pamphlets: “A.A. as a Resource for the Healthcare Professional” (P-23); “Members of the Clergy Ask About A.A.” (P-25); and “If You Are a Professional” (P-46).

2017 Advisory Action of the Conference C.P.C. Committee:

The committee recommended that the trustees’ Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community review the pamphlet, “If You Are a Professional,” develop text to include information for professionals who come in contact with veterans and active members of the Armed Services, including information on how to contact A.A. worldwide, and bring back a report or draft text to the 2018 Conference Committee for review.

Background:

1. Proposed revisions.

Suggested new text for “If You Are a Professional...”

There are two proposed additions to this pamphlet.

At the bottom of page 3, the pamphlet currently reads:

Meetings. At the heart of the program are its meetings, which are conducted autonomously by A.A. groups in cities and towns throughout the world.

The proposed change is:

Meetings. At the heart of the program are its meetings, which are conducted autonomously by A.A. groups in cities and towns throughout the world, even in jails, institutions and on military bases.

Near the bottom of page 4, the pamphlet currently reads:

Referrals From Judicial, Health Care, or other Professionals

Today numerous A.A. members come to us from judicial, health care, or other professionals.

The proposed change is:

Referrals From Judicial, Health Care, the Military or other Professionals

Today numerous A.A. members come to us from judicial, health care, military or other professionals.

On page 5, in the last paragraph of the section “**How to Make Referrals to A.A.**” the pamphlet currently reads:

Or, you can contact the General Service Office (G.S.O.) of Alcoholics Anonymous for help and information. G.S.O.’s A.A. Website www.aa.org can aid in finding local resources.

The proposed change would add a new sentence at the end:

Or, you can contact the General Service Office (G.S.O.) of Alcoholics Anonymous for help and information. G.S.O.’s A.A. Website www.aa.org can aid in finding local resources. Additionally, online A.A. meetings are available, which members of the military and others often use when they are deployed in places where there are no meetings nearby.

2017 Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community

AGENDA ITEM E: Review contents of C.P.C. Kit and Workbook.

Background notes:

Kits and Workbooks for C.P.C., Corrections, Public Information, Treatment Committee, and Special Needs/Accessibilities are reviewed by the appropriate Conference Committees during each General Service Conference.

Between Conferences, ideas for changes to a Workbook or to the contents of a Kit may be received. These may be reviewed by the appropriate trustees' Committee and implemented.

Alternatively, the trustees' Committee may choose to forward an idea to the Conference Committee for review. Members of the Conference Committee then have an opportunity to review proposed changes to a Workbook or Kit during the next General Service Conference.

2017 Additional Committee Considerations of the Conference C.P.C. Committee:

That the sample guide letters to various professionals in the C.P.C. Workbook be reviewed and updated to ensure that the language used is current and relevant to the professionals to whom they are addressed.

From the January 29, 2018 report of the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment/Accessibilities:

The committee reviewed drafts of new guide letters to professionals for inclusion in the C.P.C. workbook. The committee noted the importance of using the language of the professionals being addressed. The committee suggested that the Conference Committee on C.P.C. review these letters as part of their review of the C.P.C. kit materials.

From the January 29, 2018 report of the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment/Accessibilities:

The committee acknowledged the historical value of pamphlet "Let's Be Friendly With Our Friends" but questioned its continued use in C.P.C. service and inclusion in the C.P.C. workbook. The committee suggested that the Conference Committee on C.P.C. discuss the use of the pamphlet in C.P.C. work as part of their review of the C.P.C. kit materials.

[Note: Workbooks and Kits are service pieces. Suggested changes to their content do not become recommendations. They are put forth as Additional Committee Considerations.]

Background documents attached:

1. C.P.C. Kit (sent under separate cover to Conference Committee on C.P.C. only)
2. [C.P.C. Kit contents](#) list.

CONTENTS OF COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY (C.P.C.) KIT

www.aa.org/cpckit

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A.A. GUIDELINES:

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SERVICE MATERIAL:

[A.A. Fact Sheet](#)

[Information on Alcoholics Anonymous](#)

[About A.A.: The A.A. Program-Spiritual but Never 'Religious' \(Fall 2003\)](#)

[Working with Students Attending Professional Schools](#)

[Alcoholics Anonymous as a Resource For Drug & Alcohol Court Professionals](#)

[Suggestions for Using the A.A. Grapevine and La Viña as a Tool in C.P.C. Service](#)

[An Open Letter to Health Care Professionals](#)

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[About A.A. Newsletter](#)

[Current Box 4-5-9](#)

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CATALOGS/ORDER FORMS:

[Literature Catalog \(includes A.A.W.S. and A.A. Grapevine material\)](#)

Special literature packages are for sale to CPC committees and contacts only.*

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PAMPHLETS:

[A.A. At a Glance](#)

About A.A. Card*

[The A.A. Member – Medications and Other Drugs](#)

[A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional](#)

[Members of the Clergy ask about Alcoholics Anonymous](#)

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www.aa.org/cpckit

OTHER RESOURCES:

History & Actions: Trustees' Committee on C.P.C.*

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History & Highlights of Actions: Conference Committee on C.P.C.*

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AA GRAPEVINE RESOURCES:

Available through the AA Grapevine website at www.aagrapevine.org/resources

Grapevine magazine*

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Grapevine Today /La Viña Hoy (Flyer)*

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A.A. Grapevine: Spirituality and 'God Talk' (April 2010)*

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* Item is not available on our website. Please contact the [C.P.C.](#) desk if you have questions about this item.

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