

## Summary

Alcohol addiction is recognized as an important social problem which requires the development of effective methods of prevention, treatment and resolution of related problems. Alcoholism has become the subject of many explorations carried out by researchers from various scientific disciplines from all over the world. It is a phenomenon in all countries differing only in the intensity and the type of consumed alcohol. Alcoholism has a destructive effect not only on drinkers, but also on the social environment in which they live and, above all, on their families.

Abuse of alcohol leads to degradation of the drinker's personality, damages health and often leads to death. It's also the cause of many pathological behaviours, accidents, suicides and crimes. It often ruins professional life, thus leading to a significant deterioration in the financial situation and the living standard of the whole family. Consequently, it is a burden on society in a given country. Until the turn of the 1980s and early 1990s on alcohol, the disease was considered to be a kind of social pathology in Poland, which should be fighting in all possible means. Few handled a man addicted to alcohol as a sick person, which must be treated and who needs help. The 1990s brought some changes about alcohol dependence syndrome as the disease began to reach increasingly wider. Thus there have been changes of attitude towards alcohol addicts and their families as co-addicts. There were more and more publications discovering the basic knowledge about alcohol addiction dependence, how to stop it and how to overcome this disease. Knowledge about addiction helps understand the mechanisms that allow more effective action to stop the disease.

Taking up treatment, maintaining abstinence and achieving permanent sobriety later is a big challenge for the addict. Alcoholism is assumed to be an incurable disease (since there is no longer a return to controlled drinking) the proceedings does not end but stop the development of this disease. In order to further strengthen abstinence, it is necessary to seek support in self-help groups, among which the Community of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) is the most popular in the world.

The date of establishment of the Alcoholics Anonymous Community is believed to be June 10, 1935. However, earlier in May of the same year, a meeting of two alcoholics took place in Akron (Ohio, USA). They were William Griffith Wilson known as Bill W. was a stockbroker and Robert Halbrook Smith, known as Dr Bob

Bill W. was a surgeon, both have had a rich alcohol history. Soon other alcoholics began to join them - in 1939 there were already a hundred of them. In 1940 the first Office of the World Service AA was opened in New York. In Poland, it was not until the mid-1970s that the first two AA groups were formed. In 2019, the Alcoholics Anonymous Community estimated to have more than three millions addicts all over the world. In Poland functions about 2700 groups, each of which has an average 10-12 persons (PARPA 2020). The program proposed by the AA Community was presented in the Twelve Steps while maintaining the unity of the Community serves to the Twelve Tradition of Community. The most important and basic information about the AA Community is contained in the preamble which, in addition to determining who and for what purpose belongs, determines who belongs to the community. There are no fees or any religion, party or organization, the most important purpose is indicated. The main goal is to remain sober and help other alcoholics.

The 12 Steps Program is available to everyone regardless of age, gender or education. Obstacles do not constitute a religion or social status. The goals set out in the 12 Steps Program can be achieved and are often implemented individually and by everyone completely differently. The basis is Step One the essence of which is to admit powerlessness to alcohol and the loss of control in own life. It's a program that sets the direction and stages of the change process. The implementation of this program requires a lot of effort and many years of work on oneself. The addict receives support from the group and if oneself has a sponsor also from him but oneself also must have the support of the immediate environment especially the family.

The goal of the doctoral dissertation was to perform a sociological analysis of the AA Community as a specific social world produced in the course of interactions that occur between participants. The description and methods of researching this community used the concept of the social world presented and described by the Polish sociologist Anna Kacperczyk.

As a part of research undertaken it was assumed to determine the reasons for the popularity of the Alcoholics Anonymous Community sometimes referred to as a social phenomenon, to examine the conditions that favour its impact on the addict to understand the mechanisms of Community action conducive to make a decision to stop drinking, establishing and characterizing motives prompting addicts to seek help in this type of interaction. The work consists of five chapters, which are arranged in three separate parts.

The first part consists of two theoretical chapters containing the characteristics of alcoholism and the description of the Alcoholics Anonymous Community as a social world. The second part of the thesis is the third methodological chapter in which the research methodology is presented, their purpose and scope were indicated, research problems were formulated as well as assumptions for quantitative research. The third empirical part is an essential element of work. The fourth chapter presents the results of qualitative research. The fifth chapter discussed the results of quantitative research and presents their analysis, including attempts by respondents before joining AA to deal with addiction, the reasons for joining the Community and fears preceding this decision. At the end of the dissertation constitutive elements of the social world of AA established during empirical research were presented referring to segments of this world indicated by Anna Kacperczyk. It has been confirmed that the AA Community as a social world that has its boundaries, constitutive elements, principles and norms of the program, but above all it gives its participants a sense of belonging, promotes a change in their current lifestyle, stimulates self-development, deprives odium and ostracism that they experienced from other members of the society in which they lived. Empirical studies were described and presented graphically using tables and graphs.