



This is a speech from Dave Reed, Haddon Road AA Member, for the Stampede BBQ

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thanks to everyone in attendance, and to all the volunteers from Haddon Group and St. Andrew's who have helped make this possible. Thanks also to the Organizing Committee and Harry F.

Welcome to the second annual Haddon group Stampede barbeque held at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. St. Andrew's mission is to be 'woven into the neighbourhood', which has included providing the Haddon group with a space at a very reasonable rate to do our important work ~ helping people with problems with alcohol. Haddon group is very grateful to St Andrew's for this.

Haddon holds 19 meetings a week, trying to carry the message of AA's 12 step program of recovery. Today, we have an urgent and pressing issue that touches the lives of countless individuals and communities: **the intertwined crises of addiction and homelessness**. In these challenging times, when addiction runs rampant and homelessness is a stark reality for many, it is essential to recognize and support the transformative power of organizations like Alcoholics Anonymous.

Alcoholics Anonymous, or AA, has stood as a beacon of hope and recovery for nearly a century. Founded in 1935, AA has provided a lifeline to millions struggling with alcohol addiction. Its core principles of mutual support, anonymity, and a 12-step program have proven to be a resilient framework for individuals seeking to reclaim their lives from the grip of addiction.

The importance of AA in our current climate cannot be overstated. As addiction rates soar, exacerbated by societal stresses and economic instability, the need for accessible and effective support systems has never been greater. Addiction is not just a personal struggle; it is a public health crisis that affects families, communities, and the very fabric of our society. It fuels cycles of poverty, crime, and homelessness, creating a devastating ripple effect. Homelessness in particular, is both a cause and consequence of addiction. Many individuals find themselves on the streets due to substance abuse, while others turn to substances as a means of coping with the harsh realities of homelessness. It is a vicious cycle that traps individuals in a seemingly inescapable web of despair.

Here is where Alcoholics Anonymous plays a crucial role. By offering a supportive community and a structured path to sobriety, AA provides a lifeline to those caught in the throes of addiction. **It offers hope where there is hopelessness, and structure where there is chaos.**

The power of AA lies not only in its program but in its people – individuals who have walked the same path, faced the same demons, and emerged stronger. They offer empathy, understanding, and a sense of belonging that is often missing in the lives of those struggling with addiction. Moreover, AA's principle of anonymity creates a safe space for individuals to seek help without fear of judgment or stigma. **In a society that often marginalizes and shames those with addiction issues, this anonymity is vital.** It allows individuals to be vulnerable and honest, fostering genuine healing and recovery.

However, the reach and impact of AA go beyond individual recovery. By helping individuals overcome addiction, AA indirectly addresses the broader issue of homelessness. A person who achieves sobriety through AA is more likely to find stable housing, maintain employment, and rebuild relationships. Thus, supporting AA is an investment in the well-being of our entire community.

In conclusion, Alcoholics Anonymous is more than just a support group; **AA is a vital resource in our fight against addiction and homelessness.** As we navigate these challenging times, let us recognize and support the invaluable work of AA. Let us ensure that those in need have access to this lifeline, and **let us stand together in creating a society where hope, recovery, and dignity are within reach for all.** Thank you for your attention, and please enjoy the BBQ.

😊 Yah Hoo!!! ~ Dave Reed