

Recovery Speakers

The World's Largest Free Collection of Recovery Voices

Your Complete Platform Guide

Everything You Can Do on RecoverySpeakers.org — And What's Coming Next

Recovery Speakers · 501(c)(3) Registered Nonprofit · EIN: 87-4447272 ·

RecoverySpeakers.org

Disclaimer: Recovery Speakers is not affiliated with Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon, or any other twelve-step fellowship or organization. We do, however, do our best to conform to the traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

A Note from the Founder

You already know us. Every morning, a recording lands in your inbox — a voice from the past, sharing experience, strength, and hope. You press play. You listen. Maybe it's exactly what you needed to hear that day.

But that daily email is just the beginning.

Over the past twenty years, I've been rescuing recordings. Cassette tapes from church basements. Reel-to-reel spools from estate sales. Acetate discs from the 1940s, crumbling in attics across America. Each one holds the voice of someone who found a way out of the darkness of alcoholism — and had the courage to stand up and tell their story.

These are not famous people. They are factory workers and physicians, housewives and war heroes, judges and janitors. They are the men and women who built the recovery movement from nothing — one conversation at a time, one meeting at a time, one alcoholic helping another.

Today, Recovery Speakers has grown into something far beyond a daily email. It is a complete platform — with AI-powered research tools, a digital museum, a scholarly research library, weekly live workshops, and a massive audio collection that continues to grow every week. All of it accessible from your phone, your tablet, or your computer. Nearly all of it completely free.

This guide will show you everything that's here — and everything that's coming. I think you'll be surprised by how much you've been missing.

Thank you for being part of this community. Thank you for listening.

“When you transfer the obsession from self to that of service to others is when you get up, stand up, and stay up.”

— Mike Fitzpatrick, Founder & President, Recovery Speakers

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1. Platform at a Glance

Recovery Speakers is the world's largest free digital collection of historical recovery voices — thousands of audio recordings spanning from 1935 to the present day, documenting the founding generation of Alcoholics Anonymous and the broader twelve-step movement. The platform combines a massive and rapidly growing audio library with AI-powered research tools, a digital museum of over 300 rare artifacts, a scholarly research center, and a weekly live workshop series — all delivered through a modern Progressive Web App accessible from any device.

The platform is operated by Recovery Speakers, a 501(c)(3) registered nonprofit based in Parker, Colorado.

The simple version: All audio, all history, all museum content — free. Always. The AI-powered research tools are what require membership, though Ask Bill W. is available to everyone at no cost.

What's Here	Details
Audio Recordings	Thousands — and growing rapidly
Searchable Document Segments	211,024
Research Library	Tens of thousands of pages
Museum Artifacts	300+ rare items
Video Recordings	70+
Weekly Workshop Sessions	76 archived
AI Research Tools	3 distinct engines
Daily Email Subscribers	7,500+ (that's you)
Years in Operation	20+
Cost for Audio	Free. Always.

2. The Speaker Collection

The heart of Recovery Speakers is its audio collection — the largest freely accessible library of historical recovery recordings in existence. These recordings document the lived experience of alcoholism and recovery as told by the people who built the movement, in their own voices, in their own words.

What the Collection Contains

The Speaker Collection spans nine decades of recovery history, organized into curated collections that allow you to explore by era, theme, or individual speaker:

Pioneer Era (1935–1950) — The original, raw recordings of the men and women who forged the first paths of recovery from alcoholism. These are among the rarest audio recordings in existence — voices from a time when Alcoholics Anonymous was still finding its footing, when meetings were held in living rooms, and when lasting sobriety was considered a medical impossibility.

Example: Bill W.'s 20th Anniversary Convention address (1954) — Bill Wilson reflects on the twenty-year journey of Alcoholics Anonymous in this legendary, highly emotional recording from New York City.

Classic Era (1950–1980) — The golden age of recovery speakers. These are the talks that circulated on cassette tapes for decades, copied and re-copied, passed hand-to-hand at meetings across the world. Names like Chuck C., Sandy B., Tom I., and Earl H. became legendary through these recordings.

Example: Chuck C. — “The Spiritual Way of Life” (UCLA, California, 1974) — One of the most beloved and widely circulated recovery talks in history, recorded live at UCLA.

Modern Era (1980–Present) — Vibrant, contemporary recovery stories from conventions, roundups, and meetings across North America. High-definition digital recordings with full AI-generated transcripts.

Specialized Collections include the Michigan Pioneers, the Tom I. Collection, the Sandy B. Collection, the Earl H. Collection (a comprehensive 32-part spiritual workshop series), Women in Recovery, and many more.

How to Search

The collection is fully searchable by speaker name, city, year, topic, event type, or unique RS catalog number. You can filter by fellowship (AA, Al-Anon, NA, OA, Alateen, CA, CoDA) and by curated collection. A decade ribbon allows quick navigation across time periods from the 1950s through the 2020s.

Try this: Search for “spiritual awakening” and you’ll instantly surface talks from Bill W., Chuck C., Tom I., and dozens of other speakers who addressed this topic across seven decades.

The Audio Player

Every recording is delivered through a custom-built streaming player with play/pause, a seekable progress bar, 30-second rewind and forward buttons, and duration display. Historical recordings include a quality notice — natural tape hiss and room noise have been intentionally preserved to maintain the authentic historical record.

Live Synchronized Captions

Every recording includes live synchronized captions — word-by-word text that highlights in real time as the speaker talks. This makes the collection accessible to hearing-impaired listeners,

non-native English speakers, and anyone who benefits from reading along with the audio.

A note on captions vs. transcripts: Captions are the real-time synchronized text that appears while you listen — available on every recording, always free. Full transcripts (the complete written text you can read independently of the audio) are also free for all recordings.

3. Speaker of the Day

You already know this one — it's how most of you found us. Each morning, Recovery Speakers delivers a hand-selected featured talk to your inbox. But there's more to the experience than the email.

The Full Experience

When you click through to the website, the Speaker of the Day page offers three tabbed content panels beyond the audio itself:

Reflection — A brief meditation inspired by the day's talk, connecting the historical message to your present-day experience.

Transcript — The complete word-for-word transcript with synchronized highlighting that follows the audio playback in real time.

Context — Historical background: who the speaker was, what was happening in the recovery movement at the time, and why this particular recording matters.

Share It

Every Speaker of the Day page includes a share link with one-click copy-to-clipboard. Text it to a sponsee. Post it in your group chat. Email it to a friend who's struggling. These voices have been changing lives for decades — help them reach one more person.

Example: Monday's featured speaker — Frank L. from Alexandria, Virginia (1963). Sponsored by Clarence Snyder himself, Frank shares a powerful message about powerlessness. "Here at last I have found a home and a place where no longer can I indulge in the luxury of ever being a big shot again."

4. AI-Powered Research Tools

This is where Recovery Speakers becomes something entirely new. Three distinct AI-powered search engines allow you to have natural-language conversations with decades of recovery history. Ask a question in plain English — get an answer drawn from actual historical sources.

These tools are serious research instruments — but they're also genuinely fun. Use them to prepare a meeting topic. Dig into a step you're working on with your sponsor. Build a presentation for your home group's anniversary. Settle a friendly debate about AA history. Create trivia questions for your sober living house game night. Or just explore — ask whatever you're curious about and see what comes back from ninety years of recovery wisdom.

Ask Bill W. (Free — 3 per day, No Account Required)

Pose questions about recovery and receive answers drawn exclusively from Bill Wilson's recorded talks, personal writings, letters, and published works. It feels like having a conversation with the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous himself.

Try this: Type "What did Bill W. say about resentments?" — The system searches across all of Bill Wilson's documented words and returns a synthesized answer with direct citations to specific talks and writings, including links to listen to the original recordings.

Step work example: Working on Step Seven? Ask "What did Bill W. write about humility?" and receive a synthesized answer pulling from his talks, letters, and the Twelve and Twelve — with links to hear him discuss it in his own voice.

Quick-access topic chips make discovery easy: Resentment, Spiritual Awakening, The Twelve Steps, Humility, How AA Started, Fear, Sobriety, Traditions.

Access: 3 queries per day for everyone — no account required, no payment required. Your usage is tracked by your device so you can use it immediately without signing up. Members get higher limits (see Section 11).

Ask the Archive (Membership Required)

A more powerful engine that searches across the entire transcript library — thousands of digitized historical transcripts, recorded workshops, and pioneer speaker tapes spanning from 1935 to the present day. Ask complex questions and receive AI-synthesized answers with source citations linking directly to the original recordings.

Try this: Ask "What did early members say about the Third Step?" — The system surfaces relevant passages from multiple speakers across multiple decades, synthesizes the key themes, and provides direct links to each source recording so you can hear the full context.

Presentation example: Preparing a talk on "carrying the message"? Ask the Archive will pull quotes and stories from dozens of speakers across seven decades — giving you a rich foundation of experience to draw from.

Trivia night: Ask "Who was the first woman to get sober in AA?" or "What city had the first AA meeting outside of Akron and New York?" — the answers come back with sources you can

verify and stories you can share.

The interface includes voice search (just tap the microphone), a search history sidebar, and suggested queries for discovery.

Access: Explorer members — 5 queries per day. Premium members — Unlimited.

Deep Research (Membership Required)

The most powerful research tool on the platform — designed for anyone conducting serious inquiry into recovery history. Deep Research searches across tens of thousands of historical documents, letters, transcripts, and archival recordings using a full-power AI model with extended processing time.

Try this: Ask “What was the relationship between the Oxford Group and the development of the Twelve Steps?” — Deep Research processes for up to three minutes, searching across all document collections, and returns a comprehensive, multi-source answer with citations to specific documents, letters, and recordings.

Sponsorship tool: Working with a sponsee on Step Four? Ask Deep Research “How did the early members approach the Fourth Step inventory?” and receive a scholarly-level answer drawing from Bill W.’s letters, Dr. Bob’s guidance, and the actual practices of the first hundred members.

Home group resource: Planning your group’s anniversary celebration? Ask “What happened in AA in [your city] in the 1950s?” and Deep Research will pull from regional histories, convention recordings, and local meeting documents.

The tool includes era-based filtering (Pre-A.A. Roots, Founding Era, Structural Era, Global Spread) to focus research on specific historical periods.

Access: Explorer members — 1 query per day. Premium members — 150 queries per month. Not available to free users.

5. The Research Center

The Research Center is a comprehensive scholarly library housing the primary source documents of the recovery movement. It contains over 211,000 individually searchable text segments drawn from letters, manuscripts, books, pamphlets, academic papers, and archival documents — many of which exist nowhere else in digitized form.

This entire library is free to access. No membership required.

The Collections

Twelve major collections, each representing a distinct area of recovery history:

Collection	What's Inside
Bill W.	Letters, speeches, personal archives
Dr. Bob & Early A.A.	Documents and books from Akron's founding
The Big Book	First edition manuscripts, original stories
People of A.A.	Biographical documents, oral histories
Oxford Group & Spiritual Roots	Frank Buchman, the Four Absolutes
Historical Book Collection	48 digitized classics of early recovery
Chester H. Kirk Collection	8 volumes from Brown University
Steps & Traditions	35 documents on guiding principles
Grapevine Archives	Articles and editorials since 1944
A.A. History by City & Region	Geographic growth documentation
William White Papers	467 scholarly papers in 10 volumes
Rutgers Center of Alcohol Studies	3 volumes, 1,500+ pages

How to Use It

All books and documents are presented through an embedded PDF viewer — read, search, and navigate multi-hundred-page documents directly in your browser without downloading anything. Every document has been processed through advanced text extraction (including OCR for scanned historical documents) so you can search across the full text of all 211,024 segments simultaneously.

Try this: Open the William White Papers — 467 scholarly papers from America's foremost addiction historian, organized into 10 themed volumes covering the complete history of treatment in America. Search for any term across all 467 papers simultaneously.

6. The Bill Wilson Collection

A dedicated section devoted entirely to the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous — the most comprehensive free collection of Bill Wilson material available anywhere in the world.

Completely free. No membership required.

Audio Recordings (43 Talks, 1947–1970)

Forty-three of Bill Wilson’s recorded talks spanning from 1947 to 1970 — from intimate meeting shares to landmark convention addresses. Each recording includes live synchronized captions and a full transcript.

Example: Bill W.’s 1954 address at the 20th Anniversary Convention in New York — the legendary, highly emotional recording where Bill reflects on AA’s twenty-year journey and symbolically hands the traditions over to the general fellowship.

Written Works

Bill Wilson’s personal letters, essays, founding documents, and published writings — all searchable, all free. Read the actual words Bill Wilson wrote to early members, to his wife Lois, to clergy, to physicians, and to the countless alcoholics who wrote seeking help.

Integrated AI Search

The “Ask Bill W.” AI tool is embedded directly within this collection, allowing you to pose questions and receive answers drawn exclusively from Bill Wilson’s body of work.

7. The Digital Recovery Museum

A curated online exhibition of over 300 rare historical artifacts from the founding era of Alcoholics Anonymous and the Oxford Group. These physical objects represent the tangible heritage of the recovery movement — preserved, photographed in high resolution, and presented as a permanent public archive.

Completely free. No membership required.

What You’ll Find

The museum houses artifacts spanning from the 1930s to the present, organized across multiple categories:

Category	Description
First Edition Big Books	Original 1939 printings of “Alcoholics Anonymous”
Second Edition	1955 edition with new stories and expanded text
Third & Fourth Edition	Later editions documenting the movement’s growth
Oxford Group	Materials from the spiritual fellowship that preceded A.A.
Grapevine	Issues of A.A.’s “meeting in print” magazine
Pamphlets	Early informational materials distributed at meetings
Saturday Evening Post	The famous 1941 Jack Alexander article
Signed Items	Books and documents bearing the signatures of founders
Complete Sets	Full runs of rare publications
Brown Library	Materials from the Chester H. Kirk Collection at Brown University

Each artifact is presented with a high-resolution photograph, detailed description, historical context, and provenance information. The collection is continuously growing as new items are acquired and documented.

Example: A first-edition copy of “Alcoholics Anonymous” (1939) — one of the original 4,730 copies printed. Known as the “Big Book,” this volume launched a movement that would eventually help millions of alcoholics find sobriety.

8. The Video Library

A growing collection of over 70 video recordings featuring historic recovery speakers, workshop presentations, and documentary content.

Completely free. No membership required.

What’s Available

AA Pioneers — Historic video recordings of early AA members and significant figures, including rare footage of Nell Wing (Bill W.’s executive assistant), Henrietta Seiberling (the woman behind AA’s beginning), and Bob Smith Jr. (“Smitty”) remembering his mother Anne Smith.

Tom I. Workshop Series — Complete video recordings of Tom I.'s legendary workshop presentations on the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, working with others, unity, and spiritual principles.

Chuck C. Talks — Video recordings of Chuck C.'s beloved talks on the spiritual way of life, recorded at venues including UCLA.

Extended Presentations — Longer-format talks and rare recordings from conventions and special events.

Example: "Sister Ignatia — The Angel of AA Speaks" — A rare video recording of the Catholic nun who worked alongside Dr. Bob at St. Thomas Hospital in Akron, admitting and caring for thousands of alcoholics in the earliest days of the program.

9. Tuesday Night History Workshops

A weekly live workshop series that brings together long-timers, historians, and passionate members of the recovery community to explore the rich heritage of Alcoholics Anonymous. The complete archive of 76 recorded sessions is available on the platform.

Completely free. No membership required.

What to Expect

Each session features a guest speaker or panel exploring a specific topic in recovery history. Sessions typically run 60–80 minutes and include in-depth discussion, primary source readings, and audience interaction. Topics range from the Oxford Group's influence on the Twelve Steps to LGBTQ+ pioneers in recovery to the history of the Grapevine.

The Archive

All 76 sessions are available with full audio, live captions, speaker attribution, topic description, and duration. The catalog is searchable and sortable chronologically.

Example: "LGBTQ+ Pioneers in Recovery" — The untold stories of LGBTQ+ individuals who helped build and sustain the recovery movement despite facing discrimination within and outside the fellowship.

Example: "Bill W.'s Legacy" — The lasting impact of Bill Wilson's vision on the modern recovery movement, with readings from primary source documents.

10. The Progressive Web App

Here's something many of you may not know: Recovery Speakers works like a native app on your phone — no app store required.

How to Install It

On iPhone: Open RecoverySpeakers.org in Safari, tap the Share button (the square with the arrow), then tap “Add to Home Screen.” That's it. The app icon appears on your home screen just like any other app.

On Android: Open RecoverySpeakers.org in Chrome. You'll see a prompt to “Add to Home Screen” — tap it. Or tap the three-dot menu and select “Install app.”

What You Get

Full-Screen Experience — The app launches without browser bars or navigation chrome. It looks and feels like a native application.

Background Audio — Listen to recordings while using other apps, with the screen locked, or while browsing other parts of the platform. The audio continues uninterrupted.

Mobile-Optimized Design — Every feature is designed to work well on screens of all sizes. The AI tools, the museum, the research library — everything is accessible from your phone.

Universal Access — Works on any device with a modern web browser. iPhone, Android, iPad, laptop, desktop, or smart TV.

The experience: Thousands of recordings. Right from your phone. The voices that started a movement — in your pocket.

11. What's Free & What's Premium

Recovery Speakers operates on a simple principle: **all audio is free, always.** Membership supports the platform and unlocks the more powerful AI research tools.

Everything That's Free — No Account Required

Feature	Details
Full Speaker Collection	All recordings, all eras, all fellowships
Live Synchronized Captions	Every recording
Full Transcripts	Every recording
Speaker of the Day	Daily curated talk + email delivery
Digital Recovery Museum	All 300+ artifacts
Research Center	All 12 collections, all documents
Video Library	All 70+ videos
Tuesday Night Workshops	All 76 sessions
Bill Wilson Collection	43 recordings + all writings
Ask Bill W.	3 queries per day (no account needed)
Progressive Web App	Full mobile experience

What Membership Unlocks

Membership funds the AI research tools, server infrastructure, and ongoing digitization of new recordings. The more powerful AI tools — Ask the Archive and Deep Research — require significant computing power to operate. Every query searches across hundreds of thousands of document segments using advanced AI models. Your membership is what keeps them available and keeps the entire platform online.

Explorer — \$9.95/month or \$99/year

- Ask Bill W. — 5 queries per day
- Ask the Archive — 5 queries per day
- Deep Research — 1 query per day
- Priority access to new features
- Early access to new recordings

Premium — \$19.95/month or \$199/year

- Ask Bill W. — Unlimited
- Ask the Archive — Unlimited
- Deep Research — 150 queries per month
- MP3 downloads for offline listening (coming soon)
- Priority access to new features
- Early access to new recordings

Legacy Founding Members — Lifetime, by Invitation

A permanent recognition tier for the 62 individuals who supported Recovery Speakers from its earliest days. Full premium access, free forever.

Why It Matters

Your membership doesn't just unlock tools for you — it funds the preservation of recordings that would otherwise be lost. It pays for the servers that deliver free audio to thousands of people every day. It keeps the lights on for a platform that has no advertising, no corporate sponsors, and no outside investors. Every dollar comes from the recovery community, and every dollar goes back into serving it.

12. What's Coming Next

Recovery Speakers is growing faster than ever. Here's what's on the horizon:

Massive Collection Expansion — The Speaker Collection is about to grow dramatically. Thousands of additional talks and full transcripts are being prepared for release in the coming weeks. The collection you know today is about to become something much, much larger.

Bookmarks & Playlists — Save your favorite recordings. Build custom playlists by topic, speaker, or mood. Share them with friends and sponsees.

Listening History — Never lose track of what you've heard. Pick up where you left off across any device.

MP3 Downloads — For Premium members, the ability to download recordings for offline listening — on planes, in areas without service, or anywhere you need a voice of recovery.

Resume Across Devices — Start listening on your phone during your commute. Pick up on your laptop at home. Seamless.

Listening Queue — Build a queue of talks to listen to next, just like a podcast app.

13. How You Can Help

Recovery Speakers is funded entirely by the recovery community. There are no corporate sponsors, no advertising, and no outside investors. Every dollar goes directly to preserving, hosting, and sharing these voices.

Donate

Any amount makes a difference. One-time or monthly, processed securely via PayPal, Venmo, or credit card. All donations are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Online: RecoverySpeakers.org/donate

Mail: Recovery Speakers, 10940 S. Parker Rd., Suite #649, Parker, CO 80134

Become a Member

Your membership directly funds the AI tools, the server infrastructure, and the ongoing digitization of new recordings. Choose Explorer or Premium at RecoverySpeakers.org/upgrade.

Share a Recording

Do you have rare recovery recordings? Reel-to-reel tapes, cassettes, or digital files from meetings, conventions, or roundups? Recovery Speakers will arrange secure shipping, professional digitization, and permanent preservation. Visit RecoverySpeakers.org/archive-submit.

Spread the Word

Forward this guide to someone in recovery. Share the Speaker of the Day link in your group chat. Mention Recovery Speakers at your next meeting. Post about it on social media. Every person who discovers this platform is a person who might find the voice that changes their life.

Connect With Us

Platform	Link
Website	RecoverySpeakers.org
Facebook	facebook.com/recoveryspeakers
Instagram	@recovery_speakers
YouTube	Recovery Speakers
TikTok	@recoveryspeakers
Spotify	Recovery Speakers Podcast

Closing

You've been listening to the Speaker of the Day. Now you know everything else that's here — and everything that's coming.

The technology is modern. The mission is timeless.

These voices saved lives when they were first spoken. They're still saving lives today. And thanks to this platform, they'll keep saving lives for generations to come.

All audio is free. Always.

Welcome to the full Recovery Speakers experience.

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