

THE AA TEMPORARY CONTACT PERSON PROGRAM

BRIDGING THE GAP



AN AA SERVICE OPPORTUNITY CONNECTING INSIDE AA MEMBERS TO THE AA COMMUNITY



Address:
BRIDGE THE GAP-TCP
PO BOX 2513
BOISE, ID 83701-2513
(208) 906-2745

BTG VOLUNTEER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Contact the Inside AA Member by letter within two weeks of your notification by the Bridge The Gap Coordinator. Remain in written communication until date of release.
2. Take the newly released Inside AA Member to an AA meeting within 48 hours of their return to the community.
3. It is suggested that the first meeting with the released AA member be viewed as a 12 Step Call and that you take another AA member with you. Use the same guidelines as you would when meeting a newcomer, although you are meeting a member that may have considerable long term sobriety.
4. Review the BTG Program with the newly released AA member so there are no misunderstandings as to what this Program does and does not offer. Use this pamphlet as your reference.
5. Remind the newly released AA member that you are but a temporary "Bridge" to the local AA community.
6. Remember that your job is usually limited to taking the newly released AA member to 3 to 6 meetings, or to end as soon as a sponsor (Not You) has been found. Do your best to encourage that relationship.
7. Make sure that they receive meeting schedules, phone numbers, AA literature, and their own Big Book.
8. Encourage them to attend AA meetings as often as possible, find a Home Group, and, most important, to get a Sponsor as soon as possible. Even a temporary Sponsor who has time for them NOW would be acceptable. Also encourage them to become involved with the AA fellowship.
9. Share your experience, strength, and hope as you would any other AA member new to your community.
10. Upon completion of these responsibilities, contact the BTG Volunteer Coordinator and provide information on how this contact has worked out.

SUGGESTED Guidelines for BTG Volunteers

- **DO** take the Member to an AA meeting within 48 hours.
- **DO** carry the AA message with your experience.
- **DO** take the Member to 3-6 AA meetings.
- **DO** provide AA meeting schedules and phone numbers.
- **DO** practice your recovery and solutions.
- **DO** discuss BTG questions and problems with a Sponsor.
- **DON'T** sponsor the Member, even temporarily. It is important that they build relationships on their own.
- **DON'T** loan money, housing, food, car, or be a taxi.
- **DON'T** be involved in reports to the Justice System. Tradition Twelve is VITAL!
- **DON'T** exceed the 6 meetings with the member.
- **DON'T** become emotionally or romantically involved.
- **DON'T** be responsible for the Member's actions or attitudes in or out of the meetings.

Bridge the Gap / Temporary Contact
PO Box 2513 Boise, ID 83701-2513 (208) 906-2745

VOLUNTEER'S APPLICATION

I would like to volunteer to be an AA Contact to provide a "Bridge" for someone who is to be released back into my Community by providing transportation to meetings and introductions to other AA members in my area.

NAME: _____ YEAR OF BIRTH: _____ SEX: M / F

Email: _____ Sobriety Date: _____

HOME GROUP _____ PHONE NUMBER: (____) _____

Community where you will be able to bridge to meetings.

I understand that the Bridge the Gap / Temporary Contact Program is not AA Sponsorship, even temporarily.

SIGNATURE : _____ DATE: _____

TO THE OUTSIDE AA MEMBER:

The purpose of the AA Bridging The Gap Program is to connect the Inside Member with AA in their community upon their release. You are being asked to be that AA Bridging The Gap Volunteer. When a soon to be released Inside AA Member contacts us, we match them to an AA Bridge Volunteer in their community. We will call, get the okay, and then send information along to you. Your job is simple. You contact the Inside AA member and arrange to take them to an AA meeting within 48 hours of their release. You are to take them to a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 6 meetings. You help them to get acquainted, get phone numbers and perhaps locate a Sponsor or Home Group. It is NOT intended that you become their Sponsor, even temporarily. It would be best if the word sponsor is not used in any way to describe your service. Bridge The Gap Volunteers are "Bridges" to the local AA community. You introduce them to AA members so they have a broad, healthy base of members to call upon. Once this is done, you are then available to "Bridge" again. Lastly, we suggest Bridge Volunteers be active in AA and have a minimum of one year of continuous sobriety. If you are willing to be the hand of AA when an Inside Member reaches out for help, complete the application and mail it. Keep the rest of this pamphlet as reference.

TO THE INSIDE AA MEMBER:

Alcoholics Anonymous has a transition program in this area called Bridging The Gap. You may sign up to be matched with an AA volunteer in your home community upon release. The Bridging The Gap Volunteer has agreed to take you to some meetings, introduce you around, and help you get acquainted and comfortable among new friends in AA. During this time, you will learn about Home Groups, sponsors, working the steps, and service work. They won't follow you around or control your activities, nor will they provide jobs, money, housing, food, clothing, or any other such service. You will probably hear the five basic suggestions for sobriety the fellowship shares with all members! ... Don't Drink, Go to Meetings, Read the Big Book, Call Your Sponsor, and Work the Steps.

Past experience has shown that attending an AA meeting on the outside as soon after release as possible is one of the most effective tools in making a sober transition into the free world. Many of us have been where you are now and know what the program of Alcoholics Anonymous and its fellowship can do for you, by what it has done for us and countless others.

Please complete the attached "Bridge The Gap/Temporary Contact Form" and mail it to the address on the form. Keep the rest of this pamphlet for future reference. Try and have this application submitted as soon as possible prior to your release date. You should be contacted by mail by the Outside Volunteer.

That person will contact you through the mail with information on how to contact him/her once you are released. If you don't hear from a volunteer, please write to the Bridge The Gap Coordinator. Provide the Bridge Coordinator with information on your release date, address and telephone number where you will be living and how the Volunteer can reach you to arrange to go to AA meetings.

Our hope is that you will find this service helpful in your continued recovery.

BRIDGE PROCEDURE:

1. Inside AA Members are eligible for this program if they have less than six months to serve and have been attending Inside AA meetings on a regular basis.
2. Inside AA Member fills out and mails the application to the BTW/TCP Committee, which is responsible for coordinating all "Bridges."
3. The Bridge Coordinator matches the Inside Member with a Bridge Volunteer.
4. Bridge Volunteer writes the Inside AA Member within two weeks to confirm contact and willingness to "Bridge." If a Bridge Volunteer does not wish to use their mailing address, they may use the BTW/TCP address. If a Bridge Volunteer has not contacted the Inside AA Member within two weeks, notify the Bridge Coordinator.
5. Inside AA Member will then inform the Bridge Volunteer of all pertinent information as to the date of release, local address, and telephone number.
6. Bridge Volunteer will meet the released Inside AA Member at the time, date and place agreed upon, and attend his/her first few local AA meetings.
7. After six (6) meetings, the Volunteer is asked to "Let Go and Let God," so they can act as a "Bridge" for the next Inside AA Member.

SUGGESTED READING:

- Where Do I Go From Here?
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions
- AA Intreatment Facilities
- Problems Other Than Alcohol
- Questions and Answers on Sponsorship
- Getting Started in AA

Bridge the Gap / Temporary Contact
PO Box 2513 Boise, ID 83701-2513 (208) 906-2745

NEW MEMBER APPLICATION

I am within six months of my release date. I am requesting an AA Contact who will provide a "Bridge" for me to the AA Community through transportation to meetings and introductions to other AA members in my area.

NAME: _____ YEAR OF BIRTH: _____ SEX: M / F _____

FACILITY: _____ INMATE NUMBER: _____

FACILITY ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

ADDRESS AFTER RELEASE: _____ CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE NUMBER: (____) _____ Release Date _____

I would like to make a commitment to attend an AA meeting within 48 hours of my release.
I understand that the AA Contact is not an AA Sponsor, even temporarily.

SIGNATURE : _____ DATE: _____