



## **X. Treatment & Accessibilities: Monday-Tuesday** General Service Conference - Conférence des Services généraux - Conferencia de Servicios Generales

Apr 15, 2024 9:00 AM - Apr 16, 2024 12:00 PM EDT

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**ITEM A:** Review progress report on Military Outreach Project (formally known as the Military Audio Interviews)

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**Background notes:**

In 2017, the trustees' CPC/Treatment and Accessibilities Committee formed a subcommittee to develop service material and additional resources for the professional military community, veterans, and active duty A.A. members.

An appointed committee member (ACM) was added in 2018 who had a firm understanding of communication channels within the Armed Forces (United States or Canada), experience in A.A. service, especially involving military veterans and/or those currently serving, and the ability to strategize about how to more effectively carry the A.A. message to members and to the professionals familiar with the Veteran's Administration.

*2019 Treatment and Accessibilities Advisory Action:*

The trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities develop anonymity-protected audio interviews with military professionals about their experience with A.A. as a resource for posting online.

*2021 Treatment and Accessibilities Advisory Action:*

The following audio interviews with A.A. members who are in the Armed Forces, developed by the trustees' Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities Committee, be approved and posted on G.S.O.'s A.A. website:

- Male – Navy Captain
- Female – Air Force Pilot
- Male – Army Combat Medic

Secretary's note: Please see the Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities History and Actions to see the full evolution of the Military Outreach Project.

## CONFIDENTIAL: 74th General Service Conference Background

*From the January 29, 2023, Meeting of the trustees' CPC/Treatment and Accessibilities Committee:*

The committee reviewed the progress report and discussed the need to develop a distribution plan for how the military audio recordings will be used to reach alcoholics effectively. The committee agreed to forward to the 2023 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities the "Military Audio interview" report.

*2023 Treatment and Accessibilities Advisory Action:*

The committee recommended that the 22 interviews recorded to date as part of the Military Audio project be approved, giving the General Service Office (G.S.O.) the latitude to distribute the audio interviews in various formats and on various platforms, and that an updated report be provided to the 2024 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities.

*2023 Committee Consideration of the Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities:*

The committee reviewed the progress report on Military Audio interviews and requested that the Military Audio project be expanded to include veterans. The committee also suggested that the Military Audio project continue to seek interviews with francophone members. The committee requested that sample audio and an update report be provided to the 2024 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities.

*Secretary's 2024 Military Outreach Project update report:*

Two of the interviews conducted in fall of 2022 (and reviewed by trustees' CPC/TA in October 2022) were posted to aa.org. The Communication Services Department (CSD) staff have indicated that the manner of displaying the interviews on aa.org is temporary and that a new web resource will be developed in 2024.

As of fall of 2023, three of the previously completed interviews recorded are currently being edited.

Consultants Tom P. and Gerry C. drafted a preliminary plan for communicating about the audio project with military leadership in the United States and Canada. Work on the plan will be refined as more interviews are made available on aa.org.

## CONFIDENTIAL: 74th General Service Conference Background

A French Canadian/francophone member was found. An interview with them is being scheduled. Here are some audio interviews reflecting progress on this project.

1. Audio file sample, "Ernie" <https://www.aa.org/military-audio-ernie>
2. Audio file sample, "Mark" <https://www.aa.org/military-audio-mark>
3. Audio file sample, "Sam" <https://www.aa.org/military-audio-sam>

**ITEM B:** Review contents and format of Treatment Kit and Workbook

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**Background Notes:**

Kits and Workbooks for C.P.C., Corrections, Public Information, Treatment and Accessibilities are reviewed by the appropriate trustees' Committees during each working annual period.

Workbooks and Kits are service pieces. Any suggested changes to their content by the Conference committee are put forth as suggestions rather than recommendations.

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, or the trustees' Committee may choose to forward an idea to the Conference Committee for review.

Typically, service kits are updated annually each fall. Due to pandemic-induced supply chain and paper shortage challenges, implementation of the updates have been delayed.

Secretary's note:

Changes recommended by the 2023 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities were incorporated.

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**Background:**

1. Treatment Committee Workbook (revised 2023) is available to view on:

[https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/m-40i\\_TFWorkbook.pdf](https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/m-40i_TFWorkbook.pdf)

- ENG - [https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/f-167w\\_TF\\_Kit.pdf](https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/f-167w_TF_Kit.pdf)
- FR - [https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/ff-167w\\_TF\\_Kit.pdf](https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/ff-167w_TF_Kit.pdf)
- SP - [https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/sf-167w\\_TF\\_Kit.pdf](https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/sf-167w_TF_Kit.pdf)

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**ITEM C:** Review contents and format of Accessibilities Kit and Workbook

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**Background Notes:**

Kits and Workbooks for C.P.C., Corrections, Public Information, Treatment and Accessibilities are reviewed by the appropriate trustees' Committees during each working annual period.

Workbooks and Kits are service pieces. Any suggested changes to their content by the Conference committee are put forth as suggestions rather than recommendations.

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, or the trustees' Committee may choose to forward an idea to the Conference Committee for review.

Typically, service kits are updated annually each fall. Due to pandemic-induced supply chain and paper shortage challenges, implementation of the updates have been delayed.

Secretary's note:

Changes recommended by the 2023 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities were incorporated.

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**Background:**

1. Accessibilities workbook (revised 2023) available to view on [https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/m-48i\\_SNWorkbook.pdf](https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/m-48i_SNWorkbook.pdf)
  - EN - [https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/f-182w\\_SN\\_Kit.pdf](https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/f-182w_SN_Kit.pdf)
  - FR - [https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/ff-182w\\_SN\\_Kit.pdf](https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/ff-182w_SN_Kit.pdf)
  - SP [https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/sf-182w\\_SN\\_Kit.pdf](https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/sf-182w_SN_Kit.pdf)

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**ITEM D:** Review revised draft of the pamphlet “Bridging the Gap.”

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**Background notes:**

*From the October 29, 2023, meeting of the trustees’ CPC/Treatment and Accessibilities Committee:*

The committee reviewed a draft of the revised pamphlet P-49 “Bridging the Gap” and agreed to forward the pamphlet to the 2024 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities with minor edits.

*2023 Committee Consideration of the Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities:*

The committee reviewed the progress report on the pamphlet “Bridging the Gap” (P-49). The committee appreciated the work that has been completed on the updated draft pamphlet for A.A. members and suggested additional revisions. The committee also agreed that the distinction between Treatment and Corrections activities be maintained in literature from G.S.O. and requested that references to Corrections and to the video *A New Freedom* be removed from the draft. The committee requested that a progress report or revised draft be brought to the 2024 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities.

*2020 Treatment and Accessibilities Advisory Action:*

The pamphlet “Bridging the Gap” be updated for currency and inclusion to reach a broader scope of treatment settings about temporary contact services, and that a progress report or draft be brought to the 2021 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities.

*2019 Committee Consideration of the Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities:*

The committee considered revising the pamphlet “Bridging the Gap Between Treatment and A.A. Through Contact Programs” to include related corrections activities and agreed with the concept. The committee requested that the trustees’ Committee on Cooperation with the



## CONFIDENTIAL: 74<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference Background

Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities consult with the trustees' Committee on Corrections to review all treatment and corrections committee literature from G.S.O. related to bridging the gap and temporary contact activities with the following in mind:

- How treatment and corrections material can be updated for currency and inclusion
- How this material could be combined
- What material might be discontinued?
- How the combined material might be broadened to encompass the full range of possibilities in which a temporary contact might be useful

### Secretary's note:

Please see the Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities History and Actions to review the full evolution of the update to the pamphlet "Bridging the Gap."

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### **Background:**

1. Revised draft pamphlet P-49 "Bridging the Gap." \*

**\*Note: For members of this Conference committee only and are not available for duplication or distribution beyond the committee.**

**ITEM E:** Review updated Bridging the Gap service materials.

---

**Background notes:**

Service material is under the purview of staff responsibility and does not require conference approval but is included here for committee consideration.

*From the October 29, 2023, Meeting of the trustees' CPC/ Treatment and Accessibilities Committee:*

The committee accepted the progress report on Bridging the Gap service materials. The committee appreciated the work done to date on the A.A. Guidelines on Bridging the Gap and agreed to forward to the 2024 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities for their consideration.

*From the July 30, 2023, Meeting of the trustees' CPC/ Treatment and Accessibilities Committee:*

The committee discussed a draft of the revised A.A. Guidelines on Bridging the Gap and made some suggestions for changes. The committee looks forward to a revised draft or progress report at the October 2023 meeting.

*2023 Committee Consideration of the Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities:*

The committee discussed the progress report on a proposed Bridging the Gap workbook. The committee noted that information on Bridging the Gap and other contact programs already exists in the Treatment and Corrections Workbooks and suggested instead that sharing be collected from the Fellowship and combined with existing resources to develop A.A. Guidelines on Bridging the Gap.

Secretary's note:

The revisions to F-183 Bridging the Gap Request Form and F-184 Bridging the Gap Volunteer Form mirror similar updates that were done to corrections forms. In addition, F-183 was expanded to include more information about the program Alcoholics Anonymous.

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**Background:**

1. F-183 [Bridging the Gap Request Form](#)\*
2. F-184 [Bridging the Gap Volunteer Form](#)\*
3. Revisions to F-183 Bridging the Gap Request Form
4. Revisions to F-184 Bridging the Gap Volunteer Form.
5. A.A. Guidelines on Bridging the Gap

*\*Links to older versions*

**FOR PEOPLE  
IN TREATMENT**

**Bridging the Gap/Request Form**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Facility Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Your age range (circle one):

Under 21    22-35    36-60    over 60

Gender identity: \_\_\_\_\_  
(e.g. Male, Female, Non-binary)

Preferred Language: \_\_\_\_\_

**How can we contact you?**

Call/Text: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Call Treatment Facility: \_\_\_\_\_

Discharge Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Discharge: \_\_\_\_\_

Town or City: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip or Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Province or State: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form to:

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**www.aa.org**

F-183

4.5M – 10/23 (GP)

# A.A. Bridging The Gap Request

Connecting Those  
in Treatment to the  
A.A. Community

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### **What is Bridging the Gap?**

Bridging the Gap is a voluntary temporary contact program designed to help the alcoholic in a treatment program or other kind of formal setting to make the transition to a life of sobriety in Alcoholics Anonymous.

Many people find it difficult to make the transition from treatment to a life of sobriety.

In order to bridge this gap, A.A. members have volunteered to be temporary contacts and to introduce newcomers to Alcoholics Anonymous.

### **Who can request contact through Bridging the Gap?**

People from all kinds of programs, including Detox Centers, Hospitals, Treatment Centers, Aftercare programs and IOPs can ask for an A.A. volunteer to connect with. For those leaving a Correctional facility, there is a separate program called Contact Upon Release. Visit <https://www.aa.org/corrections-correspondence-service-insider-request-form>

### **Is Bridging the Gap for me?**

If you are in a treatment program and want to stop drinking (or stay stopped), Alcoholics Anonymous wants to help. Bridging the Gap is especially helpful for those who have not been to A.A. or who don't have strong A.A. connections in the town or city where they will be living after treatment.

Many of us have been where you are now and know that the program of A.A. and its fellowship can do for you what it had done for us and countless others.

### **Am I an alcoholic?**

Only you can decide for yourself if you belong in A.A. Our third tradition says that "The only requirement is a desire to stop drinking."

### **What do I have to do?**

This flier includes a simple sign-up form. You can fill it out and send it to the address or email listed on the back. Be sure to include your contact information. Someone from A.A. will be in touch soon.

### **What will happen if I sign up?**

A Bridging the Gap contact from A.A. will reach out to you. Your Bridging the Gap contact is temporary only. They are there to support you, answer questions and explain the A.A. program of recovery. They will not provide housing, food, clothing, jobs, money or such other services. You may hear basic suggestions for sobriety that the Fellowship shares, including don't drink; go to meetings; read the Big Book; call your sponsor and work the Steps.

Past experience has shown that attending an A.A. meeting as soon as possible after discharge is vital to making a sober transition to life on the outside. So your BTG contact will help make sure you get to a meeting right away.

### **Is there any obligation?**

There is no obligation to participate in any way. A.A. members focus on helping people who ask for help. We also respect the right of anyone to go their own way.

### **What if I will be living in a different community after treatment?**

If you are moving to or returning to a different community, be sure to put that on your sign-up form and the A.A. volunteers will do their best to connect you with someone in the community you'll be headed to.

### **Is there anything I should know about A.A. and A.A. meetings?**

Meetings are typically listed as "open" or "closed" meetings.

- **Open meetings** are available to anyone interested in Alcoholics Anonymous' program of recovery from alcoholism. Nonalcoholics may attend open meetings as observers.
- **Closed meetings** are for A.A. members only or for those who have a drinking problem and "have a desire to stop drinking."

At both types of meetings, it may be requested that participants confine their discussion to matters pertaining to recovery from alcoholism.

There are different meeting formats: Some discuss literature like the Big Book, others feature a topic discussion or have a speaker who will talk about how they got sober and what life is like today.

There are also meetings in different languages and meetings for women only, men only, young people, beginners or other groups.

### **What about my anonymity?**

A.A. members who attend meetings all over the U.S. and Canada agree that anonymity is important. So you can feel comfortable attending meetings without worrying that someone will see you or talk about your attendance. Many A.A. members decide to share about their participation in A.A. with family and friends, but it will be up to you to decide if and how you share this information. A.A. members are also careful not to put their faces or last names on anything that would publicly associate them with A.A.

### **Other Ways to Find A.A.**

Some who get out of treatment prefer to find A.A. on their own. In most areas, a list of local meetings is available. To find your local office or service entity, please visit [www.aa.org/find-aa](http://www.aa.org/find-aa).

Another great way to find local meetings is the Meeting Guide App for iOS and Android smartphones [www.aa.org/meeting-guide-app](http://www.aa.org/meeting-guide-app)

CONFIDENTIAL: 74th General Service Conference Background

12<sup>TH</sup> STEP SERVICE  
OPPORTUNITY

# A.A. Bridging The Gap Volunteer

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F-184

4.5M -- 10/23 (GP)

Connecting Those  
in Treatment to the  
A.A. Community

# CONFIDENTIAL: 74th General Service Conference Background

## A.A. Bridging the Gap Program

Dear A.A. Member,

The Bridging the Gap Program, or BTG, connects the new member being discharged from a facility to A.A. in their community. You are being asked to be that connection, what is called a Temporary Contact.

When a new, soon-to-be discharged member contacts us, we match that person to a Temporary Contact in the community where they will be living. If you have volunteered for this type of service, we will call you, get the okay and then send you their contact information.

Your job is simple. You contact the new A.A. member and arrange to take them to an A.A. meeting, preferably within 24-48 hours of their discharge. Your commitment is to take them to a variety of meetings and introduce them to other A.A. members.

During this time, you help them become acquainted, get phone numbers and perhaps locate a sponsor and a home group. You introduce them to others in A.A. so they have a broad, healthy base, then you are available to serve as a Temporary Contact for another person.

**Please note:** *It is not intended that you become their sponsor, even temporarily. It is best if the word "sponsor" is not used to describe this type of service. The term Temporary Contact is preferred.*

If you are willing to be the hand of A.A. when a member from a facility reaches out for help, complete the Temporary Contact form and give it to your G.S.R., or your BTG coordinator, Corrections or Treatment chairperson.

Please note: Volunteers will need to adhere to the rules facilities have regarding contact with residents, both while they are in the facility and after they are discharged. The BTG coordinator can provide the necessary information for each facility.

## Suggestions for the Temporary Contact

1. Remember you may be the first outside member of A.A. the contact meets. As such, you are representing all of us. It is important to be relaxed, friendly and interested.
2. Keep the general conversation related to recovery. Remember, we have no opinion on outside issues.
3. Take time to introduce the new person to as many A.A. members as possible. Do not, however, push your contact. Some people are very shy.
4. Invite them to the "meeting after the meeting" if there is one. Show them we are happy, joyous and free and that sobriety can be enjoyable.
5. Your commitment is usually finished after a couple of weeks or after the newcomer has attended a variety of meetings and hopefully found a sponsor. Use good recovery related judgment about when to end the relationship.
6. Make sure the newly released A.A. member receives meeting schedules, phone numbers and A.A. literature.
7. Encourage the new member to attend meetings as often as possible, to find a home group and to get a sponsor as soon as possible. Let them know even a temporary sponsor now would be acceptable.
8. Share your experience, strength and hope with the newly discharged member, just as you would anyone else new to A.A. in your community.
9. Be familiar with the suggestions of the BTG program contained in the pamphlet. We don't offer or imply any other service and assistance unless we personally want to provide it.
10. Please respect the complete anonymity of the new member.

## Bridging the Gap/ Volunteer Form

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Your age range (circle one):

Under 21    22-35    36-60    over 60

Gender identity: \_\_\_\_\_  
(e.g. Male, Female, Non-binary)

Preferred Language: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State or Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip or Mail Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (day): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (evening): \_\_\_\_\_

Home Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Group Location: \_\_\_\_\_

This information is confidential  
and will remain inside A.A.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please cut this part and send to your GSR,  
your BTG coordinator, Corrections or  
Treatment chairperson.

*Thank You for your service in  
Alcoholics Anonymous*

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# A.A.® Guidelines

## Bridging the Gap

from G.S.O., Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163

The A.A. Guidelines below are compiled from the shared service experience of A.A. members throughout the U.S. and Canada. They also reflect guidance given through the Twelve Traditions and the General Service Conference. In keeping with our Tradition of autonomy except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole, most decisions are made by the group conscience of the members involved. The purpose of these Guidelines is to assist in reaching an *informed* group conscience.

### HOW DO A.A. MEMBERS BRIDGE THE GAP?

All across the U.S. and Canada, A.A. members find ways to introduce new and potential A.A. members to their first meetings. Many of these new and potential members are in treatment facilities and other settings,<sup>1</sup> and need help finding A.A. in their home communities (this is “the gap.”) A.A. volunteers step in to “Bridge the Gap.”

Members of Alcoholics Anonymous meet new members and potential members upon their completion of a program or release from a facility, and accompany them to their first few A.A. meetings.

### GETTING STARTED

Start simply when forming a committee.

Experience suggests that even though a soon-to-be released alcoholic may have been participating in an A.A. group or meeting inside a treatment or correctional setting, there is often anxiety about the transition to an A.A. group on the outside.

Remember, BTG is not intended to become a long-term A.A. relationship, but simply to help ease the newly-released member’s transition to outside A.A. and to help get them started on the road to sobriety in their home community.

### BTG RESPONSIBILITIES (VARIES BY LOCATION)

In most parts of the U.S. and Canada, the work of organizing a Bridging the Gap program or Temporary Contact program is best handled by a committee of A.A. volunteers. The responsibilities of these committees often includes:

- Meeting and corresponding with staff and administration at local settings to ask for permission to share about BTG/ Temporary Contact service.
- Finding and organizing volunteers: Make announcements in local newsletters at A.A. Groups, meetings, or ask to present at local intergroup, district and area meetings and events.
- Making contact with alcoholics desiring transition help on release.

- Communicating and cooperating with other A.A. service entities, so as not to have overlapping services. Without this thoughtful approach, this can be particularly confusing to the non - AA entity or professional when being contacted by multiple committees.
- Maintaining communication with appropriate staff members at the General Service Office in New York.
- Sharing AA literature and other appropriate service materials
- Providing reliable, consistent contact information, receive requests, and routing requests to volunteers locally or across areas
- Making presentations: As a standalone committee, or make a joint presentation with PI, CPC, Corrections, Treatment, H&I committees.
- Practicing unity: Contact other local trusted servants to help find volunteers to chair committee meetings, coordinator volunteers, present to staff, participants or clients, to be temporary contact volunteers.
- Respecting autonomy: The bridging the gap activity is done differently in each location. Local trusted servants can look for help and inspiration from other areas, but ultimately create a system that works for your particular local circumstances
- The AA member volunteer contacts the alcoholic client/ participant and arranges to meet that person on the day of release to help in bridging the gap between the setting and A.A. on the outside.

### LOCAL EXPERIENCE WITH BTG

Across the U.S. and Canada, local circumstances dictate how BTG volunteers connect newcomers with A.A. in their communities. In some places, there are many treatment centers, in others, potential members are encountered in detox centers, hospitals or other settings.

Out experience has shown that attending an A.A. meeting on the outside on the day of release from medical, psychiatric, thera-

<sup>1</sup> The type of setting can vary. Such settings include: hospitals, prisons, jails; clinical, psychiatric, behavioral health, detox, inpatient/outpatient, community based, military and veteran programs; shelters, halfway houses, transitional centers.

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## CONFIDENTIAL: 74th General Service Conference Background

peutic, or treatment setting is one of the most effective tools for making a sober transition and maintaining continued sobriety in the outside world.

Experience has also shown that temporary contacts work best when care is given to match A.A. member volunteers and newcomers by gender and, if possible, age.

Special care should be taken to ensure that any requests for temporary contacts that come from minors or other vulnerable members be handled carefully.

Experience suggests that it is particularly helpful to bring the newcomer to a variety of meetings.

### BTG EXPERIENCE: WORKING WITH PROFESSIONALS

One local committee suggests that BTG volunteers need to set up a consistent way to communicate, "While it is part of my service to track down the current BTG Chairperson in an area, I doubt if a professional attempting to assist a discharged client feels the same. If a clinician/professional gets bounced around trying to help a client, they may lose interest in that case. They may also lose interest in dealing with our organization."

"It's important to remember that treatment and other therapeutic settings are managed differently through private, community, church, state or federal agencies, and may have specific requirements that A.A. volunteers should respect."

Another BTG trusted servant shared, "I found the professionals are very adaptable to do what is needed to assist their residents. We typically begin by emailing, then speak on the phone, then a zoom call to ensure all elements are in working order."

"We, the temporary contacts, need to be very clear with the newly released AA's what AA is and what AA is not. We should talk to the newcomer about our primary purpose, our singleness of purpose, our unity, and our anonymity."

### GETTING ORGANIZED

"We coordinate volunteers by logging into the database and determining which town the person is being released to. We then find a member that is willing and able to reach out to them on the very day they are released."

"Our committee has a male and a female BTG chair to coordinate the contact lists of volunteers."

"We made it a priority to get the BTG lists up-to-date and involving districts so BTG will become the communication point for referrals."

"All of us on the area committee send temporary contact requests to each other when people from our respective Districts are being released to their districts so that the gaps can be adequately bridged."

"When calling a newcomer's home, remember that someone else may answer the phone who may not know about the newcomer's desire to attend an A.A. meeting. Protect his or her

anonymity by not disclosing your own association with A.A. or your purpose for calling."

### CHALLENGES FACED BY BTG VOLUNTEERS

"The biggest challenge is getting the members with time involved, and at this time (because of Covid) not being able to speak in facilities face to face."

"We announce at meetings the need for volunteers and the BTG program but find this is not effective. I would love to do a workshop, but I have not been able to get any participation/direction from other entities."

"We are trying to be more inclusive....but are struggling with how to do it on our volunteer application.

"Our committee noted a gender gap. When we make a BTG presentation for volunteers we do not get a lot of female participation. We do try to appeal to women specifically in our presentation, with an emphasis on safety and anonymity. When this issue is directly discussed, women's participation is greater.

"Due to confidentiality policies and schedules, visiting a newcomer in a facility may prove to be impossible.

### RELATIONSHIP TO GSO

When GSO receives a request for A.A. temporary contacts, it is forwarded to the local area.

**Note:** For A.A. members in custody, the pre-release temporary contact program run by Corrections Committees is a separate program. Similarly, the Corrections Correspondence Service is not a part of this temporary contact program. It is intended for alcoholics who have six months or longer remaining on their incarceration.

### A.A. COMMITTEES, AND SERVICE ENTITIES

The alcoholics requesting help to transition to A.A. outside of their setting are best served when A.A. service entities and committees work together to provide the full variety of A.A. services.

Cooperation with the Professional Communities (CPC) and Public Information committees can also help to share about this service. Areas can provide pre-release contact services via dedicated transition committees at the Area/District level.

There are many instances of overlapping responsibilities. It should be clearly established that A.A. committees are not in competition with each other. Local circumstances determine who does what.

Depending on the location, the work is done by a shared committee, or the work is split into separate committees.

Local A.A. committees and members will have the best experience for each location, and can help provide bridge services and coordinate volunteers. Some local committees will host BTG/Temporary workshops and events for local professionals or A.A. members.

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An annual workshop on BTG is coordinated by and for A.A. members from all across the U.S. and Canada. To find out more, contact [coordinator@btgww.org](mailto:coordinator@btgww.org)

### HISTORY

Bridging the gap activities by A.A. members go back to the late 1930's. Trying to reach drunks in correctional, therapeutic, and treatment settings and escorting them to meetings was an important part of early twelfth step work, but was often not organized.

This changed in the 1970s, when the growth of in-patient treatment centers led A.A. members to realize that many alcoholics would need help finding A.A.

Most BTG programs today include regular visits to treatment settings by AA volunteers, who offer "temporary contact" to newly sober alcoholics to help them become part of AA when they leave the setting.

Today we have many forms of Bridging the Gap, Temporary Contact and Contact upon Release, and Re Entry Programs throughout our fellowship.

### RESOURCES AND LITERATURE

- Meeting Guide App <https://www.aa.org/meetingguide> — helps members find meetings based on location
- Treatment Committee page on <https://www.aa.org/treatment> — request and volunteer forms are available
- A.A. Guidelines [https://www.aa.org/pages/en\\_US/aa-guidelines](https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/aa-guidelines)
- "Bridging the Gap" pamphlet
- A.A. videos and Audio. [https://www.aa.org/pages/en\\_US/videos-and-audios](https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/videos-and-audios)
- Corrections Committee page on <https://www.aa.org/corrections> — request and volunteer forms are available

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[www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)

XXM – 10/23 (GP)

Rev. 10/23

**MG-XX**

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**ITEM F:** Review report on an inventory of what resources are currently available from the General Service Office and the AA Grapevine to meet accessibility related challenges and how we communicate about those resources to the Fellowship.

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**Background notes:**

*From the October 29, 2023, Meeting of the trustees' C.P.C./Treatment and Accessibilities Committee:*

The committee reviewed the report of A.A. publications that address accessibilities issues. The committee agreed to forward the report to the 2024 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities.

*2023 Committee Consideration of the Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities:*

The committee discussed the suggestion that an Accessibility Inventory be conducted throughout A.A.'s services and structure and suggested that the trustees' CPC/Treatment and Accessibilities Committee take an inventory of what resources are currently available from the General Service Office and the AA Grapevine to meet accessibility related challenges and consider the best methods for communicating about those resources to the Fellowship.

Secretary's note: We are seeking guidance from the Fellowship and the Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities on the effectiveness of our current communication channels we are using for these materials we have developed.

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**Background:**

1. Report of A.A. publications that currently addresses accessibility barriers and how we communicate these resources to the Fellowship.

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**What kinds of accessibility challenges do Conference-approved literature and service material address? What else might we address?**

Many factors impact what percentage of individuals report having a disability, including geography, poverty, access to health care, rates of education and incarceration. Sites that track statistics on accessibilities group them into the following categories:

1. Perceptual/learning differences: autism spectrum/dyslexia/ADD/ADHD and other cognitive impairments
2. Blind and other Visual impairments
3. Deaf and Hard of Hearing
4. Mobility/dexterity impairments
5. Mental health: anxiety/depression/trauma/PTSD

As you can see from the resources below, G.S.O. does have a variety of resources available to members who use Braille and ASL, but not as many resources focused on members with perceptual/learning differences, mobility challenges or mental health concerns.

**What resources are available and what kinds of accessibility audiences do they serve?**

<a href="#">Alcoholics Anonymous</a> (Braille)	Blind members (English speaking)
<a href="#">Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions</a> (Braille)	Blind members (English speaking)
<a href="#">Daily Reflections</a> : A Book of Reflections by A.A. Members for A.A. Members (Braille, M-50)	Blind members (English speaking)
<a href="#">This is A.A.</a> (Braille, M-63)	Blind members (English speaking)
<a href="#">Is A.A. for you?</a> (Braille, M-64)	
<a href="#">Frequently Asked Questions About AA</a> (Braille, M- 65)	Blind members (English speaking)
Staff Note: Many blind members have e-readers that work with PDFs. For these members we can share links to virtually all of the pamphlets and many of the books available for free in PDF form on aa.org	
<a href="#">Alcoholics Anonymous</a> *Abridged (ASL)	Deaf members (American Sign Language)
<a href="#">Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions</a> (ASL)	Deaf members (American Sign Language)
<a href="#">Access to A.A.: Members Share on Overcoming Barriers ASL</a> (DVD and online)	Deaf members (American Sign Language)

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1. The US Census and CDC track two categories that we generally do not talk about in Accessibilities: Self Care (difficulty dressing or bathing) and Independent Living (difficulty running errands unassisted). Canada also separately tracks disability related to pain and flexibility

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	Note: This is an older version of the pamphlet that still retains the outdated name <a href="#">A.A. for the Alcoholic with Special Needs   Alcoholics Anonymous (aa.org)</a>
Staff Note: Members who are Deaf have commented that it is difficult to find ASL items on aa.org. They would like to see a dedicated page.	
<a href="#">L'accès aux AA (QSL/ LSQ video pamphlet)</a>	Members who are Deaf in Francophone Canada
<a href="#">Accessibilities Workbook</a>	For members interested in doing service
<a href="#">P-83 Access to A.A.: Members share on Overcoming Barriers</a>	Pamphlet in English, French and Spanish highlights the experience of members with traumatic brain injury, amputee, stroke, blindness, deafness, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, acquired brain injury, deaf-blindness, and mental illness
<a href="#">P-87 A.A. for Alcoholics with Mental Health Issues – and their sponsors</a>	Members with mental health concerns and their sponsors
<a href="#">B-28 AA for the Older Alcoholic – Never too Late</a>	Stories from members who got sober after the age of 60
<a href="#">F-107 Serving All Alcoholics</a> — Making the A.A. Message Accessible	Short flyer (just edited, currently being translated) in English, French and Spanish. For members interested in doing service
<a href="#">MG-13 A.A. Guidelines on Sharing the A.A. Message with the Alcoholic Who Is Deaf</a>	For members interested in carrying the message to members in the deaf community
<a href="#">MG-16 A.A. Guidelines on Accessibility for All Alcoholics</a>	Focus on carrying the message to members with mobility challenges, deaf and blind members
New Remote Communities Guidelines	Currently being translated
History and Actions: General Service Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities	Background

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History and Actions: Trustees' Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities	Background
<a href="#">Loners Internationalists Correspondence Service</a>	Homebound members and Loners
<a href="#">SMF-208 Accessibilities Checklist for Meetings and Groups</a>	For groups focused on mobility impairments
About A.A. Spring 2014: A.A. for the Alcoholic with Special Needs	General information

**Stories from the A.A. Grapevine related to the experience of Alcoholics who are Deaf and hard of hearing.**

- [We Can Do It – Aug 2022](#) — A deaf member’s story about how to make A.A. meetings more accessible to all.
- [A Warm Welcome – Oct 2019](#) — “I am a Deaf alcoholic with over 15 years of sobriety. I decided to write this to help others better understand me and others with disabilities.”
- [From My Hands to My Soul – Oct 2019](#) — “As a sign language interpreter, I was assigned to accompany a Deaf man who was required to attend 90 A.A. meetings in 90 days...”
- [Silence Falls – Mar 2015](#) — “Right around the time I got sober, when I was 38, I lost hearing in my left ear... Then, I began gradually losing the hearing in my right ear, too...”
- [We Belong – May 2014](#) — In Michigan, a member helps a Deaf newcomer join a group and finds the true meaning of sharing in the process.
- [Signing for Sobriety – Feb 2014](#) — “I am a member of A.A. and I am also Deaf. This is my story. I first came into A.A. when I was 19.”
- [Quiet Love – Oct 2012](#) — “I was forced into early retirement due to becoming too Deaf to understand the spoken word; too Deaf to respond to instructions; too Deaf to mingle with fellow humans. I turned to alcohol as a way to bide my time in a hearing society.”
- [Meeting of the Minds – Oct 2004](#) — “Alcoholism seems to be an equal opportunity disease among the Deaf as well as the Hearing community, so we have started a Deaf A.A. group in Washington, D.C.”

**Other Accessibilities-Related Grapevine Articles:**

- Feb 2020 — From Three and a Half Feet
- Oct 2019 — Special Issue: Is A.A. accessible to all who need it?
- Jan 2018 — Oliver & me

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- Dec 2015 — My Buddy Valdez
- Sept 2015 — I Get to Be With Her
- Sept 2015 — They Got to See the Best of Me
- Apr 2015 — A Sketchy Fourth Step
- Feb 2015 — Eddie's Journey
- Sept 2013 — Different, But Not Different
- Dec 2010 — Soldier of misfortune
- Sept 2010 — Resources for Special Needs
- Sept 2010 — Be My Voice
- Sept 2010 — Don't Cry for Me: Smile!
- Jun 2007 — Access for AA
- Apr 2006 — This Hurts Us More Than It Hurts You
- Oct 2005 — Self-reliance: a Skeptic's Story
- Feb 2015 — Eddie's Journey
- Apr 2010 — Blindsided
- Oct 2005 — When the Floodwaters Rise

### **Stories in La Viña Nov–Dec 2020 — De norte a sur.**

- Nov Dec 2020 — Special Issue El despacho de Accesibilidades y Comunidades Remotas
- May June 2012 — Vida o Muerte
- Mar Apr 2010 — Necesidades especiales
- Jan Feb 2005 — Visitando una reunión de sordos

### **Stories related to the experience of older alcoholics.**

- August 2021 — Still Learning
- August 2021 — The 73-year-old Newcomer
- December 2021 — The Long Lonely Journey
- July 2022 — It's Never Too Late
- March 2023 — Coming In At An Older Age
- May 2017 — Never Too Old
- September 2014 — Panic at the Top
- September 2022 — 90-Year-Old Newcomer

### **Other materials (not under TA purview) that might be considered for updating for broader accessibility-related concerns.**

- MG-4 Conferences, Conventions, Roundups
- SMF 91 Concepts Checklist
- SMF 126 and SMF 128 – What A.A. Is and Is Not
- SMF 209 Safety in A.A.: Our Common Welfare
- SMF 142: Sharing experience on Approaching New People referred to A.A. by Treatment Facilities

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- SMF 174 Sharing DCM to DCM
- SMF 110: Sponsorship
- SMF 204 Telephone Meetings
- MG-14 Treatment Committees
- F-4 Where do I go from here?

### **How do we communicate to the Fellowship about the resources we do have?**

- What's New?
- AA.org
- *Box 4-5-9*
- Meeting Guide app news

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**ITEM G:** Review the pamphlet “A.A. in Treatment Settings” (P-27) for effectiveness and relevance.

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**Background notes:**

*From the October 29, 2023, Meeting of the trustees’ CPC/Treatment and Accessibilities Committee:*

The committee reviewed the pamphlet “A.A. in Treatment Settings” as part of their regular review of material under the purview of Treatment and Accessibilities. The committee agreed to forward to the 2024 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities the pamphlet for discussion on its’ effectiveness and relevance.

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**Background:**

1. [A.A. in Treatment Centers](#) Pamphlet (P-27)
2. SP – [A.A. en los entornos de Tratamiento | Alcoholics Anonymous \(aa.org\)](#)
3. FR - [Les AA dans les établissements de traitement | Alcoholics Anonymous](#)

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**ITEM H:** Review the flyer “Where do I go from here?” (F-4)

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**Background notes:**

*From the October 29, 2023, Meeting of the trustees’ CPC/Treatment and Accessibilities Committee:*

The committee reviewed the flyer “Where do I go from here” as part of their regular review of material under the purview of Treatment and Accessibilities. The committee agreed to forward to the 2024 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities the flyer for discussion on its’ effectiveness and relevance.

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**Background:**

1. Flyer [Where do I go from here](#) (F-4)
2. SP – [¿A dónde voy de aquí? | Alcoholics Anonymous \(aa.org\)](#)
3. FR - [Et maintenant, que vais-je faire ? | Alcoholics Anonymous \(aa.org\)](#)

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**ITEM I:** Review Resource Lists for Remote Communities and Cooperation with Elder Community

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**Background Notes:**

*From the October 29, 2023, Meeting of the trustees' CPC/Treatment and Accessibilities Committee:*

The committee reviewed the Remote Communities and Elder Community resource lists and agreed to forward to the 2024 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities for their review.

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**Background:**

1. Resource List Remote Communities
2. Resource List Elder Community

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## CONTENTS OF REMOTE COMMUNITIES KIT LIST

<b><u>Information on A.A.</u></b>	(F-2)
<b><u>If You Are a Professional</u></b>	(P-46)
<b><u>A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional</u></b>	(P-23)
<b><u>A.A. for the Native North American</u></b>	(P-21)
<b><u>A.A. for the Black and African American Alcoholic</u></b>	(P-51)
<b><u>A.A. and the Armed Services</u></b>	(P-50)
<b><u>A.A. for the Older Alcoholic</u></b>	(B-28)
<b><u>Do You Think You're Different?</u></b>	(P-13)
<b><u>Many Paths to Spirituality</u></b>	(P-84)
<b><u>A.A. for Alcoholics with Mental Health Issues — And Their Sponsors</u></b>	(P-87)
<b><u>LGBTQ Alcoholics in A.A.</u></b>	(P-32)
<b><u>Women in A.A.</u></b>	(P-5)
<b><u>The “God” Word: Agnostic and Atheist Members in A.A.</u></b>	(P-86)
<b><u>Understanding Anonymity</u></b>	(P-47)
<b><u>Young People in A.A.</u></b>	(P-4)

### **Remote Communities Communicators**

\*These documents may be requested in electronic or paper format from the staff member on the assignment. Available in English, French and Spanish.

#### English

- Remote Communities Communicator 2023: Fulfilling Our Primary Spiritual Purpose with Remote Communities!!
- Remote Communities Communicator 2022: Building Bridges to end Digital Inequality
- Remote Communities Communicator 2021 “Remote Communities — Our Time Is Now!”

#### French

- Communicateur pour les communautés éloignées 2023: « Remplir notre objectif spirituel principal avec les communautés éloignées !! »
- Communicateur pour les communautés éloignées 2021: « Communautés éloignées — Notre temps est venu! »

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Spanish

- El Comunicador de Comunidades Remotas 2023: “Cumplir nuestro propósito espiritual primario con las comunidades remotas”
- Comunicador de Comunidades Remotas de 2021 “Comunidades Remotas” — ¡Ha llegado nuestro momento!”

### OTHER PUBLICATIONS:

Box 4-5-9 Remote Communities articles

[Fall 2018, Remote Communities in A.A.: Notes from the Field](#)

[Spring 2016, Alkali Lake](#)

[Holiday 2013, 250,000 Square Miles of Opportunity Spring](#)

[2011, Reaching Remote Communities in Manitoba](#)

[Oct/Nov 2004, A.A.s in Canada Carry Message of Hope to the Inuit and Their Communities](#)

[Feb/March 2000, Trudging the ‘Road of Happy Destiny’ In the Alaska Bush Feb/Mar](#)

[1999, The A.A. Message Is Breaking the Ice In Remote Villages](#)

### A.A. GRAPEVINE RESOURCES:

*\*Staff Note — Kits often include a few resources from A.A. Grapevine, La Viña or Box 4-5-9. Listed here are some possible options that could be included in a Remote Communities Kit. Note these are currently available in English only.*

Remote Communities and Sober Holidays **DECEMBER 2023**

[A Reach Across the Globe](#) **DECEMBER 2022**

[Closer Than You Think](#) **DECEMBER 2022**

[Planting Seeds in Kenya](#) **December 2022**

[Welcome to the Jungle](#) **DECEMBER 2021**

[Devil’s Rejects](#) **DECEMBER 2021**

[800 Miles Away](#) **DECEMBER 2021**

[Getting Connected](#) **DECEMBER 2021**

[Wet in a Dry Country](#) **DECEMBER 2020**

[Globe-trotting](#) **DECEMBER 2020**

[Keeping Me Afloat](#) **DECEMBER 2020**

[On Top of the World](#) **DECEMBER 2020**

[Better with Age](#) **DECEMBER 2020**

[No Meetings in Sight](#) **DECEMBER 2020**

[Start with a Prayer](#) **DECEMBER 2019**

[Far from Home](#) **DECEMBER 2019**

[Operation Desert Love](#) **DECEMBER 2019**

[Closer Than You Think](#) **DECEMBER 2019**

[Words Matter](#) **DECEMBER 2019**

[Tank buddies](#) **DECEMBER 2018**

[Long Distance Hugs](#) **DECEMBER 2017**

[Light in a Long Winter](#) **DECEMBER 2017**

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And She Waits... **DECEMBER 2016**  
Big, Beautiful & Wild **DECEMBER 2016**  
I know, I've been There **DECEMBER 2016**  
Wherever We're Needed **DECEMBER 2016**  
Guiding Light **DECEMBER 2016**  
A New Adventure **DECEMBER 2015**

### LA VIÑA RESOURCES:

*\*Currently available in Spanish only*

¡Bienvenidos a AA! / Welcome to AA! **Diciembre 2022**

El despacho de Accesibilidades y Comunidades Remotas **NOVIEMBRE / DICIEMBRE 2020**

### CATALOG/ORDER FORMS:

[Literature Catalog \(includes A.A.W.S. and AA Grapevine La Viña material\)](#) **(F-10)**



## CONTENTS OF COOPERATION WITH ELDER COMMUNITY RESOURCE LIST

### Large Print Books

- [Alcoholics Anonymous](#) B-16
- [Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions](#) B14
- [Living Sober](#) B-25
- [Came to Believe](#) B-26
- [As Bill Sees it](#) B-27

### Large Print Pamphlets:

- [A.A. for the Older Alcoholic](#) – Never too Late (P-22)
- [This is A.A.](#) (P-56)
- [Frequently Asked Questions about A.A.](#) (P-57)
- [Is A.A. for Me?](#) (P-36)

### Other Pamphlets

<a href="#">Information on A.A.</a>	(F-2)
<a href="#">If You Are a Professional</a>	(P-46)
<a href="#">AA as a Resource for the Health Care Professional</a>	(P-23)
<a href="#">A.A. for the Native North American</a>	(P-21)
<a href="#">A.A. for the Black and African American Alcoholic</a>	(P-51)
<a href="#">A.A. and the Armed Services</a>	(P-50)
<a href="#">Do You Think You're Different?</a>	(P-13)
<a href="#">Many Paths to Spirituality</a>	(P-84)
<a href="#">Experience, Strength and Hope: A.A. for Alcoholics with Mental Health Issues</a>	(P-87)
<a href="#">Experience, Strength and Hope: LGBTQ Alcoholics in A.A.</a>	(P-32)
<a href="#">Experience, Strength and Hope: Women in A.A.</a>	(P-5)
<a href="#">Experience, Strength and Hope: The “God” Word Agnostics and Atheist Members in A.A.</a>	(P-86)
<a href="#">Understanding Anonymity</a>	(P-47)

## CONFIDENTIAL: 74th General Service Conference Background

### From Box 4-5-9:

- [Box 4-5-9 Spring 2015](#) ("Extending the Hand of AA to the Older Alcoholic")
- [Box 4-5-9 Oct Nov 2006](#) ("Seniors in Sobriety Becoming a Focus")
- [Box 4-5-9 Feb-Mar 2004](#) ("Workshop in Honolulu Points Ways to Reach The Older Alcoholic")
- [F-37 Order Form for the Box 4-5-9 Newsletter](#)

### From the AA Grapevine and La Viña

*\*Staff Note – Kits often include a few resources from AA Grapevine, La Vina or Box 4-5-9. Listed here are some possible options that could be included in a Elder Community Kit. Note these are currently available in English only.*

- March 2023 Grapevine Magazine article Coming In At An Older Age
- July 2022 Grapevine Magazine article It's never too late
- December 2021 Grapevine Magazine article The Long Lonely Journey
- Grapevine August 2021 story "Still Learning"
- August 2021 Grapevine Magazine article the 73 - year-old Newcomer
- May 2017 Grapevine Magazine article Never too old
- Grapevine special issue Sept 2014: Getting Sober Later in Life. Includes the following:
  - <https://www.aagrapevine.org/magazine/2014/sep/75-year-old-newcomer>
  - <https://www.aagrapevine.org/magazine/2014/sep/20-golden-years>
  - <https://www.aagrapevine.org/magazine/2014/sep/cold-comfort>
  - <https://www.aagrapevine.org/magazine/2014/sep/new-life-aunt-patricia>
  - <https://www.aagrapevine.org/magazine/2014/sep/panic-top>
  - <https://www.aagrapevine.org/magazine/2014/sep/pride-possessions>
  - <https://www.aagrapevine.org/magazine/2014/sep/listen-sonny>
  - <https://www.aagrapevine.org/magazine/2014/sep/green-old-timer>
  - <https://www.aagrapevine.org/magazine/2014/sep/cake-charley>

### Other

Current General Service Conference-Approved [A.A. Literature Catalog](#) (F-10)

[Loners -Internationalists Meeting \(LIM\) Registration Form](#) and Information about Loners-Internationalists Meeting (LIM) Correspondence Service (SMF-123)

SMF-172 Collected Sharing from Local CEC committee (Available on request)