

## **Guidelines for A.A. Members who Are Temporary Contacts**

*Excerpts from the GSO Corrections Workbook – pages 28 & 29*

### **Introduction**

Past experience has shown that attending an A.A. meeting on the outside on the day of release from prison is one of the most effective tools for an inmate in making a sober transition and maintaining continued sobriety in the free world. It is strongly recommended that an inmate who is an A.A. member have an A.A. contact on the outside (preferably with one year's sobriety and of the same sex) who contacts the inmate and arranges to meet him or her on the day of release to help in "Bridging the Gap" between the institution and A.A. on the outside. This section of the Workbook deals with guidelines for AA members who want to participate in this type of service, sometimes referred to as "Prerelease programs and sometimes as "Bridging the Gap" programs.

### **Guidelines for Prerelease A.A. Contacts**

The following guidelines for A.A. contacts have been drawn from the past experience of many A.A. members who are involved in this rewarding form of Twelfth Step work.

1. As in all types of sponsorship in A.A., prerelease contacts share their experience, strength and hope with soon-to-be-released inmates.
2. We have found that it is better for men to work with men and for women to work with women.
3. If possible, an AA contact should be a member of an A.A. group located in the vicinity of the inmate's residence when he or she is released.
4. As in all Twelfth Step work, it is suggested that two A.A. members meet the inmate upon release.

### **How Prerelease A.A. Contact Works**

A.A. contact is of utmost importance in corrections work. Many corrections committees find it helpful to compile a list of contacts. When an inmate is to be released, most corrections committees attempt to locate an A.A. member and link the inmate to his or her hometown AA group. However, when an inmate's point of destination is a distant city, sometimes there is slippage in contact and follow-up.

Some corrections committees link homebound inmates by:

- Arranging for a local contact.
- Giving the inmate contact names and telephone numbers.
- Providing the inmate with a meeting list.
- Helping the inmate to contact A.A. in his or her hometown through the local inter-group or central office.

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