



AREA 43 ALCOHOLIC ANONYMOUS

1330 Hooksett Road

Hooksett, NH 03106

NH AA Hotline: 800-593-3330

Bridge the Gap

Volunteer:

Part of Bridging the Gap between a treatment program and A.A. is “The Temporary Contact Program”, which is designed to help the alcoholic in an alcoholism treatment program make the transition into AA. One of the most ‘slippery’ places in the journey of sobriety is between the doors of the treatment facility and the nearest A.A. group or meeting. As a BTG volunteer, you can introduce the program of Alcoholics Anonymous to newcomers. When you sign up as a temporary contact, your name is placed on the Bridge the Gap volunteer list, along with the information you provide. When someone in treatment requests a BTG contact, a BTG committee member matches that person’s name with a temporary contact volunteer in the community near where they live. If you agree to become a temporary contact, please take some time to become familiar with the BTG guidelines on page 2.

Volunteer’s Commitment:

As a volunteer member of the Bridge the Gap program, your commitment consists of introducing your new contact to the program of Alcoholics Anonymous in his or her community. Treatment facility clients who have signed up to have a temporary contact will be expecting you to: make arrangements with your contact before they leave treatment. If this is not possible, contact them within 24 hours of their release. Familiarize the contact with AA meeting formats and explain what the newcomer can expect at his/her first meeting. Attend 3-6 meetings with your contact and introduce the newcomer to other sober members of AA. Explain ‘sponsorship’, and possibly provide the pamphlet, [‘Questions and Answers on Sponsorship’](#). Explain the value of having a home group to your contact. Help the newcomer become familiar with AA literature. Explain that the book Alcoholics Anonymous is our basic text.

Please Do Not:

Provide any form of financial support. Become a source of transportation. Provide any sort of social or counseling service. Debate or offer opinions outside the scope of your experience with the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. Provide medical or psychiatric services. Offer religious services. Sponsor the newcomer.

The following pamphlets may be helpful to you:

[Bridging the Gap](#)—P-49

[AA at a Glance](#)—F-1

[Information on AA](#)— F-2

[Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous](#) (a video on the Alcoholic Anonymous YouTube Channel)

If you are interested in volunteering as a Bridge the Gap Temporary Contact, please fill out the [BTG, Pre-release, Hotline Volunteer Online Sign-up Form](#). Our primary purpose is to stay sober and to help other alcoholics achieve sobriety. We are not affiliated with any treatment programs and have no opinion on outside issues.

Temporary Contact guidelines

Keep in mind that this is basic Twelfth Step work.

- Experience suggests that it is best to be accompanied by another A.A. member when meeting a newcomer, the first time. One of the two temporary contacts should have at least a year of sobriety.
- Experience also suggests that men work with men and women work with women.
- The intent is to provide the newcomer with your help for a limited time. You need not have experience with treatment settings. Your qualifications are your experience as an alcoholic and recovery in A.A.
- It may be helpful for you as a temporary contact to attend workshops on bridging the gap and attend meetings of your area's treatment committee.
- Remember, the goal of both A.A. and the treatment settings is the same — the recovery of the alcoholic.
- Be familiar with the paper "[Information on Alcoholics Anonymous](#)," particularly the section on what A.A. does and does not do.
- In all contacts or activities with treatment settings, it is extremely important to be punctual and to look your best.

Try to do the following:

- If possible, make contact with the newcomer while he or she is still in treatment. To avoid any misunderstandings, explain clearly that this is a temporary arrangement.
- Review the many different meeting formats — cover the difference between open and closed A.A. meetings and accompany the newcomer to a variety of meetings. Give the newcomer an A.A. meeting schedule.
- Introduce the newcomer to A.A. Conference approved books (particularly the Big Book), pamphlets and AA Grapevine.
- Explain group membership and the value of having a home group.
- Explain sponsorship to the newcomer, referring to the pamphlet "[Questions and Answers on Sponsorship](#)," and perhaps help the newcomer find a sponsor.

A.A. does not provide housing, food, clothing, jobs, money or other welfare or social services.

Points to remember about AA's relationship with a treatment facility

The professional treatment setting is responsible for its patients or clients. While we cannot compromise our A.A. Traditions, we should remember that we are there as guests of the facility and must abide by its rules. We are there to carry the A.A. message to the newcomer, and to answer any questions regarding the A.A. program of recovery and the A.A. way of life. Statements that may be interpreted as medical or psychological diagnosis or advice on medication should be avoided.

We are there only to share our experience of staying away from one drink, one day at a time, through the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. In many cases, months of hard work have gone into establishing a relationship which enables us to be invited into a facility. A careless action could destroy that trust and interfere with carrying the message. If problems arise, inform the Area Treatment Committee (treatment@nhaa.net). They may wish to present an A.A. informational meeting.

No one speaks for A.A. as a whole. When we carry the A.A. message to those in treatment, we are just one drunk talking with another. How we look, act and talk may be all they are going to know about Alcoholics Anonymous. Since we may be seen as part of A.A., let our new friends see, hear and talk to a winner!