## Responsibilities of the Corrections Bridge Volunteer

1. Contact the inside AA member by letter within two weeks of being matched and remain in touch with them as their release date approaches.
2. **Take the <u>former</u> inmate to an AA meeting within 24 to 48 hours of their release!**
3. It is suggested that the first meeting be viewed as a regular Twelfth-Step call and that you take another AA member with you. Use the same guidelines you would with any newcomer, even though the former inmate may have been regularly attending AA meetings inside.
4. Review the AA Corrections Bridge Program with the former inmate so that there are no misunderstandings as to what this program does and does not do.
5. Remind the former inmate as often as is necessary that you are but a temporary connection to their new AA community.
6. Remember that your job is finished after three meetings, or as soon as a sponsor has been found. Do your best to encourage that relationship.
7. Make sure the newly released AA receives meeting schedules, phone numbers, and AA literature.
8. Encourage the newly released AA to attend meetings as often as possible, to find a home group, and most important, **encourage them to get a sponsor as soon as possible.** Let them know that even a temporary sponsor who has time for them now would be acceptable.
9. Share your experience, strength, and hope with the newly released AA, just as you would with any other person new to AA in your community.
10. Upon completion of your service, inform the Corrections Bridge Coordinator as to the results of your experience; complete the brief Completion Report, and mail it to the coordinator at the address provided. We need to know the results of your experience; let us know what works and what does not.

## Points to Remember

- It is **vital** that former inmates attend their first AA meeting as soon as they are released.
- Our primary purpose is to **carry the message.** It is suggested that you do not:
  - (a) Loan money or anything of value,
  - (b) Become a personal "taxi" service for miscellaneous errands.
- You are not responsible for the members' attitude or actions in or out of meetings.
- Introduce the former inmate to other AA members, just as you would any newcomer. Do not sponsor him or her, even temporarily.
- Do not carry the newly released AA member to more than six meetings — it is important for the former inmate to build relationships with other members in their community.
- We are not to act in any reporting or communication capacity regarding the AA member and the justice system.
- Do not forget to attend to your own personal program of recovery. Stay in close contact with your sponsor, your home group, and most **importantly, your Higher Power.**

## Suggested Reading

"Carrying the Message into Correctional Facilities"

"Where Do I Go from Here?"

*A.A. in Prison: Inmate to Inmate*

"It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell"

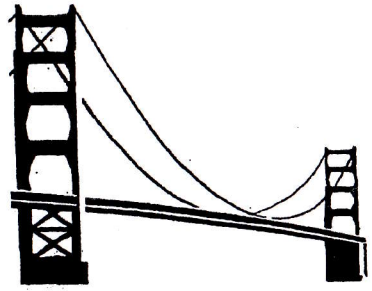
"Memo to an Inmate Who May be an Alcoholic"

"A Message to Correctional Administrators"

# THE CORRECTIONS BRIDGE PROGRAM

***A Prerelease Program for Inmates***

**A Service Opportunity Connecting Inside AA Members to the AA Community**




Mail To:

The Corrections Bridge Program
C/O Christopher Worch
P.O. Box 3105
Daphne, Al. 36526

## Corrections Bridge Procedure

1. The application form is part of this pamphlet. Inside AA members are eligible for this program if they have less than six months left to serve and have been attending AA meetings on a regular basis.
2. The inmate fills in the application and mails it to the Corrections Bridge Office which will be responsible for processing and coordinating all bridges.
3. The Bridge Coordinator will notify the inside member that the application has been received and the process has been started.
4. The Corrections Bridge Coordinator finds an appropriate volunteer to serve as a "bridge".
5. The Corrections Bridge Volunteer writes to the inside AA member within two weeks to confirm contact. If the volunteer fails to make contact, the inside AA member should inform the Coordinator. (Volunteers who do not want to use their own address may use the Corrections Bridge Program, their home group, or other local AA office as their return address; letters to this office will be forwarded to the volunteer.).
6. The inside AA member will inform the Corrections Bridge Volunteer of such information as their date of release, their arrival time in the local area, and an address and phone number.
7. The volunteer will meet the newly-released AA at an agreed upon time and place to help them adjust to attending their first few meetings in the local community.
8. The Corrections Bridge Volunteer is asked to let the newly-released AA know that after about three meetings their work together will be completed and the volunteer will be rotating on to help someone new.
9. After a connection has been completed, the volunteer will inform the Corrections Bridge Coordinator of the results.

Dear Inmate:

We have a program in this area called the **AA Corrections Bridge Program.** If you sign up, you can be matched upon release to an AA member in your home community. This AA Corrections Bridge Volunteer will take you to **up to** three AA meetings, introduce you around, and help you get acquainted and comfortable in AA. During this time, you will learn about **sponsors, home groups, working AA's Twelve Steps,** and **service.**

Your Corrections Bridge Volunteer is temporary **only.** They are there to support you, answer questions, and explain the AA program of recovery. They will not provide housing, food, clothing, jobs, money, or other such services. You will undoubtedly hear the five basic suggestions for sobriety that 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 as soon as possible after release is **key** to making a sober transition to life outside prison. Many of us have been where you are and know that the program of AA and its fellowship can do for you what it has done for us and countless others.

Complete the attached Inmate's Application; then cut off and mail to the address indicated. If possible, do this **three to six months prior to your release.** The AA Corrections Bridge Coordinator will then match you up with a Corrections Bridge Volunteer in the community where you will be living. That person will write to you with information on how to contact him/her once you are released. Keep the rest of this pamphlet for future reference.

### INMATE APPLICATION

**I am within six months of my release date. I am requesting an AA Contact who will provide a "bridge" for me to my AA community through transportation to meetings and introduction to other AA members. MAIL TO:** C/O Christopher Worch P.O. Box 3105 Daphne Al. 36526

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| INMATES NAME | SEX: ☐ M ☐ F | DOC NUMBER | |
| DOC MAILING ADDRESS | | DORM# | BED# |
| CITY | STATE | ZIP CODE | |
| RELEASING TO: (City or Town) | COUNTY | DATE OF RELEASE | |
| ADDRESS AFTER RELEASE | | PHONE NUMBER | |
| **I would like to make a commitment to attend an AA meeting within 48 hours of my release.**<br>**I understand that the AA Contact is not a AA sponsor, even temporarily.**<br>SIGNATURE | | DATE | |