



SHARING FROM BEHIND THE WALLS

A.A. General Service Office, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163

Spring 2026

Dear A.A. Friends,

Let's open our meeting with a moment of silence, followed by the A.A. Preamble:

Alcoholics Anonymous is a Fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

"The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions.

A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety."*

In Need of Daily Reflections

"I attend an A.A. meeting every first and third week of the month, and I am sober thanks to our Program. (Although there are people who make their own concoctions, which I avoid!) I'm writing to inquire about the *Daily Reflections* book, which helped me immensely when I was on the street (where I was also sober). I miss it in the morning when I wake up. I mentioned it to a person in group and he gave me your address and told me to write to you, so that's what I'm doing! I am 65 years old and am a very spiritual person. It's tough but I believe I am right where I'm supposed to be — whatever that reason is." — **Bruce M., Northeast Region**

Pen Pal Wanted

"I am so grateful for coming across this passage [describing the CCS] in Grapevine because I need help during my incarceration. I would love the Corrections Correspondence Service to help get me connected to a pen pal to share her experience, strength and hope. I nearly lost my life this last relapse; barely made it out alive with an illness and barely survived on the streets of Downtown Los Angeles."

— **Sylvia A., East Central Region**

Discovering Hope

"Currently, others in my housing unit and I are blessed to have found ourselves in here at a moment in time when we are surrounded by others who are working the Steps and thoroughly following the path. The result is: We're discovering hope in a place where we expected to lose it all. We are seeing a light at the end of the tunnel that has led us from what was, at one point, the most painful and humiliating point of our journey. We are seeing for ourselves that a power greater than ourselves is restoring us to sanity — one Step at a time. From the bottom of my heart, thank you!" — **Robert L., East Central Region**

Sponsor Sought for Correspondence

"I have been sober since 2020 and have been putting more effort into my recovery by engaging with A.A. groups, where I developed insight and knowledge about my addictions. I regret and feel truly remorseful about the trail of pain I created. I now want to continue my recovery by reaching out to a sponsor

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who has had experience and could guide me toward the right path. A close friend of mine, who is also an inmate, gave me your information and suggested I reach out. I have never done anything like this before, but I'm looking forward to communicating or corresponding with someone. Or, if you could, please send me information with what steps I could take to get a sponsor." — Juan H., Pacific Region

Interested in Help

"I am interested in the Corrections Correspondence Service (CCS) program. I'd been in this program before (about a year and a half ago) and it helped me find a sponsor. The experiences stopped my problems with alcohol for a while." — Lee D., Pacific Region

"I've learned that life isn't as simple as I would wish, but I have only to live it just for today. I can work on what I can change."

Sharing the Message of Recovery

"I'm currently an inmate at Branchville Correctional Facility. I've written you all a few letters already. I've received the introduction package and I've also received the Big Book. First, I want to say thank you for the literature; I'm so grateful for it. Here in my dorm, I'm in Recovery While Incarcerated (RWI). I chair my own meetings on Tuesdays. I'm writing this letter because I would love to share more of the message of recovery to the Fellowship, as well as to the newcomers we get here. So, would it be possible to get a copy of the *Plain Language Big Book*, as well as some topic ideas for meetings? Thank you for changing my life, and God bless!" — Jerome H., East Central Region

Staying Sober and Strong

"I'm in this predicament I've found myself in because of my alcoholism. I have drunk on and off for the past 30 years and up until this point it has completely ruined my life. My wife left me in December 2024; my parents and grandparents are deceased — I'm completely alone in this world. It's difficult to find anyone to talk to or to confide in because of the persona one must carry in here, so as not to be labeled weak. I've been sober for one year and, through my Higher Power and A.A., I know I can remain that way for the rest of my life." — Joshua K., Southwest Region

The Work Keeps Us Going

"First and foremost, I can say without doubt that I wouldn't be sober today without God and the Fellowship. It's the work of the GSO that keeps us going. I stay strong for one purpose. I'll keep coming back. My family sees the difference in me and, trust me, I can't fool them! Our meetings here have 30 members who faithfully show up. It's so cool what A.A. does; our outreach is around the world! My wife drank herself to death. I will never forget all she and I went through. Newcomers really need to know this disease will kill us if left unchecked. Without help it's deadly. My wife Rochelle was so beautiful to me and the world. She was always stopping to help people. Before I couldn't grasp it and truly enjoy life/have a truly meaningful life." — Robert F., West Central Region

Planning Ahead for Release

"I want to thank you with all my heart for answering my letter requesting information on meetings here in California. I also wanted to thank you so much for taking the time to send me information about A.A. I'll call the intergroup office in the future. The parole board recommended that I find an A.A. group to join when I'm on conditional release. When I'm free, I will go to that group for all the days I have left in my life, because I'm a 74-year-old adult. I admit and accept that I'm an alcoholic. I didn't like drugs or marijuana. In the past, I drank in the streets every day. Also, I received a book called *The Home Group: Heartbeat of AA* — thank you very much for sending it to me." — Salvador G., Pacific Region

A Beacon to Anyone in Need

"I am writing to offer my time as an A.A. sponsor. God has touched my heart and appointed me to be more involved with the Steps, basically as a way to give back and make a 'living amends' for life to other alcoholics who need to talk to someone or hang out with another member — whatever I can do to help support our mission. I know how I have achieved my 37 years of sobriety, and that was by knowing that I'm not alone and having other sober people who could relate to me (or help me find someone who could). I want to dedicate my life and be a beacon to any member (or want-to-be member), no matter their beliefs, gender or race. I was just granted parole on June 27, 2025. Without my 37 years of sobriety, I don't know where I'd be today. What would I have to offer these members and correspondents? I'm writing to express my gratitude for A.A. and my enthusiasm for the chance to help others, no matter if they are still suffering or are sober. I was an example and a mentor while I was incarcerated. I've been in prison for 37 years and I struggled being in prison and needing drugs and

alcohol. There were times when I wanted to use, but what I learned in A.A. prevented me from taking that chance, because I wanted to build my sobriety bank. It's important for me to help our A.A. family, to pursue an education, to contribute to society and to build a support network. "Our beliefs become our thoughts. Our thoughts become our words. Our words become our actions. Our actions become our habits. Our habits become our values. Our values become our destiny." — Raymond G., Pacific Region

A New Life Journey in the Making

"I currently live in northern California. Life took a little detour and I found myself incarcerated in one of California's finest. This has truly become more of a blessing than one would normally think or expect. I had the opportunity to partake in some classes for anger management and Active Commitment to Sobriety (ACTS). The course leader gave us the softcover Big Book (very impressive, might I say). I've become eager to learn more about A.A. on a personal level. A.A. had a huge influence on my upbringing and I'd lost sight of that. My grandparents on both sides were members. My maternal grandmother died of cirrhosis of the liver six months before I was born. My grandfather (Buddy) found serenity and strength with the Alcoholics Anonymous program. I owe A.A. my life and thanks for saving his life. Because of A.A. he became a great man. I'm blessed for my time spent with him and the knowledge he gave to me. A new life journey might be in the making. Traveling the railroad and spreading the word and knowledge of A.A. — it sounds much more appealing to me than a life of incarceration." — Cassie M., Pacific Region

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Need Literature for a New Group

"I've started a small group that comes together on Monday nights. We have an outsider who comes in and helps us lead it in the right format. I also hold an open meeting in the dorm for the people who are still sick or ill. I'm requesting the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* for the group so that we can work the Steps as a whole. I'd also like to see if I could get the following pamphlets: "The Twelve Steps Illustrated," "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated," "The Twelve Concepts for World Service Illustrated," and "A.A. in Correctional Facilities."

I need one of each for the group because I have people asking me about the Steps and how to work them. I've shown them how my sponsor showed me to work the Twelve Steps." — Tracy M., Southeast Region

Reading for Recovery

"I need an A.A. book and some materials I can use with others, for I'm going to try to have some meetings here. I read *Daily Reflections* on my tablet. I'm completely indigent; I believe in God with all my being. I lost my family. All I have left is this prison life; however, I've gained something very important to me." — William S., Southeast Region

More People than Big Books

"There are limited materials for the A.A. program here. This is what I'm used to and familiar with. I was looking at a *Plain Language Big Book* (soft cover, large type, size 8.5" x 11"). It had a light blue cover with a dark blue border and said, "A Tool for Reading *Alcoholics Anonymous*." We've been trying to learn, work and live Steps One, Two and Three each week, and this was very helpful — but there's only one copy! Please help me get one — please! I got sober on April 26, 2023, and just passed 26 months cleans and sober. I am working on Step work and living the Twelve Steps. I have nothing and no one, but I'm sober and have God as my Higher Power." — David S., East Central Region

The Defects of Character

"We are a group from the Asotin County Jail in Clarkston, Washington. We are named D.O.C. (Defects of Character), and we meet daily at 1 p.m. PST, after lunch tray pick up. We have a member who is now sober after a two-year bender. He had previously had 12 years of continued sobriety. We have several others, some who have been here for over a year and have found great purpose and direction from this meeting, both of which have been long overdue." — Lucas M., Pacific Region

Focused on Sobriety

"I am a 50-year-old woman who has had a tough battle with substances. Alcohol was my poison and I received a 10-year prison sentence in Florida for my actions while drunk. I went out on a binge and ended up with 10 years in jail, five children separated across two states, and two ex-in-laws disappointed in me because I couldn't stay off the sauce. I need help. I'm a hopeless case. I want to remain sober from now on. I'm in a place where most of the women use substances, so it's extremely hard. I know I can do this though. I'm so grateful that I got to write to you all at A.A. I've been to meetings (20 years ago) and I'd heard of the miracles people experienced,

but I never believed that would be me: a complete drunk, a hopeless case, at the bottom, alone." — **Tiffany V., Southeast Region**

Hill of Hope in Kansas

"I would like to register our A.A. group and its new general service representative (me, Zachary) with A.A. World Services. We're called Hill of Hope and we meet on Wednesday and Saturday at 7 p.m. at the Winfield Correctional Facility in Winfield, Kansas." — **Zachary T., Southwest Region**

More Materials Needed

"I'm an inmate at a federal correctional institution that sits above the clouds in the middle of nowhere, West Virginia. I have about ten years ahead of me and three already done and, by the grace of God, I have been sober for over three years. My home group was the Friday Nighters in the Bronx, New York City. I'm writing to you because the facility is lacking in all A.A. materials and services. I was fortunate enough to be able to get the Big Book sent in and I'd be ever so grateful for a copy of *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*." — **Thomas N., Southeast Region**

Request for Literature and Speakers

"I'm writing you this letter in regard to the Oakdale Second Chance A.A. Group (that's the name we've given ourselves for the meeting we started about a month ago). We're a group of about six men who, as they say, are sick and tired of being sick and tired of all our old ways and everything that comes with them. We knew that we needed a change, so every Tuesday night we get together, read what we can from the Big Book and talk about what's going on inside of us. We're asking for your help with our meeting — literature, getting people to come in and speak, and any other help you can give us. We've also filled out four A.A. correspondence requests and mailed them to the General Service Office in New York City. We're serious about our recovery, so any help you can give us will be greatly appreciated." — **David V., Southeast Region**

Earnestly Trying to Recover

"In a few months I will be clean and sober, by the grace of God, for five years. I am currently incarcerated at a facility in Angie, Louisiana. I am a facilitator for the Sober Living program on the compound and I help about 80 incarcerated men in the dorm learn about the Twelve Steps of A.A. I also lead another weekly meeting for men outside of the Sober Living dorm. It's my greatest wish that you send recovery literature to our facility so that I can give it to these men who are earnestly trying to recover." — **Jared D., Southeast Region**

Seeking Outside Connections

There are two members in our group who were attending A.A. meetings before being incarcerated. They help us structure our meetings according to the Traditions and principles of A.A. A few of the members have Fourth Edition books, but we also have a collection of Third Edition books that every member is given when they come to their first A.A. meeting. At this time, we do not have any connections to any outside recognized members or groups, but we'd like that to change. I was appointed secretary of the group and am writing you to establish a connection between our group and an outside one. There are a few long-term goals we'd like to achieve. One is to establish our group as a recognized A.A. group; next is to begin either written correspondence or in-person meetings held at the prison with an outside member. We'd also like to finally create connections with outside A.A. groups to assist released members and establish home groups for them. — **Jonathon M., Southeast Region**

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Giving Away the Gold

Today at the Big Book study I said I'm scared of how the doctor describes the alcoholic. I've now got 2 1/2 years sober, and I'm still on the road to recovery. A new friend and I are going to start the Fourth Step together; look at the wreckage of both our pasts, take stock, dig deep and get honest. In being sober minded for a few 24s, I'm seeing so much of what got me to prison and kept me coming back. I've learned that life isn't as simple as I would wish, but I have only to live it just for today. I can work on what I can change. The most important thing is giving away the gold I've found in over 30 years in A.A. Plus I must work on what got me here — it's deeper rooted than my crimes. I must be proactive in all I do to begin to allow God to work his will in my life. I feel A.A. is the gift and the meetings are the wrapping. By always knowing and keeping in mind how powerful God is and the strength in the Fellowship, I know all things are possible from here on out. Dreams can come true. From entering prison hopeless on day one, to a newfound hope. This could be you! — **Robert F., West Central Region**

Digital Literature Behind the Walls

Contracts with various vendors have enabled AAWS and AA Grapevine literature to be available on tablets found in the various correctional settings in the United States. This is a new service that continues to expand. The available literature has expanded to include *Box 4-5-9 newsletter*, *Sharing from Behind the Walls newsletter*, *Plain Language Big Book*, *the Primary Purpose Podcast*, and over 30 additional pamphlets in English, French, and Spanish.

We have established a new contract with the vendor Smart Communications. On July 21, 2025, A.A. material was uploaded and will be available to all facilities with Smart Communications tablets. Please request a Tablet Literature list from the Corrections desk when writing for listed literature if you have access to Smart Communications Tablets and need more information on the available literature.

Telecom and Communication through Tablets

The corrections desk has begun to communicate with members behind the walls via GTL/Viapath. If you have access to this platform, and would like to reach out to the Corrections Desk to request literature, meeting support, information on Corrections Correspondence Service, or Prerelease Contact information, please direct your message to corrections@aa.org. Additionally, if you have access to another tablet or telecom provider, the corrections desk can respond to inquiries by phone at (212) 870-3085. When

calling please include your name, location of facility, DOC number, and any other details specific to you that will allow the corrections desk to support your request for any of the services we provide.

Corrections Correspondence Service (CCS)

This service is for incarcerated alcoholics who have at least six more months to serve. We randomly match an outside A.A. from another region with members of the same gender identity. We do not provide letters of reference to parole boards, lawyers or court officials. We do not assign sponsors; however, once you make contact, an outside A.A. member may be willing to sponsor you. If you have an interest in sharing about your experiences as they relate to sobriety and problems with alcohol, then please write and request a form. We appreciate your patience.

Prerelease Contact

This service is for incarcerated alcoholics who have a release date scheduled three to six months away. We do not assign sponsors; however, once you have transitioned from "inside" A.A. to "outside" A.A., someone may be willing to sponsor you. We try to arrange for an outside A.A. in your home community to temporarily write to you just prior to your release. You can request a form, or write to us, providing your release date and destination (address, city, state, phone number.)