

Corrections Correspondence

- a special kind of A.A. Service

I know how important our Twelfth Step work is and I enjoy writing to men who are locked up. It is one of the tools that I use to keep me sober. I myself found A.A. in prison almost 20 years ago. And it hasn't been necessary for me to return to prison since I was released in 1979.

- Outside Correspondent

We are in need of A.A. members on the "outside" to correspond with A.A. members in correctional facilities.

It is suggested that men correspond with men and women with women. Most of the inmates who want an outside correspondent are men, so we are appealing to men on the outside.

If you would like to share your experience, strength and hope with A.A.s who are confined, please mail the tear-off form to G.S.O.'s Correctional Facilities Desk. The name of an inmate will be sent to you from your General Service Office and you will make the initial contact through the mail.

Those who have participated in this service have found sharing with inmates a very gratifying form of Twelfth Step work. We are happy to know there are A.A. members like you willing to help make it possible for the A.A. message to be carried to those on the "inside."

Guidelines for Corrections Correspondence Service

Welcome to one of the most rewarding and rarely mentioned forms of Twelfth Step work.

In addition to observing the rules in Correctional Facilities regarding mail and correspondence, the following are suggested guidelines drawn from shared experience to help you when writing to A.A. members on the "inside":

1. To begin, some correspondents prefer to use their group P.O. Box for receiving mail rather than their home address. Some central/intergroup offices offer their P.O. Box for this service. (We match correspondents from different states or provinces.)
2. We introduce ourselves by qualifying briefly in our opening letter.
3. We try to let the inmate know that writing, like all forms of sharing, helps us as much as it helps her or him.
4. We let the inmate know that he or she is not alone.
5. We share sobriety and sobriety only.
6. We have found it best for all concerned if no emotional or romantic involvements develop.
7. If there is a desire to send a gift for a special occasion, we make it an AA book, AA literature, or Grapevine material. Before sending literature, see if the facility will allow it. Many Correctional Facilities will permit inmates to receive only literature sent directly from the publishers. Also, some facilities do not allow inmates to receive stamps or pre-addressed, stamped envelopes.
8. In the spirit of the Twelfth Tradition, we respect the anonymity of our correspondents.
9. We encourage "inside" A.A. group activity and stress that first meeting *the day* the inmate leaves confinement.
10. We encourage "inside" correspondents to notify G.S.O. prior to their release so that G.S.O. can set up a pre-release contact from their home community.

Thank you for your willingness to share in this most important work.

CORRESPONDENCE FORM

PLEASE PRINT - Return to address below

I am a: **MALE** **FEMALE** (please circle one) How many inmates are you able to write to?: _____

Name:

(First and Last)

Address:

(City, Stat or Province, Postal or Zip Code)

Correctional Facilities Desk, General Service Office, Box 459, New York, NY 10163
Direct: (212) 870-3082 Email: corrections@aa.org Fax (212) 870-3003 Web site: www.aa.org