

Guide Questions for Longtimer Interviews, Archives Open Speaker meetings, and Oral History taped sessions

2002 version, two pages

How did you get to A.A.? Where did you first hear about A.A.---your doctor, friends, an Answering service, a hospital visit, etc.?

Did you make the first contact? How? When and where was the first contact made?

What do you remember about your first meeting?

Did you have a sponsor, and how did it help you as a newcomer?

Was the sponsor "assigned" to you; how soon after your first meeting did you get a sponsor?

Did you choose one? What was your relationship to your sponsor(s)?

What was A.A. like in the early days in your area?

Where were meetings held (homes, churches, clubs)? Who would lead them?

How many groups were in existence? How often were meetings held, and what kinds of meeting formats were used (open meetings, public meetings, closed discussion, speaker-led response-type, kitchen table meetings)?

How did each meeting open? Quiet time, prayer? What readings were heard before the topic or speaker? How did you introduce yourself when you shared?

What announcements were made?

How was coffee served (paper, Styrofoam, china cups)?

How did your early meetings close? Where did members go after closing (to restaurants, home)?

Do (did) you celebrate anniversaries, individual and group? How?

Was a basket always passed for the 7th Tradition; how much did members contribute?

Was literature freely given? Did you purchase your first Big Book?

When did first hear about or see an issue of the *A.A. Grapevine*?

Do you have favorites in A.A. literature (pamphlets, tapes, films, books)?

Who were the founders and group officers of your early groups? Any nicknames of members that you remember? Were there early members who especially contributed to the growth and success of the group? Were there many longtime members?

What were some of the early groups' names -- did any change over time, and how and when?

Were there any problems that arose during the early years -- growing pains, "rules" fights, and similar difficulties? Did solutions develop? How?

Are there any similarities to today's problems and solutions?

What was your impression of your first large meeting? Where was it held?

Do you recall any specific Conferences or Conventions?

When were some of the bigger meetings started, and how often were they held? Were they well attended?

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Did / do you participate in state or regional get-togethers (conventions, conferences, AA Forums, workshops, etc.)? What special occasions do you recall (Assemblies, opening an Intergroup Office, etc.)?

Was there an Intergroup or Central Office in your area or community? Do you know when it was started? Any problems?

When did clubhouses (if you there were any) get started, and under what circumstances? Did any problems develop? How were these solved?

Is there Al-Anon in your community? Alateen? When did it start?

Does / did it have good relations with local A.A.?

Do you know how the group was first received by the community when it was started?

Has the attitude of any local professional people, particularly toward alcoholism, been changed by contact with the local members?

Did you, or your first groups, seek the cooperation of local community and professional agencies (ministers, doctors, law enforcement agencies)?

Are there "Outside Agencies" in your area? What are their relationships with local A.A.? Are / were there many referrals, and any problems with these?

How did service outreach committees develop in your area (Public Information, Corrections, Answering Service, Grapevine, Archives, etc.)?

Describe the early District meetings, Area meetings and Assemblies, and any Intergroup or Central Office service meetings---What did the local GSRs do? How did the news of "A.A. as a whole" come to your early groups?

Describe all the types of general service you have had the opportunity to participate in.

What contact with GSO did you have in the early days?

In you own AA service, did you feel your participation brought results? In what way?

Did your group conduct business meetings? How did it spend its funds?

Did your group have picnics, holiday parties, anniversary dinners, social events?

Who organized these and were they well-attended?

What kinds of Twelfth Step work was going on? How did you contact new members?

How did Group members keep in touch with each other between meetings?

How has A.A. changed (if it has) since you first found it?

Are there any particular similarities from your early days through now?

NOTE: Get an acknowledgement from the AA Longtimer that the tape will belong to the Area Archives Committee, for future archives use.

Most importantly, get the consent if the tape will be copied for purchase, or if a transcript is planned and might potentially be published anywhere.