

Guide Questions for A.A. Oral and Histories

1. How did you, yourself, get to A.A.? When and where was the first contact made? What do you remember about your first meeting?
2. Where did you hear about A.A. How did you make the first contact? -- Answering service, Intergroup Office visit, etc.?
3. 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)?
4. 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, etc.)?
5. How did each meeting open? Quiet time, prayer? What readings were heard before the topic or speaker? What announcements were made? How was coffee served (paper, Styrofoam, china cups)?
6. Was a basket passed for the 7th Tradition; how much did members contribute? Was literature freely given? Did you purchase your first Big Book?
7. How did your early meetings close? Where did members go after closing (restaurants, home)?
8. What was A.A. like in the early days in your area?
9. Who were the founders and group officers of the early groups?
10. What was the group's first name -- did it change; if so, how and when? More than one change of name? What is the current name?
11. When was A.A. started in your town or area? Where were meetings held (homes, churches, clubs)? By whom?
12. Were there early members who especially contributed to the growth and success of the group? Many longtime members?
13. Do you know how the group was first received by the community when it was started?

14. Has the attitude of your local professional people, particularly toward alcoholism, been changed by contact with the local members?
15. Did you seek cooperation of local community and professional agencies (ministers, doctors, law enforcement agencies)?
16. Were there any problems that arose during the early years -- growing pains, etc.? Did solutions develop? How? Are there any similarities to today?
17. What was your impression of your first large meeting?
18. Was there an Intergroup or Central Office in your area or community? Do you know when it was started? Any problems?
19. When did clubhouses (if you have them) get started, and under what circumstances? Did any problems develop? How were these solved?
20. Is there Al-Anon in your community? When did it start? Does it have good relations with local A.A.? Al-A-Teen?
21. Were Conferences or Conventions held? When were they started, how often were they held? Were they well attended?
22. Do you participate in state or regional get-togethers (conventions, conferences, forums, workshops, etc.)?
23. Are there "Outside Agencies" in your area? What are their relationships with local A.A.? Many referrals, any problems with these?
24. How was A.A. Public Relations committee-type work handled? Was it well received?
25. How did committee develop in your area (Public Information, Corrections, Answering Service, Grapevine, Archives, etc.)?
26. In you own service work, did you feel your participation brought results? In what way?
27. Describe the early District meetings, Area meetings, Intergroup or Central Office service meetings? Were there local GSR and what did they do?
28. Did your group conduct business meetings? How did it spend its funds?

29. Did your group have picnics, holiday parties, anniversary dinners, social events? Who organized these and were they well-attended?
30. Describe all the types of general service you have had the opportunity to participate in?
31. What contact with GSO did you have in the early days?
32. What special occasions do you recall (Assemblies, opening an Intergroup Office, etc.)?
33. What kinds of Twelfth Step work was going on? How did you contact new members?
34. Do (did) you celebrate anniversaries, individual and group? How?
35. How has A.A. changed (if it has) since you first found it?
36. Are there any particular similarities from your early days through now?
37. Do you have favorites in A.A. literature (pamphlets, tapes, films, books)?

--Assembled from the *Handbook for Setting Up an Archival Repository (3/96 revision)*, with additional prompts,
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