

2024

*Spring  
Newsletter*

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

BRIDGING  
THE

GAP

TEMPORARY CONTACTS

In Alcoholics Anonymous Treatment and Corrections service, Bridging the Gap programs connect alcoholics leaving Treatment or Correctional facilities with Alcoholics Anonymous in their home communities by providing them with temporary contacts.

Bridging the Gap Workshop Weekend events are full weekends focused on sharing our experiences, Bridging the Gap, and developing new ideas that enhance our Service to those requesting temporary contacts.

BTGWW Annual Workshops, Newsletters, and Digital Resource Library are tools that help us learn from each other.

Registration fees ensure BTGWW events remain self-supporting.

*This Newsletter is confidential and is for use by members of Alcoholics Anonymous.*

**BRIDGING THE GAP  
WORKSHOP WEEKEND 2024  
Hosted by Area 40**

**September 6-8, 2024**

**Fairbridge Inn & Suites  
and  
Big Sky Conference Center  
Missoula, Montana**

**See the flyer in this Newsletter.**

**REGISTER ONLINE AT  
WWW.BTGWW.ORG**

**2023-2024 BTGWW OFFICERS**

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**2024 Flyer**

Communication plays a vital role when doing any service as it relates to our lives working the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. Autonomy plays a large factor with the communication challenges we are presented with when working with any number of rungs on the corrections ladder.

There is the Department of Correction whether it be the Bureau of Prisons, federal facilities, state DOC, privately owned institutions, or one of the vast numbers of county, jurisdictions, or parishes across the United States and Canada.

One of the issues that comes into play here is getting the proper information from the fellowship to the person in custody and back to the Bridge the Gap process so we can be more effective while the hand of AA is being reached out to. The goal is to make contact as soon as possible, then make it to a meeting and begin the journey to a life of sobriety outside the walls and into society. A larger part of the issue is getting a proper release date, location being released to with address and zip code, and/or a contact number. This information begins anywhere from a year or more out from their prospective release date and as soon as a couple months or less. This information can change multiple times between notification of a date to the actual release date.

An effective way to be more effective to the bridge process and to be considered helpful is to work with the correspondence volunteers' that information from letters coming directly from the person inside the walls. Often the correspondence volunteer is more likely to have current release and destination information and can forwarding that info on to the bridge the gap volunteer who can prepare for the initial meeting post release.

This method has been proven to be more effective more than once. This is just some food for thought that may enhance our primary purpose of helping the still suffering alcoholic.

Yours in service  
Rob O  
Alternate BTGWW Coordinator

## HOSTING A WORKSHOP

Good day to all the fellow BTG family members out there in the AA world of service. I was the Host committee chair for the 2018 Bridging the Gap Workshop Weekend when it was hosted by the Denver Central office.

I wanted to share what an awesome experience it was putting on this wonderful annual event. This workshop weekend proved to be an amazing way to meet people from all over Area 10, Colorado, who helped put this event together. Not to mention all the fellowship with past hosts from all over the United States and Canada who stopped at nothing to assist with any of my questions, or concerns, that arose while going through this process. Hosting this event lit a fire under the service workers in Colorado and our BTG Committee has expanded greatly. I know participants from other areas returned home with new ideas and enthusiasm.

Another cool aspect of this service allows us to join experiences with corrections and treatment which doesn't always go hand in hand. Relationships from the moment the bid was put together, through the planning stages, on to the conclusion of the weekend, were forged and still going strong as our BTG family is ever growing.

Being able to hear different ideas, speakers, and presenters, not only from all around Colorado, but the perspective across the United States and Canada was invaluable. Working with Bridging the Gap in the treatment and correctional facilities is helped when shared experiences from past workshop weekends is incorporated into our local committee work and we become more effective in carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic regardless of where they are and how they get to the fellowship.

I would certainly encourage anyone to at least bring up the topic of hosting a Workshop Weekend in your area, district or by your Intergroup/Central Office and help us gain momentum with more added experience to help this process become even more vital to the service we do in Alcoholics Anonymous.

I look forward to seeing all of you in Montana and beyond.

In love and service  
Rob O  
Alternate BTGWW Coordinator

## SUBMITTING A BID

If you are interested in submitting a bid to host a workshop weekend bid packages are available at [BTGWW.org](http://BTGWW.org) - Host Bid Information Form. If you have questions about hosting please feel free to contact any of the BTGWW officers. Our email addresses and phone numbers are listed on the first page and we are all here to help.

Last year, after the workshop, I forwarded an email from our GSO speaker to our email list. It included a link to a survey about Bridging the Gap and Treatment. Considering it was from the treatment desk and questions were associated with treatment I'm not surprised that there were not responses from members that are primarily part of corrections. However, the overall response was disappointing. A question about Bridging the Gap was put in the ask-it-basket at our Southwest Regional Forum. This is what was reported back.

UNANSWERED ASK-IT BASKET QUESTIONS

**Q. When will the service piece "Bridging the Gap" for professionals be available? It seems like BTG is always placed on the back burner.**

A. We understand that it might seem like some items get put on "the back burner." While it is true that sometimes there are more projects in the pipeline than can be accomplished in a given year (because both budgets and staff time are limited) in this case, the Bridging the Gap for Professionals draft has been given thoughtful consideration by both the trustees' committee and the Conference committee. The results of recent discussions included the following:

*In July 2023 the trustees' CPC/TA Committee Bridging the Gap pamphlet for professionals: The committee agreed to table and ask Bridging the Gap committee chairs what they need before moving forward with creating a service piece for professionals.*

*In summer 2023, a GSO staff member asked for sharing from trusted servants on this topic. She received very few responses (the survey went out as part of an Activity Update to all Delegates, Treatment Chairs and chairs of BTG and H&I committees that are listed with GSO). She also attended the 2023 BTG Workshop Weekend and asked attendees to also consider responding to the survey.*

***Of approximately 80 attendees, only three completed the survey.***

The Big Book says "So our troubles, we think, are basically of our own making." I have found this to be true not only in my personal recovery but also, at times, in my service work. For those of us that have found our service niche in Bridging the Gap we know of the importance it holds, especially for those that we have helped coming out of the facilities to find a home and recovery in AA. However, apparently, we have failed to convey that.

As a solution the BTGWW steering committee will be sending out a new survey with questions focused towards bridging the gap and not associated specifically with either treatment or corrections. The questions will be developed from our years of experience working in bridging the gap and from the experience shared in the past years of the workshop. We can only show there is an express need. All replies to the survey will be forwarded to GSO and covered in the 2024 workshop in Missoula.

Keep a lookout for the survey – it will be sent to your email.

Cheri J  
BTGWW Tech Admin

## WEBSITE UPDATE TODO LIST

- Make a list
- Re-design to current website styles
- Develop a more user-friendly, responsive menu.
- Develop a more mobile-friendlier map for choosing the release-to Area for contact requests.
- Modify the database to include multiple contact points for each Area, including email addresses for BTG, Treatment, and Corrections Committee Chairs, Area Chairpersons and Area Delegates.
- Add forms for use in updating Area contact information and email addresses.
- Add forms for use in updating Central Office/Intergroup contact information.
- Add forms for use when adding and updating workshop steering committee members.
- Modify online registration for use when including or removing banquet options.
- Automate pricing changes for online registration.
- Automate entering hard-copy snail mail registrations into the database.
- Automate workshop flyer upload.
- Create automated attendance and financial reports.
- Automate bid form upload for future workshops.
- Update email distribution to be compliant with new phishing and spam regulations.
- Redesign digital library for better search and sorting capabilities.
- Automate document upload to digital library.
- Add an online form for submitting locally developed BTG documents to the BTGWW Digital Library.

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2024

BRIDGING

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Workshop  
Weekend

TEMPORARY CONTACTS

September 6th - 8th 2024

Fairbridge Inn and Suites  
& Big Sky Conference Center  
3803 Brooks St, Missoula, MT 59804

Missoula



Hosted by Area 40—Montana

For hotel reservations call Reservations at 1-406-251-2665  
Refer to Group **BTGWW** for workshop rate of **\$139 plus tax**

The Annual Bridging the Gap Workshop Weekend consists of presentations, discussions, shared experiences, and breakout sessions on BTG topics.

Go to [btgww.org](http://btgww.org) for online registration

\$35 Early Bird Registration only

\$40 Registration only **after July 31st**

\$85 Registration & Banquet *Banquet Registrations must be received by August 16th*

Total Submitted: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in purchasing recordings

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Area #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I am willing to give a presentation on the following topic:

Accommodations-Special Needs? \_\_\_\_\_

Return registration form and check to: BTGWW, 2107 Watson Ave St. Paul MN 55116

Any questions contact Laura S. at (612) 309-8385 or email [coordinator@btgww.org](mailto:coordinator@btgww.org)