

Bridging the Gap Round Table – Friday, March 2, 2018

TOPICS

1. How to Start a Committee
2. How to Keep it Going
3. Improving Technology

UNDERSTANDING AUTONOMY – Every Area , District, State create their own committee. Not one committee is the same. Utah has a Corrections Committee , BTG meets inmates but California has H & I is very complex and strick w. regard to several prisons.

1. How to Start a Committee

California – H & I takes meeting in BTG want to help. Everyone wants to help but we are all different. Hurdles to get over are

- Formatted – a turn-key program
- Documented steps to form a committee
- 12 Step Call – form re understand service
- Opportunity to Fail
- No Desk for BTG at GSO for assistance
- Working with Others Chapter in the Big Book
- Untrained volunteers are going in to present for AA
- Send 2 or 3 on 12th step calls
- Bill W. went into 12 step work
- Delegate through being into the BTG
- Presentations
- Taking Meetings into Prisons
- Balanced Outlook
- What is beneficial?
- Communications is a hurdle with facilities.

NV Area 42 – BTG – still in process. Some dark areas seek first to understand.

- One Message
- A gap of time to reach Treatment Facility or Corrections
- Concept is the same – Act as a Bridge – help them
- Seek first to understand – each facility is different
- Ask ?s – be open-minded, before carrying your mission statement
- Website for BTG – Annual Workshop for US & Canada, help is available

HOW TO START A COMMITTEE – BTGWW.ORG User name; libraries

Password – readthebook

- Find the how to guide to start a committee on the web site .
- Suggestions – Sobriety only – working with Others
- Put it out on the District Website
- Men work with men and women with women.
- Volunteer coordinators – help with document and guidelines

2. How to Keep it Going

Districts are describing how they present the BTG commitment – showing videos for presentation

- Volunteers make contact with person being released
- H & I present cards to inmates and volunteer points out where the local meetings are held. Volunteers do not give out their numbers.
- First 24 hours is critical.
- AA.org provides basic information about BTG. BTG is not an area wide but a district wide service. Get the forms from AA.org
- Services are pre-release services under the Corrections Tab/Treatment Tab.
- Spanish speaking facilities – hard to get volunteers or do presentations there.
- BTG form taken into jails
- Separate form for treatment facilities
- There is usually a hotline number you can give for meetings as well.
- BTG WORKSHOP WEEKEND at BTGWW.org Sep 7-9, 2018 in Denver, CO
- Volunteer committees, past delegates, BTG, all involved to get and share new ideas.
- Area 06 – New and starting a committee – would like information
- BTG has a presentation – having a hard time getting approvals (clearances)
- Answer – keep working at it
- District 12, Area 09 H & I handles corrections Treatment handles Treatment & BTG work
- Some place have quarterly meetings and workshops twice a year.
- Spirit of Rotation – Change happens!

3. Improving Technology

- Obstacles – they know nothing about AA from the treatment facilities
- Treatment is changing – as client does not know anything about AA now
- Log in online, fill out forms on line, then form goes to the BTG coordinator.
- BTG is a strong tool – get on the website, explains the guidelines from the handbook and reminds us that a single person does not represent AA.
- Web site is double password encrypted
- Clients at Treatment Centers can use the web site, obeying Hippa laws

- Nationwide Access – why not use the web for fastest communication tools available today.
- Track contacts but no answer, etc.
- Create opportunity for people to volunteer via the web site

4. How to Keep Volunteers

- Start small
- Rotate
- Keep Volunteer base equal to work well
- Follow up with a phone call to see how it went
- Call the AA Hotline

Saturday, March 4, 2018

TOPICS

1. WHAT IS BTGWW?
2. How do you Start a Committee?
3. How do you Keep People Motivated?
4. Funding?
5. Improve Relationships w/ Agencies
6. Improve How We Work w/ Agencies
7. How do we Work w/ Professional that are AA members

Understanding Autonomy

We are all doing the same job but each area has set up its own way to go about it. In CNIA, H & I = combined Corrections and Treatment facilities. Other areas do it differently. In 1943 H & I was started by visited prisons in CA. In 1950 the General Service Structure was created after H & I was created in CA. In 1976 with the birth of Treatment Facilities, a second committee was formed in the General Service Structure to handle Treatment facilities. Some areas call the coordinator “BTG Chair” and others “Contact Upon Release Chair”, both are the same job.

We are alcoholics who meet alcoholics upon release with 24 hours and get them to a meeting and hopefully information to help them get started in the community. Different meetings/areas have different guideline. Always meet with 2 or 3 people at a meeting place and inform them what AA is and what AA is not. Contact before release and meet them at a meeting within 24 hours.

GSO cannot keep track of different areas that do everything differently; so hopefully BTG structure supports contacts to appropriate people to link them upon release.

PROCESS: Form / mail / on-line / call with Name, Release Date, address, contact phone number on outside.

Volunteer Coordinator arranges connection with AA member on the outside.

BTG Service – person contact and arranges to meet them at a meeting

Follow up – Coordination – Did this happen?

Form your own BTG Committee

Matthew of District 21, Area 07 offering to share a 15 page document that they use.

1. How to start a Committee and How to maintain motivation

- Meeting women at Recovery Homes – they are released to carry the message
- Recovery homes misunderstand and think we are trying to solicit for business
- Takes a lot of Footwork
- Need volunteers – AA members to make calls, AA members to deliver presentations, AA announcements at meeting, and volunteers to meet individuals upon release
- Create a sign up card with type of volunteers – clerical, presenter, 12 step work
- National BTG weekend Sept 7-9, 2018 in Denver
- Website available (see above) has a repository of information
- Ensure you have the volunteers first, then make the presentations

Outreach to Institution – Who do you contact? Get permission from Administrator and / or owner of the business. Do the presentation, show the New Freedom Video and piggy back on H & I Show. Give them Stamped Self-Addressed envelopes (P O Box to BTG), leave the cards for the clients to fill out and mail before they leave. Pamphlets on how to approach treatment centers, walk into treatment centers with information to inform administrators.

Reach out to local Treatment Centers and Jails – can still try to create a BTG committee to address agencies (Fire Camps), prisons that release inmates to areas OUTSIDE the BTG committee.

POINT OF IMPACT – suffering alcoholic

- If you want help transitioning, help getting you to an AA meeting where you are going
- Provide information to the institution
- Collect updated information

- We have a service to connect inmate to AA upon release
- Need to know where these people are being released
- Contact AA members in the arrival area and arrange BTG contact to meet released inmate
- In prisons – you need the Warden’s permission to do anything
- Inmates have access to liaison who will inform them
- We can’t gain access to facility because H & I is already there – ask them to help
- CA Warden can say no to AA request
- We have focus where we have access

BTG Coordinator attends H & I meetings in CA and provides contact cards but in some cases, the information gets confused and lost on the employees. Put the directions in writing to be passed along to the employee.

One size does not fill all. Find out what works in your Area. Check out various ways of setting up your committee. Reach out to GSO for help, reach out to CPC Committees, get introductory letters & FOLLOW UP

Is there a BTG committee in your district? What is it called, how about the area?

HOW DO YOU KEEP BTG VOLUNTEERS?

- Workshops!! 2 quarterly in districts and annually in area
- Inform volunteers of the ability to do 12 step work
- Newsletter to inform members and remind them they are on a list

HOW TO IMPROVE RELATIONSHIPS w/ AGENCIES

- 15 page PDF at CNIA.org – Resources – BTG
- Work with CPC, H & I, PI, Inter-Group/Central Offices

HOW TO WORK WITH PROFESSIONALS THAT ARE AA MEMBERS

- Approach members about BTG if noticed them at your AA mtg.
- Member is at a meeting for their own recovery – respect their program and anonymity

FUNDING BTG

- Reach out to established groups to get start up funds
- Go to H & I for start up funds
- BTG as a sub committee
- Funding Source – who are you responsible to for budget and requests
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BTG Under World Services?

- There is a tab under Treatment Tab for BTG but nothing under the corrections Tab.
- Corrections Tab shows “Pre Release Contact Services” and Different terminology and different sets of literature from the information on the Treatment Tab
- We feel the service is the same but called different things.

BTG for members being deported to Mexico?

- Set up contacts with border towns.
- Not a function of BTG
- They should know how to find meetings themselves
- Contact GSO for types of meetings and programs available
- English speaking meetings?

Bridging the Gap Presentations

-1 hour, made to clients in treatment centers

- Show DVD “Hope” (Overview of AA)
- What AA is and What it is not
- Complete contact cards
- Distinguish as presentation as BYG, not an AA meeting, about AA, not AA Mtg
- Some administrators create an hour block and incorporate into their treatment curriculum.
- Read Treatment Facilities Committee Workbook – part of Treatment work w. facilities is to inform them about misconceptions about A.A. Get the Treatment Facilities KIT
- Address vulnerable and slippery places in the Presentation
- BTG Volunteers separate from sponsor or temporary contact.

If you are new to BTG – try not to get discouraged with lack of participation, cooperation, success, remind people that they signed up for the service position, sometimes the information you get – phone number or email address may no longer be valid.

- There is a free pamphlet of guidelines for BTG volunteers, distribute it to members who indicate an interest in the BTG committee.

- Be patient – you are being of service by making yourself available.