

## AA in Colorado Long Timer Interview Questions

Here is a list of questions to guide you in conducting your long timer interview. Feel free to add questions of your own, allow the interview to take on a life of its own, and most importantly, to have fun! Nevertheless, before you begin taping, explain that our primary interest is in AA's role in the story. The focus is on our AA history in Colorado, how we were, what happened, and what we are like now. As always, the emphasis is on sobriety, rather than drinking. Perhaps the member can begin his/her story with his/her initial contact with the program.

Begin the audio recording by identifying yourself and providing the date of the taping. Then introduce the member.

### 1) BEGINNING OF SOBRIETY JOURNEY

- a) What is your sobriety date?
- b) How and when did you get started in AA? When and where did you sober up? Where did you go to your first meeting?
- c) How did you first learn about AA?
- d) Did you have a sponsor when you first came in? Did you have a temporary sponsor?
- e) What individuals were especially prominent in your sobriety?

### 2) EARLY AA IN YOUR AREA

- a) When you got sober, were there many groups or meetings in your area? How many were in existence?
- b) Did you get to experience the early growth of AA in your area? Do you know how it got started in your town or nearby?
- c) How often were meetings being held?
- d) Were there any special formats, such as speaker meetings, closed and open meetings, smoking allowed, or for particular populations like women's, men's, Spanish speaking or LGBT meetings?

### 3) AA GROWTH, CHANGES, CHALLENGES, AND NEW GROUPS

- a) Who were some of the people playing important roles in the formation of new groups?
- b) What else do you know about the growth of AA?
- c) What contributions did you yourself make to the growth of the Fellowship? (Don't be unnecessarily modest!)
- d) We say sometimes that all that's needed to form an AA meeting is two drunks, a resentment and a coffeepot. Can you talk at all about the differences that led to new groups being formed in your area?
- e) Many Groups face similar challenges that can be addressed by applying the Twelve Traditions. What types of issues did your Group solve by using the Traditions?
- f) Sometimes people in AA have personal struggles that they bring to the Groups. How did your Group handle such challenges as constant relapsers, Thirteenth steppers, or possible safety issues?
- g) AA frequently attracts people with multiple addictions along with alcoholism, including non-alcoholic drug addicts. How did your Group address these?

### 4) SERVICE WORK

- a) Were there any service positions that you held?
- b) Were there any projects that you helped with or achievements for local AA?

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- c) Were there any significant persons in the Area 10 service structure that had an impact on you and your sobriety?
- 5) TWELVE STEP WORK: 1-ON-1, CPC, TREATMENT, AND CORRECTIONS
- a) How were new members contacted? What kinds of Twelfth Step work were going on? Are there any Twelfth Step anecdotes that stick out in your mind you'd care to share?
  - b) Today, AA is well known and supported by police officers, judges, and corrections officials. What kind of relationship did AA in your area have with local authorities? How has that changed since you sobered up?
  - c) Since AA's inception, close relationships with doctors and other professionals was key to raising awareness of the program among active alcoholics. Were you involved with any outreach to professionals, such as part of a Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC) committee? If so, how effective were these efforts done by yourself or others that you know were doing similar service work?
  - d) Did you seek the cooperation of other local community or professional agencies either before you sobered up or early in your sobriety?
  - e) Treatment facilities frequently host AA and other Twelve Step meetings. Were you ever involved with these treatment meetings, either as a patient or as a supportive member of AA?
  - f) AA in Colorado has been taking meetings into the jails for a long time. Have you ever had any experience with meetings in jails, or other outreach programs, such as literature donations through the "pink can" or getting involved in the letter writing program?
- 6) PUBLIC INFORMATION
- a) Today, radio and television public service announcements for AA as well as websites and even some social media pages are becoming commonplace. How did AAs when you first got sober interact with the media?
  - b) Have you had any profound experiences sharing your relationship with alcohol with the public?
  - c) Did you have access to social media when you got sober? Have you seen how the Fellowship has been impacted by social media?
  - d) What cautions might you have for young AAs today regarding media exposure, including social media?
  - e) During the early years of your recovery, how did the community receive Alcoholics Anonymous?
  - f) Do you think your Group(s) or District has had an influence in your community? If so, how?
- 7) FELLOWSHIP
- a) What do you remember of early conferences, assemblies, and conventions? Can you recall opening intergroup or central offices?
  - b) Have you had any contact with G.S.O.?
  - c) In what ways has AA changed over the years?