



12th Step Call Guidelines

When a 12th Step Call is received, we begin with the assumption that another human being's life is at stake -- literally. This means that, without delay, this call is to be answered at once. Below are some suggested tips for making 12th Step Calls¹:

1. Arrange for another AA member to go with you.
2. Have a quiet time, read Chapter Seven in the Big Book.
3. Maintain anonymity.
4. Talk to the prospect alone, if possible. (That is, without his family and friends there.)
5. Congratulate him on wanting to do something about his drinking problem.
6. Give him some AA literature.
7. Note well what the Big Book says at the bottom of page 94: "On your first visit tell him about the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. If he shows interest, lend him your copy of this book."
8. Each of you tell him "what you used to be like, what happened, and what you are like now."
9. If he wants to talk, let him.
10. At the top of page 95, it advises, "Give him a chance to think it over... Sometimes a new man is anxious to proceed at once, and you may be tempted to let him do so. This is sometimes a mistake. If he has trouble later, he is likely to say you rushed him... If he is sincerely interested and wants to see you again, ask him to read this book in the interval (at least ask him to read the first 164 pages). After doing that (reading the book), he must decide for himself if he wants to go on.
11. When you are ready to leave, tell him you will call on him the following day if he wants, and he will have had time to read the first 164 pages, or had time to think about your conversation. Note that the second paragraph on page 96 says, "Suppose you are now making your second visit to a man. He has read this volume, and he is prepared to go through with the Twelve Steps of the program of recovery." At this point you review the Twelve Steps with him, and arrange to bring him to your group meeting. If he does not want to go on, or feels that he can do it some other way, pick up your copy of the Big Book and invite him to call on you again if he changes his mind and decides that AA can be of help.

¹ These tips are reprinted from the March 2007 online version of the AA Grapevine.

12. Finally, note how the Big Book, at the top of page 96 says, "We find it a waste of time to keep chasing a man who cannot, or will not, work with you. If you leave such a person alone, he may soon become convinced that he cannot recover by himself."

Other Guidelines to follow:

- 12th Step Call Volunteers have at least 1 year of continuous sobriety, a sponsor, and a home group.
- Men work with men and women work with women.
- During your quiet time in tip #2 above, make sure to talk to God and ask Him to guide and direct the conversation and for the seed to be planted.
- Make sure you are meeting in a safe place. Never make a 12th step call to a stranger's house alone. Asking the candidate to meet you at a meeting or a public place is a great idea.
- Take a copy of the Big Book with you that you are willing to part with if the candidate is interested in it.
- If the person is interested in jumping right in direct them to a meeting. Offer to give them a ride and help get them to and from with ease.