



the gathering
In the Heartland of Service
SWRAASA 2022
Hosted by Area 57
FINAL REPORT

**From our 2022 Southwest Regional AA Service Assembly Chair,
Stephanie B. Area 57, Oklahoma:**

Once again SWRAASA refreshed our AA Service work and gave us lasting memories! The weekend of Love and Service strengthens our family bond as we connected with both new and old friends across the Southwest Region. The Gathering in the Heartland of Service is what we all needed following a long time away from each other!

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Alternate Delegate Presentations

Friday, October 7, 2022

Tradition 1

Presenter: Rick W. Area 65, Northeast Texas

The idea of “We Before Me” has always been my shorthand to understanding Tradition One. The Traditions show us how to love each other, and this Tradition is beautifully woven through the remaining 11.

Unity begins with the individual and it is vital to have unity with God to have unity with others. We live in the solution and we are united with each other in love. When we love, we want to serve. I need to apply the first tradition in all areas of my life, in AA, at work and at home! I can ask myself some questions related to AA, at home and at work. Am I still a loner? Do I volunteer for service? Do I stick out my hand? Do I try to help others? How long has it been since I gave my number to a newcomer? Do I place the common welfare first or my own needs? At work, do I place being of service to my customers first or my advancement in the company? Each tradition answers the question to problem raised in the parallel step. Bill W. said in his writing that we must relate ourselves rightly to God and to our fellows. My personal recovery depends on me doing this.

Tradition 2

Presenter: Rick M. Area 67, Southeast Texas

Tradition 2 suggests we sacrifice our personal desire for power and authority, relying instead on the authority of our Higher Power. We learn to listen to the Group Conscience as the expression of our Higher Power's will.

Failure to honor the Spiritual Principles activates my character defects.

Tradition 3

Presenter: Sarah M. Area 10, Colorado

Alcohol is a great persuader. Our membership includes all who suffer from alcoholism. This means the group must trust God. Are we reaching out to all who suffer from alcoholism?

The Spirit of Tradition 3 is about belonging. We must be welcoming to all whether we agree with each other, or not. Our hope lies in anyone who wants our way of life.

Tradition 4

Presenter: Debbie H. Area 39, Western Missouri

Faced with unprecedented circumstances, we saw how Tradition 4 assured that each Group could follow its own conscience in determining a course of action.

Autonomy for groups except for AA, as a whole. Serving in AA during the pandemic proved the power of the group identifying alternative ways to reach newcomers. We must trust that if God is speaking to our group, God is speaking to other groups.

Tradition 5

Presenter: Bridget B. Area 25, Kansas

Each group has but one primary purpose-to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers. In its simplest form this is why meetings exist. The long form of this tradition refers to the group as being a “spiritual entity” and in essence our higher power is reaching the suffering alcoholic through the group. Both before and after the pandemic groups have found a multitude of ways that work in their area to help suffering alcoholics. Some have newcomer packets, some have greeters, but they all have the same primary purpose – to help the still suffering alcoholic.

What message is my Group sending? What message am I sending?

Tradition 6 & 7

Presenter: Jeannie M. Area 4, Arkansas

Explore how the 6th and 7th Traditions offer guidance and suggestions to avoid the pitfalls of money, property, and authority on various occasions. Finally, I will discuss how they work together to help us focus solely on our primary purpose.

Bankrupt idealist. My big ideas. But AA doesn't need my big ideas! These big ideas divert us from our primary purpose.

AA groups ought to be self-supporting by their members. Money, property and prestige isn't the problem- it's the fact we are arguing about it!

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Tradition 8

Presenter: Dean D. Area 68, Southwest Texas

In A.A. we do not charge anyone for our 12th Step work, nor do we charge anyone for our program of recovery. We must employ staff and 'special workers' to take care of the business at the General Service Office. The staff at GSO are performing non-12th Step work and are working to support the many essential services that are required to 'run A.A.' Money and spirituality do not mix. We do not professionalize our 12th step work, in doing so we would decrease the effectiveness of our singleness of purpose. We give away what has been freely given to us. However, Alcoholics Anonymous does employ special workers. The primary focus of these special workers is to keep AA running smoothly for the members of the fellowship to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic.

Tradition 9

Presenter: Kerri K. Area 46, New Mexico

Tradition Nine: Servants, Deacons, and Statesmen, Oh my! Five ways Alcoholics Anonymous is a shining example of servant leadership and why it matters to A.A. as a whole. 1. Spiritual in operation. 2. Practical; we must do the chores. 3. Rotation of leadership is key. 4. Produces trusted servants 5. Makes 12 work step work possible. Carry the message!

Tradition 10

Presenter: Rebecca H. Area 38, Eastern Missouri

Tradition 10 is vitally important to keep our program safe from outside issues, especially the last two years. We must remember first and foremost the newcomer and other members as soon as we walk through the door of the meeting hall. Today we also have social media which is potentially a resume for a sponsee to see. It is a good idea to leave political and religious opinions out of the public eye, A.A. Members and sponsees. We must never, no matter what the provocation, take positions on outside issues. Some other groups before AA did take on such outside issues and ultimately failed due to the controversy that ensued. Technology creates a special problem for us here. Taking to social media platforms with charged posts can be problematic here, especially for people who are naturally aggressive as some of us AA's can be. We need to stay away from such posts knowing a newcomer may well see those posts and decide AA isn't for them. Self-sacrifice and discipline are necessary. We need to be able to set outside issues aside for the benefit of AA and newcomers. Language of the Heart pp 88-89 deals with this topic. We must hang together or die. We can't afford to let our personal grievances or positions on outside issues hurt AA as a whole. Outside issues sometimes come into AA out of fear. Think about the newcomer and ask, would you be willing to return to a group if you heard AA's getting into political issues at a meeting? Announcements can be a problem here as well. Stick with AA announcements. It isn't our personal classified ads. This may have been the first tradition to take shape. There are great outside conflicts but, that is where they need to stay.

Tradition 11:

Presenter: Bill F. Area 66, Northwest Texas

Presentation on anonymity at the level of press, radio, television, film and the internet. The talk will look into what constitutes a violation of Tradition 11, and why it is important to maintain anonymity at the public level. How attraction is more important than promotion and how our egos can get in the way of the AA program as a whole. The talk will also discuss the other side of anonymity as stated by Doctor Bob in some of his talks and when it is ok to not be anonymous. Short Form: Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films. Long Form: Our relations with the general public should be characterized by personal anonymity. We think A.A. ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our names and pictures as A.A. members ought not be broadcast, filmed, or publicly printed. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us. Times have changed since the Big Book was written in 1939 and the 12 & 12 in 1953. We now have the internet where we can constantly break anonymity at the public level. But honesty is the foundation of our program and always has been. There are many people who post pictures on social media of their AA chips. All are happy and appreciative that we have turned our lives around and are doing well. But isn't that just attention seeking and self-promotion. Isn't that just stroking our egos? What if we slip? If we do, that doesn't attract outsiders to A.A. How do we attract people without promotion?

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We can be honest with those around us in telling them we are in Alcoholic Anonymous. It is attractive when people see us as sober individuals and how far we have come. We must maintain the anonymity of our fellows. Bill W. said, "It should be the privilege of each individual A.A. to cloak himself with as much personal anonymity as he desires." But we need to take care within the rooms of AA where we are safe, that we share our stories, lives, and phone numbers with our fellows to help them recover from alcoholism.

Tradition 12:

Presenter Ryan F. Area 57, Oklahoma

Anonymity as the foundation of the principles within each of the traditions. Just what are those principles? How anonymity differs from humility? How to place spiritual principles before the personalities of others with the fellowship? Unity is the underlying principle to guide us. Unity is the product where we live, the principle of we not me. Unity can't exist in an ego driven environment. Unity is the underlying principle to guide us. Unity is the product when we live the principles of "we not me!" When we are driven by personalities we are being driven by ego. Unity can't/doesn't exist in an ego driven environment. Ego divides. Principles bring unity.

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Saturday, October 8, 2022

Technology Pro/Con

Chuck G. Area 65, Northeast Texas

In this workshop, we will review what the Big Book and the writings of Bill W. have to say about technology. We will look at the technological changes that have occurred in the past few years, especially the changes brought about by the pandemic. What are the pros and cons of using Zoom, having hybrid or virtual only meetings, and hybrid assemblies? In addition, we will talk about technology resources, equipment needed for hybrid or virtual meetings, and best practices. We will have an open forum at the end and encourage the audience to share experiences and best practices. Technology has been important in AA since Bill called Dr. Bob in 1935.

PROS

During the pandemic the use of Zoom allowed AA to reach those members who couldn't otherwise get to a meeting.

- A home bound member is now able to attend meetings via internet
- Members in rural communities can attend meetings.
- Both Zoom and hybrid meeting are available.
- Members can attend meetings all over the world with ease.
- Those in different linguistic districts have more access. One member can Provide a computer to assist multiple.

CONS

- There have always been disagreements regarding the use of technology in various forms. Disagreement fosters growth.
- With the advent of social media the problem of anonymity has come to the forefront. AA members can accidentally break another person's anonymity.
- Trusted servants may choose to skip in person meetings because of the ease Zoom provides.
- No before or after meeting fellowship.
- Remote communities don't always access to internet.
- Zoom bombers
- Be aware of your dress on Zoom.

History 1935-1970

Russ S. Area 4, Arkansas

A quick overview of Alcoholics Anonymous from 1935-1971 and significant events in society that promoted the opinions that people formed concerning the movement. From A.A.'s roots in the Oxford Group to Hollywood's portrayal of the alcoholic and the view that

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A.A. offers the hope of recovery, we will take a walk through the first 36 years of the A.A. movement. The view from articles and literature, both fictional and non-fictional, will be touched on as well.

The Slender Thread of the events of the men and women, the ones we hear about regularly and the ones we don't give credit to often enough were all instrumental in the success of the AA program that we enjoy today. No denying the higher power and the synchronization of all the events that took place and are continuing to take place. The impact of Sam Shoemaker's contribution is significant due to the fact that he helped the Oxford group stay connected to the down and out, therefore us alcoholics were not forgotten. Frank Buchman although his mission and efforts, noble, they were more out-reaching in society and he led the Oxford group to more global missions. Sam Shoemaker brought the message of hope to the alcoholic - he assisted and influenced Bill significantly in the writing of the Big Book and the message of the Higher Power and the tenants that the Oxford group taught. The tenants were based on First Century Christianity, which meant it was the practicing servants in the streets with the message to the drunkards! The contributions of so many people that made it all happen is important to us today, not only because we need to understand the history of how God put this whole program into action but also that it is still relevant today, as we each bring a certain gift, talent, insight and perspective to the continued growth and sustainability of the AA way of life. Example of this: Without Bill Wilson the Big Book would not have been written but without Hank Parkhurst it wouldn't have been published

Area Chair

Gene M. Area 38, Eastern Missouri

The Area Chair position in the AA General Service Structure has many responsibilities but the great thing about AA is that we never have to do any of these service jobs by ourselves; there are always people who are willing to help. I will talk about qualifications, duties, and some of the things I think we need while we serve as Area Chairs. We will also share our experiences with this vital link in the AA Service Structure. - Service manual suggests 3-5 years sober, just a suggestion each group, district, area is autonomous, having experience in area affairs, understanding and appreciation of steps, traditions, and concepts. Traditions and concepts can be applied at home, work, everywhere. -Leadership skills, Bills words were concept 9, tolerance, flexibility and vision. -Sensitivity to the needs of the areas wishes. Better to talk and consult, be informed, take in information, and then use best judgment to decide what to do. - Suggested to be a past elected position, GSR, DCM, District Chair-Computer Skills to carry on work-have knowledge of Roberts rules (11 duties of a chairperson) open meeting, agenda, timeline, to announce next activities, recognize members, motions- state questions. can refuse to recognize time wasting, mean spirited, ensure order, expediate business, respond to inquiries, authenticate documents, close meeting-knowledge of procedures of the Area policies, -have the time to commit-support of the family with so much time away from home-best to set next year's meetings a year in advance and take holidays, etc. into account-location for each meeting, contact person for hotel- dealing with tech issues today, do we do area meetings hybrid, venues with Wi-Fi, etc, can utilize tech 12 to help with tech issues at area meetings-announce date and time of area assembly, how you do that? newsletter, phone calls, email, etc.-communicate with delegate to help delegate and help facilitate mock conference - communicate with committees-to be the administrative officer of the area-to prepare the agenda, consultation with officers and anything that is brought up as old or new business, try to follow in sequence to stay on track-close communication with the delegate to give delegate enough time to go over information-how do you communicate? email, website, paper- get agenda and minutes 45 days before area assembly so people could talk about before their district meeting- visit the districts, district meetings, -day of assembly - work with alt area chair to help with liaison with hotel for room needs-adhere to the timeline to help keep order-the chair has no opinions behind the mic, cannot influence the vote-make sure you have enough supplies on hand (ballots, pens, etc.)-keep everything clear with the issues going on, things can get muddy during motions-p and p changes goes to the p and p chair in writing -sharing sessions. Open Comments from the floor- Area to help with group records getting fixed to help GSR and DCM get accurate information

CPC

Greg G. Area 39, Western Missouri

One of the most important rules of presentations is "Know your audience." When we do CPC service work, we carry AA's message to professional audiences, so they know that we're here to help, and the ways in which we do so. Our message to professionals should be in their language (i.e., person-first) and avoid confusing jargon and "table talk" lingo.

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Inform professionals, and future professionals, about what AA is, can do and cannot do (AA Preamble summarizes this) Cooperation without affiliation. Provide pamphlets, meeting schedules, central office contact info and suggest the Meeting Guide app to professional community (military chaplains, court officials, probation & parole, clergy, teachers/professors/coaches). Meeting Guide app helps to show diversity of meetings. Don't over explain; stay on singleness of purpose Each member of a home group can participate in CPC work with their own clergy, Dr., and attorney. Dialog is crucial. We must be careful of WHAT we say as well as HOW we say it. Use common language not AA slang (i.e. Big Book, open and closed meetings, sponsor). Stigma and language are huge barriers for people seeking help. Being able to relate to the audience is important. Don't have expectations when speaking to professional community. Keep track of who you talk to. Invite them to and attend open meeting with them. Prepare before meeting with professionals. Listen carefully and respectfully. Grapevine and La Vina are helpful tools as well as pamphlets. Let's be Friendly with Our Friends (P34)

Concepts 1 & 2

Paul A, Area 57, Oklahoma

Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

Alcoholics Anonymous has been called an upside-down organization because the "ultimate responsibility and final authority for . . . world services" resides with the groups—rather than with the Trustees of the General Service Board or the General Service Office in New York. Concepts 1 & 2 when I think of concepts it takes me back to AA history. Delegates are the voice. Power of the Purse. In Tulsa we have central service. If a group gets hostile towards Central Service Office, then they will quit sending money to General Service Office. The power of the Purse it what makes everything work. Concepts help lead us to unity

- In Concept I, Bill traces the why, final responsibility and ultimate authority.
- The first step in 1938 was the creation of a trusteeship, "first called the Alcoholic Foundation", renamed in 1954 the General Service Board.
- The Alcoholic Foundation's task was to perform the services the groups could not do for themselves.
- How did the General Service Conference come about and why.
- Dr. Bob became fatally ill and Bill W. asked, "when Dr. Bob and I are gone, who would advise the trustees and the office?"
- The first General Service Conference came into existence in 1951. Tradition Two was rooted in conference.
- Tradition Two: "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern."
- In 1955 in St Louis the result of the General Service Conference exceeded the highest expectation. The Conference continues to this day, under Concept I and Tradition Two.

The Home Group

Brandon S, Area 66, Northwest Texas

In this workshop, we will discuss the many ways we can take our experience of service work, the 12 traditions, and knowledge of the information provided by GSO back to our home groups. From discussing items provided in the Group Handbook, linking our groups to AA as a whole to remembering the important role the GSR's play for the respective groups...all of this information will help us with our primary purpose.

Understanding the home group isn't about taking what you know into the group, but rather what you don't know and working together. The ideal home group is a healthy functioning body of AA members. A home group should always greet and welcome newcomers. Home group inventories and Group consciences are important tools, which can help to identify problems the group doesn't even know are present. Traditions should be used to resolve any problems identified through a group inventory or group conscience. We shouldn't forget that a groups member is the most important person in the Service structure.

La Vina Spanish Speaking

Guadalupe G. Area 46, New Mexico

History of la viña, objective of la Viña, how many books it has, current condition, new projects, new tools in social networks, subscriptions, also He will speak a little bit about his experience in La Viña services, etc. I want to talk about the Grapevine, La Vina. The language of the Heart" was the first book I read. el lenguaje del corazón" I like this because when I think of the meaning the heart of the language, every story through languages we can come together in community and we make the heart of the message. To share to the next suffering alcoholic.

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The Grapevine allows us to share our stories to the Hispanic Community. The first time I read a story that I resonated with, I knew I belonged. There are many stories in the Grapevine if one is boring keep searching for the one that resonates with you. I promise you'll find one if you're of the alcoholic type. Us Hispanics can be lazy when it comes to reading. we want someone to give us answers. But answers are the message of the readings. The Grapevine has been around since 1944. The history behind the Grapevine is amazing, and how all this started. The message that was shared to help others, it's motivational, it is life changing and it helped me. I remember I subscribed, and it came to my house. I couldn't believe how much I related to others and for it to be in my native language helped me realize I was an alcoholic. When thinking of the history of the Grapevine for it has been around for so long it proves that it works. The Grapevine continues to grow and evolve over time, now it's so easy to find readings online, or in this book, go to meetings. But the Grapevine you can subscribe and get it sent straight to your home and they're always needing more stories. So, send your stories your story is important it's important to do the work and to send it in because you never know who needs it. But be patient because it is a long process to print. hopefully we can continue to share the Grapevine to different districts to all over different countries call in asking for a translation. Mexico, Colombia, El Salvador you know, us Latinos like to have a good time in parties. we need this message for a new life. Sometimes the Grapevine is all we literally must get the message to further countries there is no internet no email and places like these are counting on the messages that are in this book. they're counting on the vine and the translation that we give and hear. We complain because we have it all. Working AC, nice furniture, car, job, home. Over there they do not have all the ways we do here. Now we are also in the making of the Grapevine app. We are taking ideas for topics as well. If you go to the Grapevine.com you can send an idea. You can also follow the Grapevine on Instagram today and you can send in your stories and pictures there. All of it is a process, but it's beautiful and if you're motivated to be of service and give back, do it! Jump in the service work, do the workshops, everything in the Grapevine is our experience strength and hope. They're needing people who have two year sobriety and who are willing to work for the Grapevine. Everyday is easier to learn about the Grapevine. We are soon to have an app so many countries can get involved. The Grapevine needs all the support it can get from the service to spread the books to all its cultures. When you have faith they sell to the right people who need it and it's not about the money. It's about what's in the message of the books. The solutions of AA. I'd like to thank my colleagues from District 46 for supporting me to be here today. I have a friend who was able to share their story through the Grapevine in Spanish to people in jail. They asked me when I will tell my story and that's why I'm here, the Grapevine has many stories that resonate. Keep searching for the one that resonates with you thank you.

Zoom Meetings

Bryan T. Area 57, Oklahoma

Questions: How Zoom has helped those with accessibilities needs, How Zoom helped the fellowship during Covid, How Zoom-only meetings fit into the service structure, How to safely conduct Zoom meetings, How does anonymity work with Zoom meetings, In absence of connectivity capabilities, using cellular technology to connect with Zoom meetings.

Modem to modem, the Zoom meeting helped the Fellowship stay connected. It wasn't just the groups- Districts, Area's, Regions and the General Service Conference were able to be conducted. Even treatment centers were able to have AA Groups in to carry the message! We learned on the fly. At first how to and then how to safely. We had to learn how to have the meetings and protect anonymity. Folks could attend without the use of a camera or the meetings could require a password for entry. Groups formed with the online meeting only format, while some groups incorporated a hybrid format. These groups have thrived and some participate in the Service structure. We learned that everything was going to be alright!

Secretary/ Registrar

Brian H. Area 39, Western Missouri

The Secretary and Registrar serve as information conduits, keeping the groups, the Area, and GSO informed and aware, and maintaining the needed records to be passed along to future trusted servants. This will be a brief presentation about responsibilities, options, and tools, followed by shared experience from past trusted servants.

Is this one job or two? Different areas do it differently. How do we divide the responsibility?

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Duties of secretary.: records minutes. Keeps mailing address up to date. Act as liaison between officers and committee members. Put together bulletins that encourage attendance are just a few. Duties of registrar: keeps communication going between area and GSO by using fellowship connection. Keep groups up to date. Keeping everything up to date and accurate. Only a few people per area can use Fellowship Connection. If Fellowship Connection is ever down. Email records@aa.org. There is a monthly registrar sharing session on the first Sunday of every month at 5 pm pacific time/8pm Eastern. Zoom 89358896338, password 618742

Q&A session: Can you inactivate groups on fellowship connection or do you have to go through GSO? This does take GSO intervention. They do not give push back, but they do have to have their hand in it. A group is never deleted though. Just made inactive. I just rotated into a job, is there somewhere I can find the requirements and protocol needed to do my job? There is a quick overview in your area guidelines and check with your area chair or officers for specifics. Registrar mainly only needs area contact information to do their job. Group ID numbers have recently changed. When we put them in Fellowship Connection, how do we navigate that? There were old group service numbers. Every group has a new number under FC. Both numbers are stored in the database however. If your area is an area that has these two jobs as one, you will need to figure out how to balance all your responsibilities. If you are in an area with two positions, you will need to figure out how to divide the responsibilities. When you send in their information does that prompt GSO to send committee kits? And if they don't receive do they contact GSO or you? Yea that prompts them to send the packets for their new jobs. They will contact you and you will send it in to GSO. We don't want to overwhelm them by numerous people sending in the same form.

GSR

Michelle W. Area 38, Eastern Missouri

A walk through the structure of AA and the gift of service highlighting resources and inspiration for new and seasoned GSRs. Discussion on the guardrails of our Traditions, the balance found through our Concepts, the up and down the triangle lines of communication our structure enables, and how you play a role as the representatives of groups, who through Tradition two, hold the ultimate responsibility and final authority for our world services.

The GSR role is important but it is not more or less important than any other sober member. The GSR is the link between the home group and the GSO so it is vitally important to pick the most qualified person as GSR. Without this vital link the groups will not be heard and represented nor will the GSO serve it's AA members as the need to per the traditions. Service, such as being a GSR, is all about practicing the traditions within our home groups. Strong groups are the key to the survival of AA. Strong groups produce strong individual recovery, strong recovery produces strong home groups, strong home groups carry the message, the GSO provides the means to the home groups to be strong. We all need to be aware and look at the "conference considerations" (we can access them at aa.org) because these are the issues and concerns that are being discussed at the GSO level. It is our job to know and inform our groups so we can be knowledgeable of our group's opinion.

Concepts 3,4 & 5

Amanda B, Area 68, Southwest Texas

The purpose of this workshop was to examine how Concepts 3, 4, and 5, the Right of Decision, Right of Participation and Right of Repeal, respectively, are applied at every level within the AA Service Structure. Where do we see these concepts in Group Consciences, District Meetings, Area Assemblies, and at the General Service Conference? Which traditions is applicable within the concepts?

Concerning Concept 3, the Right of Decision, we discussed that since groups have ultimate authority, there is no doubt that the AA groups have the right to direct a Delegate on how to vote at the General Service Conference. But should they? Are directed delegates truly "trusted servants?" Attendees gave examples of what they have experienced in their own groups, districts, and areas. Conference is where we send our area delegates to vote for the good of ALL AA, they go once a year. General Service Board are the trustees and they meet quarterly. AAWS oversees publishing. GSO- staff, special workers. All these people have the right of decision and we also know groups have final authority.

The group, the district, or the area that he represents has given him the authority to vote as he sees fit

- We trust our trusted servants to do their due diligence before they vote. (read background material, get opinions from others, etc.)
- Group Conscience vs an Informed Group Conscience

Comes down to trust. Our leaders are chosen by us, so we must trust them. Should delegates tell us how they voted on agenda items? There is no wrong answer. When presented with new information at Area or District, does the GSR/DCM/Delegate change

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their vote? They can with Right of Decision, but then goes back to group/district/area to explain what happened in their report. Trust God, Trust AA, and Trust each other! When discussing Concept 4, the Right of Participation, we discussed the immense spiritual significance of every AA has a vote, and there are no superiors, inferiors. The Service Manual explains how this works with the General Service Board and AAWS, but where do we see this in action at the group level? No class is set over each other. No superiors, or inferiors, discussion of not allowing some to be voting members (Committee chairs, area officers, past delegates) take away from right of participation. But right of participation is everyone has the right to participate in the discussion. -GSO employees can attend trustee meetings to participate but cannot vote. Always remember, oOnce you are a member of AA, you are important and have a voice. From the moment you are a member of AA you can send an agenda item to GSC, but it is suggested to get help. Finally, we ended with Concept 5, the Right of Appeal, and how AA's deference to Minority Opinion is rooted in The Traditions. Attendees were asked to share specific experiences with this concept they have witnessed in their groups, districts and areas that illustrated how the minority was right, and given the chance to speak, the conscience of the voting body was swayed.

- Minority opinion to give their opinion in a safe way
- AA moves a little slow, so things are not getting pushed too fast
- Only HG members can vote,
- Moving slow and informed, aren't floor actions contrary to that
- Floor actions are motions brought to floor and voted on without going back to groups/ district/ area/ gsc

How the 12th Step Call Has Changed

Gena W, Area 25, Kansas

Workshop presentation of shared experience from members about changes they have experienced in how the 12-step call has changed over the years. The 12-step call in our literature, and in our service committee work, aim to make 12-step work possible. Concluding with open sharing of experiences and thoughts of those in attendance. 'In spite of the great increase in the size and the span of this Fellowship, at its core it remains simple and personal. Each day, somewhere in the world recovery begins when one alcoholic talks with another alcoholic, sharing experience, strength, and hope.' (Fourth Edition, BB page xxii, Forward to Third Edition).

From the beginning, the 12-step call has provided hope to alcoholics around the globe. As our book states, nothing ensures our sobriety more than one alcoholic working with another. The 12-step call has developed over the years; from showing up to an alcoholic's home that has reached out for help, answering the call on our hotline, carrying our message to jails and prisons, taking shifts with an alcoholic while they detox in a hospital bed, and giving time to a newcomer before and after their first AA meeting. This breakout session provided many stories of variations on a central theme. The 12-step call provides a hand from our organization to provide hope and a solution to this grave disease. The 12-step call is also for us, members of AA, to ensure our sobriety. As we hear in the rooms, and around the tables of AA, we give it away, to keep it. Whatever an AA 12-step call looks like; the intent should always remain the same. To carry our message, our history, our solution, our hearts and enthusiasm in the form of personal experience. In this session, many stories were shared and suggestions were given: Reading 'Working with Others', before each 12-Step call can help center our minds and provides direction, Ensure that your own house is in order and that you are spiritually fit, make sure you aren't putting yourself in a dangerous environment or situation by going in a small group, pray to a higher power to guide our words and action to best serve the person on the receiving end of the 12 step call, and know when to say when - plant the seed of recovery and simply give it to your higher power to work in that person's life.

Singleness of Purpose

Josh R, Area 25, Kansas

Description: The notion of singleness of purpose as woven into Traditions 5, 6 and 10 is rooted back well before the 12 Traditions were written. Examples of previous movements that were stalled out due to non-adherence to singleness of purpose go back to the early 1800's and perhaps sooner. We will go through a brief history of these movements and use them as a springboard for discussion at it applies to the present and future. Alcoholics Anonymous has gained traction because of two main things. One solution and our primary purpose. Our homegroup, the fellowship and sponsorship should keep us focused on our primary purpose (to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic). If we get off track, we should be able to count on those to redirect us. Redirecting conversations about "outside issues" can be a touchy subject. Often the approach is too harsh (publicly reprimanding them) or too soft (ignoring and letting those conversations continue). The group consensus is this; the best approach is to politely take a person outside and "qualify" them

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using the big book (The Doctor's Opinion, page XXVIII paragraph 1). This approach will allow us to be more inclusive and redirect a person to the appropriate recovery program if they do not identify as an alcoholic. Tradition Three is a qualifier NOT a disqualifier. If a person has a desire to stop drinking they should be welcome at our meetings no matter what outside issues they bring into the rooms. This approach supports our unity and leaves the door open for us to teach them about our traditions as they pertain to alcoholism. Let's not turn anyone away rather turn them toward the appropriate meeting if not an alcoholic.

History 1971- Present

Steve S, Area 57, Oklahoma

A discussion and timeline of AA's history from 1971 to 2022. Fifty-one (51) years of events that shaped our current fellowship. From the passing of Bill W. and the original old-timers to the time AA goes around the world with face-face contact, and to the beginnings of online meetings through internet technology. Let's embrace our strength of diversity and our need for each other to continue recovery. 1971 - Bill W passed away on Jan 24 at the age of 75. He celebrated 36 years of sobriety on Dec. 11 and his 53rd wedding anniversary. 1972 - First pamphlet published "Why AA is Anonymous" by Bill W. 1973 - The 1 millionth copy of the Big Book was given to President Nixon. The first AA book not written by Bill W was published. 1975 - The 40th International AA convention was held in Denver, Colorado drawing 15,000 alcoholics and their families. 1976 - The 3rd Edition of the Big Book was approved. The 1st Regional Forum was held. 1984 - "Pass It On" written about Bill W by Sophy Henn was published on November 30th. It was evident by this point in time that the General Service structure is working strong in large part to the concept of rotation. 1985 - The 15th million copy of the Big Book was given to Ruth Hock. 1988 - The Wilson House Hotel (Bill W's childhood home) was reopened and placed on the National Registry of Historic Places. Lois W, Bill's beloved wife, passed away on October 5 at the age of 97. 1990 - "Daily Reflections" was published, as a conference approved quote of the day AA book. Notes: - AA is active in 185 countries worldwide. - The Big Book has been printed in 173 languages. - Sister Ignatius gave the Sacred Heart coin, beginning the tradition of monthly and yearly coins to celebrate sobriety. There is not, nor ever has been, an "official" AA chip.

Treasurer

Mari G. Area 68, Southwest Texas

1. 7th Tradition 2. A.A. Member Contributions 3. Home Group Treasurer 4. Self-Supporting

How much do we charge for membership in Alcoholics Anonymous

and how much is it to attend an A.A. meeting?" Of course, both are free. In the home group the maximum an individual can contribute is \$5,000 and the most you can bequeath is \$10,000. At the group level anything in the basket constitutes the 7th Tradition. It is in our preamble that we are self-supporting through our own contributions. It is important that we stick to that tradition along with the contributions we make to GSO, Central Service, District, and Area. It is important that we have a prudent reserve. But excess money is bad. We should always have the principle of poverty. History says that John D. Rockefeller was a pioneer of the 7th tradition. Transparency is important for all officers, but the treasurer must be the MOST transparent of all. All paperwork, accounts, and folders must be for clear, concise, and quick answers. This is just an example and the rule that her group follows. When she first arrived in AA it caught her attention that after the basket had been passed around and was full it was given to the chairperson. She thought to herself, "That's the position I want to hold someday." She assumed the money was being collected solely for the chairperson's pocket. She thought they were getting paid to lead the meeting. She didn't realize the money was to keep the group running. She was so accustomed to believing you didn't do anything unless you were paid for it. Sometimes there is a group expense that is unexpected. When that happens and there is no money in the account and not enough in prudent reserve, she calls an emergency group conscious meeting to discuss the need for the money. During that experience, the group "passed the basket" to make funds available. And the groups are responsible to support the district. We are responsible to support the area. And all of us are responsible to send money to GSO. Our money that reaches GSO helps us worldwide. The breakdown and distribution of every dollar is as follows: Conferences: 2.9%, Forums: 7.8%, Archives: 10.3%, Trustees and Directors: 6.6%, Services to the Groups: 37.8%, Public Information: 4.5%, Professional Communities: 5.4%, Corrections: 3.9%, Remote communities: 9.8%. There is a pamphlet on the 7th tradition. History says that Ebby once gave a dime. That's where it started. Spirituality and money mix in the basket. It's very important to be careful in these matters. Once Bill W. had an extra \$5, which was quite a bit of money back then. He needed to give it to Lois. But there was a man at a meeting he went to that was down on his luck. Bill gave the money to the man. That evening at another meeting Bill attended, the treasurer announced the group was low on funds. Bill felt dejected. He didn't have it to give to the group. He had wanted to be a hero. His ego gave the money to the man. New technology has brought about changes and challenges. What do we do about contributions through Venmo or another cash app? Mari's group doesn't take those. But that should be a group conscious decision

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Archives

Matt H. Area 4, Arkansas

The Little Rock Approach Plan; How it came about; Early issues with slips; The Little Rock group split over the plan; Letters to Bill through Bobby; Bills response; Grapevine Article, reaction; Response letters to the Grapevine; How the Plan is still around. Sterling's journey was similar to that of AA's journey. He began to work with other alcoholics and find Harlan. Five years later he learns of AA. Arkansas' first 12 step call was made by a drunk. The first mail order group is in AA Comes of Age. From the beginning the book was written a certain way, the plan was rigid, and it followed Bud visits Bill in New York and stepping stones, 1943 about the Little Rock Plan. Women start to come into AA, more and more people start coming into AA (a real stemwinder) Macie H. Macie moved from Little Rock but 3 women joined the group. Bill and Lois plan a visit, Little Rock group on January 15, 1944. He stood behind a closed curtain, this ignites AA in Arkansas. First Secretary of the Little Rock group is Frances P and she also went through the approach program. In 1950, the first international convention in Cleveland adopted the 12 traditions. Archives is about preserving and collecting the history as well as taking care of it.

Concepts 6&7

Steve F. Area 4, Arkansas

The Concepts are primarily an interpretation of A.A.'s World Service Structure. They identify the traditional practices and principles that relate the parts of our world structure into a working whole.

This workshop will attempt to briefly define Concept VI and VII. Just as the 12 principles of recovery (Steps), principles of unity (Traditions), and principles of service (concepts), can improve our AA life, we will attempt to show how Concept VI and VII can be applied to our personal life. We will study the sixth and seventh concept by examining the skills we use to be of service in AA as well as at home and work. AA Trusted Servants generally work in the best interest of AA. This is because AA saved our lives and we have a vested interest in insuring AA's future. Concept 6 is concerned with the corporate relations of AA. However, the Concepts can work both in our personal lives as well as in the Fellowship at large. Bill first spoke about the Concepts at the 1960 Conference. He hoped they would help carry AA into the future by codifying our World Service functions—the "structure" of AA, the principles which help us relate to one another within AA World Services.

Concept 6 provides the Trustees with the authority to act as freely as possible without daily oversight from the Conference. This is similar to the manner in which the AA groups give authority to the Delegate to act on their behalf. AA World Services is set up to resemble a large corporation rather than a foundation or government. AA Groups are the stockholders, and the Trustees are the Board of Directors, the "AA's Bankers" as well as the guardians of our Traditions. The Trustees are influential in making decisions for the General Service Board—we hold them responsible for \$15-\$16 million in AA money.

The Concepts work in our personal lives as well. We can learn to delegate to others, to find the people we can trust and, step back, observe and let them do the job. In my AA life, my Higher Power gives me the duty to carry the message, but not the responsibility for the results. I put forth the effort and service, God takes care of the rest.

Concept 7— We must look for the spiritual message in the Concepts to bring them alive. Balance can be achieved between the General Service Board and the Conference. The practical power of the Conference is, in the final analysis, superior to the legal power of the Board. The General Service Board has the legal status, rights, duties and responsibilities for our AA World Services. The AA Conference is the seat of ultimate service authority, although it is theoretically an advisory body. The Conference has great influence and financial power and could overcome the legal rights of the Board. Conference recommendations have the force of directives to the Board.

DCM

Cliff P. Area 39, Southwest Missouri

Being a DCM is much more than chairing a meeting. Working with a group of individuals to best serve the still suffering alcoholics in our area involves: working with Area wide efforts to communicate the group conscious of the District, reaching out to our groups to confirm meeting schedules, working with GSRs to share information and opportunities, serving an active group of district committee chairs to further the work of Alcoholics Anonymous, and increasing communication at all levels to create and maintain district unity and fellowship. A DCM has the privilege of leading communication between the Area and the Groups in their District and technology at various levels of technology can help.

Topic of Communication: Enabling group conscious to ensure that the groups feel like their voice counts and always meet the participation where they are. Some effective forms of communication included group text (GroupMe App was recommended), email and in person visits to halls that don't participate.

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Singleness of Purpose Spanish Speaking

Maria E. Area 57, Oklahoma

During this workshop we will be having a 15–20-minute presentation on Alcoholics Anonymous Traditions 3 & 5 followed by 30 minutes of shared experience of participating workshop members. We will be utilizing AA conference approved literature and newsletters from GSO. "Our first duty, as a society, is to ensure our own survival. Therefore, we must avoid distractions and multi-purpose activity. An AA group, as such, cannot take on all the personal problems of its members, let alone the problems of the whole world".

Her first experience in AA she went for meetings and she ended up finding a lot of men who wanted to help her out she was able to confess her problems as if she was in therapy. But she had never worked the steps and she never got a sponsor and she kept drinking. She felt as if it was more of a gathering of meeting new friends and finding support she didn't realize through finding a sponsor it was much more than that. She kept wondering why she kept drinking and none of her problems were getting fixed. She then found that she had to change her character through the steps of AA which you worked with the sponsor. Why aren't there more women coming to AA in the Spanish community? How can we grow AA and reach to the next suffering alcoholic? And what do we do when people come in with outside issues? How do we help them, or do we send them to a different home group that does help with that? Discussion- people in the meeting gave feedback; a gentleman said as long as they're willing to admit that they have alcoholism or they're able to announce that they are of the alcoholic type; they can stay, and we're supposed to help them as an alcoholic, but still respect and not change the Traditions.

General Service Structure

Melanie K. Area 46, New Mexico

How the concept and the structure of AA came about and why all that is included in the General Service Structure. I will start from the top of the structure and work my way down providing brief and some detailed information on each section.

The sections include: A.A Groups, Group GSR's, District Committees, Area Assemblies, Delegates to the General Service Conference, General Service Board, The AA Grapevine Board, AA World Services Board, The Grapevine Office, and General Service Office. The Conference and Trustee Committees will also be listed as well. I will include what "General Services" might include. The significance and importance of the General Service Structure.

District Committees-there are GSRs in each district which elect the DCM. Area Assembly-election of the delegate and the alternate delegate. Delegate and the General Service Conference- 21 Trustees, Class A and B. General Service Board-AA World Service and Grapevine Board.

Grapevine

Ramon G. Area 10, Colorado

The presentation is a history of the A.A. Grapevine & La Viña, from its first issue to its most recent editions. We'll discuss the various services the Grapevine and La Viña have provided to our Fellowship over the years, the changes that the publications have experienced, and what the future might look like!

Corrections

Nancy M. Area 38, Eastern Missouri

The workshop will focus on ways in which to work with the Correctional Community, both behind the walls and within the community. Areas that will be reviewed will include how to address issues related to proof of attendance, perceptions of A.A. and suggestions on educating the professional community.

Professionals are trained not to classify people as alcoholics/addicts they use words like substance abuse. Giving a client a meeting sheet to get signed and giving them a certain number of meetings to attend is not enough. She stressed the importance of professionals taking a genuine interest in the client and going a little deeper. Asking questions like do you have a sponsor? Are you working the steps? Do you show up early for the meeting before the meeting? Do you stay after? Are you doing any service? Gave reference to tradition 11 "letting our friends refer us" and the importance of the impression we AA's make on professionals. Some best practices: AA's should make it clear that we are a spiritual and not religious program. We should give no opinions to clients about taking or not taking medication. As professionals they have no option other than that is a personal matter between the individual and the doctor. If correctional staff hears about that they will not refer clients to us. We should not claim to be the only answer for their clients. There are many other organizations cooperating with DOC, we are one of many. We should explain our 12 steps and the benefits of having clients in their population that are recovering. We should remember that overall correctional facilities are understaffed with Corrections officers and they often work double shifts and could already be very stressed before having to deal with AA members bringing in meetings. Discussed tablets and how different facilities have different contracts. Some

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are paid for by tax dollars some are not. AA literature is loaded onto the tablets. Some states pay for it some ask the clients to pay. The Grapevine is a great thing to give professionals because it's eye catching and it has titles for stories on cover. They often give Grapevines to their clients. Professionals also like to be given short bits of information rather than long explanations. They have a job to do on top of cooperating with us. There are videos for AA's to share with professionals. Corrections professionals are required to have 40 hours of continuing education. Corrections professionals love to hear about success stories from AA members staying sober and out of prison.

Concepts 8&9

Mark G. and David H. Area 10 Colorado

Concept Eight discusses the responsibilities of the General Service Board regarding overall planning and policy for AA and the relationship between the board and the Service corporations: AAWS and the AA Grapevine. Concept Nine discusses leadership in AA, the importance of selecting our leaders with care and the tasks that leadership must perform in AA including some of qualities and characteristics that can help members be effective leaders.

- we're not just publishing paper anymore-corporate thinking is not for AA-concept 8 is a thankless job. -Grapevine won't change preamble without conference-buzzwords working their way into AA like transparency which we already have set in place. -concept 9---stay awake! -great essay need to read-we don't give anyone absolute authority in AA-alcohol is great deterrent -good service leader knows to get help and follow those who went before-observe-get all in--get the spark-AA won't be here if we don't put our best out there. -character over skill is what we need! -Bill's article in Grapevine listed qualities of leadership-make decisions or seek more input-be able to listen and adapt-take responsibility for action and decisions. Better word for transparency is honesty -be a statesman not a people pleaser-take criticism -visions and make plans but be flexible-electing leaders not just because they are breathing-not a popularity contest-3rd legacy-the hat is a God thing-leadership starts with sponsorship-conference is about group conscience of the moment not hard and fast what your area said. So important to go through the concepts in order. You really need to understand the first 7 to understand 8. 8 sums up what the Trustees of the General Service Board do and in what capacity they act. The arrangement is in line with modern corporate business practices. This essay in 8 is about WHY we cannot have a paid CEO. The 2 boards have responsibilities that are more than just a committee could handle. The two boards are split up, both possess its own charter, working capital, executive, employees, and office equipment. So, the trustees are the guarantors or kind of trusting directors of AA World Services, Inc and The AA Grapevine Inc. If someone were to sue AAWS they would essentially be suing the board, so they must be careful about how they operate, and we have to be careful how we elect.

Involving the Alternate

Paul M. Area 67, Southeast Texas

The Alternate Delegate is a critical position in the Service structure. Supporting the Delegate wherever needed and in constant communication with the Area, the Regional Trustee as well as GSO. In some areas, the Alternate is assigned additional responsibilities. In the Southwest Region they are assigned the responsibility of writing a Newsletter for the Southwest Regional Delegate's Assembly (SWRDA) as well as serving as their Area's representative on the Southwest Regional Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly (SWRAASA) Committee.

The alternate is a good way to start in service. You get to learn the responsibilities of the position for which you are the alternate and pray they stay well. Alternate should always be ready to stand in but that isn't the extent of it. Now many alternates have other duties than to just be in training though, that is always critical. The alternate being trained by the current position holder is a way to provide continuity in AA and to continue to grow. It helps move AA forward to carry the message to others as well. Part of this is normally learning how to listen in a different way, without bias or judgement. You must learn to listen with that right intent or we miss a lot. Listen without an opinion. Communication is the greatest problem we have in AA. Working as an alternate will help overcome this. The Service Manual says what alternates are to do, generally. Many Areas and Districts do have other more specific requirements. We need to know for what we are to be responsible. Alternates and the position holder should meet, talk and shadow. Best case scenario you rely on your sponsor and the position holder. Understand there is a lot you don't know, and they are there to help you learn. Be humble and teachable. Go to meetings and assemblies together. By pulling in the same direction who will likely grow closer and more understanding. If you have an alternate, pull them along, take them with you, have them run meetings. For DCM's create a document that tells about the position holder and the alternate. Take that with you to meetings to hand out to members of the groups, especially the GSR if they have one. As you go to different meetings get to know the personality and conscious of the groups. Read the Service Manual and the Big Book. Get to know the policies and procedures Watch what others do in positions of service. You will grow spiritually through sacrifice and service. Learning to work with others

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leads to spiritual growth. Position holders and alternatives each have their own gifts. They need to learn what those are to work together and rely on one another.

Websites

Laura S. Area 46, New Mexico

This presentation will focus primarily on Area Websites: important considerations during development, and useful tools for optimal site function and audience reach. Discussion will include building a site with rotation in mind and developing content that can be used as an informational/educational/service tool - not only for AA members, but also professionals, and more importantly, people who desperately need AA but are not familiar with our program.

Trustees

Ron C. Area 67, Southeast Texas

The service position of Trustee is one of the most important positions in the General Service Structure of Alcoholic Anonymous. This workshop will talk about the history of Trustees, from the early days of our Fellowship. The difference between the Class A and Class B trustees. This workshop will also look at the current selection and election process for regional trustees, general service trustees and trustees at large. We will also talk about some of the characteristics that are considered when the selection/election process happens. Custodial relationship "take care of". The AA service triangle can delegate to the level below. The Trustees are at the bottom of the triangle and all delegation comes from above. The Trustees are responsible for AWS, GSB and Grapevine as delegated to them (ultimately) by the AA Groups. Power of the pocketbook—if AA groups don't give money they make a decision as to how much money is available to conduct AA business. AAWS and Grapevine are two separate corporations, each with its own Board and Charter. Example AAWS makes decisions about the production (covers, paper size, etc. Not CONTENT) of AA literature, based on the latitude of decisions provided by the Conference. Trustees derive their power from the Conference. The composition of the Board (trustees Class A and Class B) can be reorganized based on perceived needs of the Fellowship. Trustees (Regional) are elected, and Trustees at Large are selected in conjunction with a job interview at AAWS. 1990 Conference Committee on Trustees—they were no longer called "local" Trustees, they can come from any Area. Class A Trustees are selected based on recommendations from the Fellowship, they don't "apply" for the position. What does a Trustee do? It is an unpaid position. It is important to listen and help the Trustees and Conference establish a dialogue. The Trustee's right of decision comes with a duty to listen, because getting to the group conscience is a process. Oversight of the corporation, review of budgets, selection of the Board, help get things done at the corporate level, so AA as a whole can function. The corporations do things that can't be done by individual groups. Regional Trustees have a different role, they travel and visit the different Areas in their Region. This consumes a great deal of time, particularly weekends. All Regional Trustees are also on Conference Committees, in addition to attending Board meetings. Keep an open mind as you LISTEN and gather information to make decisions. It is not always a pleasure, because there can be disagreements, but it is an honor.

Area Assemblies

Robert S. Area 65, Northeast Texas

A short presentation on how Northeast Texas Area 65 hosts a weekend Area Assembly. Topics will include Mock Committees, Delegate report back, 3rd Legacy Elections, GSR/DCM sharing sessions, and more. Please bring your experience on how your Area hosts their Assemblies as this can be a great learning opportunity and informative session. A lot of areas do quarterly assemblies, some don't, some only do 3, they used to have 4 but decided to have a DCM and GSR orientation in place of one of the assemblies. It's three weekends for all the portions. Used to have Spanish interpretations but discovered there was need for 2 English oriented and 1 for the Spanish community as requested, at this orientation there are presenters, basically a workshop, explains service structure, conference, GSO, that's in January, in spring the assembly is centered around GSO. For every committee at GSO that there is, there's a breakout session. Go through the agenda items one by one. GSRs and DCMs have gone to their groups and make a group decision and vote on what is proposed. Half of the afternoon is dedicated to informing the delegates on what the groups outlook on the matters are. Then go into regular business, Sunday mornings our committee report backs. All chairs will give reports. In June, there's a 3-4-hour presentation to go over the delegates report on what happened at conference, there's a Q&A on what happened with each item voted on. Fall assembly happens in September, on even years there are elections, they are an odd panel area, so even years they have elections. The fall assembly the only business that is heard is of urgent nature. All other business is off the table, simply because of the time it takes for elections. On election assemblies they also have a conference with guest speakers.

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Assemblies are free, they do have a \$10 coffee card or coffee priced per cup. The conferences are not free due to cost and being self-supporting. In odd years, they don't have a conference, they have a workshop and the workshop will take place of the conference, workshop topics are variety. I.e., sponsorship, safety in AA, Technology in AA. The assemblies are open to everyone, all the area officers and their alternates are voting members. DCMs are voting members if they aren't present then the alt DCM can fill in. If GSR is not available, alt GSR will vote, if they are not there, a Bonafide substitute will take their place in voting. 6 years ago, they did an area inventory, participation at area committee meetings and assemblies when they aren't centrally located, was not as prevalent. Panel 69 there was a technology chair that was created. Before covid there was an idea to initiate the idea of hybrid meetings. March of 2020 happened, everything started shutting down, got a phone call from their chair and didn't want to cancel the assembly, within two weeks they had their first zoom assembly. Struck out the mock committee and just focused on business aspect of it. The next assembly in the summer, they were better prepared and had a full weekend conference where delegates went over all the business. For fall elections, there was concern on how elections would happen, GSO showed up and instructed on procedure and they were able to successfully have third legacy elections. In spring 2021, there had to be a consensus on how to make a mock committee between the chair and tech chair. In the policies and procedures manual problems arose with doing it virtual, a motion in the summer was passed to have hybrid. If you're a chair and responsible for the motions, make sure that they are written in a way that most people can understand. In their area there is a rideshare coordinator and a room share coordinator. If anyone is unable to afford a room it is announced to get more people in attendance. "If any area doesn't already do GSR and DCM sharing sessions, it is a really cool thing. In addition to the 12 standing committees there are two other committees that are crucial. Financial committee and structure committee. They do not have open floor motions, they have a what's on your mind, and if it sounds like a motion, they are suggested to form a motion.

Treatment

Ali K. Area 10, Colorado

AA started and grew with Bill W. talking to drunks in the hospital. Today, it is much harder to access alcoholics seeking help from various facilities. We can't just walk in and say, "Show me to your drunks please!" We will talk about how we are taking meetings into treatment facilities and the increasing importance of our 12 Traditions being at the forefront of our 12-step work. Service work is the groups responsibility. The speaker went to 2 treatment centers. Never heard about AA or the steps. Treatment and Accessibility Chair (in A10, this is a dual position. Speakers District provided BB's for the treatment center meetings. Zoom made AA accessible for treatment centers. Sole job as District Treatment Chair to serve District, Groups, and making accessible in Treatment centers. Many volunteers lacked knowledge or experience with Traditions. A10 member trying to lead AA in Treatment Center mental health & Detox/Treatment. Stated was dual diagnosed. T-10 Medications, Mushrooms, suboxone, triggers... We have no opinion in AA as representatives. 1 on 1 with sponsee, will have the conversation. (Even perceived affiliation. Sports teams, bands, etc...)

Relationship. Suggested treatment cooperates with Bridge the Gap, CPC. Work closely with other servants. Coordinate Zoom. CPC zoom presentations with staff. Speaker meetings per HIPPA laws. Treatment blacked out screens. Treatment centers wouldn't let AA come in person. They allowed members to do AA with clients via zoom. Service projects promote unity within a homegroup. Treatment center commitment by groups. We need to honor our commitment with treatment center. Maybe 4 groups agree to show up once a month. Why aren't there more groups with H&I's chairs, PI, CPC, Corrections, etc.... Why do we only rely on the districts and areas to carry the weight of these commitments. One regret is that I wish I would have gone to more treatment center meetings. Not just calls, emails, and coordination. We have a responsibility to do the work. But not to pretend to be other things to treatment center. Taxi, handing out meds, etc.... We are responsible for representing AA in the public in these facilities. Good to have workshops and conversations with people willing to serve to educate them on our traditions and experience.

Q&A / Comments: (Personal opinion of member) Covid was a good excuse for people not to commit and not to get involved. Covid hangover. Can't do treatment job or serve via Zoom.

Q- How to approach the court or police department to bring AA in there?

A- PI chair, CPC chair, Corrections chair

Q- Several hospitals (due to Covid, they are low on staff) How to get accredited?

A- Zoom if possible also PI, CPC, Corrections chairs etc....

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Concepts 10&11

Christina S. Area 67, Southeast Texas

Bill W. states on page C36 of THE A.A. SERVICE MANUAL combined with TWELVE CONCEPTS FOR WORLD SERVICE "Let us always be sure that there is an abundance of final or ultimate authority to correct or to reorganize; but let us be equally sure that all of our trusted servants have a clearly defined an adequate authority to do their daily work and to discharge their clear responsibilities." Do our trusted servants, at every level, have clearly defined authority? Is it an adequate authority to do their work? Are they able to discharge their responsibilities? Bill W. also states on page C37 of THE A.A. SERVICE MANUAL combined with TWELVE CONCEPTS FOR WORLD SERVICE "The main outlines of this underlying structure are now defined, and the effectiveness of this arrangement has been well proven. Of what, then, does our underlying structure of service consist of?" Let's answer these questions and more, together. Join us to discuss and share your experience, strength, and hope. In a fellowship that has a spirit of democracy where the members are peers, and there is no authority. These concepts remind us of the necessity of good service leadership at all levels. It is based on our sound ways of choosing leaders and adhering to timely rotation. We want our service leaders to follow the Policies and Procedures so that the trusted servant can do their job correctly. Policies and Procedures just helps everything run a lot smoother.

Unity for Our Future

Wes R. Area 66, Northwest Texas

Everywhere we look today there are massive amounts of division between people on all kinds of issues. One of the things I personally love about the rooms of AA is the closeness and unity that we enjoy during sobriety. How can we maintain this unity and keep the world's division from affecting the fellowship? That is the question I hope we can answer during this presentation. From developing a better understanding of the Declaration of Unity to concentrating our efforts on our Primary Purpose, we have many solutions to combat division and outside issues. We can help preserve what makes our fellowship special by learning how to keep AA unified for the future. My sponsor told me, "if someone respects you, and your sobriety today, you better say yes".

Unity definition: the state of being united or joined as a whole. Many of us won't make it out without Unity. We have a common problem, and a common solution. That's why unity is so important. What threatens our Unity? (my opinion)

1. Pride & ego (must stay right sized)
2. Arguing (however, we can debate in a business meeting, then drink coffee after)
3. Controversy & drama (causes division)
4. Resentment caused by fear, and lack of security. Very divisive.
5. Gossip and judgement.
6. Social media.
7. Outside issues (AA is meant to be inclusive, but sometimes can be divisive).

Declaration of Unity - This we owe to AA's future: To place our common welfare first, to keep our fellowship united. For in AA unity depends our lives, and the lives of those to come.

How do I keep myself small in AA?

1. Humility (agree to disagree, but have coffee later)
2. Remember our primary purpose. Stay too busy for controversy.
3. Check me at the door and pick myself up on the way out.
4. Rotation of leadership. So very important.
5. Trust our Traditions in Unity.
6. Remember love and tolerance is our code.

Unity for the future: Work the steps. Support the spirit of the Traditions, and Concepts. Live Unity in all my affairs. The pandemic allowed us to catch up with technology, stay plugged in, help the next suffering alcoholic, through the calamity. Traditions protect our Unity.

Language & Culture Barriers

Linda F. Area 66, Northwest Texas

Synopsis: How to reach those with language and cultural barriers, the importance of them getting involved in District/Area service, getting them a separate Group/District, the need for translation equipment and translated documents and finally questions and discussion from the audience.

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Sponsorship

Sandy L Area 4, Arkansas

A brief history of sponsorship in AA, how it has evolved over 87 years and what AA sponsorship is like today. Discussion of various types of sponsoring (individual, group, service sponsorship, etc.) and how *"carrying the message"* in this unique way is so important to AA's unity and longevity. Sponsorship is a topic that everyone of us can relate and share. Questions to ask: How am I doing in sponsorship? How am I doing as a sponsor, as a sponsee, how is AA doing? In 1935 and then again in 1937, Bill and Bob discussed the principle behind sponsorship-one drunk talking to another-used to approach the wife first (getting background information)-an official surrender (steps one and two before coming into a meeting) Don't impose your HP on others, don't talk down to them. Communication "You are helping me, more than I am helping you". Sponsorship in 1944: Akron group and Dr. Bob wrote a manual for AA both from the sponsor and the sponsees perspective. Reading is not doing. Needing someone to show me HOW to take steps. HOW to take action. Active sponsorship helps the newcomer get involved. The best thing isn't when we get medallions for our sobriety birthday. The best thing is when our sponsees get medallions, and then even better when their sponsees get medallions.

Central Office/Intergroup

Rosi S. Area 68, Southwest Texas

A workshop that will share on how Intergroups serve the AA groups, the varieties of Intergroup organizations, Intergroup volunteers, responsibility and authority of Intergroups, communication between entities, best practices and current news about Intergroups in AA.

Questions to ask before establishing a central office: 1. Are there enough groups to support a central office, 2. Are the groups willing to support, 3. Have the groups been consulted. Function is to be there for when someone reaches out needing help. Services provided meeting schedules, on-line meetings list web site accessibility, books, literature, chips and newsletters available for groups. Intergroups operate independently of service structure but may be represented.

Public Information

Amanda R. Area 65, Northeast Texas

This discussion will be about what the job descriptions have entailed. Some of the exciting things that we have gotten to bring to fruition and still working on. Who the target audience is. In and out of AA. I wasn't so sure this was a job for me when I got it- But if not me than who? What to do when you find you're having difficulty building a committee willing to always wants to show up. What do you do then? We have countless opportunities of PI work that can be done.

Concept 12

Heather G. Area 25, Kansas

Concept 12 consists of the General Warranties of the General Service Conference, Article 12 of the Conference Charter. These Warranties guarantee that the Conference will conform to A.A.'s Twelve Traditions. The spiritual foundation for our world services is contained in the Six Warranties. Prudence is the guiding principle of Concept 12. A promise to the fellowship. Set standards for leadership. Communication with GSO is important. Lead by example. AA will not tolerate human authority. Minority opinion is very important. The best defense is no defense when AA is under attack. Freedom to grow in his light. Excess money they divide between Districts, Area, and GSO quarterly. Reduces arguments about excess money. We must step aside and let the new people

do the service position. Live the spirit of rotation. Stuff is looked at extensively before it goes to the conference. Dealing with Traditions breaks- show them in the literature where they broke the Traditions. Then leave it alone. You're not the AA police. Long timer sit down with them and talk about what's going on. Put your big girl panties on because sometimes God asks you to do hard things. Make sure people know and learn about the Traditions and Concepts. When you talk to the press leave AA out of it. All of the Concepts are promises to AA members.

Area Newsletter

Cari H. Area 57, Oklahoma

Tradition Five states "Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose—that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers." That is the primary purpose of Area newsletters. During the workshop, we will discuss how to start a newsletter if your Area does not already have one. The workshop will help with ideas about a name and logo, content, visual design, and imagery. Policies & Procedures may affect what the newsletter contains and how it is distributed. Other Area chairs throughout the SW Region will share information about technology for language translations, production, and distribution. Need more translators to help. People are retiring and need new people to step to translate.

SWRAASA 2022

Workshops

Saturday, October 8, 2022

The reasons they still do the paper copy because they get people with no phone or addresses. People that don't know they are alcoholics. They have advanced to QR codes for more accessibility to information. It's also cheaper to mail. One guy wants a panel of cartoons to help add humor and information content that month. Groups have added Birthdays to add more content to their monthly newsletter. All newsletters can be found on websites.

Saturday Night Speaker

Rebecca M. Area 4, Arkansas

When I was out drinking, I didn't see any value in service, other than expecting others to serve me. Through Alcoholics Anonymous, service has given me opportunities to learn how to love, how to practice gratitude, how to listen, how to be a family member, and how to work with others (in and out of the program). I still have more to learn, and there are still more opportunities for me to serve.

The one-word answer is love. I didn't know what the meaning of love was when I got started in AA. I didn't know what the meaning of service was, unless it served me. I didn't feel like I belonged growing up. It was the same for a lot of people but, the difference for me was that alcohol worked... and I wanted more, and I wanted more. My parents had me hospitalized a few times. Alcohol was the solution, and the consequences weren't that bad for me at first. At the end lies were just flowing from me, and the broken promises. It was all about how to feel better for me. A friend of a friend was going to an AA meeting. I went, and what I heard was that people who drank like I drank didn't have to anymore. I heard people who had experiences like I had. I heard the language of the heart and I just had to keep coming back. I started going to meetings with a contact from a friend who was able to get me to meetings. That was my first contact with service, someone serving me. Then I started cleaning out the ashtrays and talking to people after meetings. It helped me to get out of myself, though I didn't see it that way at the time. I thought I was able to go to any length I was able to share, and I didn't want to disappoint these people. I moved back to Fayetteville and someone asked me what my home group was. I told them I was just going to several. They said "No". you need to have a homegroup and get a sponsor. So, I did, but, I didn't drink coffee so I didn't think I needed to help with that and we met at a church and couldn't smoke so I didn't do that. I became treasurer, but I couldn't keep track with that. That was about the time I moved to Little Rock. All the cool people were going to business meetings. They'd already had the election and needed to name some committee chairs. I got roped into that. Not too long after that I realized all the cool people were going to the sobering center. Finally, an elder statesman came to me and said "You need to go. They need to hear what you have to say." I went. Service has taught me how to practice gratitude and to find more reasons to feel grateful. I was then elected alternate GSR and the GSR got sick. I had to stand in for the GSR until the next election. That gave me hope that I had a good way out. I had good examples who went to the district and area who showed me the way. That is when I learned the Traditions and Concepts, as I was doing it. I know my kids have learned from me to keep a commitment if you make it. I loved serving as delegate. I was trying to think of ways to be the Alternate Delegate again. I was elected Delegate, went home, called my sponsor and cried. I found out that when I trust my higher power things work out. When I got the Delegate packet it included the name and contact information for a lady who'd been a Delegate for a year already. When we talked she said she'd become a delegate and didn't want to be one either. It all worked out. Service is all about love.

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Delegate Sharing Topics

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Communication: The Language of the Heart is Spoken Here

Mark B. Area 4, Arkansas

Communicating the Language of the Heart through the message of Recovery began with Bill W. to Dr. Bob. It is precisely how we have received the life-giving message of Alcoholics Anonymous as well. It will continue to be just that for others so long as we commit together to adhere to our principles contained within our Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity, and Service.

Communication is at the heart of A.A.'s mission to extend the hand of recovery from alcoholism to anyone who seeks out help. It starts with one alcoholic sharing his or her experience, strength, and hope with another alcoholic. It takes on many forms: group meetings, district committees and area assemblies. An entire conference structure that is served by three boards and two corporations. This upside-down triangle is the pathway for A.A.'s communications. Singleness focus of our 3rd legacy. The word is communication. There has been a lifesaving communication among ourselves with the world around us and with GOD.

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Self-Support: Where Do Money and Spirituality Mix?

Wayne H. Area 65, Northeast Texas

Sacrifice, Unity, Responsibility, and Prudence at all levels – these deeply held Spiritual Principles of the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous ensure the collective health of A.A. Our very survival comes from the voluntary contributions of our members acting through their groups. The function of our services and our society depend upon our unwavering commitment to maintain A.A. and our Services at “Full Strength”.

Self-support begins with me (we) because I am part of the group. We pay our rent and utility bills, buy coffee, snacks and A.A. literature. We support our central office, our area committee, and our General Service Office. If it were not for those entities, many new people would never discover the miracles of A.A. AA reaches to anyone, anywhere. Our vision today: complete support down the triangle. According to Bill the answer is simple. Every single A.A. service is designed to make more and better Twelfth Step work possible, whether it be a group meeting place, a central or intergroup office. “A DECLARATION OF UNITY: This we owe to A.A.’s future: To place our common welfare first; to keep our fellowship united. For on A.A. unity depend our lives and the lives of those to come.”

The Hand of AA: Inclusive, Never Exclusive

Eloy M. Area 67, Southeast Texas

We need to look at what inclusive really means. But to really understand let's look at exclusive. Who would we exclude? Let's first start looking inside our own home groups. Do we have homeless or common winos coming in? How about the Drug user? Tradition three states the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. Again, how do we define this requirement? Does not a person have to declare himself an Alcoholic? The answer is no!

Safety-An Important Consideration

Kris H. Area 67, Southeast Texas

My earliest recollection of safety discussions 20 years ago was focused on 12 step calls and the notion that there is safety in numbers so never go alone if possible. Reference jealous husband anecdote from Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers. Discuss new societal fears and their reach into AA. Synopsis of available resources on the topic including smf-209, f-211 and f-228. Highlight main points, including a personal view on the sacredness of Anonymity. Finish with a synopsis of responses to a very recent Delegate poll regarding Safety and Inclusion that was circulated on the Delegate email system.

Humility-Accepting the Group Conscience

Shellia D. Area 66, Northwest Texas

We all have those egos-even within our home group and during our group conscience. Sometimes, we, matter-of-factly, go into our group conscience knowing what we as individuals want to happen. Then, as usually the norm, someone says something poignant and now our minds could possibly be changed. Is this perhaps a new perspective on the group and its' members? Or is it truly our own conscious telling us to listen and be willing to accept that a fresh face and voice may be just what is needed? When it comes to the group conscience, we need to question our motives and set aside self-will and arrogance. We sometimes go into our groups knowing exactly what we ourselves want to happen. It is not good practice to intimidate or bully someone to come around to our side of an argument. We also should never campaign or rally others to our side. Do we consider our group, district, area, and A.A. as a whole? The A.A. group must conform to A.A. as a whole. We must place our principles into the group conscience and remember that the ultimate authority is already in place. Are we willing to be open minded and hear both sides objectively and keep the traditions in our hearts and minds? We must be courteous to the judgements, hearts, and minds of others. Do we let the minority speak? Do we truly listen to what they say? We need to open our hearts to the next right action. Only then are we on the right track. Are the decisions we are making going to better the group and its members? Or are we going to stay stagnant and conform to the ideas of members who have been there longer? Some people don't want to go to group conscience meetings because they think they are too political or because they don't feel heard. It's unfortunate they feel that way because all members deserve a voice. Listening to a fresh face and a new voice is sometimes exactly what we needed. As Bill W. said, “A.A. and acceptance has taught me there is a bit of good in the worst of us and a bit of bad in the best of us. And we are all children of God and we each have a right to be here. As members we need to trust the process and our trusted servants. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die hence our common welfare comes first and that makes us all responsible for the needs of the fellowship. When a group decision is reached, we must go with the spiritual presence of our ultimate authority and have peace within ourselves and with our fellows. If the decision is not what we wanted, we humbly accept the fact that through the process it is

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what it is meant to be. Then and there it is proven that A.A.'s tradition two is correct. The group conscience can safely act as the sole authority and sure guide for Alcoholics Anonymous.

Leadership: An Ever-Vital Need

Jim F. Area 38, Eastern Missouri

In April 1959 Bill W. wrote: "No society can function well without able leadership in all its levels, and AA can be no exception. It must be said, though, that we AAs sometimes cherish the thought that we can do without any leadership at all. We are apt to warp the traditional idea of "principles before personalities" around to such a point that there would be no "personality" in leadership whatever. This would imply rather faceless automatons trying to please everybody, regardless." It seems we are currently in a period in AA where leadership is more vital than ever. Leadership with knowledge of the steps, traditions, concepts and most importantly faith and trust. Leadership is best displayed within the service manual. Those that go before us, their leadership, sets the tone of the new leadership. Leaders at all levels makes our organization function. Leaders must embrace an ever-changing environment. The service manual is a tool that sets a strong foundation for our current and future leaders.

Singleness of Purpose: Staying Pertinent in a Changing World

Sharon S. Area 57, Oklahoma

Not the same thing as our "Primary Purpose." Our first duty, as a society/member, is to insure AA's survival. We must avoid distractions that have nothing to do with the AA program. We are **NOT** all things to all people. An AA group, as such, cannot take on all the personal problems of its members, let alone the problems of the whole world. **CHANGING WORLD**: Decline in membership – perhaps people are realizing they are in the "wrong" program for them and find another fellowship which better suits their needs? What you do and who you are outside of the doors of AA, has **NOTHING** to do with you being an alcoholic inside the AA rooms. Be mindful of what AA is and what AA is NOT! Treat NA like your cousins, send them home to be with their family. Keep NA information (meeting lists, numbers, etc.) in your clubhouses/groups to share with them. Don't run the non-alcoholic off. Take them into the corridor and ask them the questions, qualify them, and if they aren't an alcoholic, give them some directions. AA is not all things to all people! We are not trying to keep others out; we are just trying to keep AA whole.

Carrying the AA Message through Technology

Beth P. Area 10, Colorado

Intro: "While A.A. groups have been meeting on virtual platforms for many years, the pandemic thrust our fellowship into uncharted territory. This talk will provide some historical information, status of 71st GSC Advisory Action on online groups participating in the service structure and ask some poignant questions. "Technology was used to assist in digitizing archive material. Box (software program) has been used to allow Area officers to share documents with each other. Virtual platforms assisted in connecting each other for meetings during the pandemic. Also, able to hold three area assemblies virtually. Discussion at the General Service Conference about online groups participating in the service structure to carry the message. Technology can create separation and needs to be navigated carefully. Tablets are now available with AA literature in corrections facilities. Scanning helped preserve the archives. Technology has helped keep the A.A. message alive but it can also bring a Separation. There is no privacy online, so the Hispanic people didn't go online since the pandemic came about.

Sponsorship: The Privilege of Passing it On

Darin H. Area 25, Kansas

Sponsorship changes over time with us as individuals and AA as a whole. Leadership is an essential part of sponsorship, and it bears tremendous responsibility for the new person coming in the door and the maintenance of those with continuous sobriety. Our relationships run deep and are the difference much of the time, between drunk or sober, life and death, family's survival, and our own lives as sponsors. The meaning of sponsorship has changed over time and I have found that seems to be most people's experience. Leadership is so important in AA. But it is especially important in sponsorship. It bears a huge responsibility to the newcomer walking in the door. Concept 9 sums up leadership and therefore sums up sponsorship as well. We give away sponsorship for fun and for free. It is a personal responsibility in our insurance. The book tells us we walk hand in hand and progress. The sponsor and sponsee BOTH get to grow during this relationship. Sponsorship teaches us love and to have compassion.

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Participating in All of AA (The 3 Legacies)

Barbara R. Area 68, Southwest Texas

Participating in all of A.A. is simple, but not easy. Think of it as a three-legged stool. Who wants to sit on a wobbly stool? But that's exactly what we do when we're not participating in all three legacies. Service, Unity, Recovery. How do we have continued participation, attendance, sponsorship? There is always time to carry the message. What tradition applies helps all AA problems to find a solution.

What do we owe to AA's future

Pam K. Area 39, Western Missouri

In 1955 the 5th General Service Conference was asked to "assume the burdens and privilege of AAs third great legacy – the legacy of World Service." We had been handed "Our Great Responsibility". This responsibility is to protect and care for Alcoholics Anonymous. Pam talked about what we as current AA members owe to AA and our future, that's to "Protect and care for AA ". We do that by carrying the AA message in all our affairs. It's been said that sponsorship keeps us sober and helps us to help the next suffering alcoholic. Today, fewer and fewer people wanting to get involved in service. They just go to home group meetings and maybe offer a small amount of service there such as greeter, make coffee but that's all they want to do. We hear about the three T's: Time, Talent and Treasury. We need to follow the steps and practice our principles which are the traditions in all we do in AA. Without the traditions and principles of this program, we have no program, with no program, we have no sobriety, and with no sobriety I have no life. We all need to get involved in service, ensuring the AA program will continue for future generations of alcoholics. There is no greater liberty than what we find in AA. However, that liberty will require the one thing none of us like, work! Service work!

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Looking Ahead – Trustee Panel

Sunday, October 9, 2022

Looking Ahead Trustee Panel

"Looking Ahead" was the focal point of the five-member panel. It included four Class B and one Class A Trustees. Our Class A trustee stated that the Service Manual was the "bible" that should guide incoming trustees. Looking forward members should remember, always, that the newcomer is the most important person in AA. One Class B trustee said that people entering service work for the first time must remember their primary purpose is to help the still suffering alcoholic. Another suggested that all alcoholics, whether or not they are in service, should not just "look forward", they must "move forward" to enhance their sobriety. Finally, another Class B said those entering service work should learn all they can about their position; be prepared to help newcomers and know that service work is a privilege not to be taken for granted.
