

Orientation Guide
for the new
General Service Representative
District 03/Santa Cruz County
of California Northern Coastal Area 06
of Pacific Region 03
of Alcoholics Anonymous



Responsibility Statement

I am responsible....

When anyone, anywhere,
Reaches out for help, I want
the hand of AA always to be there.
And for that: I am responsible.

<http://santacruzgeneralservice.org/>
www.cnca06.org
www.aa.org

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“Final responsibility and the ultimate authority for AA world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole fellowship.” (Concept I)

WELCOME TO DISTRICT 03 SANTA CRUZ COUNTY!

As a GSR, you are the conduit through which information from your group gets to the District, to the Area and to the Conference of Delegates in New York. This is an ongoing process with an emphasis on bringing a group conscience to the Pre Conference Assembly held annually in April.

You are also the conduit through which the information about AA as a whole gets back to inform the group. Without you, your group will not have a voice and AA as a whole will miss the guidance of your group which is necessary to conduct AA business.

This organizational method; region, area, district and group may seem complicated and overly structured at first but it is really in accord with our Tradition of “least possible organization.” It has been tested over time as providing the most balanced way to arrive at the only recognized authority in AA, which is expressed as an Informed Group Conscience that must be communicated to others when it deals with issues affecting AA as a whole. Perhaps this will be clearer if we start at the top of the AA structure.

YOUR MEETING _____
IS IN SUBDISTRICT _____

YOUR DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBER (DCM) IS _____
PHONE _____
EMAIL _____

YOUR CALIF. NORTHERN COASTAL AREA DELEGATE IS _____

District 03 is in CALIFORNIA NORTHERN COASTAL AREA (CNCA) Area 06, which consists of 23 Districts from south Monterey County to the Oregon border, including 5 Spanish speaking.

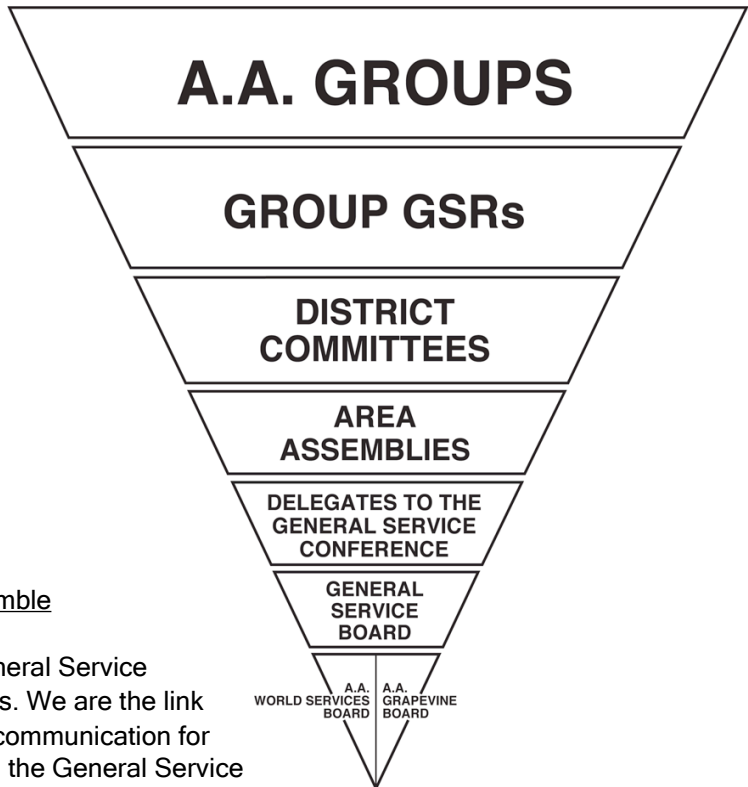
CNCA (Area 06) is in the Pacific Region, Region 3, which includes California, Hawaii, Arizona, Alaska, Washington, Oregon.

NEW GSR CHECKLIST

- ✓ Contact the District Registrar to sign up and start getting GS information mailed to you.
- ✓ Make sure the Telephone Reminder has your contact info if you want a monthly reminder call about the district meeting.
- ✓ Make sure the District Chairperson has your email address. They will send out monthly announcements.
- ✓ Contact your DCM (district committee member of your subdistrict) and let them know you're here. (You could invite them to your group's business meeting as an introduction or ask him/her for help at any time)
- ✓ Get a Service Sponsor.¹ There will be an opportunity at the district meeting to see who's available to be a service sponsor.
- ✓ Get a group folder or binder for announcements and fliers. You can pass this around your group or leave on your group's literature table, according to your group's conscience.

¹ A SERVICE SPONSOR is an alcoholic who has made some progress in recovery and performance in service who shares this experience with another alcoholic who may be just starting the journey, or possibly with someone that has been around a while. A good overview on service sponsorship may be found in the pamphlet, [Questions and Answers on Sponsorship](#) (P-15), pages 25–27. There it is suggested that, "A service sponsor is usually someone who is knowledgeable in AA history and has a strong background in the service structure." Individuals may feel that they have more to offer in one area of service than another. A service sponsor presents the various aspects of service to the sponsee, and assists the sponsee in making informed decision(s). Whatever level of service one performs, all is toward the same end: sharing the overall responsibilities of Alcoholics Anonymous.

STRUCTURE OF THE CONFERENCE (U.S. and Canada)



The GSR Preamble

We are the General Service Representatives. We are the link in the chain of communication for our groups with the General Service Conference and the world of AA

We realize the ultimate authority is a loving God as he may express Himself in our Group Conscience. As trusted servants, our job is to bring information to our groups in order that they can reach a well informed group conscience. In passing along this group conscience, we are helping to maintain the unity and strength so vital to our fellowship.

Let us, therefore, have the patience and tolerance to listen while others share, the courage to speak up when we have something to share, and the wisdom to do what is right for our group and AA as a whole.

TIPS FOR YOUR FIRST DISTRICT MEETING

- Please Ask Questions! You may not know any of the people there, or fully understand what is being discussed; possibly just as it was at your first AA meeting. But similarly, everyone there was once also a newcomer and knows what it feels like. Talk to people. Find out how to get additional information about issues being discussed. You'll find that people involved in service are a friendly bunch and love to take time to share and explain this most valuable part of recovery with new people,
- Information and handouts will be emailed to you. These include a meeting agenda, last meeting's minutes, the treasurer's report, fliers, other items about events or other AA groups. Please print these out, or download to a device to bring to the meeting. Some, not enough for everyone, will be available at the front door at the meeting. Do check for any last minute additions.
- Take notes. It will help you to remember what to bring back to your group.
- 3 Things - Write down at least three things to bring back to your group. At the end of the district meeting, people will suggest different things you can take from the meeting for your group such as ... announcements about upcoming General Service events, issues to get group consciences on, service opportunities, concerns of which the group should be aware, things that just excited you, interesting factoids about AA and what's going on at a regional or national level.
- Easy Does It - Don't try to figure it all out tonight. Give yourself about six months to get a feel for the process, the structure, and all the confusing acronyms. Remember to check in with another GSR or your DCM and ask what he or she is bringing back to the group.

YOUR HOME GROUP

The relationship of the GSR's with their group is probably the most important and, hopefully, a most fluid and open one. The best way to become effective is to attend the meetings of your Home Group on a regular basis. This gets you acquainted with the members of the group and their ideas and also gives you some credibility when you make suggestions and reports. Only by attending group meetings regularly can we stay informed of our group's affairs. People in General Service - particularly the GSR's - are generally known as the Guardians of our Traditions. Remember that you're not the Intergroup Rep. It's best to let the Intergroup Rep for your group handle the announcements from that Council meeting.

Whether your group has a Steering Committee or a business meeting, the GSR should be an active part of it; giving regular reports to their group on service activities and brief reports on important issues discussed at the district and area meetings.

REPORTING BACK TO YOUR GROUP

Things you might report to your Group include:

- Items that will be interesting to your group: exciting things, concerns, trends in AA, personal stories about 12th step work at the greater AA level.
- News of any events or workshops you learned about at the district meeting.
- Financial reports: Let them know how donations are going and what the Group's money is being spent at the District, by the Area or in NY.
- Telling them when you will need the Group's financial support to attend a General Service function (eg: gas money). The group is responsible for their GSR's expenses. (If the district has a surplus, it may help defray costs for GSRs but this is not always possible.)
- Open service opportunities.
- Issues that will require an informed group conscience. Try to explain it as simply and fairly as possible, letting them know when and where a group discussion and informed group conscience will happen.

- Report Backs - Let them know how you carried their group conscience at the district meeting or area assembly and how you shared their concerns and hopes about an issue.
- Brief reminders about what General Service is and how AA is run by its groups. Their voice counts.
- Issues that provoke discussion and greater participation.
- The Grapevine: Both the in-print and digital subscription options.
- Your enthusiasm for service. Let them know you're there to serve them.
- Your gratitude.

Things you might not want to report to your group include:

- Negative announcements.
- Confusing announcements.
- Really long announcements.
- Announcements on things that just aren't that interesting
- Your personal opinion on any issue. (GSRs vote at another group, not their own)
- Fear. (HP's got it handled.)

With a bit of practice, you can probably work in a piece of information that will provoke a question and get the discussion started. You may not personally agree with your groups' conscience but if you have done your job correctly and discussed it enough, you will have no problem in abiding by it; and can rightly feel good about it, too.

When to Share GS Info:

This is really up to your group. Most groups ask their GSR to share BRIEFLY during the announcement time of the meeting. This is not a time to share extensively about General Service business, to bring up complex issues or get an informed group conscience. That's the kind of thing that will get a GSR message shut down. Attend your group's business meeting and give your complete report there. If there is an urgent or time sensitive matter, let the group secretary know before the meeting and, if possible, work out whether you can announce a brief discussion after the meeting. Some GSRs may bring everything straight to the group - just be careful you don't alienate folks by making announcements that delay (too much) the normal meeting.

MORE TIPS ON SHARING

Keep it short and simple. Don't ask for informed group consciences at the group level if you can do it at a business meeting. Remember, whenever you get a group conscience, you want it to be an informed one. That takes a little time for everyone to be heard. Feel out your meeting and get a sense of what they want.

Probably the most important thing that you can do as a GSR is to become an informed one. This serves both us personally and AA as a whole. The more you know, the more you can share from personal experience and the more credible your voice will become.

Also important: Listen carefully to your group members.

DUTIES OF THE GSR

Now, let's focus on the duties of a GSR in a bit more detail. The GSR has the job of:

- Linking a group with AA as a whole.
- Representing the voice of his or her group's conscience.
- If you can't be there to report on the conscience, ask your DCM or DCMC.
- Bringing the problems and remedies that affect AA unity, health and growth back to their group.

In this sense, the annual Conference of Delegates in NY can feel that it is acting for AA as a whole only to the extent that the GSR keeps the group informed and can gather and communicate the group's conscience.

In general, there are three areas in which the GSR's have their major responsibilities, each of which involves a two way relationship with:

- the group.
- the district.
- the general service area.

Read The AA Service Manual, Chapter I, and the Pamphlet "GSR: Perhaps the most important job in AA" for further information on your job and duties.

MEETINGS - EVENTS - WORKSHOPS

You are asked to participate in:

- Your group's monthly Business Meeting.
- District 03 Meetings (2nd Wednesday of the month @ 7:30 p.m.).
- California Coastal Area Assemblies (Usually held in April, May, August & November).
- District Workshops throughout the year.
- Agenda Topics Workshop (Usually in March).
- Delegate's Report on the Conference (usually a potluck held in lieu of the regular June district meeting).
- Unity Day - includes Intergroup and other local service folks. Doesn't happen every year, but we try.

Other cool General Service gatherings you are invited to attend:

- CNCA Monthly Meetings in Petaluma (Usually held the 4th Saturday of the month). You are a nonvoting but important member at CNCA monthly business meetings.
- Pacific Regional Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly. (PRAASA) This is an inspiring weekend assembly of service people held the 1st weekend in March.) "The purpose of PRAASA is to develop greater unity among the members, groups, and areas of the Pacific Region, to encourage the exchange of ideas and to provide an opportunity for members to discuss pertinent aspects of AA Recovery, Unity, and Service should always be the primary purpose for each assembly. The thought of how we can better serve Alcoholic Anonymous should never be compromised."
- Annual Congresso (Spanish Language conference- usually held in summer)
- Regional Forums are held somewhere in our region every two years in even-numbered years. These are weekend sharing sessions to improve communication among service and potential service people and representatives of the General Service Board, Staff, and Grapevine Staff.

OUR ANNUAL CALENDAR OF GENERAL SERVICE EVENTS

Much of what we do is aimed at helping the GSR understand the issues of the day. Agenda Topics² are discussed at the General Service Conference of Delegates each spring and we try to help GSRs get that group conscience to the delegate in time for the annual conference. New GSRs come on board throughout the year and step into the cycle as best as they can. The second year of a term is always more familiar for everyone. Here's what a year usually looks like:

JANUARY - The Districts receive list of preliminary Agenda Items
Mid-January is the deadline for submitting Agenda Items for the conference.

FEBRUARY - Conference Committee Background materials are available to committee members in mid-February.

MARCH - Districts get final draft of agenda topics. Prepare for pre-conference assembly. Usually the district hosts an informative workshop on the topics and supports GSRs in educating their groups and getting informed group consciences.

APRIL/May - General Service Conference of Delegates is held in New York; Post-Conference Assembly is held in Calif. Northern Coastal Area.

JUNE - Often we invite the Delegate to share his/her report of the conference at our district meeting and invite everyone in the fellowship to join us for a potluck.

AUGUST - Summer Assembly.

NOVEMBER - Fall Assembly. It's either an election for new area officers, in the odd years, an Area inventory is conducted, in the even years.

DECEMBER - District Holiday Potluck & Gearing up for Next Year
Delegates receive the Preliminary list of Agenda Items for next year.

All events, except for the Conference of Delegates in New York, are open to all members so bring your sponsees, sponsors and friends.

² Agenda Topics are a list of issues generated by groups throughout the US and Canada that are discussed throughout AA and often voted on by our delegates.

The Second Tradition:

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.

TOOLS FOR THE GSR

- Getting an Informed Group Conscience.
- Taking a Personal Service Inventory.
- Asking for Help.
- Having a Service Sponsor.

Getting an Informed Group Conscience

Concept XII, Warranty Four: "That all important decisions should be reached by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity."

"Here on the one hand we erect a safeguard against any hasty or overbearing authority of a simple majority; and, on the other hand, it takes notice of the rights and the frequent wisdom of minorities, however small. This principle further guarantees that all matters of importance, time permitting, will be extensively debated, and that such debates will continue until a really heavy majority can support every critical decision..."

How does an informed group conscience differ from a group opinion or a majority vote?

The group conscience strives for unanimity through enlightenment, spirituality and the practice of our principles in all our affairs. To be fully informed requires a willingness to listen to minority opinions through full discussion on sensitive issues, the group works slowly, discouraging formal motions until the group has a clear sense of its views. Placing principles before personalities, the group is wary of dominating opinions. The group conscience is the aggregate of experience a group develops after applying the Traditions and Concepts to a question. The difference between a group conscience and a majority vote or group opinion is that one or more of the elements described above are missing.

How does "A Loving God" express Himself through the group conscience?

Groups find their way past ignorance, prejudice and self-will on an individual basis by practicing the Twelve Steps which enable us to practice humility, patience, tolerance, kindness and love -- emphasizing principles before personalities. Through the Steps, we learn to overcome self-will and open the way to a group conscience. When tempers flare, an informed chairperson postpones discussion until those tempers cool, allowing time for prayer and meditation.

Knowledge of AA history and willingness to listen to experience were also cited as important factors. We can listen for a quiet minority voice which may be the true expression of a loving God by allowing time for all to share and, especially, the minority to be heard. The importance of the minority view was stressed in most workshop sessions.

- 1. Review "How to Get an Informed Group Conscience" on page 11 of this guide.**
The most common method is for getting an informed group conscience on the agenda topics is to hold a special discussion meeting either before or after the regular group meeting. It should be made clear that these are not steering committee meetings and that no meeting business should be discussed at them. It is advisable to hold several meetings, as the topics are generally too complex to be discussed in a single meeting. By holding multiple meetings, all concerned members of the group are given an opportunity to participate.
- 2. Gather Support.**
Meet with individual members and let them know you value their opinions.
- 3. Learn by example.**
Attend other meetings' agenda topic discussions to see how they do it. You may also ask your DCM to lead one or more of your agenda topic discussions so that you can see how it is done at your meeting.
- 4. The delegate needs to know.**
Tell the members of your group that the delegate will be uninformed if they do not come up with a group conscience. The delegate will then be forced to vote his or her conscience instead of your group's conscience.
- 5. The Secretary can help.**
Develop a good relationship with the group secretary. More than any other individual, this person can help and support you.
- 6. Announce meetings.**
Announce at the meeting that the discussion meetings will be held over the following several weeks.
- 7. Use the phone.**
Call group members to remind them of the upcoming discussion meeting.
- 8. Use the copy machine.**
Make copies of the list of agenda topics and distribute it to the group at the discussion meetings. Prepare literature on each topic prior to its discussion in order to facilitate dialogue and lessen the amount of time required to explain the issues to the members. The group cannot effectively take its conscience until the members are educated as to what the issues are. Having a brief statement which explains each issue can help here. Turn in your receipt for making the copies to your group treasurer.

9. **Facilitate, don't lead.**
Your job is not to lead the discussion by to facilitate it. Again, refer to page 11 of this guide for more information on facilitating group discussion.
10. **Take notes.**
While you are facilitating discussion, have someone take notes for you.
11. **Talk it dry.**
Discuss each topic until there is a clear group consensus. If there is no consensus, write down what the opinions of the different members were and the reasons the members held those opinions.
12. **Don't be a perfectionist.**
It is not necessary to explain all the facets of each issue to the group. Part of your job as a GSR is to simplify and condense the issues somewhat. Be sure to cover all of the important points, but a complete evaluation is not necessary.
13. **Did I hear you correctly?**
After each discussion meeting, summarize the results to the discussion group. Determine what you think the group conscience is and tell them. Ask them if they agree with your understanding.
14. **Tell the whole group.**
After each discussion meeting, make an announcement at the end of the regular meeting to inform the group what was discussed and what the group conscience is. This may encourage those members who want to have their opinions heard to come to the next Agenda Topic discussion meetings.
15. **Tell the delegate.**
Take your group's conscience to the Pre-Conference Assembly. If you don't hear your group's conscience expressed, then "go to the mike" and voice it. Give your name, the group you represent, how you got the group conscience, and what the group conscience is. It is also recommended that you submit your group conscience to the delegate.

A PERSONAL SERVICE INVENTORY

Just as most members take a personal fourth step inventory, a lot of us find that it can be useful to take periodic “spot-check” personal service inventories. Below is a list of sample questions that you might use for such an inventory.

1. Am I doing MY job?
2. Do I make weekly announcements to my group?
3. Do I keep the announcements as short and simple as possible?
4. Do I show enthusiasm for service work (attraction!) when making announcements?
5. Do I make announcements at meetings where no GSR is present if something is happening in General Service?
6. Do I keep trying to get an alternate GSR (or DCM) then bring that person to district and/or area meetings and pass on to them what I have learned?
7. Do I occasionally suggest one of the Traditions as a topic at a recovery meeting?
8. Do I suggest, in a kind and loving way, that we may need to have a group conscience (discussion of all sides and sometimes a vote) when I feel the Traditions are not being followed or when someone in the group brings up an issue?
9. Do I feel uncomfortable making these announcements or asking for group discussions? Do I remember that the group asked me to do this?
10. Do I let God, as reflected in the group conscience, select who gets involved in service, or do I sometimes know better?
11. Do I read the AA service Manual and do my job as outlined Am I committed?
12. As a GSR, DCM, DCMC, or district officer, am I responsible for having the best possible informed group or district, telling them what is happening in AA as a whole, at the area and in the district (keeping in mind that what they decide to do is no my responsibility I my job is to see that they are able to make informed decisions)?
13. Do I encourage sponsees to get involved in general Service?

SPONSORSHIP IN SERVICE

Sponsorship in AA is basically the same as helping another individual's recovery or in service to a group. It can be one alcoholic who has made some progress in recovery and/or performance or service, sharing this experience with another alcoholic who is just starting the journey. Both types of service spring from the spiritual aspects of the program. Individuals may feel that they have more to offer in one area than in another. It is the service sponsor's responsibility to present the various aspects of service: setting up a meeting, working on committees; participating in conferences, etc. In this matter, it is important for the service sponsor to help individuals understand the distinction between serving the needs of the Fellowship and meeting the personal needs of another group member. The service sponsor begins by encouraging the member to become active in their home group -- coffee, literature, cleanup, attending business meetings or intergroup meetings, etc. The service sponsor should keep in mind that all members will not have the desire or qualifications to move beyond certain levels and, thus, the service sponsor might help find tasks appropriate to individuals' skills and interests. Whatever level of service one performs, all are toward the same end -- sharing the overall responsibilities of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Eventually, the service sponsor encourages the individual member interested in this form of service to attend district meetings and to read about the history and structure of Alcoholics Anonymous. At this point, the individual beginning this work should begin to understand the responsibilities of service work, as well as feel the satisfaction of yet another form of 12th step work. Such individuals should be encouraged to take an active part in district activities and consider being elected to alternate positions in the district to learn about the responsibilities of various jobs in the service structure. It is important for the individual to continue to learn about the three Legacies--- Unity, Recovery and Service, and to understand that the principle of rotation not only allows them to move on in service, but also gives newer members the privilege of serving. Rotation also allows them to understand that no one should hold on to a position of trust long enough to feel a proprietary interest and thereby discourage newcomers from service. Now, through knowledge and experience, the newer member is aware that service is our most important product after sobriety. With this knowledge, the individual is able to share their vision with others and ensure the future of Alcoholics Anonymous. The above section on service sponsorship has been quoted directly from the AA pamphlet Questions and answers on Sponsorship.

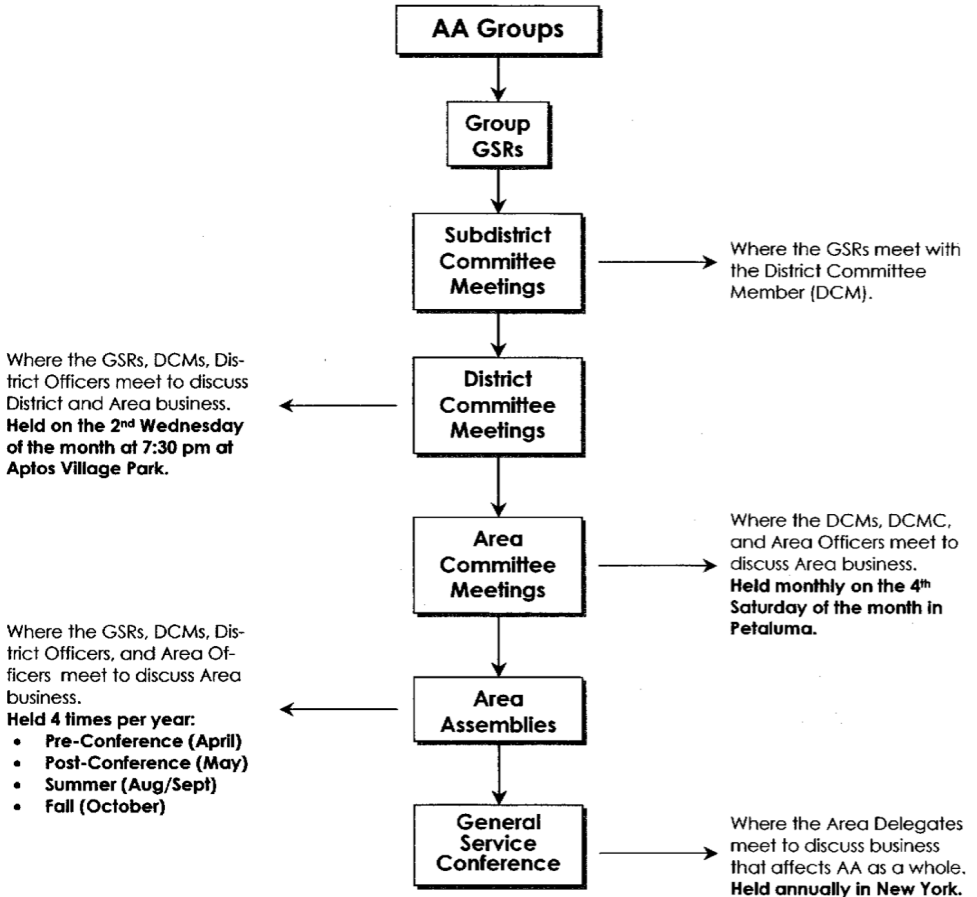
ROTATION

In most groups, the GSR is elected to a two year term. DCM's and area officers likewise serve two years. Since rotation is an essential part of service, it is important to have an Alternate GSR to learn something about the job before they assume the responsibility that goes with it. Having someone in the wings who is prepared will give you the freedom to go into and experience other levels of service without feeling that your job is unfinished because there is no one to take your place.

If you've been elected a GSR without any training, don't despair. Ask the former GSR, or your DCM, for copies of past district meeting and area assembly minutes, read the previous reports, if any, from your group to the district, and learn what is being discussed at the Area level. It is an adage in AA that by the time you have fully learned how to do your current job - it is time to rotate out of it. Remember, we strive for progress, not perfection.

And, if we hold any job beyond its' usual term, we are denying someone else the opportunity to learn and grow as we have. It will seem frustrating at times because you may think that nobody in the group is listening or cares about what you have to say. Then, sometime you will find yourself amazed by being asked a question relating to something you thought was dead and buried months ago. Or your group asks you to deal with a question in terms of how it relates to the AA Traditions. Those times are part of what makes it all rewarding in the end. So keep coming back and ask questions until you feel you have, or know how to get, an answer.

The General Service Conference Structure



AVAILABLE/NOT AVAILABLE

District 03 has followed the Area lead and has begun to incorporate "job descriptions" as part of our agenda at business meetings. We feel that an early start to this process is imperative to the future health of the district. As important as a "pass-it-on" is to ensure stability, first you need qualified trusted servants. We hope that by starting this process early we foster discussion that illuminates topics of the spiritual nature of rotation and our 3rd legacy process.

There seems to be 2 schools of thought concerning available/not available.

- If I'm available, I'm available for everything. Let the group decide "God doesn't choose the qualified, He qualifies the chosen"
- I'm available for the positions that best fit my experience and qualities.

The first line of thought certainly appeals to the spiritual nature of "trusted servant" and would seem prudent given the filter of our 3rd Legacy. It seems entirely appropriate to place oneself in line in order to inform the body of your availability. The danger might be, one of ego. Look at me; I'm eligible so I'm available. This availability might elicit votes from friends and sponsees and siphon votes from less known or less popular but better qualified candidates causing them to drop off the board. There is also the situation where no one else makes themselves available and the job becomes yours by default.

The second line of thought also seems to fit the spiritual implications of this question. If I am a CPA would I not best serve as the Treasurer? I am experienced at my current level but new at the next would it not be better to make myself available only at the entry positions instead of starting at the top? The same situations might arise what if no one is available for the job I pass on? Would someone following the above path maybe less qualified receive the position by default because I targeted my commitment?

There are of course many more questions we need ask ourselves. Questions of

- Family
- Work
- Prior commitments
- Qualifications

Time, Time, Time

We all want to be of service, available not available is a very spiritual process. We need to talk to our families, our employers, our service sponsors, sponsee's. We need to check our qualifications and motivations. Most of all we need to ask "What is best for AA as a Whole?"

DOING BUSINESS IN GENERAL SERVICE DISTRICT 03 - SANTA CRUZ

Who Votes? - GSRs, Officers and DCMs can vote at district meetings and assemblies (except the alternate DCMC only votes if the DCMC isn't present. DCMs and the DCMC (or alternate DCMC) can vote at monthly Area Meetings.

Third Legacy Elections - See next page & your Service Manual

What's On Your Mind? - This is a time to share what's going on in your meeting and seek support or suggestions from other GSRs at the district meeting.

Housekeeping Motions usually, but not always, arise from a routine report offered by an officer or committee. These are Simple³ in nature, handle minor objectives with little controversy, expense or impact. They are usually about procedure and routine matters. As such, other than questions for clarification, there is little discussion and no debate. If there is no objection, the issue passes. If there is an objection, the matter becomes New Business on the agenda. If there is an urgency, the chairperson can handle it that night as Old Business.

New Business: On the agenda, this is usually a presentation only early in the agenda with time for some questions but no vote until the matter is discussed. Typically no action is taken until it becomes Old Business at a subsequent meeting. The item may be expedited if urgent. As New Business, GSRs are asked to gather group consciences, share their group experiences, carry back what they've heard in discussion to their group, gather more group consciences if necessary.

Old Business: Old Business is an issue that has been presented and discussed and carried (usually) from a previous meeting. If the chair determines the district is ready for a vote, it will be called. The Chair will ask for a sense of the room. Are folks ready to vote? Has the discussion wound down? The chair may decide to continue the discussion as Old Business to give people more time to inform themselves and their groups and come to a substantial unanimity⁴ if possible.

³ Simple - a simple majority, over 50% (v. 2/3 majority). A simple majority is usually called for in votes that involve procedure, little controversy, little money, little impact.

⁴ Substantial Unanimity - is 2/3ds of eligible votes on an issue. We try to reach substantial unanimity whenever possible in AA. Especially if an issue is deemed controversial, involving AA as a whole, significant funding or sets a precedent or new policy. The hope is that more agreement will avoid railroading, politicking or the tyranny of the bare majority.

2/3ds vs 50%: A motion may be decided by simple majority or 2/3ds majority. A vote may be taken to determine if the motion requires a 2/3ds majority, Such a vote can only be decided by a simple majority.

Note About Minority Opinion: It's best to bring forth Minority Opinion early in the discussion rather than wait until a vote so there is full discussion. Saving a minority opinion until after a vote, when there is no rebuttal, can be a time-waster. Also a considerable amount of abstentions indicates that we voted too early. But what is considerable? A chair guards against the tyranny of the majority but how this is done is usually learned from experience.

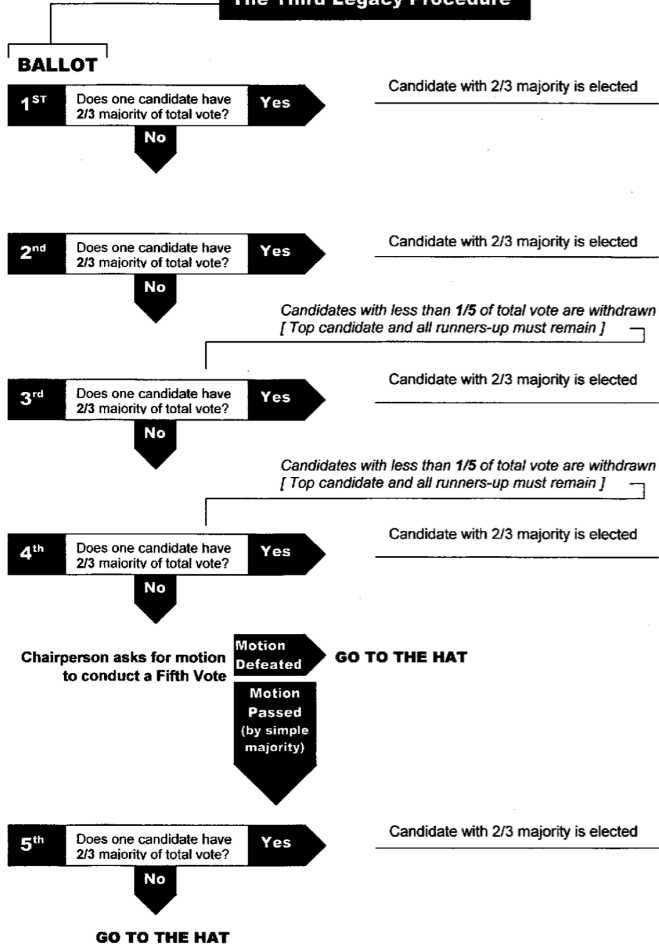
Vote To Reconsider

After a vote, the chair will ask if there is a minority opinion. At this time, anyone who voted in the losing group can speak up and explain why he or she did so. The chair will then ask if there is a Motion To Reconsider and anyone who voted in the winning majority who would like to change his or her vote can ask for a re-vote. If there is a second, There will be a simple majority vote to reconsider and reopen discussion -- usually at the next gathering.

Call The Question! - No, there is no calling the question in General Service. Unlike in meetings conducted according to Roberts Rules of Order, AA seeks to reach "substantial unanimity" on issues. This means that the chairperson decides whether issues have been discussed enough to proceed with a vote or whether they should be held over for more discussion. If there is discord in a discussion, we seek to talk it out. (Some say we talk it to death and then talk a little more.) Patience is more than a virtue in General Service, it's a survival skill and a reminder that Love & Tolerance is our code.

A Spiritual Process: The watchword is ... pause. Time allows us to quell our passions, become better informed and listen for the minority opinion and the shy voice. Remember, this is a spiritual process. Ultimately we have the right of decision. The group conscious evolves. We are informed, not instructed. Trust the spirit of the moment. There is no one method on how to allow for this evolution. Recall that our principles are just that: spiritual principles; not rules.

The Third Legacy Procedure



OUR DISTRICT INVENTORY

Just as the Area takes an area inventory in odd-numbered years, we in District 03/ Santa Cruz County, usually decide to take an inventory every two years to evaluate how well we're fulfilling the district purpose. As a GSR, you'll be expected to participate in the inventory process, regardless of how long you've served at the district. Newcomer input is equally as important as input from seasoned General Service folks. More about group inventories may be found in the pamphlet, The AA Group and in the AA Service Manual. We often tailor our inventory questions for the district, but here's a commonly used question list as adapted from The AA Group:

1. What is the basic purpose of the District Committee?
2. What additional activities can we engage in to carry the message?
3. Considering the number of alcoholics in our district, are we reaching enough people?
4. What has the District done lately to bring the AA message to the attention of professionals who can be helpful in reaching those who are in need of AA?
5. Do we try to illustrate a good cross-section of AA in our message?
6. Do new GSRs stick with us, or does the turnover and missed meetings seem excessive?
7. How effective are we in communicating with all our groups?
8. Do all AAs know about district meetings and have the opportunity to attend?
9. Has enough effort been made to explain, to all groups, the value and purpose of a GSR?
10. Do all GSRs have adequate opportunity to serve on committees?
11. Are District officers picked with care and consideration?
12. Do our groups carry their fair share of supporting the area and General Service Office?
13. How well are our groups informed about what is happening in AA worldwide?
14. Are our district meetings informative and enthusiastic?

SOME HELPFUL READING

Some of the reading material may seem tough at first, but you'll see how it relates to other parts of the program. If you do this, it will surprise you someday when it comes alive and becomes a part of you and your message.

The GSR May Be The Most Important Job In AA, [pamphlet]
AA Service Manual with the Twelve Concepts for World Service (in back of book)
The Twelve Concepts For World Service Illustrated, [pamphlet]
AA Comes of Age [Book]
AA and the Good Oldtimers [Book]
The 12 Traditions [pamphlet]
AA Tradition - How it Developed, [pamphlet]
3 legacies [pamphlet]
The AA Group [pamphlet]
Box 459 [General Service Office bimonthly newsletter]
Supporting The AA Support System, [pamphlet]
Circles of love and Service, [pamphlet]
Inside AA, [pamphlet]
The "White Sheet," What AA Does and Does Not Do, [One page flyer]
AA Literature Catalog.
Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. [Book]
Our local General Service website

CNCA Comments [California Northern Coastal Area monthly newsletter] You should begin receiving it shortly after signing up with the District Registrar. You can find more info at www.cnca06.org.

Final Conference Report [A detailed report from the General Service Conference held in New York City in April of each year]

Area Map of U.S. & Canada

This map represents a general outline of Areas



Santa Cruz Subdistrict Meeting List

Subdistrict #01 Wantonville/La Selva
Make My Day Group
Watsonville Fellowship Group
WFAA Candlelight Meeting
La Selva Beach Mens Meeting
Triple Winners Emotional Sobriety
Sobriety in the Ville
Aromas Group
8 - Total Meetings

Subdistrict #02 Aptos
Mens Stag 11 Group
The Bay Group
Awareness Group
HOW Group
Aptos Womens Serenity Group
Early Morning Spiritual Group
Sobriety and Gratitude Group
7 - Total Meetings

Subdistrict #03 Greater Soquel
NiftyLadies on Park
Gay Men Living Sober Group
Mattison Lane Group
Book Study (Thur)
Back to Basics Group
Big Book & Step Study Group
Men's Cross Talkers
Skyland Group
8 - Total Meetings

Subdistrict #04 Soquel Main Street
Today's Womens Step Tradition Gp
In the Hat
Soquel Acceptance Group
Sisters in Sobriety Group
Twisted Sisters Group
Donut Group
Keep it Simple Big Book Study
Mens Basic Step Study Group
Friday Acceptance Group
Eyes On The Prize Group
10 - Total Meetings

Subdistrict #05 Capitola/Live Oak
Early Risers Group
Jade Street Park
Friday Night Live
Spiritual Tools
Mens Beginner Step Study
Sick Puppies
Friday Night Live Group
Solutions In The Sand Group
8 - Total Meetings

Subdistrict #06 East Santa Cruz
Queers without Beers
Roxas Group
Out of the Blue
BYOB Step Study Group
Saved By Grace Group
Step Daddies
Sunday Night Candlelight Group
Triple Winners in the Solution
Blessed AA
Santa Cruz Speaker Group
Pleasure Point Group
Midtown Womans Big Book Study
Friday Night Lights Group
13 - Total Meetings

Subdistrict #07 Downtown Santa Cruz
Conscious Contact Meditation Meeting
Santa Cruz Fellowship Group
On The Beach Group
Grateful and Gay Group
Young People's Underground
We Agnostics
We Agnostics (virtual)
Sober and Sandy
8 - Total Meetings

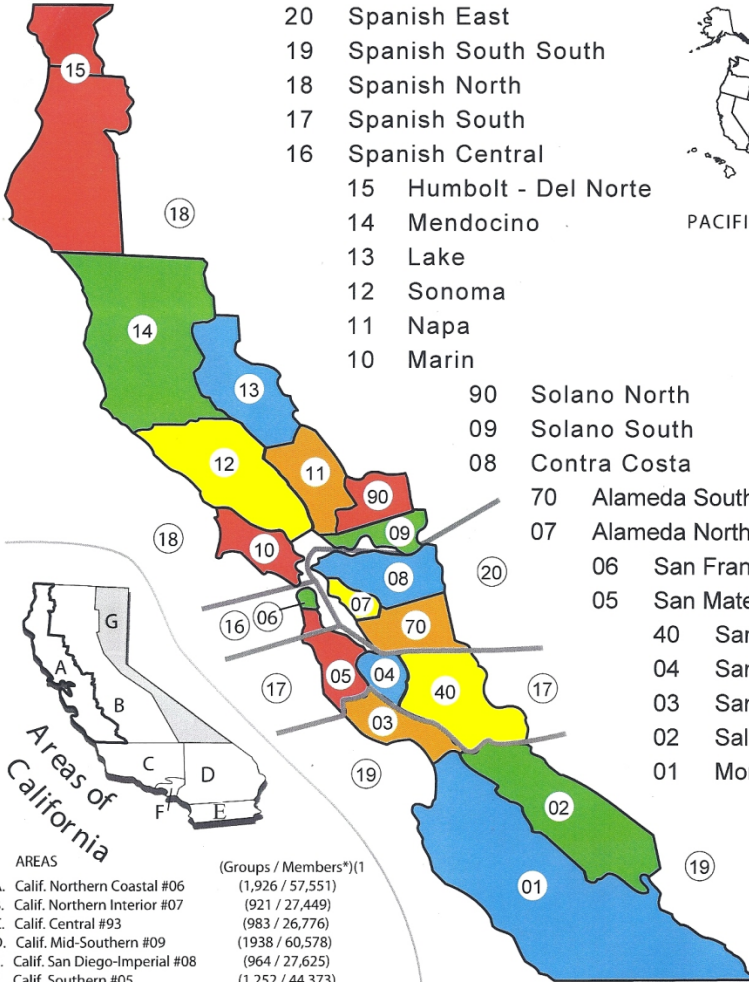
Subdistrict #08
Sought Through Meditation Group
Sought Through Prayer Group
Alternative Group
Westside Group
Shivering Denizens Group
We Are the Weirdos
Candlelight Group
In the Dark Group
Sunday Morning Spiritual Group
No Frills Sobriety Group
10 - Total Meetings

Subdistrict #09
Ocean View Group
Sober Slugs Group
New Life
Thumper's Big Book Study Group
Woman's/Non Binary Underground
Tues Womens Brown Baggers
6 - Total Meetings

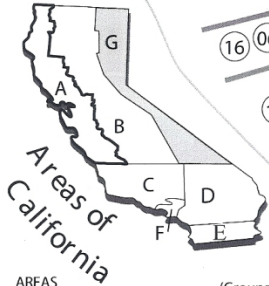
Subdistrict #10
Scotts Valley Happy Destiny Group
Step Study For Women Group
From The Heart
Monday Mens Meeting
4 - Total Meetings

Subdistrict #11
Thursday Felton Group (Pie Meeting)
Women in the Woods
Into The Woods
The Bonny Doon Group
Ben Lomond Fellowship Group
Monday Nite Acceptance Group
Friday Night Candlelight
Boulder Creek Group
Speaker Discussion Chip Meeting
9 - Total Meetings

C.N.C.A. DISTRICTS



- 20 Spanish East
- 19 Spanish South South
- 18 Spanish North
- 17 Spanish South
- 16 Spanish Central
- 15 Humbolt - Del Norte
- 14 Mendocino
- 13 Lake
- 12 Sonoma
- 11 Napa
- 10 Marin
- 90 Solano North
- 09 Solano South
- 08 Contra Costa
- 70 Alameda South
- 07 Alameda North
- 06 San Francisco
- 05 San Mateo
- 40 Santa Clara South
- 04 Santa Clara North
- 03 Santa Cruz
- 02 Salinas - San Benito
- 01 Monterey



AREAS	(Groups / Members)*(1)
A. Calif. Northern Coastal #06	(1,926 / 57,551)
B. Calif. Northern Interior #07	(921 / 27,449)
C. Calif. Central #93	(983 / 26,776)
D. Calif. Mid-Southern #09	(1938 / 60,578)
E. Calif. San Diego-Imperial #08	(964 / 27,625)
F. Calif. Southern #05	(1,252 / 44,373)
G. Nevada #42	

California Northern Coastal Area
 Alcoholics Anonymous General Service
 23 Districts 1,926 Groups 57,551 Members



2011

*(Figures based upon the 2011 General Service Conference Final Report)

GLOSSARY

THE CONFERENCE AND THE DELEGATE: At the annual Conference meeting, matters of importance to the Fellowship as a whole are first considered and discussed by one of the standing Conference committees, then brought to the full Conference in the form of committee recommendations. All Conference members then have the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the recommendations before they are voted on. Committee recommendations that are approved become Conference Advisory Actions. After the Conference, the delegate reports back to the area, working through DCMs and group GSRs. Conference Advisory Actions that were referred to the trustees are sent to either the appropriate trustees' committee, GSO, or the AA Grapevine for implementation. Membership in the Conference consists of area delegates, trustees, directors of AA World Services and the Grapevine, and AA staff members of the General Service Office and the Grapevine.

THE DISTRICT: Groups are organized into districts, collections of groups located near one another. The GSRs of these groups select district committee members (DCMs), who become part of the area committee

DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBER (DCM) - An essential link between the group GSR and the area delegate to the General Service Conference. Serves as leader of the district committee and his or her subdistrict and is exposed to the group conscience of that district. As a member of the area committee, he or she is able to pass on the district's thinking to the delegate and the committee.

THE DISTRICT: Groups are organized into districts, collections of groups located near one another. The GSRs of these groups select district committee members (DCMs), who become part of the area committee

THE GROUP - Communication starts with the group, which lets its group conscience – for or against change, approval or disapproval of a proposed action – be known to its elected GSR. The GSR makes sure the group's wishes are heard and fully considered at the district and area levels, and that they are part of the delegate's thinking at the Conference. After each annual Conference, the G.S.R. is responsible for making sure that group members are informed about what went on at the Conference and made aware of the full range of Advisory Actions (see Chapter Seven).

THE TRUSTEES: The General Service Board is made up of 21 trustees who meet quarterly. Actions are reported to the Fellowship through quarterly reports and also in the Final Conference Report. The board's two operating corporations, AA World Services, Inc. and The AA Grapevine Inc., report in the same way (see Chapter Ten). AAW.S. is the corporation that employs GSO personnel, directs GSO services, and is responsible for book and pamphlet publishing. The Grapevine corporate board employs the magazine's editorial and business staffs and publishes AA's monthly magazine and related materials.

ABOUT CNCA: California Northern Coastal Area 06 (www.cnca06.org) is a link in the chain of communication between the groups it serves and the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous. CNCA encompasses 21,427 square miles of coastal counties, bordered on the north by Oregon and on the south by San Luis Obispo County.

CNCA serves more than 51,000 AA members in 22 Districts. Each district's DCM Chairperson (DCMC) and the District Committee Members (DCMs) of our 153 subdistricts serve over 2,000 registered groups via their General Service Representatives (GSRs). The districts and the area communicate through liaisons with the 23 Central Offices/Intergroups within CNCA boundaries, as well as with the autonomous Northern California Hospitals and Institutions Committee.

In addition to the monthly district and subdistrict meetings, communication throughout the area is enhanced via four district-hosted assemblies per year, monthly area committee meetings, area officer visits to district meetings and our monthly newsletter (published in English and in Spanish).

Area Subcommittees include Archives, Bridging The Gap, Finance, Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community, Interpretation and Translation and Website committees. Through the assemblies, committees and district visits, CNCA participates in the process of carrying the group voice to our Delegate and the General Service Conference.

General Service Reps are invited to attend almost all monthly meetings and subcommittee gatherings. A monthly carpool leaves Santa Cruz usually on the fourth Saturday of the month about 7:30 a.m. Contact the district chairperson for more information.

12 Concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. Final responsibility and ultimate authority for AA world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our fellowship.
2. The General Service Conference of AA has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in world affairs.
3. To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of AA - the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives - with a traditional "Right of Decision".
4. At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation", allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.
5. Throughout our structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.
6. The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.
7. The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the AA purse for final effectiveness.
8. The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.
9. Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.
10. Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.
11. The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualification, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.
12. The Conference shall observe the spirit of AA tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.