

Orientation Guide
for the new
General Service Representative
District 06 – San Francisco
of California Northern Coastal Area 06
of Pacific Region 03 of Alcoholics Anonymous
PANEL 69 | 2019-2020



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://www.sfgeneralservice.org>
www.cnca06.org
www.aa.org

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 Alcoholics Anonymous.

We realize the ultimate authority is a loving Higher Power as expressed through our Group Conscience. As trusted servants, our job is to bring information to our groups in order that they can reach an 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.

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WELCOME to DISTRICT 06 – SAN FRANCISCO. PANEL 69 | 2019-2020

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 or May of each year.

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 that 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 _____ (GROUP #) _____

Is in SUBDISTRICT _____ in the _____ NEIGHBORHOOD

Each subdistrict has a DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBER (DCM)

YOUR DCM IS _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

YOUR CALIFORNIA NORTHERN COASTAL AREA DELEGATE FOR PANEL 69 IS:

Teddy Basham-Witherington Email: delegate.p69@cnc06.org

District 06 is in CALIFORNIA NORTHERN COASTAL AREA (CNCA) Area 06 (includes 23 Districts from south Monterey County to the Oregon border)

CNCA (Area 06) is part of the Pacific Region (Region 3), which includes Alaska (Area 02), Arizona (Area 03), Southern California (Area 05), California Northern Coastal (Area 06), California Northern Interior (Area 07), San Diego – Imperial Area (Area 08), Mid-Southern California (Area 09), Hawaii (Area 17), Idaho (Area 18), Nevada (Area 42), New Mexico (Area 43), Oregon (58), Western Washington (72), Eastern Washington (Area 92) and Central California (Area 93).

NEW GSR CHECKLIST

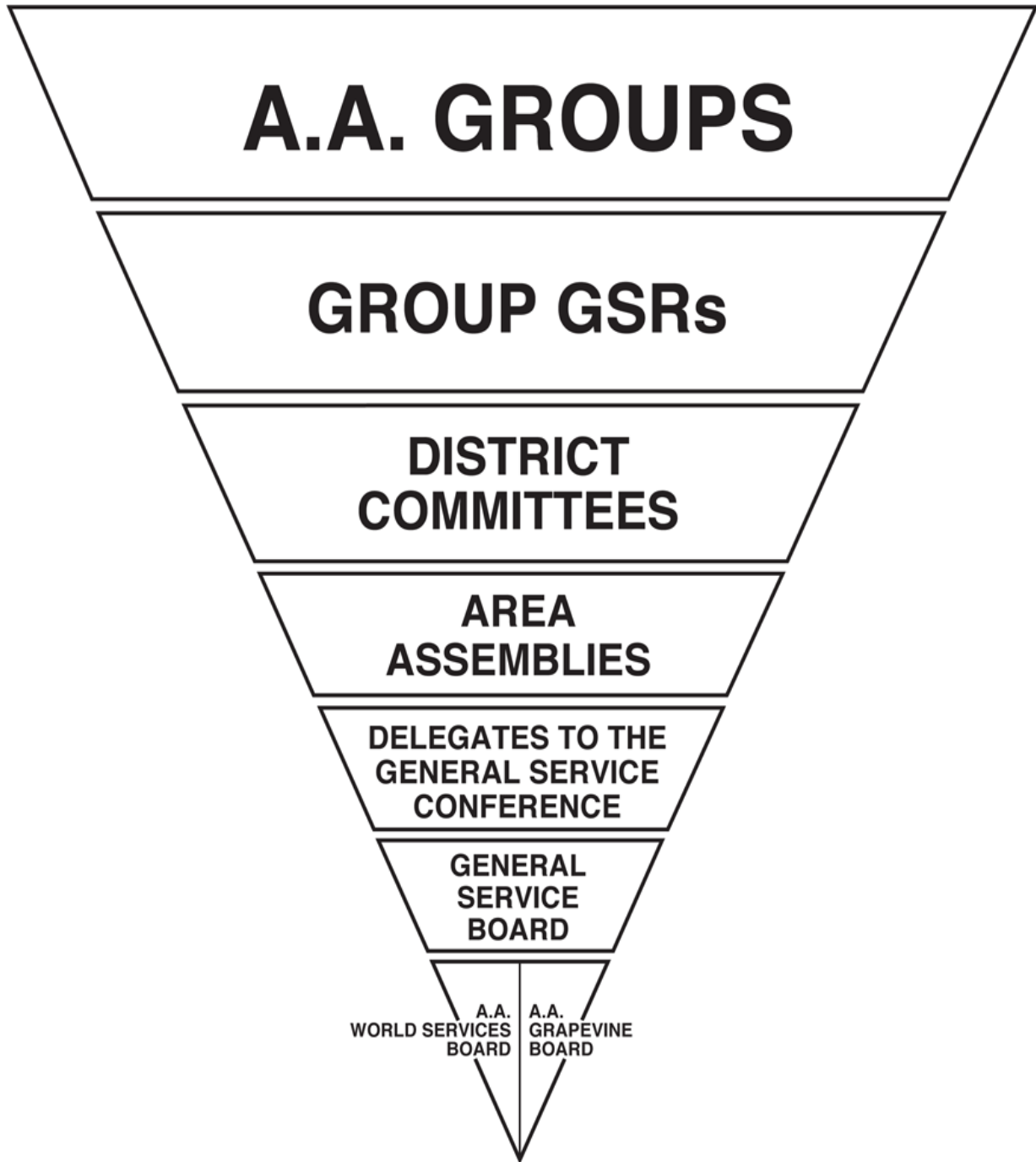
- ✓ Attend New GSR Orientation Training with the Alternate DCMC.
- ✓ Contact* the District Registrar to sign up and start getting General Service information mailed to you. (You will receive a service packet from GSO within three to five weeks of registration; if you do not receive it, contact the District Registrar.)
- ✓ Make sure the Mail Coordinator has your email address. They will send out monthly announcements, meeting minutes and agendas, and other General Service-related information.
- ✓ Contact your DCM (District Committee Member of your sub-district) 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
- ✓ Some groups create a group folder or binder for announcement information, phone list, treasurer's report, and fliers. You can pass this around your group or leave on your group's literature table, according to your group's conscience. This can help cut down on length of announcements and serve as record keeping.

* Contact list included as separate attachment.

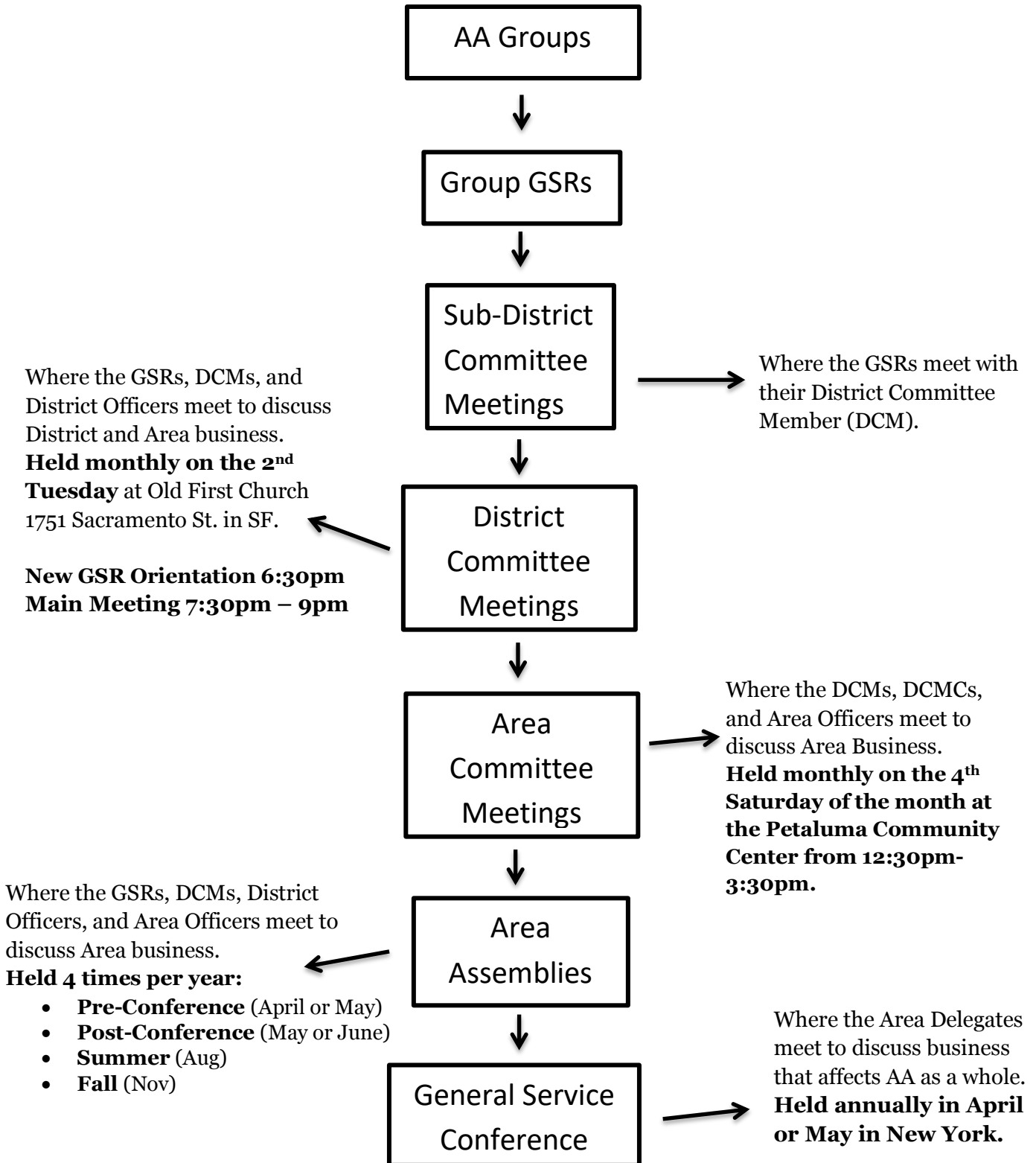
¹ A SERVICE SPONSOR is an alcoholic who has made some progress in recovery and performance in service who shares this experience with another alcoholic who may be just starting the journey, or possibly with someone that has been around a while. A good overview on service sponsorship may be found in the 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.

UPSIDE DOWN TRIANGLE

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



LINKING AA GROUPS TO THE GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE



TIPS FOR YOUR FIRST DISTRICT MEETING (aka the GSR Meeting)

- Please ask questions! Ask Ask Ask ☺ Talk to people.
 - *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.*
- Treat entering General Service similar to entering AA as a newcomer.
 - You may not know any of the people there, or may not fully understand what is being discussed; like at your first AA meeting. But similarly, everyone here was once a newcomer too. We know what it feels like. Find out how to get additional information about issues being discussed.
- Pick up the handouts.
 - Usually on a table by the door or the front table. These include a meeting agenda, last meeting's minutes, the Treasurer's report, fliers, other items about events or other AA groups. (Next meeting: remember to bring a device to read them electronically as they will be emailed to you before the next District Meeting.)
- 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.
 - Announcements about upcoming General Service events
 - Issues to get group consciences on
 - Service opportunities
 - Concerns the group should be aware of
 - Things you're just excited about or interesting factoids about AA
 - 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 and ask what they are bringing back to their group.

TIPS FOR SUBSEQUENT DISTRICT MEETINGS (aka the GSR Meeting)

- Remember to bring a device to read along electronically as they will be emailed to you before the next District Meeting (e.g., agenda, previous minutes, etc.).
- Show up early. Great chance to ask questions and get to know others.
- Attend the orientation more than once ☺ Chelsea will love the help!!!
- Attend the Service manual and concepts study at 6:30 pm!

SERVING AS A GSR

The relationship of the GSR with their group is vital. Ideally, it is a most fluid and open one.

Serving as a GSR requires W.H.A.T. 4 things?

1. **W**illingness
2. **H**umility
3. **A**ttendance (*a.k.a. just show up!*)
4. **T**hree Legacies (*knowledge of/ desire to learn*)

Willingness:

- If you are reading this, you're clearly willing ☺ Congratulations on giving back to AA!
- Your participation is crucial for the health and future of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Humility:

- Ask your HP for a loving attitude of open-mindedness, patience and tolerance.
- Remember we serve the groups – not the other way around.
- Be a good listener. Ask old timers about the history of the group.
- In General Service we set aside our personal agenda for what's in the best interest of our members, the alcoholic who is still suffering, and AA as a whole.

Attendance:

- 70% of the General Service Rep commitment is just showing up.
- Attend the monthly Business Meetings on a regular basis.
- Get acquainted with members by showing up early and staying late to chat.
- Only by attending meetings regularly can we stay informed of our group's and GS affairs.

Three Legacies: Recovery, Unity, and Service

- People in General Service – particularly the GSR's – are generally known as the guardians of our Traditions – one of the Three Legacies of Alcoholics Anonymous.
- The three sides of the recovery triangle.
- Like the three legs of a stool – all are necessary for a balanced sobriety.



1. **Recovery:** *Twelve Steps* guide our actions in recovery as individuals.
2. **Unity:** *Twelve Traditions* guide our actions in relations with others and as a group.
3. **Service:** *Twelve Concepts* for World Service guide our actions as an assembly in service.

DUTIES OF THE GSR

The GSR has the job of:

- Linking a group with AA as a whole.
- Representing the voice of their group conscience at the Area Assemblies.
- Bringing issues and remedies that affect AA unity, health and growth back to the 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 conscience.

In general, there are three parts of the fellowship to which the GSR's have their major responsibilities, each of which involves a two-way relationship:

- 1) the Group 2) the District 3) the General Service Area

Read the AA Service Manual, Chapter 2 ("The Group and Its GSR"), and the pamphlet "GSR: Your group's link to AA as a whole" Formerly "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
- Monthly District 06 Meetings (2nd Tuesday of the month @ 7:30 p.m.)
- District Agenda Topics Workshop (usually end of Feb/ beginning of March)
- California Northern Coastal Area Assemblies (April, May/June, August & November)
- Unity Day (includes Intergroup and other local service folks.)

Other General Service gatherings you are invited to attend:

- CNCA Monthly Meetings in Petaluma (usually held the 4th Saturday of the month). As a GSR, 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, usually 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. Local Forums may also be held periodically.

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 in NY. 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 is what a GSR's year usually looks like:

JANUARY: The Districts receive list of preliminary Agenda Topics. Mid-January is the deadline for submitting Agenda Topics for the Conference.

FEBRUARY: Conference Committee background materials and summaries become available, typically in mid-February.

MARCH: Districts receive final draft of Agenda Topics. Prepare for Pre-Conference Assembly. Usually the District hosts an informative Agenda Topics workshop to discuss the topics and to support GSRs in educating their groups and getting informed group consciences.

APRIL: Area Pre-Conference Assembly is held in Calif. Northern Coastal Area. Bring your group's conscience to your Area Delegate! (If you can't attend, ask your Alternate GSR or your DCM to present this information for you; your group's conscience can also be submitted to the Area Delegate by email.)

APRIL: General Service Conference of Delegates is held in New York.

MAY: Post-Conference Assembly is held in California 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 (sometimes we have a potluck).

AUGUST: Summer Assembly is held in California Northern Coastal Area.

NOVEMBER: Fall Assembly is held in California Northern Coastal Area, where either an election for new Area officers or an Area inventory is conducted.

All events, except for the Conference of Delegates in New York, are open to all members: 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.

MAKING GENERAL SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS AT YOUR GROUP

When to share General Service information at your group meeting:

- This is really up to your group.
- Most groups ask the GSR to share BRIEFLY during regular announcements.
 - 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 a fuller report there.
- *If there is an urgent or time sensitive matter, you can:*
 - Ask an old timer from the group how these things are usually addressed.
 - Let the group secretary know before the meeting and, if possible, work out whether you can make a special announcement during the main meeting. Let members know there will be 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 long announcements that unnecessarily delay the rest of the meeting. (This can be seen as hijacking the meeting.)

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 on 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 (i.e., gas money). *The group is responsible for their GSR's expenses.*
- Open service opportunities in General Service.
- 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 Back: 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 purpose and importance the Grapevine magazine. How to subscribe to the Grapevine.
- 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
- Overly long announcements
- Announcements on things that just aren't that interesting
- Your personal opinion on any issue
 - (GSRs vote at a group where they are just a member and not the representative – which is where GSRs can voice personal opinions)
- Fear (HP's got it handled)

More tips on sharing:

- Keep it short and simple.
- Don't ask for informed group consciences at the main meeting.
- Instead, announce that it will be done at the business meeting, or a special meeting outside the main meeting.

GETTING AN INFORMED GROUP CONSCIENCE

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.***

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...”

What is an informed group conscience?

- The group conscience strives for unanimity through enlightenment, spirituality and the practice of our principles in all our affairs.
- Unanimity is not required, but the minority opinion needs to feel heard and considered.
- The group works slowly, discouraging formal motions until there is a clear sense of its position and views.
- Placing principles before personalities, the group is wary of dominating opinions.
- Be informed: The group cannot effectively take its conscience until the members are educated as to what the issues are.
- To be fully informed requires a willingness to listen to minority opinions through full discussion on sensitive issues; every voice is given space to be heard respectfully.
- The group conscience is the aggregate of experience a group develops after applying the Traditions and Concepts to a question.

How does it differ from a group opinion or a majority vote?

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 itself 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 to a group conscience.
- When tempers flare, an informed chairperson (often a DCM or GSR) postpones discussion until those tempers cool, allowing time for prayer and meditation.
- Knowledge of AA history and experience of how traditions developed are valuable.
- We can listen for a quiet minority voice that may be the true expression of a loving God by allowing time for all to share and, especially, the minority to be heard.

Suggestions for Obtaining an Informed Group Conscience

1. Review “Getting an Informed Group Conscience” on Page 14 of this guide

- The most common method 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 regular business meetings and that no meeting business is discussed/ debated.
- 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

- Talk with individual members at your meeting; ask what they think.
- Ask members to help with planning the special meeting for the group conscience.
- Talk with old timers about how this has been done in the past.
- Let members 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

- Let the members of your group know 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 main 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(s).

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 (i.e., bring copies of the Grapevine to provide examples of ‘grey pages’).
- Use the Agenda Topics Summaries and background material provided.
- Providing a brief statement explaining each issue can also help.
- Submit your receipt for making copies to your group’s treasurer.

9. Facilitate, don’t lead

- Your job is not to lead the discussion but to facilitate it.
- Again, refer to 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 conscience.
- If there is not consensus, write down the opinions of the different members; this may be done by writing down direct quotes from members.

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 summary is best.

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 in your regular group 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 attend the next Agenda Topics discussion meeting.

15. Tell the Delegate

- Take your group’s conscience to the Pre-Conference Assembly.
- If you don’t hear your group’s conscience expressed during the open discussion on a particular topic, then go to the microphone and voice it.
- You only have 90 seconds so no need to say which group you represent.
- Prioritize sharing the group conscience.
- You can also submit your group conscience to the Delegate by providing a written copy during the Assembly or by emailing it if you cannot attend.

TAKING 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) and 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 not my responsibility; my job is to see that they are able to make informed decisions)?
13. Do I encourage sponsees to become involved in General Service?

The 12 Concepts for World Service can also apply directly to the GSR and can be part of a personal service inventory; become informed about the Concepts by reading them in your AA Service Manual and by discussing them with your service sponsor.

SPONSORSHIP IN SERVICE

The following sections on service sponsorship has been quoted directly from the AA pamphlet *Questions and Answers on Sponsorship*:

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 individual 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.

DOING BUSINESS IN GENERAL SERVICE

Who Votes?

- GSRs, Officers and DCMs can vote at District Meetings and Assemblies
- DCMs and the DCMC can vote at monthly Area Committee Meetings
- Alternates (like Alt GSRs and the Alt DCMC) only vote if they are filling in.

Third Legacy Elections:

- This is the method used to elect our District officers. See the following page and your Service Manual for more information on the Third Legacy Procedure for elections.

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:

- Often, these arise from a routine report offered by an officer or committee.
- Tend to be Simple³ in nature: for minor items 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 urgency, the chairperson can handle it that night as Old Business.

New Business:

- On the agenda, this is usually a presentation with time for some questions but no discussion nor vote.
- 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 take the topic to their group, gather questions and feedback from their group to bring back to the following meeting for discussion and share their group experiences on the item.

Old Business:

- Old Business is an issue that has been presented, discussed and carried over (usually) from a previous meeting.
- If the Chair (DCMC) determines the District is ready for to vote on the issue, then a vote can take place. We typically do not accept motions to take a vote from the floor as this can shut down discussion preemptively.
- Often, the Chair will ask for a sense of the room: Are folks ready to vote?
- 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 – requires 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 - requires 2/3^{rds} 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.

2/3^{rds} vs. 50%:

- A motion may be decided by simple majority or 2/3^{rds} majority.
- A vote may be taken to determine if the motion requires a 2/3^{rds} 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 is not in the best interest of the fellowship.
- Also, a considerable amount of abstentions indicates that we voted too early.
- *But what is considerable?* The 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 is asked to explain why.
- 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.

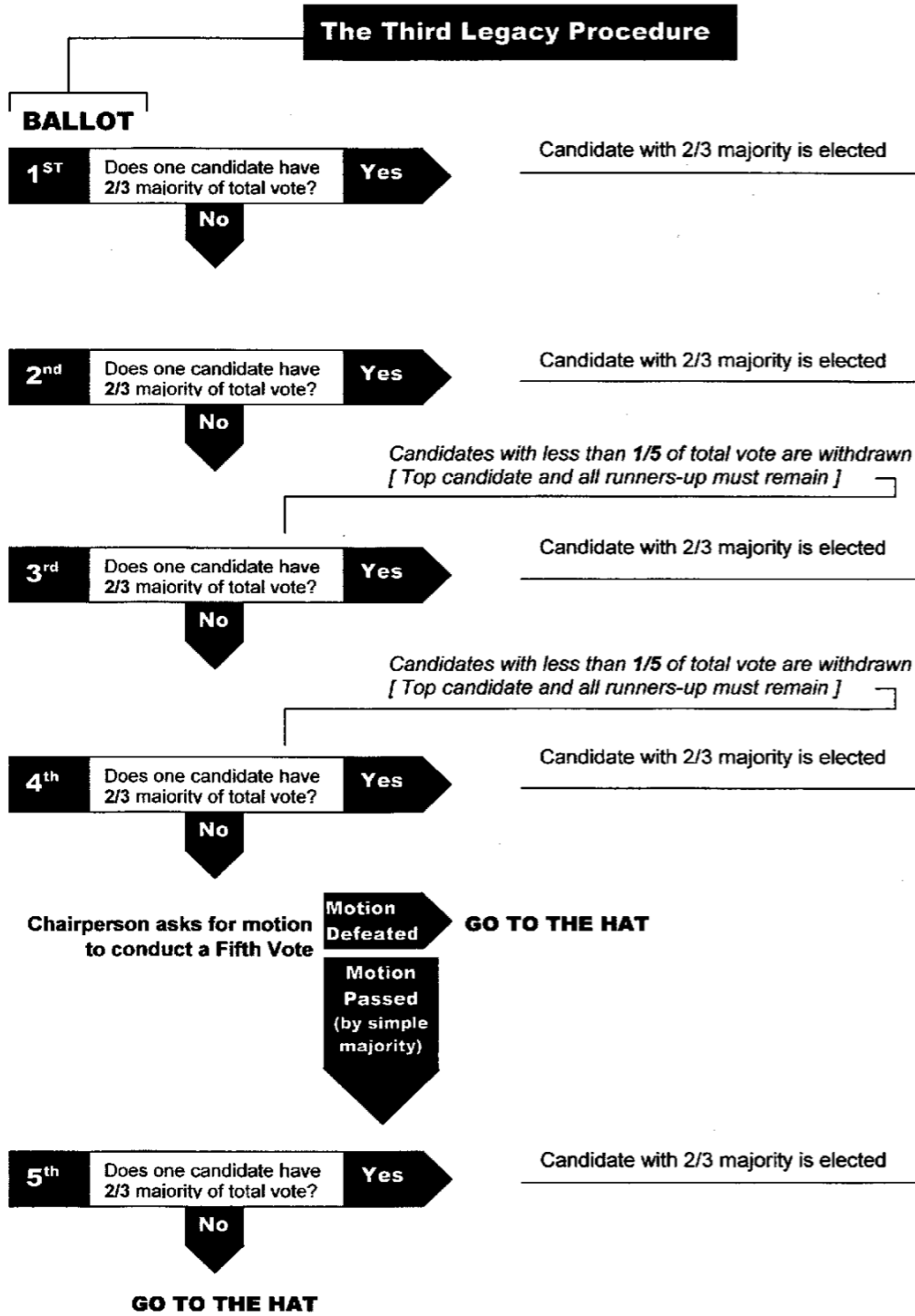
Call The Question!

- There is no calling the question in General Service. (*a.k.a. voting on the issue now*)
- Unlike in meetings conducted according to Roberts Rules of Order, AA seeks to reach "substantial unanimity" on issues.
- This means that the Chair 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 - then talk a little more.)
- Patience is more than a virtue in General Service, it's a survival skill and a reminder that Love and 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 conscience 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.

THIRD LEGACY PROCEDURE



AVAILABLE/NOT AVAILABLE

When filling District positions (officers and DCMs), the Chair starts by asking who is available or not available to fill a particular service position.

There seem to be two schools of thought about the “available/not available” question:

- 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 only available for the positions that best fit my experience and qualities.

The first line of thinking certainly appeals to the spiritual nature.

- Consider “trusted servant” and approach through the filter of our Third Legacy. It seems entirely appropriate to place oneself in line in order to inform the voting 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 makes himself or herself available and the job becomes yours by default.

The second line of thinking also seems to fit the spiritual implications of this question.

- If I am a CPA would I not serve best as the treasurer?
- I am experienced at my current level but new at the next; would it be not be better to make myself available only at the entry positions instead of starting at the top?
- What if no one is available for the job that I pass on?
- Would someone maybe less qualified receive the position by default because I targeted my commitment?

There are of course many more questions we need to ask ourselves when declaring ourselves available or unavailable for a service position. We should consider:

- Family
- Work
- Prior commitments
- Qualifications
- Time, time, time

We all want to be of service; “available/not available” is a spiritual process. We need to talk to our families, our employers, our service sponsors, our sponsor and our sponsees. We need to check our qualifications and motivations. Most of all, we need to ask, “What is best for AA as a whole?”

ROTATION

In most groups, the GSR is elected to a two-year term. DCMs 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 will be 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.

District 06 is following our Area's lead and has begun to incorporate discussion of "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 "pass it on" is to ensure stability, we first need qualified trusted servants. We hope that this will foster discussion that illuminates topics of the spiritual nature of rotation and our Third Legacy election procedure.

OUR DISTRICT INVENTORY

Just as the Area takes an inventory in odd-numbered years, we in District 6 usually decide to take an inventory every two years to evaluate how well we're fulfilling the District's 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 list of questions 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.

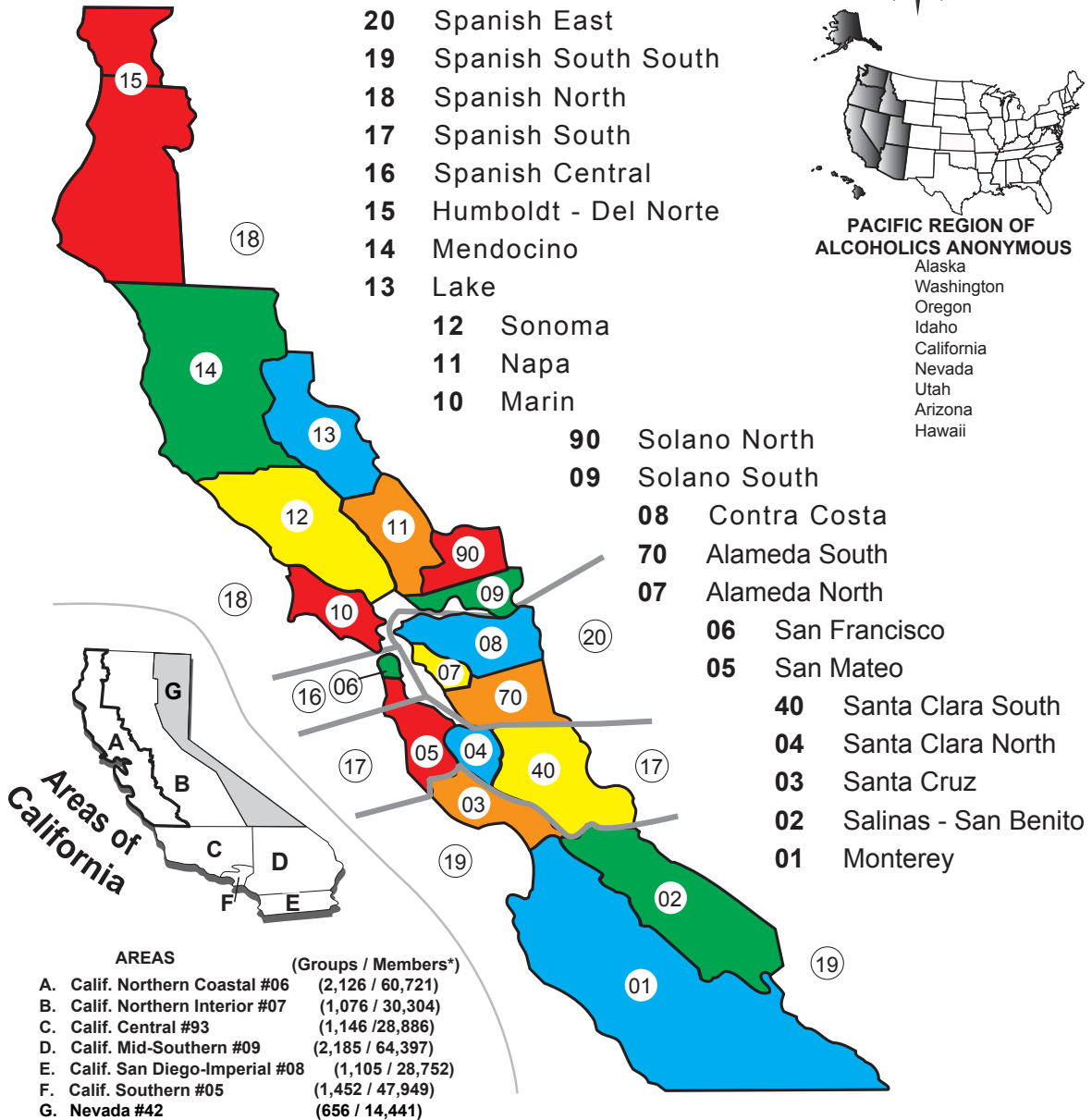
The GSR May Be The Most Important Job In AA [pamphlet]
The AA Service Manual Combined With the Twelve Concepts for World Service [book]
The Twelve Concepts For World Service Illustrated [pamphlet]
AA Comes of Age [book]
Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers [book]
The 12 Traditions [pamphlet]
AA Tradition - 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 sfgeneralservice.org

CNCA Comments [California Northern Coastal Area monthly newsletter]: You should begin receiving this publication shortly after signing up with the District Registrar. The CNCA Comments are also available on the CNCA website approximately two weeks after the monthly Area Meeting. See www.cnca06.org for more information.

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



C.N.C.A. DISTRICTS



PACIFIC REGION OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
 Alaska
 Washington
 Oregon
 Idaho
 California
 Nevada
 Utah
 Arizona
 Hawaii

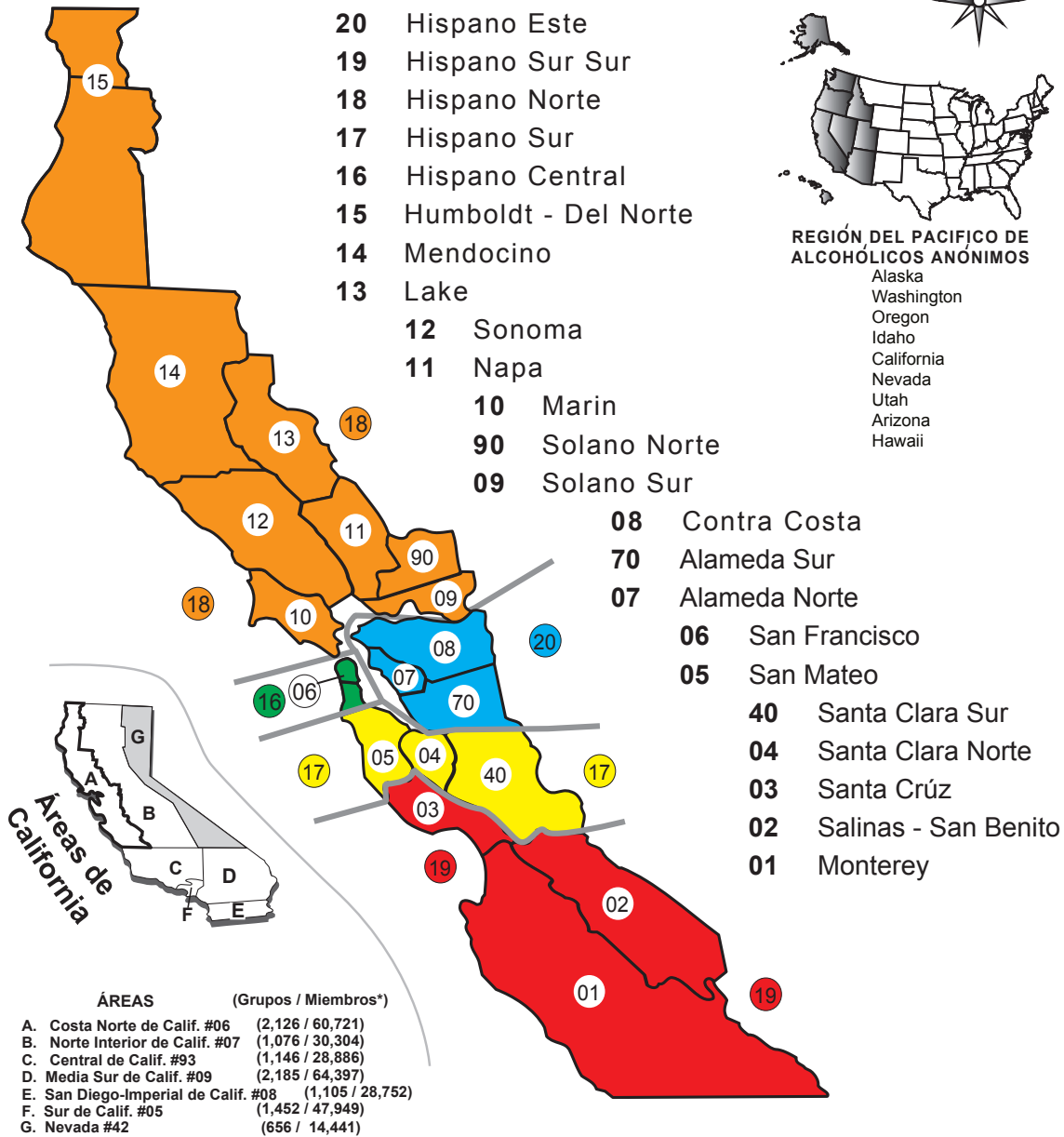
California Northern Coastal Area 06
Alcoholics Anonymous General Service
23 Districts 2,126 Groups 60,721 Members



2018

*(Figures based upon the 2018 General Service Conference Final Report.)

DISTRITOS DE C.N.C.A.



Área 06 Costa Norte de California

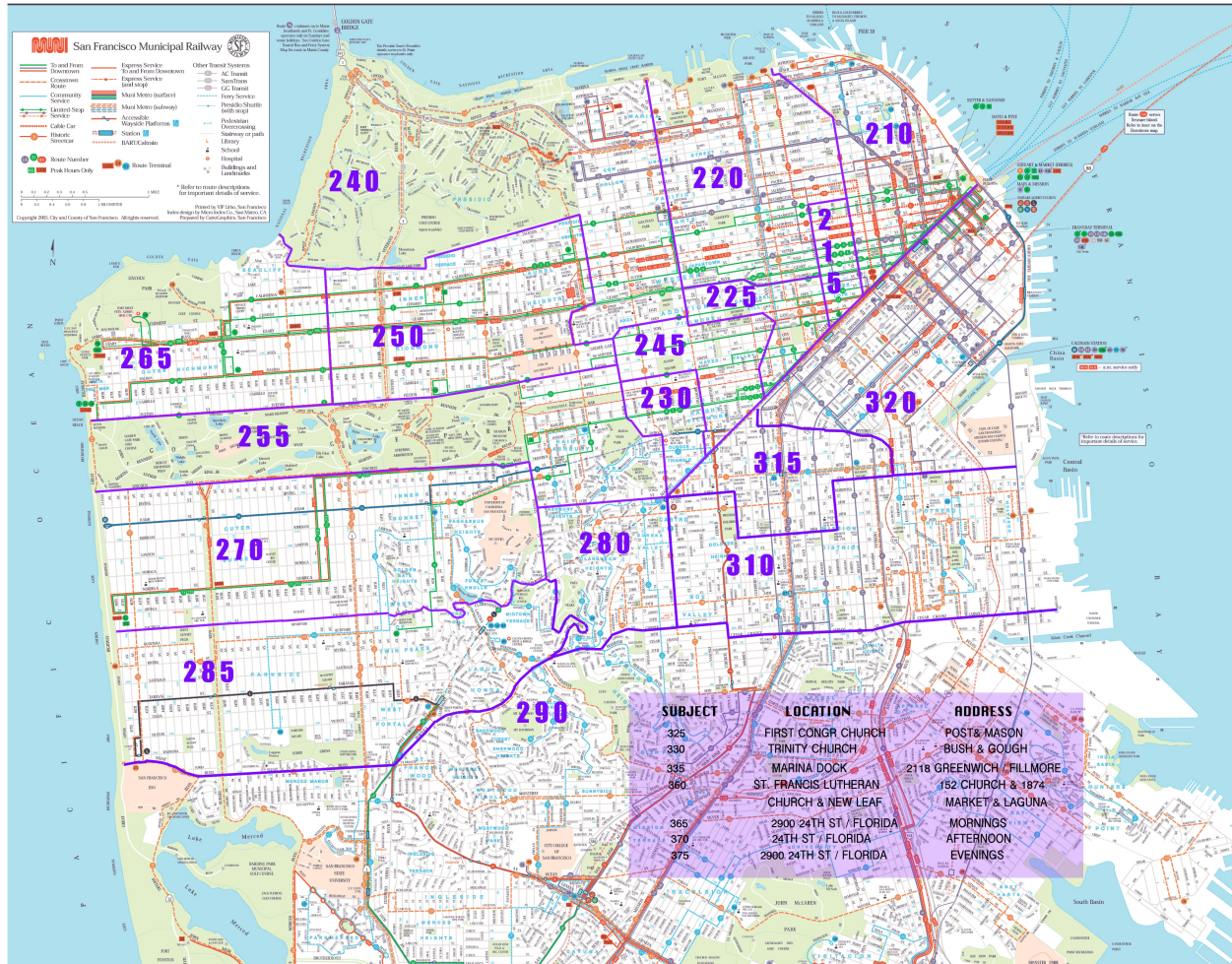
Servicios Generales de Alcohólicos Anónimos
 23 Distritos 2,126 Grupos 60,721 Miembros



2018

*(Figuras basadas sobre los Reportes Finales de la Conferencia Servicios Generales del 2018.)

SAN FRANCISCO SUB-DISTRICTS



GLOSSARY

Alphabet Soup
Acronyms in Alcoholics Anonymous

- A.A.W.S.** Alcoholics Anonymous World Services. An incorporated entity that produces all AA literature. The A.A.W.S. Board reports directly to the General Service Board, and is accountable to the Fellowship as a whole through AA's General Service Conference.
- A.C.M.** The Area Committee Meeting is held monthly on the 4th Sat of the month in Petaluma.
- A.G.R.** The Alternate General Service Representative serves alongside the General Service Representative and fills-in when the GSR is unavailable. Ideally, the Alternate shadows and supports the GSR and steps into the role of GSR when commitments rotate.
- C.N.C.A.** California Northern Costal Area (Area 06) is one of six AA General Service Areas in California. Geographically encompasses 21,427 square miles of coastal counties from the Oregon border to San Luis Obispo County. CNCA-06 has 23 Districts and serves more than 60,000 AA members and over 2,000 registered groups.
- D.C.M.C.** A District Committee Member Chair is the chairperson of a unit of the AA service structure – a District. San Francisco is District 06 and one of 23 districts in CNCA.
- D.C.M.** A District Committee Member serves a sub-district – an area within a district. Sub-districts are usually comprised of a geographical area or location (e.g. the Inner Sunset, the Dry Dock, etc.). DCMs serve the GSRs and groups that meet within the Sub-District. DCMs are automatically a member of the Area Committee – which meets monthly and quarterly at Assemblies.
- G.S.B.** The General Service Board is the legal entity that oversees the operation of AA's publishing arms (AAWS & Grapevine), as well as the G.S.O. in NY.
- G.S.C.** The General Service Conference (or 'the Conference') is an annual conference, held in New York, during which the policies of AA as a whole are discussed and formed. CNCA sends one elected representative (Delegate) to this conference.
- G.S.O.** The General Service Office acts as the headquarters for AA's worldwide communication.
- G.S.R.** The General Service Representative provides the critical link between the AA group and the AA Fellowship. GSRs typically attend 4 Assemblies, monthly district business meetings, and more.
- G.v.R.** The Grapevine Representative works to ensure that group members know about the A.A. Grapevine (AA's meeting in print). Group Grapevine Reps can register through aagrapevine.org.

- H.&I.** Hospitals and Institutions committee focuses on carrying the message to confined alcoholics. Supports and coordinates the service work in treatment & correctional facilities, and other institutions where residents cannot attend outside meetings. Members 'pink can' contributions provide AA literature for members who are confined.
- P.I./C.P.C.** Public Information/ Cooperation with the Professional Community is a committee that AA informs the general public about the message and principles of Alcoholics Anonymous, and builds working relationships with the many professional persons who may come into contact with the drinking alcoholic and may be able to refer them to AA. This is AA's attempt to be "friendly with our friends" and in so doing, perhaps we may be able to do through cooperation that which we could not do separately.
- PRAASA** The Pacific Region Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly is an annual assembly hosted by one of the 15 areas in the Pacific Region of Alcoholics Anonymous each year and it therefore moves around the region. The purpose of PRAASA is to: 1) Develop greater unity among the members, groups, and areas of the Pacific Region; 2) Encourage the exchange of ideas and experiences; 3) Provide an opportunity for members to discuss pertinent aspects of Alcoholics Anonymous; 4) The Assembly and the PRAASA Committee should always foster the Recovery, Unity and Service legacies of Alcoholics Anonymous.

AA Terminology in General Service

Area: A geographical division within a state or province. Each Area elects a Delegate who attends the General Service Conference in New York each year. There are 93 Areas in North America. Our Area is CNCA06. www.cnca06.org

Area Assembly: Four times a year, trusted servants of CNCA gather to be the link between our members and the fellowship as a whole. Each Assembly is hosted by one or two of the CNCA Districts. Also, Area business is discussed and voted upon. Bi-annually, this assembly will elect a Delegate to the General Service Conference and Area Officers. Voting members are GSRs, DCMs, Area Standing Committee Chairs, and Area Officers. Any member of AA may attend.

Area Committee: A committee made up of DCMs, Area Officers, Area Standing Committee Chairs, and Past Delegates, and is a vital element of the general service structure. Any member of AA may attend.

Class A Trustee (non-alcoholic): These trustees are members of the general public. They are non-alcoholic friends of AA and have often worked in cooperation with AA for years. They are selected for a variety of reasons including business skills, professional standing, and the specific profession in which they work. They provide a critical link between AA and the general public and professional world as Class A Trustees are not members of AA and can be the 'face' of AA without breaking traditions.

Delegate: The person elected at the electoral Area Assembly every other year to carry the Area's voice to the annual General Service Conference in New York, and to bring back a report of the results of that meeting. Additionally, the Delegate is the primary communication channel between the Area and the rest of the AA service structure in the U.S and Canada.

District: (San Francisco in District 06) A division within the Area that is represented by a District Committee Member Chair. These divisions can be along county lines, zip code areas, natural divisions such as rivers, or any other boundary that seems to be appropriate. In some areas, where there is a large contingent of members who speak a particular non-English language, districts can be formed using language as a basis ([in San Francisco District 16 is Spanish Speaking](#)).

District Meetings: The service meetings attended and coordinated by the District Committee Member Chair, DCMs, and GSR's for the groups within the district. Any member of AA may attend.

General Service (Class B) Trustee: These trustees are selected for their particular business or other skills. They, like the Regional Trustees, serve a 4-year term on the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous. Often Past Delegates, Class B Trustees are sober members of AA.

General Service Conference: An annual gathering of delegates from the 93 Areas in the US & Canada to conduct the business of AA. In addition to these delegates, the Members of the General Service Board (21), G.S.O. staff members, and non-trustee Directors of A.A.W.S and the Grapevine are also voting members of the Conference. It is an event that lasts one full week and provides guidance to AA headquarters (GSO) and to the service boards (AAWS & GV).

General Services: Originally, the services performed by AA's General Service Office in New York. Today it means the work of anyone in the General Service Structure – GSR, DCM, Committee Chairs, Area Officers, Delegates, etc.

International Convention: A convention of AA's held every 5 years to celebrate AA's continuing progress. This convention does not conduct any official business. It is held in cities in the US & Canada based on bids provided to the General Service Board, and rotates based on the bidding process, which also involves the General Service Conference.

Region: A grouping of several states or provinces from which a Regional Trustee is elected to serve on the General Service Board. There are eight regions – six in the U.S. and 2 in Canada. CNCA is part of the [Pacific Region](#), which includes Alaska (Area 02), Arizona (Area 03), Southern California (Area 05), California Northern Coastal (Area 06), California Northern Interior (Area 07), San Diego – Imperial Area (Area 08), Mid-Southern California (Area 09), Hawaii (Area 17), Idaho (Area 18), Nevada (Area 42), New Mexico (Area 43), Oregon (58), Western Washington (72), Eastern Washington (Area 92) and Central California (Area 93).

Regional (Class B) Trustee: A person elected to serve as a Trustee on AA's General Service Board. Each of the 8 regions in the US & Canada has a Regional Trustee. Class B Trustees provide a regional perspective while serving AA as a whole. Class B Trustees are sober members of AA.

Sharing Session: A meeting of a group, district, area, or conference in which everyone is invited to contribute ideas and comments on matters affecting AA.

Substantial Unanimity: This phrase, in Alcoholics Anonymous, essentially means a vote in which a minimum of 2/3 of the voters are in agreement. While some matters, such as a vote to reconsider a previous motion, only require a majority vote – any vote that binds an AA entity to actions taken after the deliberative process is completed, generally requires substantial unanimity.

Three Legacies of Alcoholics Anonymous: Recovery, Unity, and Service. The three sides of the recovery triangle; like the three legs of a stool – all are necessary for a balanced sobriety.

1. Recovery: Twelve Steps guide our actions in recovery as individuals.
2. Unity: Twelve Traditions guide our actions in relations with others and as a group.
3. Service: Twelve Concepts for World Service guide our actions as an assembly in service.

Third Legacy Procedure: AA's Third Legacy Procedure is a special type of electoral procedure. It is considered to be unique to AA. It has proven highly successful in eliminating the influence of factions or parties that seem to thrive on most political scenes. Please see the AA Service Manual for a complete description of this vital procedure.

Trustee-At-Large: There is a Trustee-At-Large for the U.S. and one for Canada. These people, elected in much the same way as the Regional Trustees, help to carry out the duties of a Regional Trustee – should that person be unable to do so either temporarily or permanently. They also attend the Annual World Service Meeting as the representative from the US/Canada General Service Structure.

World Service Meeting: A meeting of delegates (often a Trustee) from each of the General Service Structures around the world. Not all countries are represented, only those with an established service structure and the desire to send a representative. These delegates meet to discuss AA's work and struggles all over the globe. One year they meet in a hosting country – the following year they meet in New York.

THE TWELVE CONCEPTS FOR WORLD SERVICE

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.