

67TH SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE

Folks, I want to thank you for the privilege of being able to serve Area 15 and its people as your Alternate Delegate. I also want to thank the Area for the opportunity to attend the 67th Southeastern Conference on your behalf. Please allow this report to summarize the main issues and interesting information provided by the Delegates in their talks on a variety of A.A. issues.

DELEGATES' TALKS

PART ONE – ATTRACTION RATHER THAN PROMOTION

I. ARE WE BEING INCLUSIVE OR EXCLUSIVE IN CARRYING THE MESSAGE – RANDY H. – DELEGATE, LOUISIANA, AREA 27

- A. The Third Tradition – Long Form – states that all who suffer from alcoholism are entitled to be members of A.A. We are not to refuse anyone who seeks recovery from alcoholism.
- B. We also need to help the individual discover if they are alcoholic.
- C. A.A. Comes of Age, p. 106 - We should do one thing well rather than many things poorly.
- D. The Twelve and Twelve, p. 150, states “Shoemaker stick to thy last” as another way of telling us to stick to our singleness of purpose.
- E. We need to stick to our primary purpose of helping other alcoholics rather than focusing on outside issues like sex, drugs, gambling, food, nicotine, etc.
- F. The Twelve and Twelve, p. 132, states the sole authority in A.A. is a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience.
- G. The Singleness of Purpose is essential to the treatment of alcoholism- according to George Valiant, past Trustee.
- H. Problems Other Than Alcohol, the pamphlet by Bill W. provides guidance in this area. It discusses pill and drug use, asks questions, and finds the Traditions resolve this issue.
- I. Bill W. defined sobriety as freedom from alcohol.
- J. Bill also wrote a Grapevine article stating that those not given the truth will die.
- K. The specialized alcoholic groups, such as men’s, women’s, young people’s, etc. also do not take away from the singleness of purpose.
- L. Bill W. also wrote the pamphlet “Do You Think You’re Different,” which discusses these issues and suggests you are not different – He feels the pamphlet should be one page and on the inside say “You’re Not.”
- M. Identification with another alcoholic is the key, try to relate to them.
- N. No alcoholic would like groups named the “Wet A.A. Group,” the “Dry A.A. Group,” the “Republican” or “Democrat” Group, or the “Atheist” or “Agnostic” Group.
- O. Our membership Tradition states: “We believe that any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety, may call themselves a group, provided that as a group they have no other affiliation.
- P. Always try to be inclusive in all that you do in A.A.

**II. IS ADVANCING TECHNOLOGY LIMITING OR ENHANCING
SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR MEMBERS – JOY F. –
DELEGATE, KENTUCKY AND SOUTHERN INDIANA, AREA 26**

- A. Using a tablet and an I-Phone to conduct A.A. business while at the hospital with her husband is an example of what we can do with technology these days to enhance our service opportunities.
- B. The world is quite different now from the days of growing up with a party phone line where you shared your phone line with six-ten other families in the '60s and '70s.
- C. Certain times without technology are great, such as walking in the woods with my Sponsor with no text or e-mails.
- D. Face – to – face meetings with each other should not be forgotten.
- E. E-mail and technology sometimes allows people to hide behind technology rather than appear at meetings.
- F. Technology doesn't threaten the Traditions if we continue to follow the Traditions on anonymity, self support, unity, and affiliation in the technology world.
- G. Chat rooms can be beneficial under some circumstances.
- H. Question: Can the internet provide the same attraction as in-person exchanges?
- I. An example of how technology enhances our service opportunities is a recent conference call of the Finance Committee before the General Service Conference which included folks from Canada, Maryland, Kentucky, Montana, Wyoming, who were all on the call.
- J. We should not make A.A. service jobs dependent on technology.
- K. GSRs should not have to travel to attend Business Meetings when we could use a conference call or other technology instead.
- L. Another example of technology helping us is to get the GSC Agenda Background Documents on a CD which saves the printing costs.
- M. Another question is whether the Area should pay for equipment for someone who does not have a computer or other device.
- N. On line websites for intergroups and groups help carry the message.
- O. The Loners use the internet to stay connected.
- P. Should on-line groups replace face-to-face meetings, and, if so, do they hold newcomers accountable?
- Q. The General Service Conference uses technology to help with vote counting and other matters.
- R. We should be open minded about technology use since it helps some folks get the message who otherwise would not – shut-ins and others with health issues who cannot get out.
- S. On-line apps for the Big Book, 12 + 12 and other books for I-Phones and Tablets will probably result in less literature sales.

III. REACHING THE NEWCOMER – WHAT ARE THE TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES – DENNIS J. – DELEGATE, ALABAMA/NORTHWEST FLORIDA, AREA 1

- A. Reasons to go to meetings as a newcomer – coffee, women, and laughter.
- B. Reasons not to go to meetings – not being greeted –
 - 1. Outside - should have 1-2 greeters preferably
 - 2. Inside – greeters can show you around to the coffee, bathroom location, first step table, and introduce you to some of the folks there.
 - 3. Remembered his name when he came back – because they wrote it down.
- C. Reading materials are great to reach newcomers:
 - 1. Grapevine – read a 2 page story compared to reading the Big Book which some people find hard to do when they first come in.
 - 2. Living Sober – answers questions for newcomers.
 - 3. Came to Believe - provides stories of how some folks found a spiritual part of their program.
- D. Coffee makers – come early, sometimes two hours to beat the newcomer to hold on to the coffee maker job, need to let newcomers take it over after a couple months.
- E. Newcomers – see the pain in their eyes, sometimes they do not want to be introduced.
- F. Sometimes when we travel we meet newcomers - they ask have you ever been to this meeting? Just tell them no and be nice. You should also tell newcomers they are doing a great job.
- G. Newcomers – in groups, districts, areas, and General Service Conference levels – be aware of them and help them when you can.
- H. Don't wait till you get to the airport to call me, call me before you get in the cab.
- I. There are no stupid questions for newcomers, but the ones not asked.
- J. Greet at the home group – because when he came in, he didn't care if you died first or he did, before he was greeted and told to keep coming back.
- K. Two circle groups – one circle inside the other, put the talkers in the inner circle and the listeners in the outside circle – he believes you need to tell the newcomers how this works if your group uses the two circle format.
- L. Tell the newcomer to take the literature, its free.
- M. Try to remember what you wanted when you first walked in and were standing at the door.
- N. It's up to us to get the newcomers to come back, ask if there is anything you can do for them.

IV. TRADITION OF ANONYMITY: THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION OF ALL OUR TRADITIONS – PATTY L. – DELEGATE, GEORGIA, AREA 16

- A. I'm grateful to be in the middle of A.A, one of my friends re-lapsed yesterday. She put a lot of things before A.A.
- B. Sobriety must come before everything or I have nothing.
- C. Honesty issues
- D. GSC approved reading materials help folks understand anonymity:
 - 1. A.A. Comes of Age
 - 2. Best of Bill
 - 3. Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions
- E. Twelve and Twelve – Tradition 12 - Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all of our Traditions.
- E. Anonymity – is the greatest protection we can ever have.
- F. Anonymity - the substance is sacrifice.
- G. Humility and sacrifice are the key provisions of anonymity.
- H. Bill W. – In A.A. Comes of Age states “No topic merits more study than anonymity.”
- I. Anonymity breaks – Use of stories, photographs, or names in articles – need to avoid.
- J. Personal anonymity is one of the greatest protections we get from A.A., we don't have to tell anyone, not our family, friends or those we work with.
- K. “Understanding Anonymity” – GSO pamphlet.
- L. You should discuss with friends how you want your anonymity handled.
- M. Facebook Pages – More than 60 % of attendees had Facebook pages.
- N. Anonymity – If a person from work shows up at a meeting at your home group, you can't tell a co-worker or anyone else.
- O. Some people claim anonymity is stunting A.A.'s growth in a New York Times article – claimed A.A. does not need to be anonymous any more even though an individual could be anonymous as a member themselves.
- P. Traditions Checklist on Traditions Eleven and Twelve – discusses the use of the names of others.

PART TWO – LEADERSHIP WITHIN A.A.

I. INSPIRING INTO SERVICE - DON A. – DELEGATE, TENNESSEE - AREA 64

- A. His service experience – started when he complained about the home group's GSR and they appointed him to GSR of the Frazier Group and he has been in service ever since.
- B. His Sponsor got him involved in service and his life has been enhanced by service.
- C. He sponsor's both men and women as their Service Sponsor.
- D. Recovery, Unity and Service – Three legged stool:
 - 1. With one leg – stool falls over.
 - 2. With two legs – stool works for awhile, but then falls over.
 - 3. With all three legs – works all the time.
- E. They told him – Get your ____ in the truck- take road trips with your Sponsees.
- F. Attract folks into service –
 - 1. Show up and suit up – teach by example – attend Home Group and its business meetings regularly:
 - a. Your actions speak so loud I can't hear what you are saying
 - b. You can't think your way into good living
 - c. You can act your way into good thinking.
 - 2. Let your enthusiasm for service show.
 - 3. Agree to Disagree
 - 4. How you present something effects how it is perceived.
 - 5. 1959 Grapevine article – "Leadership –Ever a Vital Need in A.A.:"
 - a. Good Leadership – good plans come from anyone.
 - b. Good leader – discards his plan for a better plan.
 - 6. Keep apprised of what's going on.
 - 7. If you want what we have, you have to do what we do.
 - 8. Personally invite others to come with you on service trips.
- G. A.A.'s Legacy of Service – Bill W. pamphlet to suggest.
- H. Young people – full of energy - sponsor them, don't talk down to them, and don't tell them you spilled more than they drank.
- I. Young people are grateful when we show up for their events like ICYPAA.
- J. Be an example, talk to them one on one, nothing will ever replace it.
- K. You can't lead where you don't go.
- L. Dr. Bob led by helping others for four reasons – Big Book, p. 181:
 - 1. Sense of duty.
 - 2. It is a pleasure.
 - 3. Because in so doing I am paying my debt to the man who took time to pass it on to me.
 - 4. Because every time I do it I take out a little more insurance for myself against a possible slip.

**II. LEADERSHIP IN A.A. : GUIDELINES FOR SERVING AS A
LEADER AND A TRUSTED SERVANT – HERMAN R. –
ALTERNATE DELEGATE, SOUTH CAROLINA – AREA 62**

- A. I always want to be a servant to our loving and caring God who may express himself in our group conscience.
- B. Concept 9 – Good Leaders and Trusted Servants – good discussion about leading in A.A.
- C. He attended prison and other meetings for eight years and then he was told he needed to come to the Area Assembly as an Alternate GSR, even though he thought it was political.
- D. He then became Public Information Chair eventually and then came out of the hat as the Alternate Delegate.
- E. No society functions without good leadership.
 - 1. Like Trustees – We trusted them and thus put them in that position over us.
- F. In order to get respect, you must give respect.
- G. Time – Some things we must earn.
- H. Who is a leader in A.A.? - A man or woman who personally puts principles before everything and practices principles in all their affairs.
- I. Good leadership never passes the buck.
- J. Issues need to be tackled.
- K. I do not always have to be right.
- L. Compromise – Agree to agree.
- M. Acid test – Accepting constructive criticism.
- N. Taking inventory in A.A. – How do you get a Sponsor – by taking their inventory.
- O. Be a good listener.
- P. A Vision – Today I have it.
- Q. Accountable and responsible – be so.

**III. BLEEDING DEACONS AND ELDER STATESMEN –
DO WE NEED THEM BOTH? – CECILIA R. –
DELEGATE, NORTH FLORIDA - AREA 14**

- A. September, 1962 Grapevine Article - “Bleating Deacons Corner” – People “bleated” like goats at speaker meetings – discussed complaints or criticisms of other A.A. members.
- B. Deacon – Definition – Knowledgeable of ways and customs who is held to a higher standard and is usually a male.
- C. Elder – Definition – Older, knowledgeable about a family or group and is usually a male.
- D. Need – Definition – Necessary to make things work.
- E. Bleeding Deacons – Examples:
 - 1. My way or no way.
 - 2. No change in the way things are done.
 - 3. No disagreements with his or her decisions.
 - 4. Been known to bleed to death or to drink.
- F. Elder Statesmen – Examples:
 - 1. Uses their collection of experience, listens.
 - 2. Shares his or her knowledge.
 - 3. Takes care of folks.
 - 4. Servants who take care of things, but do not take control of them.
- G. Inventory of Sponsors, Bleeding Deacons, and Elder Statesmen:
 - 1. Primary Purpose – What is it?
 - 2. Seek the good of all, not the good of one.
 - 3. Participates in the meeting after the meeting.
- H. Folks with long term sobriety, need to continue to go to meetings to be of service to the group:
 - 1. By sharing the group’s past experience with various issues
 - 2. It may help the group avoid its old mistakes.

**IV. HAS THE SPIRIT OF ROTATION OUTLIVED ITS USEFULNESS
IN A.A. – JIM S. – DELEGATE, WEST VIRGINIA – AREA 73**

- A. "Rotation" – Definition – leave position.
- B. "Spirit of Rotation" – Once you leave a position, let it go and do not try to influence the new person in the position.
- C. He started in a small group as Intergroup Representative, then GSR for 2-3 terms, then became Alternate DCM and then DCM.
- D. If you stay in a position too long, you take away opportunities for others to serve.
- E. 52nd GSC – "Spirit of Rotation" – article -
 - 1. At the 1955 International in St. Louis, passed on the Three Legacies –
 - a. Twelve Steps.
 - b. Twelve Traditions.
 - c. Twelve Concepts.
 - 2. They also allowed the General Service Conference to take over A.A.'s leadership.
- F. Allow leaders to make mistakes without criticism.
- G. Spirit of Rotation's benefits to the individual are beyond our imagination because God's plans are better than ours:
 - 1. Helps us to move forward.
 - 2. Allows us to go on to further spiritual awakening and be ready for a new job.
- H. Allows God, through our group conscience, to guide us in our service – rotation brings different experiences.
- I. AA. Service Manual – states the A.A. practice of rotation prevents Delegates from succeeding themselves and they cannot come back until they take some time off.
- J. Group Conscience –
- K. Concept Eleven – Continuity of office, A.A. GSO paid staff members rotate, in the future if the rotation system does not work, A.A. may jump from the frying pan into the fire.
- L. Twelve and Twelve – Tradition Nine – The Group needs the least possible organization. Rotating leadership is best.
- M. Box 459 – Cleaned coffee pot for a year and then his Sponsor said let it go to a newcomer and he passed it on.
- N. Rotation – Allows us to learn different experiences and keeps us right sized.

PART THREE – SPONSORSHIP

I. ARE WE LIVING UP TO OUR RESPONSIBILITIES IN SPONSORSHIP? – TOM K. – DELEGATE, MISSISSIPPI - AREA 37

- A. Keep our Commitments - Ability to do what I say when I say I am going to do.
- B. Sponsorship – Definition – to vouch for or support.
- C. His first Sponsor – Get into group service
- D. He complained about General Service and the politics down in Jackson, Mississippi at the Area Assemblies and his Sponsor told him to get involved and then he ended up as the Delegate.
- E. Sponsor types:
 - 1. Celebrity.
 - 2. “Like me” Sponsor.
 - 3. In name only.
 - 4. 911.
 - 5. Can we be friends?
 - 6. By the book.
 - 7. Legacy Sponsor.
- F. Service introduction – 36 Principles - 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, and 12 Concepts.
- G. Before he went to the General Service Conference, he read all the Background Material and tabbed it.
- H. “Pigeon” term – Dr. Bob started using it.
- I. He introduces pigeons into the “clichés” of the group.
- J. Laughter in A.A. is the miracle of A.A.
- K. Sponsor helps us grow our skin a little thicker.
- L. Sponsor – always tells the truth.
- M. How can I tell if it is working:
 - 1. Are people staying sober, coming back to meetings, multi-generational Sponsees.
 - 2. Pigeons growing, know the Traditions and Concepts, are involved in service.

**II. ROLE OF THE SPONSEE (PIGEON) IN A HEALTHY
PRODUCTIVE SPONSORSHIP RELATIONSHIP – KATHY G. –
DELEGATE, FLORIDA - AREA 15**

- A. Our basic text says “nothing will so much insure our sobriety as intensive work with another alcoholic.”
- B. Sponsee – Get and stay sober:
 - 1. Be willing.
 - 2. Be honest – unlike before getting sober when we lied to psychologists and hid the how much we drank, our thefts, and our affairs, choose complete honesty.
 - 3. Be open minded.
- C. Sponsor-
 - 1. We share our thoughts when we come in with our Sponsees.
 - 2. We choose them because they have something we want in their recovery.
- D. We became willing when we became desperate.
- E. Open-mindedness – When told to get on my knees and ask God to remove the obsession to drink, I was skeptical, but all the fight was gone and I opened my mind to try it and a whole new world opened up to me as soon as I knelt down.
 - 1. I thought I might not measure up to God’s standards.
 - 2. Prayed for forgiveness to God.
- F. First Group position – Supply Chairman.
- G. Willingness – This opened the door to the experience of the supreme joy of service in A.A. and made me feel a part of and a member of the group.
 - 1. Just say yes to service.
 - 2. Led to new opportunities in the group, district, and area.
- H. Taking the steps changed my life.
 - 1. Helping someone take them makes us feel better and better.
 - 2. The repeated experience of taking the steps enlarged my spiritual life.
- I. A Vision for You - We make lifelong friends and shoulder to shoulder commence our common journey.
- J. To have a host of friends.
- K. Service Sponsorship – Concepts, Traditions:
 - 1. Stand for next position available.
 - 2. Just say yes and you will be amazed.

**III. SPONSORING NEWCOMERS WITH MULTIPLE ADDICTIONS-
CINDY F. – DELEGATE, VIRGINIA - AREA 71**

- A. Her experience – gift of desperation, her last chance, she couldn't fill the void, and spent the last few years before she came in trying to drink herself to death, this was the last stop:
 - 1. Her Sponsor was scared off by all the white teeth.
 - 2. Laughter was the first thing that attracted her because you were enjoying yourselves.
 - 3. She felt she was terminally unique – she did not have a Sponsor for two and a half years, but the fellowship carried her.
- B. Her First Sponsor- Told her everyone shares their experience, strength, and hope and our Design for Living which really works.
- C. She learned her primary purpose is to help other alcoholics learn how to not drink a day at a time.
- D. The A.A. message is still the same in the literature, but the outside world has changed.
- E. Those not alcoholics – unlike alcoholics they do not have a desire to stop drinking.
- F. 1958 Grapevine Article – “Problems Other Than Alcohol.”
 - 1. Discusses all who suffer from alcoholism.
 - 2. States A.A. cannot be all things to all people.
- G. People attend A.A. and die of drug overdoses because they are in the wrong fellowship.
- H. N.A. Meetings – “A drug is a drug is a drug.”
 - 1. Alcoholic – drinks, gets drunk.
 - 2. Addict – uses, goes on to other drugs
- I. A.A. is not the answer to all who suffer.

**IV. SPONSORSHIP 101- PRINCIPLES, TOOLS, AND TECHNIQUES
FOR EFFECTIVE SPONSORSHIP –
-INOCNECIO F. – DELEGATE, PUERTO RICO - AREA 77**

- A. Principles:
1. Honesty – synonyms – integrity, sincerity, straight forward; be honest with your higher power and with others..
 2. His Sponsor has a Sponsor.
 3. Must be honest – Sponsor to Sponsee, Sponsee to Sponsor.
 4. His Sponsor – Kiki – Gave him tough love.
 - a. Kiki was always laughing.
 - b. Kiki said yes he would be Ino's Sponsor, but told him not to call him at 2 in the morning and tell him he did not have hot water.
- B. He was willing to take the steps.
- C. His Sponsor passed two years ago – but:
1. He is in me – all my Sponsors are;
 2. My Sponsors are my second Godfathers – “Padrenos” in Puerto Rico.
- D. Love is given each day by Sponsors.
- E. For the first time he felt free.
- F. His Sponsor helped him become a man.
- G. He began to feel faith.
- H. It was finally OK for him to be himself.
- I. Sponsor – Encouraged me – listened w/compassion and understanding.
- J. Sponsee is a part of a system that works.
- K. Sponsor – Get one, use one, and be one. He began to change as he did this.
- L. Tool- Cell phone use – call, text, talk – keep in touch with Sponsees and your Sponsor.
- M. His First Business Meeting – If you are the Chair you can help keep the meeting focused.
- N. He learned how to make the coffee and this experience gave him the language of the heart.
- O. When he moved to Puerto Rico – Kiki told him the first thing to do was to run to a meeting, he found one on line, he felt he had a willing faith and hope, and then he was looking for his new Sponsor and his next adventure and found both at the Serenity Group.
- P. On the way home, he drove by his old bars and had a panic attack, but a voice came out of the blue and told him to call his Sponsor Tony and he began to feel he was free.
- Q. When he became a Sponsor, he stopped the car and cried and felt complete.
- R. He thought he was Mr. A.A. for a while and said let me touch you and you will be safe.
- S. An old-timer told him his Sponsee's slip came from the hand of God.
- T. Read the literature, Dr. Bob and the Good Old-Timers, Pass it On, and the Conference Reports.
- U. Give love and compassion to others.
- V. Today, I live the steps and listen to others.
- W. Get a Service Sponsor and go through the Concepts like he did.