

# General Service Representative (GSR)

Workshop

Area 23

Welcome

- Opening/Introduction

# Schedule of Events

- 1) Opening with District Personnel
- 2) Third Legacy; Commitment to Home Group/District/Area 23, and Registering with GSO
- 3) Importance and use of A.A. Service Manual, Robert's Rules of Order, & Area 23 Structure Manual and Guidelines
- Break
- 4) Guardian of Traditions, and Being involved in Service work at the District and Area Level;
- 5) Roles and Responsibilities of the GSR, Group Conscious, Group Inventory, and Financial Contributions
- 6) Ask-It Basket/Closing

# Officers

<b>Chair</b> chairperson@area23aa.org	<b>Alternate Chairperson</b> alternatchair@area23aa.org	<b>Delegate</b> delegate@area23aa.org	<b>Alternate Delegate</b> alternatedelegate@area23aa.org
<b>Secretary</b> secretary@area23aa.org	<b>Alternate Secretary</b> alternatesecretary@area23aa.org	<b>Treasurer</b> treasurer@area23aa.org	<b>Alternate Treasurer</b> alternatetreasurer@area23aa.org

## Committee Chairs

<b>Accessibility Chair</b> accessibilitieschair@area23aa.org	<b>Archives Chair</b> archiveschair@area23aa.org	<b>AV Chair</b> avchair@area23aa.org	<b>Corrections Chair</b> correctionschair@area23aa.org
<b>CPC Chair</b> cpcchair@area23aa.org	<b>Finance Chair</b> financechair@area23aa.org	<b>Grapevine Chair</b> grapevinechair@area23aa.org	<b>Group Services Chair</b> groupserviceschair@area23aa.org
<b>Newsletter Chair</b> newsletterchair@area23aa.org	<b>Intergroup Liaison</b> intergroupliaisonchair@area23aa.org	<b>Literature Chair</b> literaturechair@area23aa.org	<b>Public Information Chair</b> publicinformationchair@area23aa.org
<b>Treatment Facilities Chair</b> treatmentchair@area23aa.org	<b>Website Committee Chair</b> websitechair@area23aa.org	<b>2022 State Convention Chair</b> Todd Kowinski stateconventionchair@area23aa.org	

Third Legacy; Commitment to Home Group/District/Area 23,  
and Registering with GSO

# Third Legacy

The founders of Alcoholics Anonymous have given to each of us three great Legacies: Recovery, Unity, and Service.

\*Our First Legacy, Recovery, has given us a second chance to find happiness and freedom; to live useful and productive lives.

\*Our Second Legacy, Unity, has provided us with a fellowship made up of people who share our own common problem; who give us the love and support necessary to maintain our sobriety.

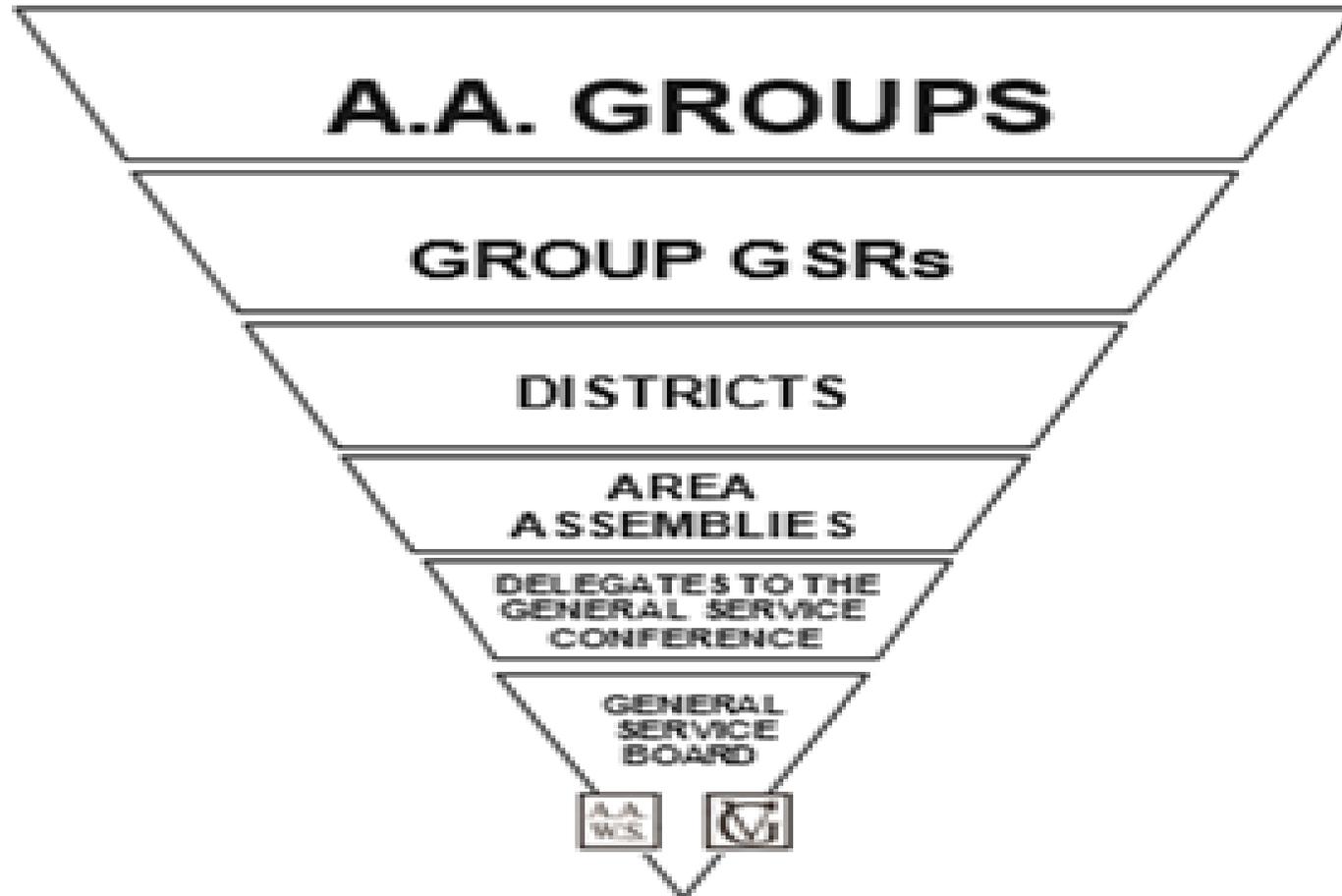
\*Our Third Legacy, Service offers us the opportunity to implement our primary goal “ to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers”.

Most important - it is a proven fact -that those who participate in service have a significantly better chance of remaining sober, than those who do not.

“These are derived from the accumulated experience of A.A.’s earliest members that have been passed on and shared with us: the suggestions for Recovery are the Twelve Steps; the suggestions for achieving Unity are the Twelve Traditions; and the A.A. Service is described in the A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service, and Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age. (A.A. Group pamphlet p 40)

# STRUCTURE OF THE CONFERENCE

(U.S. and Canada)



# The General Service Conference Structure (U.S. and Canada)



\*Secondary committees.

## A WORD ABOUT COMMITMENT --Ready, Willing, and Able

Commitment, in terms of recovery, means recovering some of those basic principles which all of us were taught as children, but which we lost somewhere in pursuit of self.

As members of the general service structure, those principles that we must now demonstrate as a trusted servant include willingness, self sacrifice, honesty, consideration of others, thoughtfulness, love, tolerance and, most of all, basic etiquette.

- Do we show up when we say we will?
- Are we on time?
- Do we mark our A.A. commitments on the calendar and then work around them, or do we attend only if it doesn't interfere with our own pleasure?
- When we are unable to make an event that the G.S.R. should attend, do we arrange for our alternate to be there?
- Do we keep our alternates well informed and involved?
- Do we attend as many service activities as possible in order to become better informed, or do we do the least possible required?
- Do we tend to our responsibilities cheerfully or portray them as a drag?
- Are we able to offer criticism lovingly and based on the application of our three legacies, or do we let personalities get in the way?

All of these things are important to being committed to service in A.A., but the bottom line is: Are we giving in proportion to what has been given to us? Gratitude is an action word. It is something we show, not just something we talk about. If we give only a tenth of what has been given to us, we should all be shining examples of service and commitment in A.A.

# Registering with GSO

- Registering with the General Service Office (GSO)
- Your DCM can help you determine if your Home Group is Registered with the GSO.
- We have an Area Group Services Chair that is very efficient with registering you. ([groupserviceschair@area23aa.org](mailto:groupserviceschair@area23aa.org))
  - Use the New Group Form if your Home Group is not already a registered group.
  - Use a Change of Information Form if your Home Group is a registered group.
  - If you are not sure if your group is registered, check with our Area Group Services Chair.

# Why Register?

- You get stuff.
  - A GSR or DCM Packet.
  - A copy of Box 459.
- You get connected.
  - You and your group will get support and improved communication from GSO. Your group will be assigned a service number. The service number improves communication between GSO and your group. (See the A.A. Service Manual)
  - You will be on a committee at the Area level
  - The DCM's will receive information from the Alternate Delegate and the Group Services Chair at each assembly.

# We Are Here For You

- If you have questions, please ask. We are the resources that are available to you:
- The Officers: Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Secretary, Alternate Secretary, Treasurer, Alternate Treasurer
- The Permanent Standing Committee Chairpersons: Archives, Cooperation with the Professional Community, Corrections, Grapevine, Literature, Public Information, Treatment, The Handout, Registrar/Group Services, Area/Intergroup Liaison, Finance Committee, Special Needs, and State Convention.
- Past Delegates

# Contact Information

- General Service Office online at [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)
- General Service Office, PO Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163
- Area 23 Website at [area23aa.org](http://area23aa.org)
  - Officers and DCM's contact email
  - User Name and Password (Anonymity)



Importance and use of A.A., Robert's Rules of Order, Service Manual & Area 23 Structure Manual and Guidelines

# Service Manual - [virtual copy](#)

*The*  
**A.A. SERVICE MANUAL**

*Combined With*

**TWELVE CONCEPTS**  
*for* **WORLD SERVICE**

*by Bill W.*

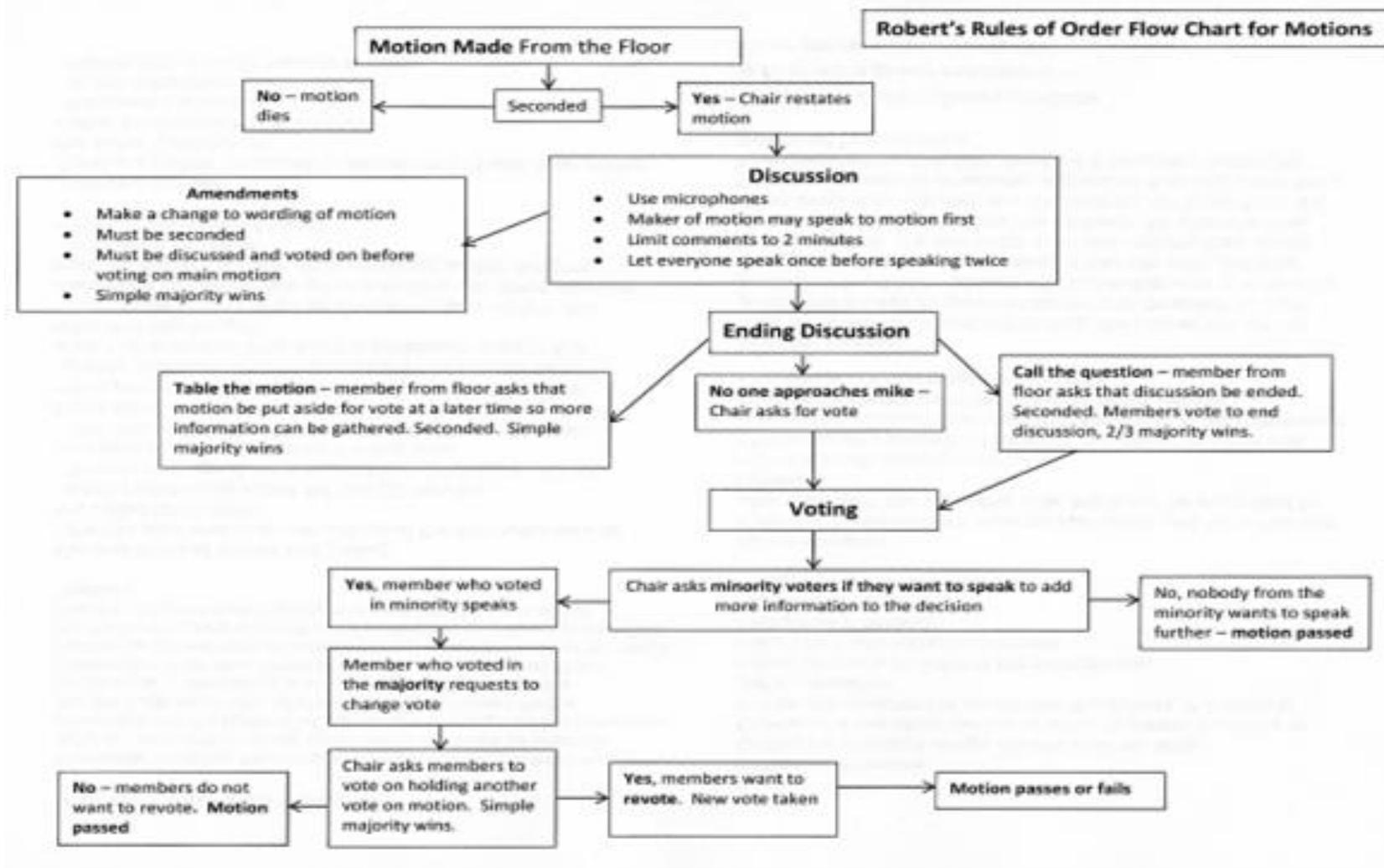
*2016-2018 Edition*

**REFLECTING ACTIONS OF THE  
2016 GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE**

## Review of our A.A. Service Manual

The Service Manual is a guidebook and gives direction for how we can work together. It gives you expectations and duties of the service positions and provides a set of concepts to guide us.

# Why we use Roberts Rule of Order





Review of our Area 23  
Southern Indiana Structure  
of Area Committee and Area  
Assembly Guidelines –  
[virtual copy](#)





## ATTENDING DISTRICT MEETINGS

In general, the G.S.R.'s major responsibilities involve a two-way relationship with:

- The group.
- The district.
- The area.
- The general service office

There are really very few completely new and original problems that develop in groups, so our continuity of experience is extremely valuable to the new G.S.R. The G.S.R.s may share with their fellow G.S.R.s and the D.C.M. at the district or Area meetings how they dealt with such matters and with what success. Their experience may be helpful to another group.

Also, at the district meetings, agenda items that require action at the next area assembly can be discussed. This is a kind of middle ground where such discussion makes us better informed and able to take back to our group any business where a group conscience is needed. We can then take this conscience back to the assembly and make our voice heard.

Guardian of Traditions, and Being involved in Service work at  
the District and Area Level

GSR is also known as the Guardian of Traditions

### **The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous**

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
2. 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.
3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose-to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

# Is Our Group Aligned With The Twelve Traditions? From the pamphlet "The AA Group", Big Book page 562- 566, and the Twelve and Twelve

"Some groups take inventory by examining our Twelve Traditions, one at a time, to determine how well they are living up to these principles."

\*(If you can answer yes to any of these it may be in violation of that Tradition.)

One: Does our group put the interests of any individual above the welfare of the group or of AA as a whole?

Two: Does our group do anything that misrepresents the conscience of the majority of the group?

Three: Does our group exclude anyone with a drinking problem from attending the group?

Four: Does our group do anything that does not conform to AA principles and affect other groups or AA as a whole?

Five: Does our group do anything that conflicts with our carrying the AA message to alcoholics who want a way out from their drinking problem?

Six: Does anything we do affiliate, endorse or bind the group, actual or implied, to any related facility or outside enterprise?

Seven: Does the group receive donations from anyone other than an AA member?

Eight: Are there any fees besides meeting expenses being charged for Twelve Step work, IE: fellowship, sponsoring, step work, counseling?

Nine: Is there a governing individual or exclusive group authority that dictates organization to our group?

Ten: Does our group do anything that publicly states an opinion or takes sides on any issues or controversy that are outside of AA?

Eleven: At the general public level, does the group publicize any individual AA member's name or picture as a self-appointed representative of AA?

Twelve: Does our group give personal distinction to any AA member either among fellow alcoholics or the general public that puts their opinions above the conscience of the group or AA?

## Importance of Home Groups and Service work:

According to “The A.A. Group...where it all begins” pamphlet it states,

“Traditionally, most A.A. members through our years have found it important to belong to one group which they call their Home Group. This is the group where they accept service responsibilities and try to sustain friendships. And although all A.A. members are usually welcome at all groups, and feel at home at any of these meetings, the concept of the “Home Group” has still remained the strongest bond between the A.A. members and the Fellowship. With membership comes the right to vote upon issues that might affect the group and might also affect A.A. as a whole—process that forms the very cornerstone of A.A. service structure. As with all group-conscious matters, each A.A. member has one vote, and this, ideally, is voiced through the home group.

According to “A.A. Service Manual” which is the outgrowth of the “Third Legacy Manual” which began with Bill W.’s first draft in 1951 it states, “For most A.A.s, membership in a home group is one of the keys to continuing sobriety. In a home group, they accept service responsibilities and learn to sustain friendships. The home group affords individual A.A.s the privilege of voting on issues that affect the Fellowship as a whole, it is the very basis of the service structure. ‘The Twelve Traditions make it clear the principle that A.A. as such, should never be organized, that there are no bosses and no government in A.A. Yet at the same time, the Traditions recognize the need for some kind of organization to carry the message. “ (S.M. pg S15)

“Alcoholics Anonymous has been called an upside-down organization because, as the structure chart shows, the groups are on top and the trustees at the bottom. Bill W. wrote in Concept 1: “The A.A. groups today hold ultimate authority for our world services...the actual voice and the effective conscience for our whole Society.” (S. M. pg S15)

“Keeping a balance between ultimate authority and responsibility and the active, day to day functioning of world services means there must be constant communication among all elements of the structure.”



## Roles and Responsibilities of the GSR, Group Conscious, Group Inventory, and Financial Contributions

# Be Prepared

Become familiar with and keep with you:

- GSR Binder/Notebook
- AA Service Manual
- Area 23 Structure (Booklet)
- Area 23 Guidelines (Booklet)

## Attend District Meetings and Area Assemblies

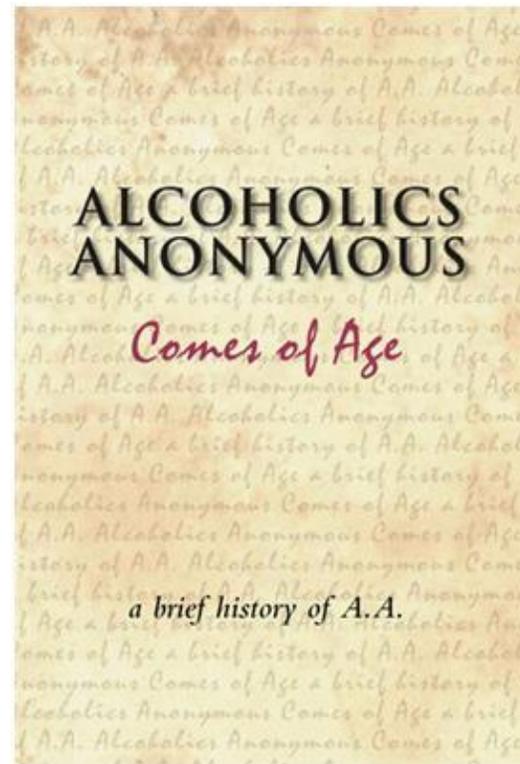
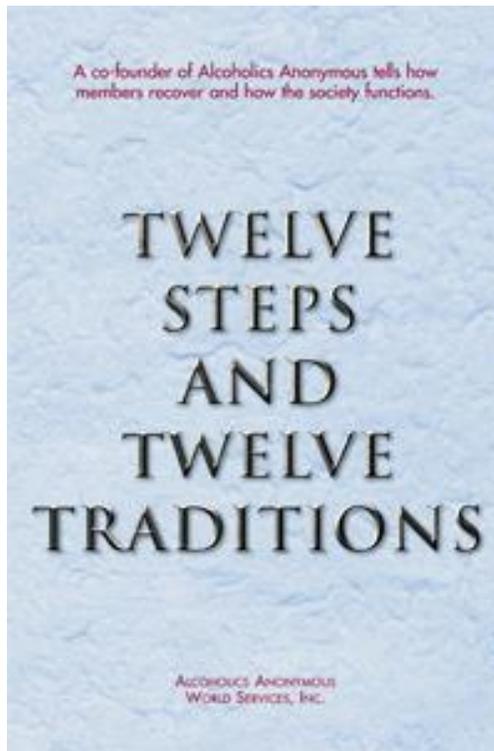
How can you know what is happening at the District and Area level if you don't attend the meetings.

Remember you carry information to and from the District and Area level to and from your Home Group.

Service Weekend—I can't stress this enough! There is so much to learn at this function. There are workshops and every other year there is a voting Assembly. Your vote controls who is doing what at the Area! If you don't think your vote counts, you need to attend a voting Assembly to see how one person's vote can make a difference.

It is also important to ask for your group's financial support for you to attend the Service weekend.

# Learn the Traditions from the "12 & 12" and "AA Comes of Age"



# Excellent Resource

The A.A. Group...Where it all begins (P-16) -  
[virtual copy](#)



# GSR for Home Group and Group Conscience

**The Group:** The communication process starts with the group, which lets its group conscience—for or against, approval or disapproval of a proposed action [Affecting A.A. as a whole]—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” (SM p517)

At the annual Conference, our area delegate shares our group conscience with the other area delegates; and they vote on whether any changes, deletions or additions will be made to Conference Advisory Actions.

**“What is an informed A.A. Group Conscience?”** The group conscience is the collective conscience of the group membership and thus represents substantial unanimity of an issue before definitive action is taken. This is achieved by the group members through the sharing of full information, individual points of view, and the practice of the A.A. principles. To be fully informed requires a willingness to listen to minority opinions with an open mind.” (A.A. Group pamphlet p 28)

# Group Meetings

What are some types of Home Group Meetings? Business and Inventory

**Business:** Some groups schedule special sessions throughout the year, apart from regular meetings, for reports from group officers to discuss group affairs and obtain group guidance. Group officers usually are elected at such meetings.' (A.A. Group pamphlet p 14-15)

'In most groups, the chairperson or another officer calls the business meeting, which ordinarily is held on a monthly basis.' (A.A.Group pamphlet p 30) "The order of business may include: electing new officers; scheduling meetings; receiving and discussing treasurer reports, and apportioning excess funds to local intergroup, GSO and the area and district treasuries." (A.A.Group pamphlet p 30) While some groups may occasionally permit non-members to attend, the group may request that only home group members participate or vote." (A.A.Group pamphlet p 30) "Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterwards." (First Tradition)

**Group Inventory.** These are meetings at which members work toward understanding how well the group is fulfilling its primary purpose." (A.A. Group pamphlet p 15) "Many groups periodically hold a "group inventory meeting" to evaluate how well they are fulfilling their primary purpose: to help alcoholics recover through A.A.'s suggested Twelve Steps of recovery. Some groups take inventory by examining our Twelve Traditions, one at a time, to determine how well they are living up to these principles." (A.A. Group pamphlet p 30).

Our individual sobriety depends on the group.  
The group depends on us. We soon learn  
that unless we curb our individual  
desires and ambitions, we can  
damage the group...



# Group Inventory

## Is Our Group Aligned With The Twelve Traditions?

"Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning, which many of us had never attempted. Though our decision was a vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face, and to be rid of, the things in ourselves that had been blocking us." Big Book pg 64

"Group Inventory" information from the pamphlet "The AA Group"

"Many groups periodically hold a "group inventory meeting" to evaluate how well they are fulfilling their primary purpose: to help alcoholics recover through A.A.'s suggested Twelve Steps of recovery. Some groups take inventory by examining our Twelve Traditions, one at a time, to determine how well they are living up to these Groups interested in taking regular inventory will find a review of the Tenth Step helpful. The following questions, compiled from A.A. shared experience, may be useful in arriving at an informed group conscience. Groups will probably wish to add questions of their own."

The Group Inventory Questions can be located in "The AA Group Pamphlet".

# What else should I do?

- Attend the Area 23 Assemblies, your district meetings and your group meetings.
  - Vote! You are the voice of your group.
  - Participate in your committee.
- Show up to meetings with these things = Prepared
  - Prepare a Service Notebook.
  - Bring information to your group and your group's conscience back to the Area Assemblies.
  - Carry the A.A. Service Manual, Area 23 Structure and Area 23 Guidelines. These are your reference tools to keep with your notebook.

## REPORTS TO THOSE YOU SERVE (Homegroup)

Highlight what is happening at the District and Area level. Are there any proposals that are coming up at the District or Area?

- Any new group officers or other service position holders.
- Who your alternate G.S.R. is.
- Any new group officers or other service position holders.
- What the average attendance is at group meetings.
- Any problems the group may be facing such as having to move, court referrals, dual diagnosis members (alcoholism coupled with a mental illness), non-alcoholic addicts, lack of interest in service, etc.

And, things you might report to your group include:

Have copies of the District, Area and the General Service Office Treasurer's Reports for all to see.

- New district officers and other service people.
- News of any events or workshops you learned about at the district meeting.

Have copies of the Area Handout and Box 459. Pick a topic from Box 459 if you have time to discuss it.

- Things that you think the group can relate to or is interested or involved in.
- If there is an issue coming up that will require your vote, try to explain it as simply, fully, and fairly as possible so that they can arrive at an informed group conscience.

Reimbursement from your Home Group

- How your group divides its funds for contributions.  
Seventh Tradition

# 7th Tradition Contributions

## Donations

You may now donate to the General Service Office online at [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)

General Service Office, PO Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163

Area 23 Southern Indiana, 7 th Tradition, PO Box 546, Indianapolis, IN 46206

# Ask-It Basket/Closing

- We would like to thank you for attending this GSR workshop.
- Thank you for inviting us to come and speak

When anyone anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. to always be there, and for that I am responsible.