



# Carry the Message May, 2010

The Huron Valley Area Intergroup Newsletter

Serving the Recovery Community since 1979

## AA's Twelve Concepts for World Service

*The Twelve Concepts for World Service are an interpretation of A.A.'s world service structure. They reveal the evolution by which it has arrived in its present form, and they detail the experience and reasoning on which our operation stands today.*

### Concept V Long Form

Throughout our world service structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.

### Concept V Checklist

- Do we encourage the minority opinion, the "Right of Appeal", to be heard at our home group, district committee meetings, area assemblies and the Conference?
- What does our group accept as "substantial unanimity"?
- Has our group experienced the "tyranny of the majority" or the "tyranny of the minority"?
- Does our group understand the importance of all points of view being heard before a vote is taken?

## A.A.'s Legacy of Service

by Bill W.

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(Continued from last month)

No description of our world services would be complete without full acknowledgment of all that has been contributed by our nonalcoholic trustees. Over the years they have given an incredible amount of time and effort; theirs has been a true labor of love. Some of them, like Jack Alexander, Fulton Oursler, Leonard Harrison, and Bernard Smith, have given much in their fields of literature, social service, finance, and law. Their example is being followed by more recent nonalcoholic trustees.

As I pointed out earlier, in the 1940's our headquarters was constantly overhung by one great threat to its future existence: Doctor Bob and I and our board of trustees had the entire responsibility for the conduct of A.A.'s services.

In the years leading up to 1950 and 1951, we began to debate the desirability of some sort of advisory board of A.A.'s. Or maybe we needed a conference of larger numbers, elected by A.A. itself; people who would inspect the headquarters yearly, a body to whom the trustees

could become responsible, a guiding conscience of our whole world effort.

But the objections to this were persistent and nothing happened for several years. Such a venture, it was said, would be expensive. Worse still, it might plunge A.A. into disruptive political activity when conference delegates were elected. Then Doctor Bob fell ill, mortally ill. Finally, in 1950, spurred on by the relentless logic of the situation, the trustees authorized Doctor Bob and me to devise the plan with which this booklet deals. It was a plan for a General Service Conference of A.A., a plan by which our Society could assume full and permanent responsibility for the conduct of its most vital affairs.

### Birth of the Conference

It was one thing to say that we ought to have a General Service Conference, but it was quite another to devise a plan which would bring it into successful existence. The cost of holding one was easily dismissed, but how on earth were we going to cut down destructive politics, with all its usual struggles for prestige and vainglory? How many delegates

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## HVAI Contributions

**We'd like to thank last months contributors...without the support of groups like these we would not be able to do the important work we do for the recovering community.**

### **Ann Arbor:**

Another Second Chance  
Get Straight Candlelight  
Sober Spice  
Stadium 12/12  
Young People on the Move  
Washtenaw County District

04

### **Dexter:**

Dexter Group  
Women of Substance

### **Ypsilanti:**

Attitude Adjustment  
Promises Group  
Thursday Night Steps  
Unity Group

### **Personal and Anonymous Contributions**

would be required and from where should they come? Arrived at New York, how could they be related to the board of trustees? What would be their actual powers and duties?

With these several weighty considerations in mind, and with some misgivings, I commenced work on a draft of a plan, much assisted by Helen B., an A.A. staff member.

Though the Conference might be later enlarged to include the whole world, we felt that the first delegates should come from the U.S. and Canada only. Each state and province might be allowed one delegate. Those containing heavy A.A. populations could have additional delegates. To give the Conference continuity, delegates could be divided into panels. An odd-numbered panel (Panel One), elected for two years, would be invited for 1951, the first year. An even-numbered panel (Panel Two), elected for two years, would be seated in 1952. Thereafter, one panel would be elected and one would be retired yearly. This would cause the Conference to ro-

tate, while maintaining some continuity.

But how could we pull the inevitable election pressure down? To accomplish this, it was provided that a delegate must receive a two-thirds vote for election. If a delegate got a majority of this size, nobody could kick much. But if he or she didn't, and the election was close, what then? Well, perhaps the names of the two highest in the running, or the three officers of the committee, or even the whole committee, could be put in a hat. One name would be drawn. The winner of this painless lottery would become the delegate.

But when these delegates met in conference, what would they do? We thought they would want to have real authority. So, in the charter drawn for the Conference itself, it was provided that the delegates could issue flat directions to the trustees on a two-thirds vote. And even a simple majority vote would constitute a mighty strong suggestion.

### **Delegates Encouraged to Question**

## Meeting Updates

To update your April 2009 Directories, please print and pass on this information. Go to [www.hvai.org](http://www.hvai.org) and click on the AA & Al-Anon Meeting Locator, then type the key word 'change' in the search box. You can print and distribute this abbreviated list as a service.

## Send Your Voluntary 7th Tradition Contributions To:

**Huron Valley Area Intergroup**  
31 South Huron Street  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

**District 4**  
Washtenaw County Treasurer  
Box 971502  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

**Central Michigan Intra-Area 32**  
C.M.I.A. Area 32 Treasurer  
10351 Timber Ridge Drive  
Milan, MI 48160

**AA World Service**  
Grand Central Station  
P.O. Box 459  
New York, NY 10164-0423

## Upcoming Events

**1st. Sunday of every EVEN month:** Central MI CMIA ...Conference Service Structure Meeting: <http://www.cmia32.org>

**3rd Saturday:** AA Group Service Center: 4pm Huron Valley Area Intergroup Meeting, 101 S. Huron St. Ypsi. [www.hvai.org](http://www.hvai.org)

**3rd Monday:** District 4: (3rd Mon. ea. month) Conference Service Structure Meeting, Calvary Methodist Church, 1415 Miller, Ann Arbor, 48103

**3rd Thursday:** District 8: Conference Service Structure Meeting: Brighton <http://www.aalivcomi.org>

**last Sunday:** West-Side MCYPAA Bid Committee Planning: Dawn Farm basement, 6633 Stony Creek, Ypsilanti Info: John W. 248-840-1388, James G. 734- 323-9913, Amanda 734-645-3648, Talara E. 734-678-0187 or <http://www.ws-mcypaa.org/>

**Last Monday:** Eastern Area EACYPAA Bid Committee Planning: Denny's backroom, Ann Arbor Road and I-275, Plymouth, MI info: John W. 248-840-1388, Nick G. 586-291-4871, James G. 734-323-9913 or <http://www.ws-mcypaa.org/>

**May 14-16th, 2010:** *Recovering Maniacs 2010 Mens' Spring Canoe Trip.* Old Log Resort, Marion, MI. \$60. Deadline May 1st Contacts: Rick 734) 686-0264, Brent 734) 368-7970, Smilin Dave 517)

**May 28-30, 2010:** *58th Michigan State Convention- "75 Years of Miracles. It Works, It Really Does!"* Boyne Mountain Resort. Jeff & Kimberly B. will provide entertainment and humor, Jerry W will do an Anthology of Bill W.'s Story. Info. <http://www.wmaa34.com> (Room Reservations: P.O. B. 19, Boyne Falls, Mi 49713)

**July 1-10 , 2010:** *9 & 10 DAY PACKAGES FROM \$1448.00 : International AA World Convention & Cruise Packages & Big Book Study from \$799.00: Cruise Info:* [www.NotAGlumLot.com](http://www.NotAGlumLot.com)

The first Conference was set for April 1951. In came the delegates. They looked over our offices, cellar to garret, got acquainted with the whole staff, shook hands with the trustees. That evening, we gave them a briefing session, under the name of "What's on your mind?" We answered scores of questions of all kinds. The delegates began to feel at home and reassured. They inspected our finances with a microscope. After they had listened to reports from the board of trustees and from all the services, there was warm but cordial debate on many a question of policy. Trustees submitted several of their own serious problems for the opinion of the Conference.

So went session after session, morning, afternoon, and evening. The delegates handled several

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

tough puzzles about which we at G.S.O. were in doubt, sometimes giving advice contrary to our own conclusions. In nearly every instance, we saw that they were right. Then and there they proved, as never before, that A.A.'s Tradition Two was correct. The group conscience could safely act as the sole authority and sure guide for Alcoholics Anonymous.

Nobody present will ever forget that final session of the first Conference. We knew that the impossible had happened, that A.A.

could never break down in the middle, that Alcoholics Anonymous was at last safe from any storm the future might bring. And, as delegates returned home, they carried this same conviction with them.

Realizing our need for funds and better literature circulation, some did place a little too much emphasis on this necessity; others were a little discouraged, wondering why fellow members in their areas did not take fire as they had. They forgot that they themselves had been eyewitnesses to the Conference and that their brother alcoholics had not. But, both here and at home, they made an impression much greater than they knew.

In the midst of this exciting turn

(Continued from page 3)

of affairs, the Conference agreed that the Alcoholic Foundation ought to be renamed the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, and this was done. The word “Foundation” stood for charity, paternalism and maybe big money. A.A. would have none of these; from here out we could assume full responsibility and pay our expenses ourselves.

As I watched all this grow, I became entirely sure that Alcoholics Anonymous was at last safe — even from me.

### AA Guidelines: Central or Intergroup Offices

—From publication MG02 © the AA General Service Office, NY, NY

The A.A. Guidelines below are compiled from the shared experience of A.A. members throughout the U.S. and Canada. They also reflect guidance given through the Twelve Traditions and the General Service Conference. In keeping with our Tradition of autonomy except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole, most decisions are made by the group conscience of the members involved. The purpose of these Guidelines is to assist in reaching an **informed** group conscience.

### WHAT IS A CENTRAL OF-

### FIGE (INTERGROUP)?

A central office (or intergroup) is an A.A. service office that involves partnership among groups in a community—just as A.A. groups themselves are partnerships of individuals. A central office is established to carry out certain functions common to all the groups—functions which are best handled by a centralized office—and it is usually maintained, supervised, and supported by these groups in their general interest. It exists to aid the groups in their common purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

### FUNCTIONS OF A CENTRAL OFFICE/INTERGROUP

The A.A. experience has demonstrated that central offices are helpful, particularly in populous areas. There are nearly 1000 central/intergroup offices throughout the world, performing vital A.A. services. These constitute a network of service outlets and A.A. contacts to help carry the A.A. message.

Sometimes, however, central office ventures have bogged down in disputes over money, authority, and like matters— thus becoming less effective in carrying the A.A. message. It’s not always clear why these troubles have come up, but often it’s been because the proper functions of a central office were not clearly explained or understood, or there was some disregard of the principles in A.A.’s Twelve Traditions. So the following suggestions have been

made to outline the basic services a central office might offer:

1) **A.A. Inquiries**—By providing an Alcoholics Anonymous listing in the local telephone directory, the central office may receive inquiries from those seeking help. They will refer the caller to a nearby A.A. group, where sponsorship may be arranged, or have a twelfth stepper contact them. Many local A.A. offices now have their own Web site.

2) **Office Facilities**—The central office can maintain a conveniently located office in which paid workers and/or volunteers are available to carry the message of A.A. to the alcoholic.

3) **Meeting Lists and Other Literature** — At regular intervals, the central office may publish and distribute up-to-date lists of meetings and other information about local A.A. services. Many intergroup/central offices sell A.A. Conference-approved literature for the convenience of local groups.

4) **Information Exchange**—The service office may function as a clearinghouse for the circulation and exchange of information among all the A.A. groups in the community. In this same connection, a logical function of the central office is to provide “program exchange” meetings, where group program chairpersons meet regularly to exchange meetings with other groups. (...To be continued)