

A NEWSLETTER FOR
GSRs AND ALL OTHER
MEMBERS OF A.A.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Election Process
- General Service Story
- Group Inventories
- Contributions



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area8aa.org



San Diego-Imperial Area 08 Assembly

SEPTEMBER 2021 ISSUE

The Hat Trick

Our Area 8 elections take place in September of odd years. In 2021 we will elect ten officers to serve on Panel 72 (2022-2023). The election procedure is unique to Alcoholics Anonymous and is called the Third Legacy Procedure. A full description can be found in Chapter One of the A.A. Service Manual. Why, and how, did this come about?

In A.A. we always try to come to our decisions through consensus. The true group conscious should reflect the will of a substantial majority of the members. As an example,

in Area 8, any motion to change our established Structure & Guidelines must be approved by a two-thirds majority of the voting members of the



Assembly. Any margin less than that and the motion is defeated. We then move on to other business.

This works well for matters of policy and procedure, but what about an

election? We need to be able to have resolution and select a winner. Our founders foresaw this when it came time to choose delegates for the first General Service Conference in 1951. They stipulated that all delegates must receive two-thirds of the votes to be elected, but realized that some elections are hotly contested, something they wished to avoid.

Bill mentions a possible solution in *A.A. Comes of Age* (p.216), "Here we would have to invent something. Maybe the lead man and one or two

The 11th Step Workshop

The fundamental role of prayer and meditation in the lives of AA members was the topic of a recent workshop in Area 8. District 7 sponsored this practical workshop with three panel speakers and a 30 minute meditation practice period where 4 different types of meditation experiences were shared. I was in attendance along with about 20 others.

Anna P, Jess and Joel C.

were the panel speakers. Coincidentally, they were all from the teaching profession. Anna P is an elementary school teacher, Jess teaches middle school at a Waldorf school and Joel C teaches at the college level. All 3 speakers were invited to share by different members of the District 7 committee and their shared profession was a complete 'accident' delivered by District

7. They all shared about the imperative role that meditation played in their profession. Perhaps, if you are meditating on a new career path, teaching is in your future!

Following the beautiful stories shared by these educators and members of our fellowship, we practiced 4 meditation and breathwork techniques. We began with "Stand Like a Mountain," a

Advisory Actions: When a recommendation, whether from a committee or through a floor action, is approved in full session with “substantial unanimity” it becomes an Advisory Action. Advisory Actions represent the informed group conscience of the Fellowship. The revised preamble is an example of this process.

What Is Step 11 of AA? “Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.”

The Hat Trick (continued from page 1)

of his runners-up might place their names in a hat and take their chances on a drawing...Since the high men in the running would almost always be good ones, we could not miss getting a fine panel of delegates by such a method.” Bill concedes that this was merely speculation. As Bill describes in the same source (p.217), the method was put to the test in Boston...“the Assemblymen voted and voted, but nobody could get a two-thirds majority. At last it was decided that the names of the whole committee be dumped into the hat. And out of that traditional receptacle there was drawn a fine delegate. Everybody was elated;” One

thought on this is that through selecting by lot, we are leaving the choice to God. Bottom line here, without divine intervention, one will need to secure a two-thirds majority in order to be elected to an area officer position. The pool of eligible candidates is large, and it is entirely possible to have a dozen or more individuals standing for one position. Several ballots are taken to eliminate those with few votes. If, at any time, one candidate does get that two-thirds majority, the election is over. Eventually there are two candidates remaining. If neither has a two-thirds majority the Assembly may decide to take one more vote. If that ballot does not yield a decisive outcome, the election goes – To the Hat!

Both names are placed in the hat and the name drawn is the winner. How does this rather complicated process work? Rather well! Alcoholics Anonymous has never experienced the equivalent of an American political election, nor has there ever been an angry mob storming the General Service Office in New York. On only one occasion was there a glitch. Several years back, during the election for Secretary in Area 72 (Western Washington), neither final candidate achieved a two-thirds majority. Both names were placed in a hat and the winner drawn was...Seven and Three Eighths.

—Blaine H. Area Chair

11th Step Workshop (continued from page 1)

Chi Gong standing meditation that was led by Christine. That was followed by “Lion’s Breath,” which allows the breath to create a balanced and centered state to begin many meditation practices. It’s a silly exercise that involves sticking out the tongue and crossing the eyes. Then, we did a typical

seated meditation for 5 minutes that began with a guided breathing exercise for 10 deep breaths. Finally, we ended the mediation segment with a walking meditation where we explored the senses as we walked around the Alano Club where the event took place.

Wish you were there? So do we. In place of time travel, District 7 can send you our handout for guided meditation and energy tool practices. Email:

DCM_07@area8aa.org to receive your copy. Many blessings!

—Allison, DCM District 7

New Service Material – “Safety and A.A. Flyer” (F-228) –
Added September, 2021 [Click here](#) to download.

The Group Inventory: Taking Stock

My husband started a business 32 years ago. An electrical contractor, he views taking an inventory as a regular part of the duties which keep his business running. When he first started, he simply wired houses but over the years his customers wanted more technology and less environmental impact in the world. By taking stock, investigating growth, checking goals, looking at the possibilities, he began to offer whole-house automation, solar energy, electronic UV protecting shades, and most recently, garage plug-ins for electric cars. Obviously, the inventory is crucial for growth. AA also has an inventory process.

Just as we alcoholics found it necessary to complete a 4th Step inventory, to take stock of our lives, it is important that our groups check their impact and cohesiveness and remain welcoming to newcomers, especially after being on Zoom meetings for over a year. Our growth, our effectiveness, and spreading the AA message as written in the Book, depends on it. Has your group done an inventory lately? It doesn't have to be wordy or lengthy. Even five simple questions can bring up a wonderful discussion likely resulting in a group conscience.

AA World Services has been conducting an inventory through the Conference process for the last few years. The General Service Office, the Boards, and other entities wanted to receive input on how they are doing and receive suggestions for improvement. The members of the conference are surveyed on each day of the Conference and it's a lengthy survey. They expect the panel to be deliberate in their answers. Each Conference committee gets the results of their surveys, and then conduct their inventory from the points that emerge. GSO takes the results very serious and often a change is implemented as soon as the Conference convenes. This kind of care and support is the model we want for our groups.

To cement the idea of a Group Inventory further, here are remarks culled from Bill W.'s 1961 article in the Grapevine called "The Shape of Things to Come," in which Bill's words are timeless: "AA's first quarter-century is now history. Our next twenty-five years lie in prospect before us. How, then, can we make the most of this new grant of time? ...now that our functioning is fairly effective and widespread, it would be temptingly easy to settle down as merely one more useful agency on the world scene...AA is fine, just the way it is...

We know that the price of such self-satisfaction is an inevitable backslide, punctuated at some point by a very rude awakening. We have to grow or else deteriorate... Just how, then, can AA go on changing for the better? Does this mean that we are to tinker with our basic principles? (12 Steps & 12 Traditions) Here the answer would seem to be "no" ... So then, if our basics are so firmly fixed as all this, what is there left to change or to improve?...While we need not alter our truths, we can surely improve their application to ourselves, to AA as a whole, and to our relation with the world around us...We can constantly step up 'the practice of these principles in all our affairs'...let us therefore rededicate ourselves to an ever greater responsibility for our general welfare. Let us continue to take our inventory as a fellowship, searching out our flaws and confessing them freely. Let us devote ourselves to the repair of all faulty relations that may exist, whether within or without." Inventory remains a major key to our survival. —Roxane R.

A group has personality and so groups differ one from another as do individuals.

—AA
Grapevine
Oct, 2006

AA's Third Legacy Procedure and Purpose

AA's *Third Legacy Procedure* is a special type of electoral procedure, used primarily for the election of Area Delegates, Regional and other Trustees and International Delegates, where more than one candidate is nominated.

It is considered to be unique to AA, and at first glance, appears to introduce a strong element of chance into

a matter that should depend solely on the judgement of the majority. In practice, it has proved highly successful in eliminating the influence of factions or parties. A second-place candidate who may be extremely well qualified, but without early popular support is encouraged to stay in the balloting rather than withdraw.

IT MUST FIRST BE ESTABLISHED:

- That the candidates are eligible and willing to stand.
- That the right to vote has been established.
- If the election involves appointing an Alternate position, it should be decided in advance whether the runner-up will be that Alternate or whether this will be by a separate election.

Keeping It (Olive) Green

Not having attended an in-person Alcoholics Anonymous meeting in more than one year, it felt strange but wonderful to attend the initial meeting of the Friday 11:30 AM group in the Chapel on board MCAS Miramar. As someone who got sober while on active duty in the military, I knew the difficulties encountered by servicemen who exist in a climate where drinking is part of the culture. In fact, this

Group was established at the request of the Miramar Chaplain who had reached out to Area 8's newest standing committee – Armed Services, in an effort to provide Marines and other military servicemen with a convenient venue to experience a

new way of life – sobriety.

The military operates a large (maximum 100 beds) inpatient drug and alcohol treatment center on the Submarine Base on Point Loma. Graduates are under orders to not drink for one year and to attend regular 12-Step meetings.

Unfortunately most don't attain that year of sobriety. The majority did not enter treatment voluntarily but were ordered there as a result of one or more alcohol or drug related incident

It was gratifying to see a graduate of the Point Loma treat-

ment program at that first Chapel meeting. There were five of us, including the Secretary, a former Navy pilot. I felt safe there. The meeting was indoors but in a very large room with everyone masked and practicing social distancing. It was hoped that word of the existence of this group would spread. The most recent meeting had ten (10!) in attendance including three Marines and one newcomer at his first A.A. meeting!

This stuff works, and, in this case, it works because of the 12-Step efforts put forth by our standing committees including the Armed Services Committee.

--Blaine H., Area Chair

Have something going on in the near future? Let the Area 8 Newsletter Chair know to see about putting the dates in here: area8.org

The group is a precious thing. Let's look after it. —
AA Grapevine, 2006



Letters to the editor:
newsletter@area8aa.org

Preliminary timeline release dates for revised, new and other items of A.A.W.S. literature, in accordance with the 71st General Service Conference:

July-*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* reformatted softcover (English, B-15), "Faith Healers Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous" (revised P-25, FP-25, Sp-25) formerly titled "Members of the Clergy Ask About AA" with new title & edits.

August-71st General Service Conference Final Report (online PDF Aug. 10, printed Aug. 31)

September-"Hispanic Women in A.A." new pamphlet, "Our Experience Has Taught Us: An Introduction to Our Twelve Traditions" new pamphlet, "Your G.S.O. and AA Grapevine" new video on DVD, Sample text portions for

the Plain & Simple Big Book will be submitted for review.

October-The Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, in English, French, and Spanish – new recordings in CD sets (possible mid-September), E-Book of Our Great Responsibility (in English, French and Spanish editions)

November-A.A. Service Manual – new design! – fully revised and updated 2021-2023

December 2021 -or- January 2022-Experiencia, Fortaleza y Esperanza (newly completed Spanish translation of the English-language title, Experience, Strength and Hope.