

### EDITOR'S CORNER

What a great time to be a member of Alcoholics Anonymous! I keep hearing from other members that our groups are getting members back after Covid, lots of young people are coming into AA. When I've been able to get over to the young peoples group, We Stopped in Time, they have had a full room of aspiring sober alcoholics. Our District 8 and Intergroup meetings have been well attended, committees are back in full swing revamping our website, planning events, and carrying the message to treatment and correctional facilities. There are so many opportunities to be of service right now.

Unfortunately, with the nature of what AA is all about—carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers—there have been some who have come in who didn't get the message and sadly never will. One of our Montgomery meetings has seen several deaths from members who relapsed just in the last

month, which is a sad reminder that not everyone is going to get the message, but at least we can say we tried. It's a reminder to me that I "may not be able to stay sober, or even alive, unless [I pass] on to other alcoholics what was so freely given" to me (12 and 12 page 132-133).

As tragic as these losses are, wallowing in self-pity, one of my favorite pastimes, would diminish my usefulness to others. Each day is a new day God has given me to be of service. I need to keep asking for directions each day and leave the results up to Him. We are bound to see failures, but some of those will turn into successes later, and we're going to see more of those the more we stay united in recovery and service.

Happy reading  
Mike D.

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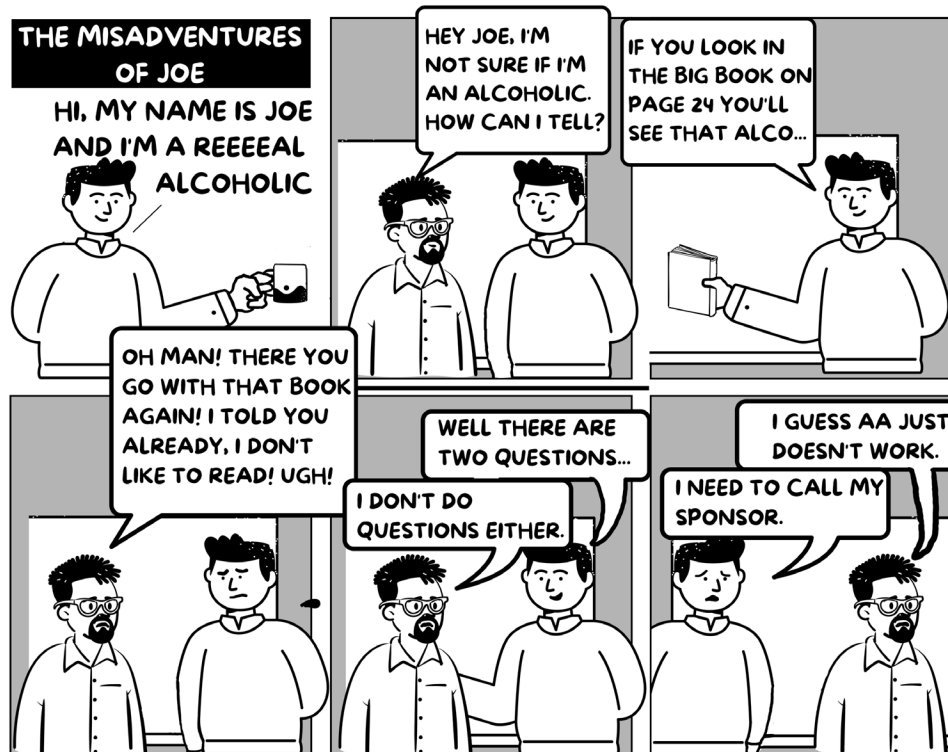
THE POST is published to improve communication between local A.A.<sup>®</sup> groups and encourage the participation of A.A. members in services and activities that promote sobriety. Opinions expressed in letters and articles are those of the authors and do not indicate endorsement by Montgomery Area Intergroup Central Office or Alcoholics Anonymous<sup>®</sup>.

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[Post.Subscription@centralalaa.org](mailto:Post.Subscription@centralalaa.org)





**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**



**SERVICE ALERT**

**Intergroup Monthly Meeting  
Saturday, May 6, 2023**

8:00 a.m. @ Legacies Group (via Zoom)  
3412 Atlanta Hwy, Montgomery, AL 36109

**District 8 Service Meeting  
Saturday, May 6, 2023**

9:30 a.m. @ Legacies (via Zoom)

Intergroup is in need of a chairperson. Requires 12 months of sobriety and can't be serving on the board. To keep the website calendar updated please email [webchair@centralalaa.org](mailto:webchair@centralalaa.org) with events. If you would like to write an article for the P.O.S.T. please email [post.editor@centralalaa.org](mailto:post.editor@centralalaa.org)

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Please contact  
[Intergroup@centralalaa.org](mailto:Intergroup@centralalaa.org) if willing and able to serve!

**Intergroup meeting** Saturday, May 6 8:00 am at Legacies and on Zoom

**District 8 meeting** Saturday, May 6th 9:30 am at Legacies and on Zoom

**Archives Meeting** Saturday, May 20th 10:30 am at Happy Hour. District 8 Archives meeting is the third Saturday of each month.

**District 8 Treatment/Corrections Committee Meeting** Saturday, May 20th 10:30 am at Legacies.

**Fellowship Group eat and meet** Saturday, May 20th 4-7:30 pm at Grace Church, 5 Bell Road, Montgomery, AL, Fellowship at 4 pm, food at 5 pm, speakers at 6 pm.

**Speaker meetings** on Saturdays, 6:00 pm at Millbrook Primary Purpose.

\* SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Please check website.

# The Post

POWER OF SOBER THOUGHT

**THE POST COMMITTEE**

Editor/coordinator: Mike D.  
Copy Editor: Jill Z.  
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Various

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## MONTGOMERY INTERGROUP DIRECTORY OF A.A.<sup>®</sup> GROUP MEETINGS

*Meeting Schedule: April 14, 2023*

Montgomery Intergroup Central Office 24/7 Hotline 334-264-4122

Group/Location	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>MONTGOMERY</b>							
<b>A Vision for You Group of AA</b> R.O.S.S. Recovery Center 925 Forest Ave Montgomery, AL 36106			O-D 7:30 p				
<b>Chapter 9 Group of AA</b> CAP Auditorium 1153 Air Base Boulevard						O-D 1:30 p <b>Temporary Inactive</b>	O-D 1:30 p <b>Temporary Inactive</b>
<b>Chisholm Group of AA</b> I-409 Federal Dr. Montgomery, AL 36107 in back of strip mall	C-D-SM 12p C-ST-SM 6p	C-D-SM 12p C-D-SM 6p	C-D-SM 12p C-L-SM 6p	C-D-SM 12p C-D-SM 6p	C-D-SM 12p C-D-SM 6p	C-D-SM 6p	O-SP 6p
<b>Fellowship Group of AA</b> Grace Church at Bell Road 5 Bell Road (Corner of Bell Rd & Atlanta Hwy)	C-L & BG * 6 p	C-D & BG * 6 p		C-D & BG * 6 p	C-L & BG * 6 p	O-SP 6p	C-D* 2p C-D-W 6p
<b>Happy Hour Group of AA</b> 3466 Eastdale Circle (Next to Fortis College)	C-D 6:30 am 12p & 6p	C-D 6:30 am & 12p C-L (12x12) 6p	C-D 6:30 am C-L/BB 12p C-D 6p	C-D 6:30 am & 12p O-D/BG 6p	C-D 6:30 am 12p & 6p O-SP 7p 1st Friday	C-D 12p	C-D 12p O-D/BG 6p
<b>The Legacies Group of AA</b> 3412 Atlanta Highway (Enter on Forrest Hills) Zoom ID 798-727-9234 PC Awakening	C-D 12P C-D 6 pm Zoom	C-L BB 12p	C-D 12p O-SP 8p Hybrid (in person and on-line)	C-L (12X12) 12p	C-D 12p C-D-CI 8p C-D-CI 8p Zoom	C-D 12p	C-D 9am C-D 9am Zoom
<b>Grupo Ayudate a Ti Mismo</b> 3412 Atlanta Highway (Enter on Forrest Hills)	O-D 7:30-9p HISP	O-D 7:30-9p HISP				O-D 7:30-9:30p HISP	O-D 11a-1p HISP
<b>Living Sober Group of AA</b> Church of the Ascension 315 Clanton Ave. 36104 meeting in the Joshua house	C-D 6p		C-L 6p				
<b>Sole Purpose Group of AA</b> 22 North California Street		C-D 7:30p		C-L BB 7:30p			
<b>Strange Camels Group of AA</b> Immanuel Presbyterian Church 8790 Vaughn Road	C-L 7p	C-D 7p		C-D 7p			
<b>Tradition Three Group of AA</b> First Christian Church 1705 Taylor Montgomery, AL 36117	O-D 11a	O-D 11a	O-D 11a	O-D 11a	O-D 11a		
<b>We Stopped in Time Group of AA</b> Eastern Hills Baptist Church 3604 Pleasant Ridge Road		O-S/D 8pm YP <b>Temporary Inactive</b>				O-SP/D 8pm YP	
<b>CLANTON</b>							
<b>Clanton Group of AA</b> Church of Christ 111 Lay Dam Rd. Clanton, AL 35045	O-D 7p			O-L 12p		O-D 7p	
<b>GREENVILLE</b>							
<b>Camellia City Group of AA</b> Greenville Housing Authority 601 Beelant St, 30637 334-437-2015	C-D 7p			C-D 7p			

**MONTGOMERY INTERGROUP DIRECTORY OF A.A.® GROUP MEETINGS**

<b>Group/Location</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
<b>HOPE HULL</b>							
<b>County Hope Group of AA</b> Hope Hull United Methodist Church 305 Wasden Road (Silver trailer behind Church)		O-D 6p		O-BB 6p			
<b>MILLBROOK</b>							
<b>Primary Purpose Group of AA</b> Church of the Nazarene Fellowship Hall 3251 Brown Road		O-D 6p		O-D 6p		O-SP 6p	
<b>PRATTVILLE</b>							
<b>Autauga S.O.S. Group of AA</b> St. Mark's Episcopal Church 178 E 4th Street	O-L/BB 12p	C-D 12p		C-D 12p	O-L(12x12) 12p	C-D-W 9a	
<b>Prattville Downtown Group of AA</b> 326 West 5th Street	O-SP 6:30p	O-BG 6:30p	O-D 12p C-D 6:30p	C-L 6:30p	O-SP 6:30p	C-D 12p O-D-CI 6:30p	O-D 12p C-L /12x12 6:30p
<b>SELMA</b>							
<b>Selma Group of AA</b> Courthouse, Alabama Ave & Lauderdale St	O-D 12:30p	O-D 6p	O-D 12:30p	O-D 6p	O-D 12:30p		O-D 6p
<b>Braveheart Group</b> St. Paul's Episcopal Church 210 Lauderdale St	C-D 6p		C-D 6p			C-D 6p	
<b>THORSBY</b>							
<b>Thorsby Group of AA</b> 20466 US-31 Thorsby, AL 35171			O-D 7:30p				O-D 8a
<b>WETUMPKA</b>							
<b>Wetumpka Group of AA</b> 103 Tuskeena St	C-D * 7p			C-D 7:30 p			

**Legend**

**O = Open Meeting** (for anyone interested in the AA Program)  
**C = Closed Meeting** (attendance limited to those with a desire to stop drinking)

D = Discussion	HISP = Spanish Speaking	Literature Study (BB, 12/12 or Other)
SP = Speaker	YP = Young People & Young at Heart	LGBT = Lesbian, Gay, Bi Transgender
SM = Smoking	ST = Step Study	* Al-Anon meets Simultaneously
CI = Candlelight Meeting	BG = Beginners	** Alateen meets Simultaneously
W = Women	L = Literature	

*Montgomery Intergroup provides this schedule of A.A. group meetings in this area to member groups, individual A.A. members, and appropriate interested parties. A listing in this schedule does not imply approval of endorsement of any group's approach to or practice of the traditional AA program.*

**Montgomery Intergroup 334-264-4122 \* [montgomeryintergroup@yahoo.com](mailto:montgomeryintergroup@yahoo.com) \* [www.centralalaa.org](http://www.centralalaa.org)  
 828 Forest Avenue, Suite A \* Montgomery, AL 36106 \* Open Mondays 10 am to 2 pm**

## STEP FIVE ADMITTED TO GOD, TO OURSELVES, AND TO ANOTHER HUMAN BEING THE EXACT NATURE OF OUR WRONGS

I thought I did well enough setting on a course of vigorous action following the third step and completing a full fourth step inventory. Now I was told I must admit the exact nature of my wrongs to another human being. So there it was, the time had finally arrived. There was no more hiding, burrowing the secrets of my past deep within my soul. I knew I had to cast it out like the big book reads. I won't tell you details of my 5th step here, but I will say I had a thing that I never planned on telling another soul. This is where the alcoholic mind persuades many alcoholics out of the rooms of AA. Let me be the one to tell you this, nothing in your story is new to us. Whatever it is that happened to you or whatever it is that you did has already been told by many alcoholics before you. It will be told by others to come. I figured that my story was sicker than most. What I did not know was that it was okay. I was desperate enough to acquire the honesty and willingness required to complete this step.

This step also takes a level of desperation, and I had that. I dove in head first. I got it out, everything. It's an interesting choice of words when the big books says "cast out." In Christianity, it means to expel, to drive out. This sounds something like an exorcism. That's a pretty intense statement, but in spiritual terms, I understand the correlation. How was I to drive out (cast out) these things within myself? First things first, I had to be totally transparent. Second, I had to be rid of the fear that held me back. I had to let it all out. I remember my hands being clammy as I was seated on my sponsor's couch in her beautiful home. After telling all, I looked up sheepishly at her, not sure what I was about to get. Would she be upset and kick me out of her house? Would she be disgusted? Would she tell me this isn't going to work for someone like me? She looked at me with kind eyes and said, "I did something like that too." Instantly, the weight of the world fell off my shoulders. I could sigh a breath of relief. We even got in a good laugh. I walked through that arch of freedom the Big Book talks about on page 75.

I was also told, after doing another 5th step years later, in front of a beautiful fireplace with air lighter than I've ever experienced, that I was now free. I uncovered something different in my last 5th step, an unhealed part of me that held onto guilt and shame. But when I was told I was free, I believed that. It was told to me that if I skipped this step, I may not overcome drinking. The 5th step is part of completing the housecleaning. I didn't have to go to my sponsors to do a 5th step, but I chose them because I trusted them. No one gets the mechanisms of our minds like another alcoholic. Plus, we've heard it all! Today, I am free from the bonds that kept me in secrecy, the bonds that kept me out of the light.

I like to visualize this step as picking a Lotus. We go into the murky, swampy waters, but with perseverance and God's help. We emerge with something new and beautiful.

"We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past. Once we have taken the step, withholding nothing, we are delighted. We can look the world in the eye. We can be alone at perfect peace and ease. Our fears fall from us. We begin to feel the nearness of our creator. We may have had certain spiritual beliefs, but now we began to have a spiritual experience. The feeling that the drink problem has disappeared has often come strongly. We feel we are on the broad highway, walking hand in hand with the Spirit of the Universe" (Big Book pg. 75).

I was then told to go home and reflect on these things for one hour. I did that. I came to find that I was thorough enough to be satisfied. I believe that hour is important. We may have missed something, and we also get to sit with God for an hour. That hour, I admitted to God the nature of my wrongs, and I thanked the universe. The 5th step tears down the veil I had in place keeping God, the World, and self-acceptance out. I've learned who I truly are and who I am not. The 5th step brought me closer to God and closer to you.

- Casey W.

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**Have a burning desire to share your  
experience, strength and hope? Send your  
article to [post.editor@centralalaa.org](mailto:post.editor@centralalaa.org).**

**TRADITION FIVE  
EACH GROUP HAS BUT ONE PRIMARY PURPOSE –  
TO CARRY ITS MESSAGE TO THE ALCOHOLIC WHO  
STILL SUFFERS."**

Bill W. opened up the chapter on tradition five in the 12 and 12 with the quote: "shoemaker, stick to thy last!" For a long time I had no idea what he meant by that and just put it off as one more of Bill W.'s antiquated sayings, but like just about every old saying of Bill W.'s

I've looked up, I found something interesting and helpful. This proverb comes from Apelles, the painter, who lived in ancient Greece. He was famous for painting several portraits of Alexander the Great. It is said that Apelles would display his paintings to the public when he was finished with them, but he would hide behind them and listen to people's criticisms because he believed that the common people would be harsher critics. One day while doing this he heard a shoemaker criticizing his painting for missing a loophole on a sandal. He corrected the error later that day and put the painting back out the next day, hoping the cobbler would notice. The cobbler came by, and seeing that the error was corrected, began criticizing the leg in the painting. Apelles was indignant and came out from behind the painting and said, "shoemaker, stick to thy last!" In other words, don't try to judge something that is not part of your skill set. An AA group is going to have a lot of opinions, and all those opinions aren't going to be the same. If you haven't noticed this try going to your group's business meeting. The purpose of this tradition is to keep us focused on our central purpose, really our only purpose," to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers."

The chapter on tradition five in the 12 and 12 is also where we get the phrase "singleness of purpose" which is the most succinct way of putting this tradition. To the casual observer it might appear that not drinking is AA's primary purpose. After all we're not out proselytizing to get more members.

AA doesn't promote its meetings. There are no AA crusades or pledge drives. We typically keep our AA activities to our meetings.

So, how can carrying the message be our primary purpose? Bill W. wrote in the 12 and 12 on page 151 that, "it is the great paradox of A.A. that we know we can seldom keep the precious gift of sobriety unless we give it away." So how do we carry the message of sobriety if all our AA activity is confined to hanging out at A.A. meetings? We can talk to the newcomers, often people who have been referred to A.A. by the courts. This is a legitimate method of carrying the message, but it's hard for an entire group to carry the message to one newcomer. What the founders did, and what a lot of people with good sobriety do today, is go to treatment centers and correctional facilities to find new prospects for AA. It's important to remember that this isn't extra credit in AA. The Big Book says on page 97, "Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery. A kindly act once in a while isn't enough." If I really want to enjoy my sobriety, and not just endure it, I have to be focused on helping others.

The way this works in my life is asking God to show me who to help. God really likes answering that prayer. He always sends someone along for me to help and I know when I am helping them I'm doing God's will, even when I'm not sure I'm doing that great of a job. Often God ends me alcoholics to help, but not always. God has a lot of kids and they're not all in the program. I can guarantee you that if you pray and ask God for someone to help, he will answer that prayer.

If you ask for a suffering alcoholic to carry the message to, God will answer that prayer too. "Your job now is to be in the place where you may be of maximum helpfulness to others" (Big Book pg. 102).

Mike D.  
PDG

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**CONCEPT FIVE  
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.**

The long form and short form of this concept are almost identical, just about the only words the long form adds are: "world service" and "petitions." The 12 concepts are specifically meant for our world service structure, but they also apply to our local service structures. This concept ensures that everyone's voice gets heard, especially those who may disagree with the majority opinion.

In the AA Service Manual, Bill W. says that this concept relates to our 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." Even when our General Service Conference makes decisions based on a majority opinion, it is not meant to govern AA.

Those in trusted servant positions are supposed to be doing something for AA that the individual or group in AA cannot do for themselves. Just like everyone else in AA, our trusted servants have the right to be wrong. Listening to the minority opinion gives a service committee the opportunity to reflect on their decisions to make sure they have made the best decisions for the group in keeping with tradition 5, similarly to the way the individual member reflects on the foundation of their recovery after taking the fifth step. Although it's doubtful that the steps, traditions, and concepts were all written to line up with each other, it's still fun to make connections. Every opinion in AA matters and it's important to remember that even those who may disagree with us about how things get done still have good intentions and, in the end, we all want the same thing: the message of recovery being shared with other alcoholics.

Mike D.  
PDG

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## ARCHIVES CORNER

Here are a few dates from the archives of Alcoholics Anonymous for the month of May:

**May 4** (1946 ) Marty Mann explained AA and the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism on the "We the People" radio show.

**May 2** (1941). First AA group formed in New Orleans, LA.

**May 6** (1939). Clarence S of Cleveland told Dr. Bob, his sponsor, he would not be back to the Oxford group meetings in Akron and would start an AA meeting in Cleveland. Also in 1939, the Long form of the Traditions was published in the Aa Grapevine.

**May 8** (1943) Akron AA group held its' 8th anniversary with 500 sober alcoholics present.

(1971). Bill Wilson was buried in a private ceremony in East Dorset, Vermont.

**May 11**(1935) From the Mayflower Hotel, Bill Wilson called Walter Tunks who referred him to Henrietta Seiberling who introduced Bill to Dr. Bob.

**May 12** (1935) Mothers' Day - Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith met for the first time in Akron, Ohio, at the home of Henrietta Seiberling.

**May 19** (2000). Dr. Paul Ohliger died at the age of 83. His story, "Doctor, Alcoholic, Addict," was retitled "Acceptance Was the Answer," in the 4th edition.

**May 28** (1974) The first World Service meeting of AA outside of America was held in London.

**May 31** (1938). Bill and other AA's began writing the Big Book.

Other May events for which we have no specific dates:

**1919:** Bill returns home from service.

**1935:** Bill works with alcoholics, but fails to sober any of them. Lois reminds him HE is still sober.

**1938:** Bill begins writing the book Alcoholics Anonymous.

We welcome anyone and everyone interested in the history of A.A. and our district to the district archives meeting the third Saturday of each month at 10:30 at Happy Hour. Remember, we wouldn't have our sobriety if it weren't for those who went before us. May we continue to trudge the happy road of destiny together!

In love and service,  
Jill Z - Happy Hour Group

HOME  
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## GENERAL SERVICE BOARD FAQ

The Trustees of the General Service Board have created a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page to inform and support our conference delegates about the resignation of Linda Chezem and events around the January Board Weekend.

### 1.What reason is needed to remove a board member in New York State? What was the basis for the removal of the Board Chair?

According to New York State law, a board may remove a trustee with or without cause. The bylaws of the General Service Board require a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote of Member Trustees for removal. There is no stated vote count required to accept or request a resignation.

Linda Chezem offered to resign after several trustees brought their concerns about her conduct to the board. All 21 Member Trustees were present for the initial discussion of concerns. Linda was asked to leave for the discussion about her offered resignation. The GSB voted unanimously to accept her resignation.

### 2.What occurred at the Trustees' Planning and Sharing Session on January 29th?

The agenda for the meeting included "Reprise of Oversight," which the Board Chair asked the Treasurer to lead. The Board Chair was advised by email on December 27th that this oversight discussion would focus on "trust and communication between the staff and the three boards and the three boards to each other." A response to the email was received the same day. The discussion began with an introductory statement: "The objective is to begin a Board discussion of oversight, trust, and our structure. I ask that you listen with patience, and an open mind, share

with an open heart, and remember AA's first tradition -"Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA Unity."

Several trustees shared their experiences and concerns about the board chair's leadership, compliance with policy, adherence to AA principles, and trust and communication. They shared their personal experiences, which resulted in more trustees sharing that they also had similar experiences and concerns. The Board Chair was present and responded to the concerns. Included in her response was her offer to resign if asked. After some discussion, she was asked to leave the room.

A break was taken for dinner, after which the discussion continued. No one spoke in opposition to accepting the chair's resignation. When no other hands were raised to speak, a motion was made and passed, requiring a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote to accept the resignation. The subsequent vote to accept the resignation was unanimous, with 19 in favor and the session chair abstaining.

The session was difficult for everyone. Comments have been made about discomfort with the level of emotion in the room; this is understandable. Some of the sharing was through tears, and there were moments when voices were raised (as also occurred in at least one committee meeting that weekend). Others have expressed that there was much-reasoned discourse. No one made any threats toward anyone else, left their seat, or physically intimidated another trustee.

Some have stated that they feel an informed group conscience was not possible under the circumstances. While this view is respected, it was never expressed during the discussion, so there was no awareness of these concerns until after the weekend.

Not all trustees knew there would be a discussion regarding the board leadership. The trustees who brought their concerns forward desired to avoid gathering any pre-meeting sentiment one way or the other and to minimize any tone of confrontation. Not only was there an absence of a defined process for raising these matters to the board about the board chair, but it was also unnerving to do so. It is understood that the lack of advanced notice to all board members is a legitimate point of contention.

The Board Chair was notified of the decision to accept her resignation at approximately 10 pm. Discussion on filling the vacancy began and was paused to be carried over into the next day. The board spent the remainder of the evening on other existing agenda items for the session and adjourned at approximately 12:30 am.

### **3. What were the concerns expressed? Were these serious enough to result in a request for the resignation of the board chair?**

The concerns brought to and then discussed by the full board included:

- operating independently of the Board, Board policies, committees, and corporate Board structures,
- micromanagement of trustees and employees, and
- making unprofessional and inappropriate remarks about past and current trustees and employees.

The Board has a fiduciary duty and an obligation to those we serve to address any issues affecting its effective functioning, including when that involves its leadership. Board oversight and governance are weakened when trustees act outside the committee system and AA principles that have proven to ensure accountability and Concept IV participation.

The chair has a fundamental role in facilitating an environment that allows the board to develop its priorities and execute its work.

### **4. Is there a written document reflecting the concerns or deliberations of the board?**

No, there is no written document. As is often the case in Trustees' Planning and Sharing Sessions, there was a wide-ranging discussion. Several trustees shared, and some used personal notes, which is a common practice to stay on topic. The board chair also shared during this discussion. No one kept a meeting transcript; no record or document reflects the discussion scope and depth of the discussion that ultimately formed the group conscience.

The group conscience is reflected in the statement published by the General Service Board and provided to all General Service Conference delegates. The full board generated a statement, with all trustee members contributing until it reached final form. Feel free to share that document and this one with your areas as you see fit.

### **5. What efforts were made to advise the board chair of concerns or offer help before this meeting?**

Several trustees have shared about raising concerns about the governance process and the language the board chair used about board servants and employees directly with the board chair. These efforts did not resolve the concerning behaviors.

Some trustees reported that they offered to help, but the chair declined the offer, as were suggestions to seek help from the trustees emeriti.

### **6. Did other board members resign after January 29th? Is it unusual for resigned trustees to contact current and past general service conference members?**

Josh E. submitted his resignation, "I am no longer able to serve as a member of this board. Please consider the attached resignation as my Concept 5, minority appeal to a higher authority". The resignation attached stated, "As a result of what I experienced at our January Board meeting, the lack of willingness to pause, reflect, and inventory before we continue to act, and the decision to forward a new chair to the 73rd General Service Conference, I am no longer able to serve this board. I am unable to resolve within my heart the lack of notification, process, or due diligence applied to deeply impactful decisions, and worse, the lack of willingness to apply a slower, more deliberative process to picking up the pieces of what we have done." Josh has since indicated that additional statements he made in the body of his email were intended to be part of his minority appeal to the General Service Board about the process for selecting the new chair.

We understand that those who have resigned, and other past delegates and past trustees have actively engaged current delegates. The General Service Board has not tried to and cannot direct the actions of anyone, including past trusted servants. These unusual communications will likely continue as long as there is an appetite for them. The one-way communication with some of the conference members has fostered further division. For example, these communications are not translated for the access of all conference members and have been distributed to some conference members but not others.

### **7. Will the Board members who brought forward the concerns about the Board Chair be removed from the Board?**

The obligation of anyone raising concerns to the Board about any other member of the Board is that they are "acting in good faith," meaning the person bringing forward concerns must believe that the information disclosed is substantially accurate and not for personal gain or reward. Doing so is a duty of leadership under Concept IX, and it is the responsibility of any trustee or director of any corporation. It is then the responsibility of the Board to consider the information provided and have discussion and deliberation regarding how to proceed.

Of note, the code of conduct and Concept V identify the GSB as the recipient of concerns, but neither offers a process. The GSB Code of Conduct states that "the GSB and its chair" receive reports of noncompliance with the Code and/or requests for guidance about the Code. It further states that "reports and requests should be brought without fear of reprisal; because of their potentially sensitive nature, all reports are held in the strictest of confidence."

In the essay on Concept V, Bill W states:

"The traditional "Right of Appeal" should also permit any person in our service structure, whether paid or unpaid, to petition for the redress of a personal grievance, carrying his complaint, if he so desires, directly to the General Service Board. He or she should be able to do this without prejudice or fear of reprisal. Though this will be a seldom exercised right in practice, its very existence will always tend to restrain those in authority from unjust uses of their power. Surely our workers should cheerfully accept the necessary direction and discipline with their jobs. Still, all of them should nevertheless feel that they need not silently endure unnecessary and unfair personal domination."

Removal of Board members for voicing concerns about conduct that they believe, in good faith, is harmful to the



organization and to the effectiveness of the Board would be retribution and is out of line with both the Code of Conduct and Concept V, which promise protection from such actions. Protection from retribution ensures that present and future trustees do not withhold concerns from the board for fear of retribution. The outcome of 4 of 7 any discussion that results from raising such concerns is the board's responsibility, not the responsibility of the individuals who voiced concerns to initiate the discussion.

Despite this being a General Service Board decision, the previous board chair publicly named two trustees who raised concerns, even though several other trustees shared their own experiences and concerns. This is precisely the type of retaliation and reprisal both the code of conduct and Concept V call for protection from.

#### **8. Were there threats or demands made during these discussions to force the chair to resign?**

No. The treasurer stated it had become impossible for him to fulfill his obligations as a trustee and treasurer due to interference by the Board Chair with the timeline and process for the 2023 budget. Trustees' Finance and the Corporate Boards had agreed to the budget timeline/process during a December 2022 Special Meeting of Trustees' Finance. The board chair continued to bypass the group conscience related to financial oversight at multiple levels. The treasurer decided he could no longer serve and planned to resign after raising his good faith concerns to the board. This was not intended as leverage to coerce a resignation from the Board Chair. Ultimately, the treasurer's resignation was unnecessary due to the turn of events.

One trustee stated that she had seriously considered whether it might be better for AA if she stepped down instead of reporting her concerns. However, she considered how many employees and trustees had also been affected. Seeing the continued erosion of AA principles and processes, it was clear to her that her resignation would not solve the problem, and advising the board of the concerns was needed.

Some trustees emphasized that directors could be replaced if the General Service Board perceived the corporations' work was derelict. In context, this statement was made to illustrate that bypassing the group conscience is not how our Concepts and bylaws direct the resolution of different points of view; rather, minority opinions are brought to the appropriate committee and corporate settings for careful consideration or in cases warranting extreme need, directors can be replaced.

#### **9. What trust and communication challenges have occurred since the announcement of Linda's resignation?**

Trust and communication have a significant impact on AA's effectiveness and unity. Tradition 2 and the 12 Concepts of AA outline how we rely on the service structure and trusted servants for accurate communication. The circumvention of the Conference members in this matter through "secret" social media platforms, group chats, and direct lobbying of delegates by individuals has been harmful.

It was also harmful that the GSB did not arrange for clear and direct communications with delegates and other conference members more quickly; had we done so, some of the misinformation and resultant disunity and anger could have been avoided.

#### **10. What is the Policy Review Committee, and how is it important?**

A policy review committee was formally formed at the January 2023 Board meeting after being initiated by the Board Chair in late 2022. The composition, scope, and procedure are being developed, but it is clear that we need a more robust complaint and review process for GSB code of conduct concerns. The Review Committee will be an opportunity to review the Code of Conduct for shortfalls that have become evident with our current guiding documents and ensure a clear process is available in the event of any future need for reporting concerns to the GSB.

#### **11. Why is the Board expediting the search for a new Chair and not taking a slower, more deliberative approach? What is the process for chair selection and onboarding?**

The important decision to task the Trustees Nominating Committee to begin its work sooner rather than later was arrived at following ample discussion, vote, and substantial unanimity. The Board felt that stability and unity would best be served by searching for a new chair rather than through a series of interim chair(s).

The process for chair selection is outlined in the Trustees Nominating Committee Procedure #14, which states that the Trustees Nominating Committee acts as the search committee, that Trustees Nominating Committee conducts interviews from which two or three candidates are selected to be interviewed by the full Board, the Board members discuss the candidates. A final selection is made by Third Legacy Procedure. Onboarding is usually done through communication between the Board Chair and Trustees Emeriti.

The GSB agreed that if a new chair was selected after the 73rd GSC, a report would be made to the conference about our progress, and an interim chair would be selected. Based on progress to date, it is expected that there will be a new chair included on the slate presented to the 73rd GSC.

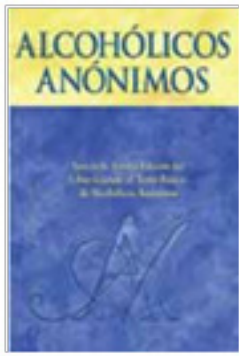
#### **12. How is the Board functioning now? What is needed from the Conference to help?**

Overall, the Board is functioning well with the needed preparations for Conference continuing. There is disunity, as we are sure conference members are aware. Some of this is due to the division that was fostered prior to the resignation of the board chair, and some of this has emerged due to the challenges that have occurred since. Like any group conscience, the board benefits from a minority opinion and diversity of thought, provided 6 of 7

everyone is willing to place our common welfare first. Unity doesn't require unanimity, but it does require love, tolerance, and compromise.

All input from the Conference members regarding how to best move forward, improve communications, and best serve the Fellowship is welcome.

The concern is raised that specific members of the GSB have been named and also that they have been identified as bearing undue influence or responsibility for these events. Caution is requested in accepting or perpetuating such accusations. Concerns were brought to the General Service Board; no one knew what decision(s) would unfold. Targeting any member of the GSB in such a manner is harmful and disregards the fact that these events reflect board actions.



### ¿QUÉ ES A.A.?

Alcohólicos Anónimos es una comunidad internacional de hombres y mujeres que ha tenido un problema con la bebida. Es no profesional, automantenida, multiracial, no política y disponible en casi todo el mundo. No hay requisitos referentes a edad ni nivel de educación. Puede hacerse miembro cualquier persona que desee hacer algo para solucionar su problema con la bebida.

Desde su publicación en 1939, este texto básico ha ayudado a millones de hombres a recuperarse del alcoholismo.

Actualmente disponible en la Tercera Edición aprobada por la Conferencia de Servicios Generales, el Libro Grande contiene las historias de los cofundadores, y de muchos miembros de diversa procedencia que han encontrado la recuperación en la Comunidad mundial.

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Si usted o alguien que usted conoce tiene una experiencia o historia para compartir acerca de la recuperación en las reuniones de Alcohólicos Anónimos por favor póngase en contacto conmigo Oni S., a través de [Post.Editor@centralalaa.org](mailto:Post.Editor@centralalaa.org).

**Have a burning desire to share your experience, strength and hope? Send your article to [post.editor@centralalaa.org](mailto:post.editor@centralalaa.org).**

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