

10am - Meeting Opened – Area Officer Responsibility Review

An area officer presented the responsibilities of her office. She passed out a short description and qualified her panel's workload as unusual due to a database crash. She estimates she has spent 30 hours a week on her tasks to register groups and other service positions with CNCA06 and the General Service Office. However, the next officer will not have to spend as much time. The new officer should have internet access, and basic computer and typing skills. CNCA provides a laptop and a mouse. The majority of the tasks are district updates, and the communication between each District's Registrar or DCMC. She said GSO and the Area are looking into electronic options, which will save time. Her first month was the busiest with 1000 records processed from 2200 groups and other committees. The officer is expected to visit three districts a month. She said her office has been a spiritual experience - "just typing names, it's amazing to see all those involved in General Service," she said. She expressed her gratitude for the experience.

Sharing Session Opened with the Serenity Prayer by Erica G

Translation by Juan. Thank you for your service!

40 DCMs, GSRs and visitors attended. Erica G. facilitated.

Welcome to one newcomer. Our meeting is open to everyone to learn and participation on the topic.

Presentation – How to Use the Concepts in Our Lives – Marisol, District 03

- She noticed she procrastinated on this project, then spent the evening before doing internet research and reading the Service Manual and other literature. She is facing a difficult time in her life and noted that service helps keep her sober.
- AA gave her purpose and a life, a sponsor, sponsees, a full-time job and the ability to participate in her career in a life-changing way
- Each of us is a single cell in AA, and as a single cell, we can fail but the Concept teach her to trust, delegate and ask for help
- The Concepts are difficult to understand on their own, but as she lives her life in AA, she can see their effect.
- She didn't want to be a GSR, and, at one year into sobriety, she was actively planning suicide She talked about it at meetings. She felt she starved for emotional sobriety. She listened to speaker tapes. They got her into General Service. General Service saved her from herself and it also saved her group from a lot of further controversy. Her group was fighting many things – one was safety an how to keep the meeting safe. There was a lot of 13-Stepping going on and the group did not know how to handle it.
- She suggested a group inventory, which failed miserably, but the group got to understand General Service. Now, four years later, the group is well-informed. Her group – which meets daily at 7 AM – is the highest contributor to H&I. She is accountable to those she serves.
- At work, her task completion is visible and she's been compensated for that skill
- In AA we collectively decide to delegate our voice and consciences to the conference, which bases it actions on the needs of the groups. So, groups ought to participate. Accountability builds trust as a single, group to the structure of AA
- As a servant, we're not forced to function, but rather we have a right to decide how we want to function
- In AA, we are not second-class citizens. Where in any society can you say that about?
- Concept 4 defines each of us as trusted servants. We ask each other for help and respect, meeting on common ground. She was not treated as an equal in her alcoholic family and she was given and had no way to voice her opinions
- In AA, all members have a voice and a right of appeal

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- The rest of the Concepts deal with a lot of trust, delegation of authority and checks and balances between our entities.
- How does she apply the Concepts in her life? She'd been applying them to her life since childhood, the day she got sober, when she came out of an SLE, and, at day 35 in her sobriety, when she was asked to lead a discussion in her union and HR depart and the topic was equanimity, lack of accountability and lack of transparency concerning equal pay. That discussion set a historical precedent with the union and lead to a strike for a pay increase. The result was not as asked for but the Concepts taught her that we do not retaliate.

Members Share

Round the table, sharing session-style

The chair reminded members that everyone has something valuable to share. If you have a question, it may be answered in the room or you could talk to someone after the meeting to help you find what you need.

All members who shared thanked the presenter for her honesty, openness and willingness

- She noticed that General Service helped her group – there were meetings with fist-fights and when she stepped into General Service, many things shifted. Many members had no structure and didn't feel like their voices mattered. The group conscience process brought structure and assured members that their voices would be heard. So, she has seen her fellowship change due to her involvement in General Service
- She's inspired to take a look at her personal life and how she's incorporating the Concepts.
- He was grateful the presenter brought in her personal stories. It helps him to understand how the concepts affect our lives and our groups.
- The Concepts give him a lot more freedom to examine someone else's viewpoint
- Three things taught by Concepts are so valuable: trust, delegation and to ask for help to be accountable
- He reflected that her procrastination allowed for her passion and humility and allowed her to implement her experience, strength and hope. The Concepts and the right of participation, decision and appeal help us see that in AA, no matter what our opinion, we will hear all kinds of ideas and are guided to think for ourselves. We learn to be ourselves, right, wrong or indifferent. We become trustworthy. The key element is not to think but to do.
- He said it was inspirational for hear the presenter's persona experience and it opens the doors even further for the use of the Concepts in AA or or our lives. He notices that often his wife has the minority opinion and it usually ends up that she's right. He said the presenter's experience, strength and hope was a gift to him and to us
- She was so glad of the light shined on the Concepts
- She thanked the presenter for her heart-felt presentation. She liked the reference to the 12 x 12 x 12 (Steps/Traditions/Concepts). She noted that the presenter's experience, strength and hope let us know you didn't finish and demonstrated a responsibility to yourself to learn more and help us all learn. She also saw humility, willingness and going to any length.
- She reflected that the presenter to her seemed like a living example of the Concepts, Steps and Traditions. She saw willingness, humility, honesty, selflessness, consideration, respect, courage, taking responsibility and acceptance of her human limitations.
- She said, "content takes second place to heart – if you speak from the heart – everyone in the room will remembers what you said."
- She said "even if you feel as though you didn't present 'properly' you gave us a gift."
- She said the presenter encouraged her to continue her process

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- The presentation made her realize that if she keeps pursuing giving all members a voice, there's no more time for secrets. She didn't realize that she had found a voice in AA and now is seeking it in others. The program is inside of her.
- He said it was great to see a member get emotional about the Concepts. He thinks of them in three buckets: 1) delegation – power delegates power to next group, the group to area to the General Service Conference and the trustees 2) spiritual principles – rights, appeal, decision and 3) structure. The leadership piece and its spiritual principles are now part of modern leadership training – and he as a master's degree in leadership
- One thing that attracted her to General Service was a sense of applying spiritual principles. The spiritual principles began to work in her life as they transformed her. She wants to be open to learning and absorbing info. It's a continuation of our "blueprint for living"
- He said, "We live these things intuitively." At his home group, members left the meeting and couldn't find a tool to make an informed decision. They Concepts work in our lives if we work them
- His service sponsor asked him to go through Concept 9 and highlight the leadership attributes. Perseverance, forethought, acquiescence, right timing. At his work, he uses a group conscience where all voices are heard. In job interviews, he'd ask about the balance of responsibility with authority. "The power of the purse" also applies to personal and professional life.
- He said the Concepts can be lofty and he reminds himself about Concepts 4 and 5 – participation and minority opinion in personal and work life. Everybody's voice is important and all don't have to agree with him
- The Concepts give keep him in check and guide him to delegate service and tasks – even in his marriage.
- He noted that the Concepts also offer some of the best methods also used in profit-sharing companies. In AA, we aren't punitive, as shown at our last conference where a suggestion for censure and restructuring the world service board was not acted upon.

Next Month's Topic – How Do You Deal With Negative Perceptions of General Service – Larry V.

- ALL – Please bring radios. We need everyone to have an opportunity to share.
- Thank you, Juan, for interpreting
- Meeting adjourned at 10:50 AM with the Responsibility Statement

Respectfully submitted,
Jacqueline P., Recording Secretary