

10am - Meeting Opened with the Serenity Prayer by Erica S.

Translation by Nicholas. Thank you for your service!

A few radios were lent for translation

48 DCMs, GSRs and visitors attended. Erica S. facilitated.

Welcome to two newcomers.

Presentation – Helping GSRs with Controversial Topics – Barbara Z.

Members Share

- Provide a Pros and Cons sheet for a group conscience. Listen to what the group has to say. As GSRs, we should be knowledgeable about the Traditions. So, when a member has an argument that goes against the Traditions, it's our responsibility to instruct members.
- Member's personal experience is that she gets "offended" when a motion fails. As a GSR, it's helpful to have a service sponsor to vent to. She wants to be a safe person as a DCM and to vent with a fellow versus public venting
- Member recommends June 2017 *CNCA Comments*, Joann's notes, since it gives meetings tools. Uniform information is helpful and it's important to educate members that General Service does the hard work of unifying communications so we don't have 50 versions of each brochure.
- A group wasn't applying spiritual methods/principles to make decisions. She suggested that the meeting bring HP into the room and into our decision-making. If we stay rooted in Tradition 1, that's when the business of AA comes from the heart and we make decisions that are best for all. Newcomers have the right to participate; we need to provide the best information possible.
- Member suggests getting all the background info to GSRs in neutral language, without any "spin." Because I am an alcoholic, I have opinions on everything. But my job to educate and give info. Keep "my" opinion out of it.
- "The money thing" is often controversial. In a downtown San Francisco meeting, communication skills are very important in dealing with homeless people, the bathroom, coffee. Knowing I was nice to a rude person means I am making progress. Know the responsibilities of the GSR. Emphasize that General Service is important. He's watched meeting die, and it often began because no GSR was present. How we express controversial subjects is very important.
- Controversy can be a spiritual tool to moving toward serenity and group conscience. Member wants to be guided by her HP. She's aware she need to monitor her delivery, keeping dramatic facial expressions and body language to a minimum. Drop the drama language and opinion. She hopes never to lose an opportunity to keep her big mouth shut.
- Controversy can be helpful because everyone wants to be involved when change happens. Controversy helps members get into service. The drama with Bill's original Big Book manuscript is a prime example – members got activated.
- Sub district meetings are valuable for GSRs so they can hear what other GSRs are up to and handling situations. The lack of comprehensive information can often inspire the fear to present controversy. It's our job to provide good info to GSRs.
- I have to move away from being "right." If I insist on being right, I am not able to see the larger picture.
- Often in meetings, it's "personalities before principles." The reality is that I don't know how to handle any one problem. If we are not looking to a pre-ordained result, the idea of a "set aside

prayer” is extremely important. It’s hard to go into a meeting and meet disdain regarding GS announcement. And, there always seems to be a “personality” in the room that’s driving the dim view of General Service. This scenario of the “personality” affects us at the group, intergroup and district level – it seems to happen everywhere. An important question is what any actions are when a dominant personality runs the show with a pre-ordained end-point.

- We need to do homework that covers the controversial topic. We can help the GSR understand and to execute the process that we have, the group conscience. The group conscience process has been the most amazing process she’s ever experienced. Everyone gets the opportunity to voice their opinion and that just does not happen in the “real world.” In Alcoholics Anonymous, we strive to hear all voices and the minority voice, which may guide us to reconsider. This is a civilized process and something we can come to trust. We’ll probably get to do it again. Trusting our process. Ask for outside help. Everyone is here to help.
- Money is the controversial topic. I am hearing fear – at the district and home group. We can educate the GSR to pray before meeting. We need to move away from personal disparagement. If someone is so dominant, maybe we should pray.
- She experienced a dominant personality “help” a GSR do a group inventory without any old-timers present. When going thru inventory question, the attitude was there’s “nothing wrong with our meeting,” as it says in the Big Book after a tornado, “Look Ma! Ain’t it grand, the wind stopped blowing?” Encourage all to share, especially the members who don’t feel empowered.
- A meeting that doesn’t pay rent gives Seventh Tradition to an outside place. A favorite curmudgeon was invited to be part of sharing session on how we were going to distribute our money. He softened up when there was space made for his voice. He has to learn that no one likes to be put into a corner. She is self-righteous about where the money should go and asked trustees about what happened. Trustee said to donate to outside.
- We had a local break of anonymity on Facebook that stirred controversy and the thoughts arose that “New York’s gotta do something...!” It motivated a conversation about anonymity as a gift that member give to the fellowship. Humility in action sets aside personal recognition so that the AA program can have center stage.

Next Month’s Topic – James – Discussion on Technology

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

Respectfully submitted,
Recording Secretary Jacqueline P.
DCM, District 10, Sub-District 03