

How do we discuss Money in AA

First off thank you for allowing me to be of service. I have been to many DCM sharing sessions and this is the first time being able to present. How did that happen? I spoke with my service sponsor a day before the area meeting. He asks very difficult questions like have you ever done a presentation? I said no, but I almost did! He laughed and suggested I could raise my hand. That is how you have me here today.

Now lets get down to business. I will read a couple pieces of our self-support literature as an example of what a GSR could do or any member to their groups to discuss money and self-support.

Self-Support (obtained from Self Support Card F-42)

The Seventh Tradition states that Alcoholics Anonymous is self-supporting through our own contributions. The contributions help to cover the group's expenses. But the Seventh Tradition is more than simply paying for rent and other group expenses. It is both a privilege and a responsibility of individual groups and members to ensure that our organization, at every level, remains forever self-supporting and free of outside influences that might divert us from our primary purpose.

The monetary amount of each contribution is secondary to the spiritual connection that joins us in unity with A.A. groups around the world.

- Currently about 41.5% of groups contribute to the General Service Office.
- Costs of Services provided by G.S.O. (as of 2017) are approximately \$7.27 per member per year.
- Gross profit from A.A. literature sales account for over 50% of G.S.O.'s income.
- Your contributions help ensure the future of our Fellowship worldwide.

Personal thoughts:

- What is the value of your sobriety?
- Does your group know that contributions may be made online at AA.org?
- Gratitude, expressed through contributions, reaches the still-suffering alcoholic.

(This was taken from our self-support card f-42. If read completely front and back side it takes one minute and thirty seconds or less)

A passed delegate had this to say "What I believe to be the most important aspect of self-support to share with the groups is: showing them where and how their contributions are spent, and the good being done for the still suffering alcoholic. " Below are a couple examples I will read off from the Seventh Tradition Fact Sheet:

YOUR SEVENTH TRADITION CONTRIBUTIONS (From F-203 Seventh Tradition Fact Sheet)

Carrying Our Message Beyond Your Home Group

When you or your home group contributes to the General Service Office (G.S.O.) your contribution helps an alcoholic around the corner or around the world. Here are some of the ways that happens:

1 The G.S.O. Publishing Department has coordinated translations of the Big Book in 69 languages and translations of other A.A. literature in more than 91 languages. Further translations are constantly in process.

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2 Each year G.S.O. staff responds to over 90,000 emails, letters, and phone calls from A.A. members, suffering alcoholics, professionals, students, the press and others interested in A.A. Thus, accurate and consistent information about A.A. is provided.

3 Staff communications often help someone find local A.A. meetings, link members in service, and support the start of A.A. in countries where there are no A.A. meetings.

4 G.S.O. maintains and updates the aa.org website that averages over 30,000 visits per day. The website provides information about A.A., including how to find A.A. in their community, and provides help to members and those seeking help with their drinking problem, as well as to families and friends of problem drinkers, and professionals.

(This was taken from F-203 Seventh Tradition Fact Sheet. This reading took one Minute and thirty seconds to read)

These are a couple ways to create awareness to your groups by sharing things as simple as what I have just done with you. Some groups can do more or less depending on groups attention span. I encourage any member to first write out what you want to share with your group then time it. When my service sponsor shared this with me I was not impressed. I like the easy softer way. They do not call me mister half measures for no reason. My experience has been if I am to be of maximum usefulness to myself and anyone around me it takes a little effort. So, I began to become willing to do these things. It works very well.

In Warranty Two, in the Twelfth Concept (pg 63 in my 2014-15 AA Service Manual) Bill talks about the importance of self-support through individual members, very specifically. A couple things I took from that reading was the amount of time and energy I put towards a newcomer is not to be paid but rather an amend that I get to make to all of those who tried to help me over the years. Thank you to all of those in the room today that have carried a strong message so I can continue to be here today with you in service. A quote from P.63 of the service manual. "But when it comes to actually spending of cash, particularly for A. A. Service overhead, many of us are apt to turn a bit reluctant" I have seen this at group level, local or intergroup level and at the general service level. In the book living sober on Page 81- "Alcoholism is expensive. Although A. A. itself charges no dues or fees whatever, we have already paid pretty heavy dues to liquor stores and bartenders before we get here. So many of us get here broke. The sooner we become self-supporting the better we have found. In the service manual on pg S26- S27 The GSR section under Duties it talks about the leaflet "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix." It talks about the GSR knowing that leaflet. According to Bill , "The answer is simple enough. Every single A.A. service is designed to make more and better Twelfth Step work possible, whether it be a group meeting place, a central or intergroup office . . . or the world service Headquarters

"Though not costly, these service agencies are absolutely essential to our continued expansion — to our survival as a Fellowship. Their costs are a collective obligation that rests squarely upon all of us. Our support of services actually amounts to a recognition on our part that A.A. everywhere function in full strength — and that, under our Tradition of self-support, we are all going to foot the bill.

Weather I am in General Service, Intergroup, a group Business meeting I have seen where spirituality and money mix and where we can discuss money in A.A. I heard Billy N share if we needed money we do not want a large contribution, what we want is a couple of bucks from each member. The startling facts that only 41% of all registered groups contribute anything to the GSB. Also, that for a contribution of less than \$8, per member, annually we could be fully self-supporting through voluntary contributions and not need to rely upon literature sale profits to "make up" the difference in services requested and contributions made.

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My take away from all of this info and the original question is. "How do we discuss Money in AA? We share our experience, we read our literature, and talk about these things openly in business meetings, regular meetings, with service sponsors, at intergroups, Area meetings such as this one. Here is the link on self-support: [AA.org](https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/contributions-and-self-support).

https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/contributions-and-self-support There is over 15 pieces of literature right at our finger tips. Maybe pick one or two talking points at the business meeting you go to. Perhaps at our area meeting we chose one a month or quarterly. Share this info with sponsee's and your sponsor. And of course when sitting with GSR's at our sub district meetings I can certainly bring up one a month so I get myself and possibly others informed. All of this is to help facilitate one alcoholic working with another.

There are a couple analogies that I have kept with me over the years. I was attending the Intergroup meeting and an older gentlemen stood up at the monthly meeting. He talked about how in the 1950's he took himself and his girl to the movies and the cost. It was around a dollar. He then told us how much it cost just this past weekend which was 2015 for him and his gal. The cost was over twenty dollars. I heard Raymundo speak about a cup of coffee. I could not remember his actual numbers he used so I looked up what a cup of coffee went for in 1950, it was a nickel. Today I could get one for \$2. But most places I think are more. I like to think about what was the cost of my last drink? For me I liked double's, so my drinks were 8 to 12 dollars almost anywhere. Trust me I never had just one. When I got here I told my sponsor I think it's cheaper for me to put twenty dollars in versus a therapist or the bar. He suggested a lower number and I now do that at most meetings I go to. His experience was for me to give a little one day at a time. I did not want to over do it but, certainly do not want to under do it. I have also found out over the years that some groups cannot afford to contribute to Central Office and General Service. It used to upset me. I would say there not self-supporting (this was controversial) maybe pass the basket a second time, let the group know we are not supporting our local or international services. I have since found out I can give directly to both Central Office and General Service in addition to H and I and meetings through their websites or mail a check. I would say my total contributions for the year might be comparable to two weeks or less than my drinking. AA is still the best thing going for me! Other things to think about if we had more money we could possibly get more services done. Translations, Pi-CPC work, Literature sales could go down and be more accessible to all. Thanks for letting me be of Service!