

## DCM Sharing Sessions Minutes February 27, 2021

11:00 AM – Sharing Session held virtually; opened with the Serenity Prayer by Drew B., Chair. The session opened with a five-minute presentation by JB from San Francisco on the topic, **“How do we get more people involved in General Service?”**

The Presenter shared:

- The important task of trying to get people involved in General Service, and that there's a fine line between attraction and promotion.
- That attracting GSR representation and the link between the group and the district is a very vital link. It is the GSR's job.
- At the 2020 Unity Day a past trustee gave a great talk about this topic: 97 percent of the time the question always comes up of how to be more involved in General Service. Their response is that it's the wrong question and suggested that the right question, “What are we doing wrong that more people aren't attracted to General Service?” In 1997, AA.org issued a statement, “Due to a lack of a central geographic location, online AA Groups are not a direct part of the US/CANADA Service Structure.”
- They shared their experience as a DCM (District Committee Member) from Upstate New York -- a very rural district that had roughly 23 groups in that district. On average there would be 3 GSRs at the district meetings.
- Dark versus Silent groups: Groups that has no representation. Some don't have business meetings. To make an announcement, one would have to pick out time of unrepresented meeting to share a presentation about having a GSR. A lot of groups didn't want anything to do with it. A service sponsor has been a lifesaver to get the message across.
- That you are missing out on such great times in general service. We suggest. We share our opinion. That having a service sponsor has helped in changing the wording of letters or speech on something they've tried to instill.
- Their experience has been joyful. Not only do they stay sober, it enhances sobriety immensely.
- AA Grapevine that I think is apropos to this topic, “Springfield UTAH 1998 Unity seldom means that we all agree on everything. Unity is best achieved by a full hearing of all points of view, time for all of those involved to step back from emotional responses and to consider what would best serve the group and AA as a whole.

## **Members shared in response to the presentation given by JB, “How do we get more people involved in General Service?”**

A member shared:

- How they can communicate and not make them feel bad
- Crosstalk is encouraged during a sharing session
- Sharing about General Service has expanded a great sense of belonging to get folks interested in relating topics to the concepts and traditions.
- Sharing how recovery is relative to the concepts and traditions during meetings

- Going through literature and including a service manual gets people curious about getting in service
- There is a "calctrant" bunch of people taking pride of not having business meetings like a badge of honor. Zoom makes it convenient going to every single meeting even twice.
- Having the approach to do the job in letting everyone know about general service, showing a presentation of the upside down triangle to inform people about General Service
- It is quite fun and really exciting
- Feel disappointed that we have so little participation; getting excited; showing up at meetings in sub-district and speaking at group level for announcements; we can encourage our groups to have a contact person to stay active with GSO; have someone listed as the contact; email address, street address, the meeting info and, service number. Seeing which groups are active and what meetings are not represented; completing a spreadsheet with every meeting and what sub-districts there are within a district We don't know unless we have some type of spread sheet telling us that; giving a data dump of all the meetings on the list of the central office within the district.
- A national statistic was given that General Service represents 27% of groups across the nation; the effort is great and that we don't have to be down on ourselves; it is a great way of saying, "I want to get a group history, and who is the GSR for this group? Oh, you don't have one? Well, let me tell you."
- As a brand new DCM creating a list of meetings to attend to introduce themselves; found this role as a DCM natural to help people get connected; there is really no rule book; folks are really appreciative for the service popping into the meeting and introducing yourself as a DCM providing contact info; the little things that are helpful; not feeling the pressure and having to do anything perfectly; being there and showing up
- It is like a jack of all trades down in Salinas because there is not a lot of participation; there are over 75 groups here and only 6 attend District; not sure how to attract but will try; being a retired parole and probation officer, the attraction is once you are here and you like it, you stay; judges sending them is promotion; defense attorneys and social workers sending clients is promotion; but then if they like what they are getting into as a client, most of them stay; like training a dog: come, sit, stay. Most don't stay; not sure how to attract; any suggestions would be helpful
- Got into service 20 years sober had a sponsor that advised them to not get caught up with the General Service people; a lot of people feels that way and the message is spreading; when getting involved as a GSR telling them, "You know, they are going to change everything, and if we don't show up we won't have anything left."
- Give some little tidbit of what was going on in AA; the GSR establishes interest and others ask about it; periodically we go almost dark because we are so far away; some didn't know they were allowed at Area as a GSR; didn't know if they were stepping on boundaries
- Sponsor said we were going for a ride and wound up in Yountville at a meeting attracted by the food; if you want to break out of your shell and stop being shy in front of people this job is for you; to be enthusiastic in sending the message is sharing information explaining that it isn't just business but how fun it can be
- EXPERIENCE has been they have had a bad experience with it, they have a fear of it being outside of AA and not wanting anything to change; keeping it the way it is; my job as a dentist

was to motivate people to floss; it is difficult to enthuse people to change habits; General Service is a huge part of AA

- It is amazing to see the amount of participation; it is really exciting to be a part of the Area; they are on the same boat in getting to as many meetings as possible
- Experiencing a lot about my position; getting tricked in going to the first GSR meeting; whatever it takes; getting around to the meetings within the sub-district; start from where you are and things will unfold; someone pointed out in Half Moon Bay coming into the groups with the respect of the group's autonomy; presenting how change can happen and be powerful as well.

Chair thanked JB for their presentation.

**TOPIC FOR NEXT MONTH: Experience, Strength, and Hope on the Agenda Topics process**

**A collective conscience was given that the leader Ben from District 12 will share a report for about 5-7 minutes to kick us off into discussion.**

**Meeting adjourned at 11:50 AM with the Responsibility Statement**

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Chase C. DCM Sharing Session Recording Secretary*