

DCM SHARING SESSION APRIL 23, 2022

11:00 AM – Sharing Session held hybrid in person at the Petaluma Community Center and online via Zoom Video Conference; Megan of District 15 standing in for Drew B. as Madam Chair

What happens at a DCM Sharing Session by Drew B.: At the DCM Sharing Session, a District Committee Member suggest a topic and then there is a discussion on the topic with those in attendance.

Following the Area Officer's Presentation there was a presentation by: Megan M

Presentation Topic – Integrating Zoom groups into district online or virtual groups and how we are dealing with them today

I want to talk about a little bit more and share with you the history of A.A. and its virtual world; in a way the Grapevine though not digital but a meeting in print; after the first loner's international meeting printed a bulletin in 1949 the Internationalists Round Robin was mailed to a small band of inter-nationalists; 1976- a GSO staff member coordinated loaners, homers, and international correspondence for those unable to attend meetings regularly because there is not one in the vicinity; Homer: unable because of physical incapacity; Inter-nationalist: port contact; on-sea member; GSO manages the correspondence; that is the limit of it. The first online group was the Lamplighters that was formed in 1990 and met by email and still continues today; OIAA in 1986 the first online meeting used a bulletin board; it was not real time, but you would see it in a bulletin board sort of fashion; The development of the world wide web expanded the accessibility of online meetings; There is not any service structure available to them; up until recently there was no room for virtual groups; OIAA would be a sort of container for these Groups; because of Covid, Groups were not allowed to participate in the Structure of A.A.; Just like regular aa meetings online aa meetings are autonomous, due to the lack of a physical location, they are not a part of the structure; and to participate in Group Conscience decisions locally; these groups have no access to General Service; However, up until just recently, there did not exist in the GSO service structure room for virtual groups of any type, OIAA or not.

I guess it was imagined that OIAA would be a sort of container for these virtual groups. But with the advent of Covid and the following explosion of virtual AA meetings and groups the fact that virtual groups were not allowed participation in the General Service structure has become an issue. This is from the most recent version of the A.A. Guide-line on the Internet:

“Just like regular A.A. meetings, online A.A. meetings/groups are autonomous. Due to the lack of a central geographic location, online A.A. meetings/groups are not a direct part of the U.S./Canada service structure. A.A. members are encouraged to participate in service where they physically reside and to participate in group conscience decisions locally.” CNCA does allow online Groups to participate in the General Service Structure; this matter is not falling on deaf ears with GSO. There is still a need to allowing online groups to be a part; online meeting provides accessibility to those that are not able to attend a physical meeting; parents with young children, overseas members, elderly, provides a supplement to in person meetings. Expect that A.A will eventually be meeting via virtual reality; they already exist.

Consideration: Would like to know how your Districts integrate online meetings to participate; how does your District feel about members who do not reside within the geographical region of the District? what is the overall response to an online presence?

Topic for Next Month: How could we support the Meeting Guide App?

Presented By: Karen C.

Respectfully Submitted,
Chase C. | DCM Session Recording Secretary