

Report

2017 Area 60 annual conference, Friday, 31
March – Sunday, 02 April

Friday Evening Panel of Three: three topics:

First, Ed, DCM from District 23

DIVERSITY/OUTREACH, what we learned:

- Blacks are underrepresented. -5% in AA. Outreach is lacking.
- “Fear” is the reason suggested. Black people perceive that “AA seems to be White”, and many fear indignities unintended or otherwise.

Suggestion: “Get a greeter.”

Second, Jill from District 11

SAFETY, dealing with 13th steppers, predators and other disruptors.

Answers:

- “Sponsorship” Sponsors may be able to influence potential offenders.
- Ed’s group has a plan. Three or four male members surround the offender, eventually walking him/her out.

They are very careful not to lay a hand on the offender, lest they expose their group and AA to liability/litigation.

Surprisingly, the offenders are often respected, long-time members.

Third, Our own Jon M, District 41.

COMMUNICATIONS. Jon talked about his website work for Area 60. -No notes.

Friday Evening, Late Session: "PARTICIPATION:"

1. "FELLOWSHIP VS. MEMBERSHIP",

a) Membership, Religion/God for the Newcomer

Discussion of our tolerance and inclusion took place. The following sections of As Bill Sees It were offered as guidance. Religion was cited as potential obstacle to some.

A.B.S.I.: # 34:

"Not Allied with Any Sect..."

"While A.A. has restored thousands of poor Christians to their churches, and has made believers out of atheists and agnostics, it has also made good A.A.'s out of those belonging to the Buddhist, Islamic, and Jewish faiths. For example, we question very much whether our Buddhist members in Japan would ever have joined this Society had A.A. officially stamped itself a strictly Christian movement.

"You can easily convince yourself of this by imagining that A.A. started among the Buddhists and that they then told you you couldn't join them unless you become a Buddhist, too. If you were a Christian alcoholic under these circumstances, you might well turn your face to the wall and die."

LETTER, 1954

158

Tolerance in Practice

"We found that the principles of tolerance and love had to be emphasized in actual practice. We can never say (or insinuate) to anyone that he must agree to our formula or be excommunicated. The atheist may stand up in an A.A. meeting still denying the Deity, yet reporting how vastly he has been changed in attitude and outlook. Much experience tells us he will presently change his mind about God, but nobody tells him he must do so." In order to carry the principle of inclusiveness and tolerance still further,

we make no religious requirement of anyone. All people having an alcoholic problem who wish to get rid of it and so make a happy adjustment with the circumstances of their lives, become A.A. members by simply associating with us. Nothing but sincerity is needed. But we do not demand even this. "In such an atmosphere the orthodox, the unorthodox, and the unbeliever mix happily and usefully together. An opportunity for spiritual growth is open to all."

LETTER, 1940

b) Fellowship. It Can Be Challenging.

A.B.S.I.: # 18:

18

Companion and Partner

"Dr. Bob was my constant companion and partner in the great A.A. adventure. As the physician and great human being that he was, he chose work with others as his prime A.A, vocation and achieved a record which, in quantity and in quality, none will ever surpass. Assisted by the incomparable Sister Ignatia at St. Thomas Hospital in Akron, he -- without charge -- medically treated and spiritually infused five thousand sufferers. "In all the stress and strain of A.A.'s pioneering time, no hard word ever passed between us. **For this, I can thankfully say that the credit was all his.**"

2. LEADERSHIP

Notes say, "I Am Responsible."

3. IS YOUR VOICE HEARD?:

Notes say, "Make your voice heard by asking questions."

Friday Evening, continued, GSR Roundtable.:

GSR Roundtable, responsibilities and challenges.

- 1) Resources, AA literature:
 - a) "The Traditions Illustrated"
 - b) "The AA Group"

Saturday 01 April, Money in AA

- Spirituality and Money
 - “Talk about uncomfortable things.”
 - “Be good stewards.”
 - “**Love** of money is the root of evil. -not money itself.”
 - “Be aware of the use of money to feed ego.”
- “Fully Support Our Obligations”
 - “Never enough money.”
 - “We are stewards.”
- Money is Controversial in AA
 - In 2015, the average cost to GSO per member was \$7.08.
 - Member contributions were about \$5.58 per member.
 - 33% of groups contributed to GSO and about half of the revenue was from book sales.
 - A new “Self-Support” card for meetings has been issued, and the current statistics are printed on it. The numbers are about the same.
- When membership is aware of a specific need, contributions rise.
 - Suggested reading: Grapevine article, “The Rise and Fall of the Group”.
- We can use our Group Service Number to set up automatic payments to GSO.

Saturday 01 April, continued

10:30 AM:

Dr. Peter Luongo, Professor, Johns Hopkins University, Class "A" Trustee

"COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATION"

A great talk about the history of AA and professionals in healthcare. Dr. Luongo has served both AA and government agencies for many years. He is credited with early cooperation with the AA "band of drunks" in his government service against the advice of his peers.

Saturday Afternoon: Committees

Member choose a committee to join. Our GSR chose the "Literature" committee.

- The committee considered the request from Area "8" to consider retiring the AA pamphlet, "Too Young". It was noted that the pamphlet contains stereotypes that young people report finding offensive.

The committee voted to support the retiring of the pamphlet.

- The committee also considered and voted on changes proposed in Area "10" to the pamphlet, "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship". Two bullet points appear to contradict what is stated on several other conference approved pamphlets.

The bullet points suggest that groups keep files on newcomers with their names, addresses and phone numbers. It is suggested to use these files for "followup activity where it seems needed".

The committee consensus was that these files violate the AA tradition of anonymity and potentially intimidate newcomers. The committee voted to support Area 10's request to remove the offending bullet points from the pamphlet.

- Literature Committee Agenda Item "J": "Requests for literature and/or language regarding safety. Please refer to committee handout.

The 62nd General Service Workshop, Safety in A.A.: Our Common Welfare is available.