

GSR Roundtable

Friday 03/02/2018

TOPICS TO COVER :

1. Service Sponsors
 2. GSR Duties
 3. Court Ordered / Addict or Alcoholic
 4. Group Inventory
 5. Agenda Items – Motivating the Groups
 6. Increasing the 7th Tradition
 7. Group Activities (Ideas and Involvement)
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1. Service Sponsors – importance
 - a. Tradition – introduction
 - b. Answer Questions about duties of new service position
 - c. How to budget your time
 2. GSR Duties
 - a. Brief explanations at meetings of what is happening in service – world, area, district
 - b. General Service Representative – we serve not the boss
 - c. Business meeting – relate district mtg and at district mtg relate business mtg news.
 - d. Voice of the Group towards the delegate and world services
 - e. Voice or Opinion – as a GSR do I have a voice?
 - f. Take “good” notes on agenda items so the whys and why nots are fresh
 - g. Spring conference is important to obtain group conscience on agenda items.
 3. Court Ordered – Addict or Alcoholic
 - a. Is meeting being overwhelmed by numbers, tell the court
 - b. Encourage addicts to find or start an NA meeting.
 - c. Is alcohol your primary/leading problem? Plant the recovery seed
 - d. Allow/show/help the addict who wants to quit drinking
 - e. Traditions may steer you to a better solution
 - f. Don't be afraid to call for help – central office, GSO, etc.
 - g. Third tradition – use the long form not only the short form (look in 12 x 12)
 - h. Love and Tolerance
 - i. Use Pamphlets!
 - j. Steer court-ordered to traditions, singleness of purpose to identify as alcoholics
 4. Group Inventory & Organizing Events
 - a. Unable to hold business meeting, inventory might (probably) be impossible
 - b. Bring in an experienced outside moderator, someone who has service experience and has moderated group inventories
 - c. Focus on recovery in meetings, unity may come with events and involvement. All are equal!
 - d. Proper Group inventory will cause growth! Worth the effort to do it right.
 - e. Group to Group sponsorship
 - f. Groups will go dark and occasionally die
 - g. Use the service manual.
 - h. Using the 12 Traditions checklist for your inventory

5. Agenda Items / Motivating the Group
 - a. Making a decision (or two) to create a ripples to kick start involvement.
 - b. Besides announcing, inviting a member to fill a position. Announcements are not always enough
 - c. Motivate members to participate by engaging individuals who will be good in those positions.
 - d. Bribe with food
 - e. Introducing newcomers to business, district, area meetings
 - f. Don't wait for the newcomers to be prejudiced against service work
 - g. Remember to make service work fun. Activities happen when people enjoy being together.
 - h. Use your DCM, Alt DCM, Central Office, etc.
6. Increase 7th Tradition Involvement and Amount
 - a. 100 people at a YPAA, downtown meeting? How to get more people to donate – start a self support train.
 - b. Asking district and/or other groups to help a special interest group survive (meeting at a homeless shelter)
 - c. Make sure meeting attendees know that this is our meeting and we need to keep it afloat.
 - d. Remind members that our group is part of all of AA and we need to do more than pay the rent to be self supporting.
7. Group Activities / Ideas = Involvement
 - a. Monthly Speaker meeting with pot luck
 - b. Involvement with other groups and districts
 - c. Camping trip, what traditions dictate registration fees, raffles
 - d. Consult with DCMs, Area Officers and Central Office for ideas that have been tried in the past.

Saturday, 3/3/2018 Round Table Notes

Facilitator: Joe, A46

Roundtable Questions:

1. How do you have the money talk with your meetings? What words to you use to encourage them to contribute more? Good ways to have that discussion? (David, GSR)
2. How do we keep GSR involved and motivated in service? What about for young people – how to get newer people with a couple years sobriety involved in general service? (Ronnie, D13 A8, DCM)
3. My home group is small. How do you keep the fire going in the old-timers? (Brandon, GSR, A2, Alaska, CPC)
4. Group is not interested in hearing from GSR. Working with attraction not promotion. Attended GRS school. How do you get the group enthused in hearing about GSR news? (Pam, GSR)
5. What venue do you provide agenda items to your meeting? Special meeting? Time/location/media? How do you receive results back to make the GSR report? (Ian, Rio Linda A7)
6. Shocked at first GSR meeting in Sacramento Area. 25 years ago, there was excitement. There is lack of enthusiasm now. Why? Sponsorship? There used to be 6 month

commitments, now it's 3 months. How do you convey importance of service? (Valleria, GSR, D7, *No.1 offenders*)

7. Only 5-6 GSRs for area meeting, 50 meetings weekly and 1 GSR from that club. How can we spread the word and get people interested in being GSR? (Rebecca, GSR D2 A8)

1. How do you have the money talk with your meetings? What words to you use to encourage them to contribute more? Good ways to have that discussion? (David, GSR)

- Suggest contributing the equivalent price of a drink into the basket. (Brandon)
- putting in the price of your last drink or the cost of your next drink; done on meeting by meeting level (Ellonor, GSR A6 D4)
- Say "this is how we pay our rent, buy birthday chips... go down the list; be generous if you can." Contributions have gone up. (Joe, Reno, NV)
- Talk about what services the group does, how many people we reach out to, expenses; talk about what intergroup does, district does. Not for guilt or shame, but we talk about what we're doing. (Austin "Freedom Fellowship" Los Altos, CA)
- 50% of 7th tradition goes to club. Big Book contribution basket is passed for BB purchase, so it doesn't need to be split with the Alano Club (Dan A9 D10, *Alano Club*)
- You can see where money goes, there is literature that shows where the money goes. Google "Where does my contribution go at AA?" (Steve, GSR Loomis A7 D21)
- We have 37 meetings a week and 1 GSR. The suggested 7th is \$2 written in to the meeting instructions. Explain the required donations to keep the meeting open. (Michael A72 D39, GSR)
- Pleasenton, CA has 5-6 meetings each day, can run in the red. When we put it out there that we are having trouble, the donations go up. This is also put into the announcements. (Rick, GSR. A6 D8, Lafayette, *The Hut*)
- Have "elder statesmen" get in-front of group to make announcement to group. (Ed, Carson City, NV)
- We have 4 in our group and hold a 7th tradition topic meeting. It's a contribution not a donation, because AA is not a charity - with AA, I'm involved. (Vallerie, A92, Omet WA, Treasurer and GSR)
- We share monthly or bimonthly, treasures report that helps share where contributions are going. If there are a lot of people from treatment groups attending but not contributing, talk to the treatment facilitator about a donation and how this is impacting the group. (Justin, A93 D1, *Learning to Live - Mens Stag*)
- We suggest put in the amount of your anniversary number. We began taking Vinmo for Visa/Mastercard at meeting level before and after meetings. (Nick, A58 D16)
- We suggest putting in a 1\$ for the newcommer and mention "I put in a dollar for you – I care about your sobriety." (Donna, ID, A18 D4, GSR, *Pass it Forward*)
- We have a poster that shows costs in 1950 and costs now. There is a suggestion to contribute \$2 per person. We have birthday envelopes for contributions. My sobriety is worth more than the cost of a Bourbon and Coke. (Jeremy)
- When there was a shortfall at the group, as secretary, I put language into the reading that \$1 when AA started, in today's value is now \$6. Announce that the basket is light, pass it a second a time and say where the money goes. (Stewart, GSR, D4 A6)

2. How do we keep GSR involved and motivated in service? What about for young people – how to get newer people with a couple years sobriety involved in general service? (Ronnie, district 13, area 8, DCM)

- Have sponsor and service sponsor. Have tradition and concepts meeting with DCM. If you're strong in sobriety you can be of service to your group. (Michael)
- At 4 months my sponsor said it's time for service work, shake hands at the door, make coffee. I've volunteered for many service positions. Something feels wrong if I'm not doing service work. Responsibility Pledge. If you'd go out in the snow to drink then you can go in the weather to a meeting. (Dixie, A8 D8, *Downtown Discussion Group*, San Diego)
- What drew me at 20 was a need. If no one was doing something, I wanted to help because it needs to be done. Serve pizza, soda and salad, at lot of events, education on GSR role in district. (Pam, D5 A9, *Rush Hour Meeting*)
- One Big problem is that people don't know what GSR is. Treasurer and Secretary are easy to understand because you can see them. Reach out to people and have GSR and reps explain what it is and the functionality. (Tiffany, A9)
- I was recruited - this level of service might not be for everyone. I was told to attend, 'have the experience' and bring it back. Attraction rather than promotion. I want to be DCM and do something. Home group is putting together a travel account for those who want to come to meetings. (Jeff, A2 Alaska, GSR)
- One thing not to do: When I volunteered for service, I was told, "No, we have someone else." There were no other suggestions. Service starts with sponsorship; educating people to have a service sponsor. (Eloise)
- I was brought to a service assembly. Bring newcomers so they can see if they like it or not. Make it look attractive. (Page, A17 GSR, Maui, HI)
- Some people are not excited by General Service. I love it and am fired up about it, but not all my sponsees are. Ask sponsees, what fires you up? Service is about not thinking about myself. My group has 4 members. I love getting involved in fellowship, not just this little group, but all of AA and this whole deal. When I'm excited then people around me often get excited. Be a cheerleader. If there is no fire, then create it. Do fun stuff. (Amen)

3. My home group is small. How do you keep the fire going in the old-timers? (Brandon, GSR, A2, Alaska, CPC)

- What keeps me excited is newcomers -to always have someone new in my world, to see the miracle of carrying the message of sobriety. (Joe, GSR, *Mid-Day Group*)
- When I look into your eye I see my higher power. My corner of the world is different than your corner. When I hear different experiences I fall in love with AA again. (Pat, GSR A9)
- Service is imperative for long-term sobriety, I sponsor and do what AA's do. I'm inspired by seeing how other groups do their meetings. (John)
- I'm older and I can't get to meeting. I don't have the transportation. Call and ask if people need rides to meetings. (Frankie)
- My group is writing a second edition of *Out Stories Disclosed* and we can see the history of the meetings. If you're making a new meeting, find an old-timer to learn about the stumbling blocks and successes. Communicate with old-timers who are "elderly statesmen" not "bleeding deacons" and use that valuable resource - anvil of experience. (Greg, A72 D32)
- I got involved in this group with 30-40 years average sobriety which had no GSR. Getting the group involved so they can act on it has been tough going. Phrase things in

ways that mean something to people, like the first 164 pages. I'm receiving great feedback now from them. (Dave, D16 A8, *Just the Black Print*)

- I'm GSR of a group that's 5 yrs old. I declined the offer to be GSR at first and then remembered 'I never turn down a request for help in AA.' I do things I don't like because I was asked to help. Ask long-timers to participate – they probably will. (Robert, A42 D7, Las Vegas)
- My group asked me to at least be the alternate GSR. I asked the group for an exception to sobriety requirement so a newcomer can be the Alt.GSR. Thank you to my long distance sponsor – who I recognized by voice but haven't seen in person in years! (Mike, D43 A7, Fresno GSR)
- I appreciated the feeling in the rooms and the feelings I didn't get when I was hanging out with people in bars and ER's. I now learn from women in AA who I never would have hung out with before. I've learned patience, understanding and empathy. Tradition 5. (Ronnie A8 D13, GSR)

4. My group is not interested in hearing from the GSR. I'm working with attraction not promotion and have attended GSR school. How do you get the group enthused in hearing about GSR news? (Pam, GSR)

- I make this sound exciting. When I get home I'll share that one topic was Tradition #3. I need to give them the information since they elected me. Bring the communication and bring their advice back. (Mystery)
- Our group donates. I'm GSR, PR chair, central office - it's about 4 hours a month and I spent a lot more time on a barstool than that. My first time, I made a beautiful report and lost the group after 15 seconds. Our group has no requirement on alternate, so I grabbed a guy who looks like he has a lot of free time. Share only 2 to 3 minutes - small reports. I can't help anyone in my home group if I'm not sober. (Evan, A69 D10, *The Wake Up Call Meeting*)
- I was asked to be GSR and am contributing by making the commitment for my own sobriety. (Elizabeth, Hawaii Big Island A17 D8, Secretary, Treasurer, coffee maker, GSR)
- I have a group that wants to be just a fellowship with no one stepping up to be GSR. Every position I've been in I've learned something about me and I've grown. I read the GSR book. I'm going to bring the message back to my group. (Joan, D6 A42,)
- One of the greatest things in AA for me has been being GSR. I didn't meet the sobriety requirement. I asked for it to be waived. It was. I stepped up for Archivist and webmaster. I'm in service because I am sober. I make it enthusiastic. (John, D15, Chico)
- I learned from the service manual and sponsorship. I started by washing ashtrays and riding along on 12th step calls. Motivate people with food. I require a service commitment – something to get my sponsees out of themselves - for me to sponsor. (Tim, A69, Utah,)
- I'm an older-timer, but a newcomer. I'm coming back to the principles. I'm reading the Big Book in English for the 1st time in years. My homegroup is 50 years old and they are not very excited about service. I translate the minutes to deliver a smaller format that they can hear. (Carlos, 4 time GSR; 1st time in English, *East Side Open Breakfast*' A72 D34)
- The most important part of GSR is to train my replacement. I suggest attending a Regional Forum. I bring information back to my group and share what the most current

agenda items are. I get my groups conscious to pass on to my delegate. (Buster, GSR, Colfax, D21 A7)

Closing: Joe – Thank you for sharing this spiritual experience