



AA in SA

Striving to improve communication between GSO, the Members and Groups of the Fellowship

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MESSAGE FROM THE GSO CHAIRMAN

Have you heard about AA being on “Sound Cloud”? If you have not, then I am concerned and so should you be. This is the 3rd communication from GSO to let members know that we have embarked on a project to convert audio cassettes into a digital format. Yep, those audio cassettes are now available to you on the tips of your fingers. No fewer than 30 talks have been converted; ranging from 1964 to 2003. At the time of writing, we have had 477 talks being listened to and the feedback has only been positive. So, on your smart phone, tablet, computer go to <https://soundcloud.com/aasafrica> and feel the recovery.

Service Workshops and Traditions meetings are not always well supported as a Group or personal AA celebration. With August being elected to be Service Awareness Month in South Africa we have made every effort to ensure that literature is on the shelves waiting to be rolled out. The ball is now in the court of the Areas, Districts and groups. It is a matter of getting you the member involved.

If you ever wanted to find a way to move from self-centeredness towards selflessness; August would be the month to start. That for me is the crux of the 12 step program. I was just an ordinary drunk with a matric certificate not good enough to enter university. Today I sit here with humility, not pride or ego for the trust placed upon me to write this communication to you. Some days ago, I was just a gutter drunk from Chatsworth.

There are certain things that are important to me which allowed me to remain in service which I will share with you in the hope that it may help you.

- The pay is good – it is often wonderful to reflect on a day and your heart smiles when you know you have helped another human being.
- I wanted to serve and give back for what I have received for nothing with love and understanding.
- I have no fear and was prepared to admit I am ignorant and willing to learn. People respect that and will openly help.
- I never bother about what people think of me – I care about what I think about myself on a regular basis (Step 10). Do the next right thing – it is not a popularity contest.
- I have the right to be wrong and can openly admit when I have made a mistake and am willing to make an amend. People are willing to forgive you if you are honest.

Nothing is hard in AA and please call on us at any time if we can help you on your spiritual journey or point you in a direction. There is AASA GSO which belongs to you.

God Bless and happy sobriety.

Sandil M – GSO Chairman

CONFERENCE 2019

***Please note that these are highlights of decisions made. Full Conference Decisions documents available in the website's Library section.

Proposal: The Pretoria and East Rand areas are quite small and hosting National Convention on their own puts a strain on groups and members. Proposal for Pretoria and East Rand groups jointly host Convention.

Decision: This proposal was accepted. Instead of a 6 year rotation, there will be a 5 year rotation.

Proposal: That the World Service Delegates are allotted 30 – 45 minutes for a Q and A session with the Delegates at Conference to share their experience relating to topics and experiences from the WSM. WSD should suggest proposals from topics discussed at WSM which would benefit the fellowship. The WSD would take the responsibility to follow up with delegates on progress of the advisory decisions taken at conference. WSD to update the Board at their meetings and at conference annually on the successes and challenges.

Decision: This proposal was unanimously accepted.

Proposal: Our Delegates have a kit which explains duties and requirements for the position. Conference to approve compilation of a kit to be developed for World Service Delegates. When a new WSD is elected, he/she should know what the portfolio entails.

Decision: This proposal was unanimously accepted. The current World Service Delegates will put together a kit with the help of information gained by AA worldwide.

Proposal: The 12 Concepts had been adapted for SA needs. Conference is asked for approval of this document.

Decision: This proposal was unanimously accepted with the provision that a disclaimer will be added to state that the SA document should be read in conjunction with the AAWS document.

Proposal: How can we protect women from feeling threatened (uncomfortable) in a sexual manner in AA? Female members join a group, but do not stay long

because they are being harassed by our male members either for personal or sexual gains. Proposal: Guidelines to be developed (similar to the Safety AA from GSO USA and the leaflet from the UK) for groups to use.

Decision: The committee believes that as a statistic more than 70% of women who join the fellowship have experienced some form of sexual harassment. This form of harassment becomes a challenge for the member if it continues within the fellowship. While we address the issue of women, the same is experienced by men to a lesser extent. In view of the seriousness, the committee decided as follows:

While literature and guidelines are available they are not always practical. We believe that what the proposal asks of us to point members in a direction so that have a point of contact. While respecting the autonomy of groups it is suggested that the following statement should be incorporated into the meeting format (program) or a special card be printed with the following:

“Should anyone feel that he or she is being subjected to financial, sexual or any form of harassment the person is advised to address the issue with _____ (Chairman, secretary, GSR, Delegate Tom, Tandi or YYY – Your choice) immediately.” Where possible, the group make a male and female member available.

Proposal: AA App is not working as it should be working. App to be taken down.

Decision: This proposal was unanimously accepted.

Proposal: An AA member was recently told that only Conference approved literature should be read at out at meetings. Based on an issue from the General Service Office, USA, in 1978, we feel this is not correct. We believe this should be a matter for the group conscience. Can Conference clarify this matter?

Decision: Conference recommends that AA approved literature be used at group meetings.

Proposal: The wallet card “Hints and suggestions for 12th steppers” has been adapted for SA from the original UK card. Conference is asked to approve the card for printing and selling.

Decision: The card was approved and will be in stock at GSO and Area Offices.

Proposal: The leaflet “Violence and personal conduct” has been adapted for SA from the original UK leaflet. Conference is asked to approve the leaflet as a guideline document. If approved, the leaflet will be added to the Service Manual, the Group Handbook Kit and the Guidelines section of the website.

Decision: The leaflet was approved and will be available as a guideline.

Proposal: The leaflet “Welcoming a newcomer to the group” has been adapted for SA from the original UK leaflet. Proposal: Conference is asked to approve the leaflet as a guideline document. If approved, the leaflet will be added to the Service Manual, the Group Handbook Kit and the Guidelines section of the website.

Decision: The leaflet was approved and will be available as a guideline.

Proposal: To have birthday sobriety cards/group birthday cards/certificates printed. Stock will be held and sold by GSO and Area Offices.

Decision: Conference approved this proposal. The GSO Publications Coordinator will design the card for printing.

Proposal: The CPC/PI committee plans to launch “The Year of Awareness”. The plan is to create both radio and visual advertisements to be used by any area in South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe to create awareness that Alcoholics Anonymous is an option to recover from your drinking problem. A budget of R 50 000 is requested.

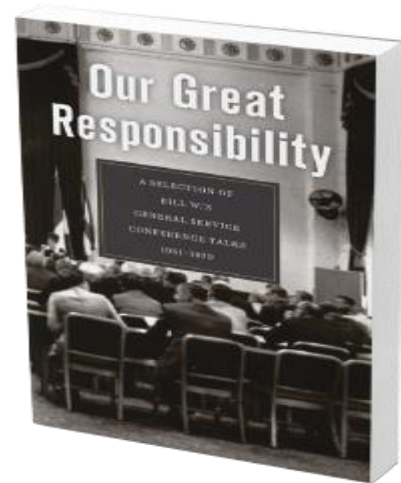
Decision: Conference approved the proposal and budget.

LITERATURE

We need your shares for Regmaker and Alco-Solo. These meetings in print cannot be produced timeously without your support. Please send your shares in Word Format to gso@asouthafrica.org.za

AAWS has released a new book for the first time in 29 years. “Our Great Responsibility” is a selection of Bill W.’s General Service Conference talks from 1951 –

1970. The book will be available in South Africa in October 2019.



NEW GSO BANKING DETAILS

In an ongoing process of reducing costs to our Fellowship, and subsequent to lengthy deliberation, The General Service Board and General Service Office have decided to change banking facilities to FNB. A change of this magnitude does not come without challenges, but we believe the savings will outweigh the perceived drawbacks.

In view of this action we request that all Area Offices, District Offices, Group Treasurers and Individual members be advised of our new Banking details, which are:

Bank	: FIRST NATIONAL BANK
Account Number	: 62 747 941 046
Branch	: Bracken City
Branch Number	: 252242

As we have allowed a six month migration period for this transition, we would request that all and any Debit Orders, Stop Orders and future contributions be changed to the FNB Account.

At this juncture we would like to inform and thank members who have selflessly pledged money on a monthly basis, and urge them and any others who may be in a position to pledge, to kindly institute Stop Orders or any other form of payment into the FNB Account.

We thank you for your Service and trust that this important communication will be transmitted to the Fellowship as a whole. May you continue to be blessed with joyous sobriety as we trudge the road of happy destiny.

YOUR GSO COMMITTEE 2019

Chairman	Sandil M
Treasurer	Douglas DP
Conference Coordinator	Jane R
Publications Coordinator	Cathlin M
IT Coordinator	Suben N
National Secretary Literature & Publications	Lisa M
National Secretary CPC/PI	Liza VE
National Secretary TF/CF	Gavin D
Office Administrator	Mandy J

INTO ACTION - AUGUST IS SERVICE MONTH

Conference 2018 decided that August should be Service Month. Most Area Assemblies hold their AGMS in September which means that members have the wonderful opportunity to be of service. How to choose a position to apply for? What do you need to do the job? GSO has put together a list of leaflets for each Service Arm which could assist Areas when holding workshops to address these important issues. Please contact gso@aasouthafrica.org.za for a copy of the list.

COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC INFORMATION (CPC/PI)

Tradition Eleven: Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.

How can we attract the still suffering alcoholic who has never heard of AA and how the 12 Step program can help? This year’s National CPC/PI committee decided to address the issue in the coming year.

AA already has a clip fit for use on any radio station. The clip is available to download from the website. The professional sound track is being used to create a

visual clip which will be available on the website soon. The committee members are hard at work to have this clip broadcast on television on a regular basis.



Promotion of literature sales is important. You can carry the message by informing our professional friends of the workings of AA and how we can help the still suffering alcoholic. This literature stand comes fully stocked and is ideal for HR departments of companies as well as rehabs, hospitals etc.

ABBREVIATIONS & TERMS

There are many abbreviations and terms used in AA meetings, minutes, reports and other documentation. To name a few:

- AAWS – Alcoholics Anonymous World Services
- GSO – General Service Office
- Conference – Annual service meeting attended by Delegates, the Board of Trustees, World Service Delegates and GSO committee members
- GSR – General Service Representative
- DCM – District Committee Member
- CPC – Cooperation with the Professional Community
- PI – Public Information
- TF – Treatment Facilities
- CF – Correctional Facilities
- ASA – Archives, Structures and Administration
- SSASM – Sub-Saharan Africa Service Meeting
- WSM – World Service Meeting
- WSD – World Service Delegate