

The Upside-Down Triangle – What Does it Really Mean?

A Word From Our SENY Delegate - Panel 71

Hello, fellow AA members! Last month, I shared my personal interpretation of the General Service Conference's purpose. I said it was "to enable all the groups to live in Tradition 5. All of this is what the Structure of the Conference (the upside-down service triangle) is about on page S16 of our AA Service Manual." I think that idea needs more attention than I had the space to give it last time, so I'm going to address it again, as it applies to this month's theme of "supporting the trusted servant".

The trusted servant, who is the link between the Group and the rest of General Service, is, of course, the GSR. Page S26 of the AA Service Manual says, "The general service representative has the job of linking [their] group with AA as a whole." Your district and/or county, the Area 49 SENY Committee, the General Service Conference, the General Service Board, and the two corporations (AA World Services and Grapevine/La Vina) – in other words, the rest of the triangle below the AA Groups – are all tasked with supporting those groups, and it happens most effectively through that critical trusted servant, the GSR.

On the larger scale, SENY supports that link with the GSRs through the annual Conference cycle: the Delegate's Day of Sharing (March 20th), the Pre-Conference Assembly (April 10th), and the Post-Conference Assembly (June 12th). While all AA members are invited to, and welcome at, these events, they are focused ultimately on the GSR. Additionally, many SENY counties, districts, committees and groups put on workshops and meetings offering support - including Traditions, and Concepts, and Service (oh my). And your delegate is always willing to hear from you – that's one of my favorite parts of this commitment!

But here's the catch: ***you need to be willing to take advantage of this support.*** Therefore, I'll continue to offer you this challenge: go to www.aaseny.org, and visit our calendar, our "From The Delegate" page, and all the available resources. I'll ask you to attend the above area events, and to become that "two-way street" of communication on behalf of your group. Finally, remember: service, like sobriety, is not for those who need it, or those who want it – it's for those who do it.

So let's do it!

In Love and Service (and Support),

Tom B.

WHATS INSIDE

- *Do I Need A Service Sponsor?*
- *Our Trusted Servants Speak Up*
- *SENY Convention Recap*
- *The 2021 Delegate's Questionnaire!*

Next Month's Theme:

"AN INFORMED GROUP CONSCIENCE"

Deadline For Submissions:

APRIL 6TH

LET'S Link UP!

Sharing is caring... Write an article about your experience, strength, and hope in AA service. Please limit your article to 350 words, and email it to link@aaseny.org or mail it: The Link Editor, P.O. Box 571, NY, NY 10116

SERVICE WITH A SMILE EXPERIENCE, ENTHUSIASM, AND HUMOR

From the SENY Service Sponsorship Chair

"Service keeps you sober." Simple. Clear. Concise. It is a mantra that was ingrained in me by my interim sponsor, step sponsor, group service sponsor, and service sponsor. Hey, it takes a village sometimes to keep me sashaying on the service runway to recovery, one day at a time. I have collected mantras my entire service journey to keep me in the light - "The fellows may fail you, but the fellowship never will", "It is not about you, it is never about you", "Learn to listen, listen to learn, and listen as if you have no opinion", "You win some, you lose some, it is only an AA meeting", and my all time favorite concerning what truly makes an effective trusted servant - "Experience, enthusiasm, and humor".

I reach out to my service sponsors for their take on the Traditions and Concepts so I can resolve the issue to the best of my ability. I also continue my "higher education" in AA by moving further down the triangle and attending all the service workshops, conferences, and conventions I can. Do I curb my enthusiasm? Never. I love service. It allows me to tap into my assets, not my liabilities, to carry the message and serve my primary purpose with grace and gratitude. My sponsors taught me to scan a meeting, a room, or an assembly and seek out the people who I wished to emulate in service and to follow their lead. To cheer on the new service angel and make service fun, fun, fun until the gavel brings the meeting to a close.



"Service keeps you sober."

How does one get experience? In my experience, strength, and hope it has been by actively doing and stepping up for service when the opportunity has arisen, or when my group service sponsor so kindly suggested, "Now that you have been the group overall chair, you are to take 6 months off and then you are to become the group's GSR". They don't call them tour guides for nothing! I also learned valuable lessons in service by making mistakes and being open to the guidance, wisdom, and the knowledge of those who came before me, and whose shoulders I stand on, to correct, make amends, and carry on. When baffled and confused by a service conundrum,

Make'em laugh! I take my service commitments seriously, but I constantly remember that "we are not a glum lot", and AA's Rule 62, "don't take yourself too damn seriously". It also has allowed me to be "imperfectly perfect" as I learn, grow, and transform from the kind and loving support I receive. So set up a chair, make the coffee, chair a meeting, sit on a committee or attend an assembly, and sparkle, shimmer, shine. "Many hands make light work for all."

Yours in service and gratitude,
Keith P.

FROM THE MOUTHS OF BABES

We asked some trusted servants if there was something they think might have helped them when they first got into general service or a question they had regarding their position? Here are some of their answers!

“ What information from area/county/district meetings was most relevant to bring back to my group, whether at our weekly meeting or at our monthly business meeting?
My service sponsor helped me discern this one. ”

“ As a first time GSR, I wish I had known about service sponsorship ahead of time - I think it would have made the initial process a lot more approachable. Being a GSR for my home group was my first time in general service - I went in feeling a little overwhelmed and with a lot of questions. I was so glad to have the session before the assembly that gave an overview - and introduced the concept of service sponsorship. In retrospect, it seems obvious that there would be a one-on-one support structure for navigating general service! ”

“ AA does a fairly good job providing information regarding the position, so I really don't have any questions (at the moment) However, it would be cool if they assigned you with a 'mentor' until one is comfortable to reach out to a service sponsor. ”

“ I would have liked a separate day and time for training. It always felt rushed. They offered a brief rundown 30 mins before the meeting, but that is not nearly enough. Left me so displaced that by the time I'm just getting the flow of things it's time to give up the commitment. ”

“ One thing that would have been helpful when starting the position was materials, upfront. They said it would come but they never did. And this was pre pandemic! ”



When the SENY chair at the time, Jerry R., asked me if I would like to be the 2021 SENY convention chair, I told him I would think about it and let him know. I then thought, “What brings me joy?” I got on the phone with my service sponsor, and past convention chairs asking, “From where did your joy come?” I realized after talking to a few people and praying a lot, HP would provide the joy when and where HP chose. So, I accepted and set up my first virtual planning committee meeting.

Then came August and we found out we were not going to be able to have a live event. I went to the SENY committee meeting and asked for resources to help with licensing and funding. I was reminded we were self-supporting. I asked for volunteer help with tech and got no takers. At that point I felt like I was being asked to do a job with my hands tied behind my back. But as HP has shown me repeatedly, when one door closes; another door opens. He provided me with a convention planning team, including a tech team, that was more than anything I could have wished for. As I watched people stepping up, being willing to help each other, working together brought me a wave of joy.

UPCOMING EVENTS

4/3 - SENY Archives Committee: *The Big Book at 82*

4/7 - Manhattan County Concepts Meeting

4/10 - SENY Pre-Conference Assembly

4/15 - SENY Service Sponsor Committee Meeting

4/18 - 4/24 - 71st General Service Conference

For more events go to AASENY.org

There were some obstacles - if we wanted this to be a great event, how were we going to pay for licensing and outside technical help? Would people be willing to pay for a virtual meeting? Again, I talked with people and prayed. We decided there would be a registration fee. Another obstacle was a sub-committee chair that seemed to be having trouble getting a job done. Again, back to my service sponsor, and the suggestion I received was getting that person some help. I asked if they would like some help and I heard the relief. Once more HP provided and I felt the joy.

On more than a few evenings I had conversations with one of my key sub-committee chairs about our acceptance of the things we cannot change and that it was going to be OK. That will forever be a takeaway for both of us. I was asked the Thursday before the event if I was anxious or nervous. My response was “no”, HP was in control. We, as a team had done all we could do, all the pieces were in place.

Then it happened, you, AA members, SENY members, Alanon family members and friends made my weekend joy on steroids! Sunday afternoon, after it was all over, I took a walk on the beach with my dog and HP, and was overwhelmed with gratitude for the gifts we were provided - to bring the message of recovery, fun, happiness, and most of all JOY to so many people! Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Kathie

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The Delegate’s Questionnaire, 71st General Service Conference, 2021

"Final responsibility and ultimate authority for our A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole fellowship". Bill W, Concept I

Friends in service: this is the time of year to let your group’s voice be heard. You will hear presentations on each of the eight agenda items below at the Delegate’s Day of Sharing on Saturday, March 20th, which will provide presentations on the background material for each item. And then, on April 10th, when your GSR attends the Pre-Conference Assembly, I will listen to your report-backs from the groups, and will be able to become as fully informed of the wishes of our Area as possible, so that I can go the General Service Conference prepared.

Please mail this form to Tom B., SENY Delegate, P.O. Box 571, New York, NY 10016 – or scan / email to delegate@aaseny.org. Please go beyond a simple “yes” or “no” with each item, if you can – I need to hear the group’s thinking behind their answer, not just the answer.

I must receive all electronically completed questionnaires by Tuesday, April 13th (or by Thursday April 8th, if sent by regular mail) in order to properly consider them. Thank you for helping me to be a better-informed Delegate! – Tom B.

1 Literature:
Consider revising the pamphlet, “The A.A. Group”, to reflect the importance of the group as a “spiritual entity” as stated in the Long Form of Tradition Five. Background / focus – “The Group as a spiritual entity is not mentioned until page 31 and only in reference to safety.” Long form of Tradition 5: “...Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity...”

2 Literature:
Review draft language regarding safety and A.A. to be included in Living Sober and “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship”. Background / focus – “...review of draft language with accessibility in mind as it relates to reading level”.

The Delegate's Questionnaire, 71st General Service Conference, 2021

3

Cooperation with the Professional Community:

Consider a request to create a pamphlet for mental health professionals. Background / focus – “Create a pamphlet geared towards mental health professionals specifically that would educate them about A.A. with the hope that they may be better qualified to help a person who has the desire to stop drinking”.

4

Corrections:

Discuss innovative ways of carrying the message to alcoholics in correctional facilities / programs. Background / focus – “While it is important to have coordination performed at the district or area level, using the tools that have emerged during this difficult time can help more Groups participate in this vital Twelve Step work”.

5

Grapevine and La Vina:

Review progress report on development of an Instagram account. Background / focus – “...in line with the Twelve Traditions... provide additional information on implementation, anonymity, affiliation, outside contributions, privacy and promotion...”

6

Finance:

Reconsider the 1972 G.S.C. Advisory Action stating “G.S.O. should not accept contributions from clubs, listed or known as such, whether or not composed solely of A.A. members. Contributions are welcome from groups meeting in clubs as long as they are sent in the name of the group”. Background / focus – “... reevaluate the decision that was made in 1972 to determine if the reason for the GSC Action is still the same.”

7

Public Information:

Consider draft plan to develop podcasts. Background / focus – “The Committee suggested that information such as function, target audiences, participation, possible episode topics and an implementation plan be included”.

8

Policy/Admissions:

Consider requests regarding participation of online groups in the General Service structure. Background / focus – “... six proposed agenda items related to the topic of online groups not affiliated with a physical meeting space having a voice and a vote in the General Service structure”.

Group Name: _____

County: _____

Submitted by (first name, last initial): _____

Date: _____

Congratulations to your Group for letting its voice be heard!

UPCOMING GENERAL SERVICE MEETINGS			To add or update email agenda@aaseny.org
SENY Archives Committee Meeting	4/2	6:00p	Zoom ID: 998 938 7641 Passcode: 714921
SENY Archives Committee - The Big Book at 82	4/3	7:30p	Zoom ID: 998 938 7641 Passcode: 714921
SENY Committee Meeting	4/5	7:30p	7:00p Orientation, Virtual Information to follow
District 312 Virtual Meeting	4/7	6:30p	Zoom ID: 312 815 7427 2176 Password: 2580
SENY Grapevine/La Vina Committee Meeting	4/7	7:30p	Zoom ID: 998 938 7641 Passcode: 714921
Manhattan County (MGSM) Concepts Meeting	4/7	8:00p	Zoom ID: 839 2303 1919 Passcode: 149068
SENY Pre-Conference Assembly Virtual	4/10	9:00a	Virtual Information to follow
Brooklyn District 405 Meeting	4/10	3:15p	Zoom ID: 536 413 6776 Passcode: 120712
Staten Island General Services Meeting	4/11	7:00p	Zoom ID: 847 1858 9467 Passcode: 2021
Bronx-Upper Manhattan General Service Meeting	4/14	7:00p	Zoom ID: 405 675 7373
Bronx-Upper Manhattan (BxUM) County Meeting	4/14	7:00p	Zoom ID: 429 704 8123 Passcode: Serenity
SENY Public Information (PI) Committee Meeting	4/15	7:00p	Zoom ID: 998 938 7641 Passcode: 714921
Hispanic District Asamblea	4/18	9:30a	Grupo Solo Por Hoy, 161 North Main St, Freeport, NY
71st General Service Conference	4/18 - 4/24	12:30p	TBD
SENY Literature Committee Meeting	4/18	2:00p	Zoom ID: 998 938 7641 Passcode: 714921
SENY Intergroup Committee Meeting	4/18	4:00p	Zoom ID: 631 669 1124
Nassau County General Service Meeting	4/19	7:30p	Zoom ID: 922 8787 8377 Passcode: 12345, NY

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*Special committees (neither standing, nor adhoc committees)

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