

Hi everyone, my name is (removed) and I am an alcoholic. It is my privilege to be here today and facilitate your district inventory. What I would like to do first is tell you a little bit about how I am going to run the inventory for you. When I facilitate inventories, I don't know a lot of you so it is good I do not know a lot of the personalities in this room. Everyone will be treated equally and have an equal voice. Sometimes inventories can get really passionate and you might feel like you need to cross talk. You might need to feel like you need to say something to someone who just said something that you didn't like. I am not going to allow that. I am not picking on you. I am just not going to allow people to talk at each other. So what we would like to hear in the inventory process is what you think is working and what you think is not working. How you are fulfilling the purpose of your district. How are your activities in keeping with the traditions in the context and how are they not. Where are the trouble areas? Where are you having problems? Your district members have a list of questions and there are copies if you need one. We will go down that list. I am going to plan about 2 hours. There are 13 questions, so I am going to allow not quite 10 minutes per question to get us through. I will be typing as you are sharing and I may ask you to hold on a second while I get a thought down. I may take a couple of weeks for me to turn a report into you. I will provide everything I took down in my notes with no names or anything. I will provide feedback to you on what traditions might be able to help you out. Maybe you should read this article in Language of the Heart or maybe you might need to look at this concept. The AA Group pamphlet might help you out and so on. I will provide feedback, here's where you have a problem area and here's some places you can go to possibly get a solution to what the problem is. Does that sound acceptable to everyone?

Are you guys' familiar with the traditions checklist? Right from the AA Grapevine, very good little list of questions on each tradition to help you kind of pinpoint where a problem area might be or where the solution might be or just any question in here that might not have realized might be associated with that tradition. It is a very good checklist for you so even after this inventory you might want to pick one of these up or download it from the internet and kind of go through it and go hey maybe tradition 6 might be able to help us with that. Is anyone here just because they don't think this district inventory is going to work and they just want to see it go bad? It's an honest program. Maybe there are some people who do not want to have an inventory. Think about that. And as it goes along, participate and let's just see where it goes. I think you will find that we get some good information out of this. So let's go to our first question.

Question 1: What is the purpose of District 6 and are we fulfilling that purpose?

Why do you have one if there is no purpose the why are we here? Anyone have an idea? I would like to think that our purpose is to serve District 6 people first. We represent the people in District 6 first and that should be our primary purpose. To go along with the first tradition AA unity but our primary purpose is to let the people in district 6 know what is going on and let them know they have a voice and they can help with their ideas. It's based on attraction but I don't think we are putting out that attraction message to well.

Our purpose is to help the suffering alcoholic.

NOVEMBER 9 2013 DISTRICT 6, AREA 15, INVENTORY

I am new to district and I am finding I was surprised the level of organization that goes on in/at the district meetings. I'm thinking that part of it is to help the suffering alcoholic (like what was said) but keeping some sort of organization to "hell run wild" disorganization.

Just like the GSRs and everything else, district 6 is supposed to keep with the steps, traditions and world concepts I would say. Yes, General Service is the guardian of the traditions, exactly.

To provide information – I know people involved in district don't have any idea about the committees. The officers; going to the area meetings. To provide information and bring it back to the people as well. Make it more open. I try to let everyone know at my group business meeting that everyone is welcome to come to district meetings to see what it is about. Get more people and information out there.

Our bylaws describe the purpose in the first paragraph. Many of you may not have seen that before. It is helpful.

I always understood the District to be the go between the area for the groups so there is no stoppage of information. Some groups have GSRs but there are groups that do not have GSRs. The DCMs participating in the district meetings and the GSRs are the conduit of information It has to flow both ways.

Question 2: Are we attracting new people and are new members sticking with us?

Do you get new GSRs, DCMs and committee chairs and are they staying? Do you get committee members? Do you get fresh committee members? Do they stick around?

This is my first time. I am back to AA about 16 months and it was suggested by someone who has seen me recover to become the GSR for my group. This is my first actual meeting so I am here really basically to listen and learn. So yes I would say you are attracting new people cause it was taught to me that service is vital and I am doing as much as I can. Yes, you are reaching new people.

Unfortunately, I don't like to be the bearer of bad news but I can tell you I have been a member of District 6 since I moved here so I have be involved in district 6 over 10 years and I have seen at the district level our numbers dwindling. Our district meetings used to be standing room only sometimes and today there is plenty of room in the district. I know as far as AA we get more people in AA but I don't know what we can do to get people involved in district. I know a lot of people go to a district meeting and after the first meeting if they do not have a sponsor around or somebody to help them they won't come back because they hear things and they are completely lost. I know a few people including myself. I've had a few people come to a district meeting and you explain things to them and have them come a few months. A lot of those people have stayed in service. If no one grabs people and explains what is going on at the district meeting. There are a lot of things that happen at a district meeting and sometimes people do not understand. It's just like a business meeting at a group; there are arguments over little things, but there not really little. They seem trivial to some people but when you are talking traditions and other things they are not.

I am new to the district. I migrated down from New York about four months ago. I've been sober eleven and a half years and I wanted to step it up. I have been going to the corrections meetings in District 6. We need to keep this thing going. A lot of the influx in treatment centers but every time I am sitting in a meeting like that...the future of alcoholics anonymous. Someone is going to have to carry it on when we go to that AA meeting in the sky. I'm new and I will go to any length to keep this going. And it's pleasure to be here.

I think we are still attracting people as much as we always did but they are not sticking with us. They fail to listen to what is suggested and they do not get a service sponsor. Like when they come in here and they don't get a home group and a sponsor. And therefore they get confused about what is going on. They district meetings are confusing and all they see is a bunch of bickering. And they do not come back.

I, myself was not looped into getting involved. I was just caught off guard. It ended up being cool but the point was I was caught off guard because I had no clue. I come from a group, I call it "suffering from bleeding deaconism" and our group is now recovered from that. The deacon is gone. At the last district meeting I simply did the same thing that was done to me to two individuals because it has been a process trying to bring the pamphlet in to get the group back on track. I invited two individuals that did not have a job in our group to the district meeting. I told them meet me at the meeting. It's a really cool meeting. It was the district meeting up at the college but I did not tell them and I signed them up as alternate GSRs. I thought I was doing really well because I had two and then I found out I could only have one so I still haven't told the other guy he isn't. But it's cool because they feel like they are involved. I am finding the problem coming from uninformed groups because from the groups. A lot of the older people here have been involved in AA a long time and I've been around to several meetings and groups and now that I'm involved in district I am able to see the people involved in district at those meetings so I've seen district presence at those meetings. We have been discussing at our service manual meetings we have that it's really the DCMs not educating the groups. I'm not really sure how this works with the GSRs not educating the groups. It's an informed group that lacking in a lot of areas. Lacking in functionally as to how it is suggested much less anybody representing that group at a district level. I don't know how we could attract more people outside of making it more unbusiness like; more of a fun thing for somebody to get involved in because I know that, I'm enjoying myself but when I tell people about district they're like UGH, like it's an ugly thing. I know for me, the ice cream social, just the name itself, it's so old, It reminds me of Shirley Temple. It really does. It's an informed group and I, myself and looking forward to becoming a DCS and being taught to go back to the group and present things and I definitely have a tendency to present things wrong.

We get new GSRs come in that are new at district meetings and we ask them to listen to the committee reports and tell them that at the end of the meeting that have to choose a committee to join. I would like to see some kind of guideline for them to exit the committee if they don't want to be on it because when our chairperson says what committee you want to be on they say you don't have to be married to it; you don't have to do it. That's presenting in my mind there's no sense in doing it if I don't have to. If they're going to be on a committee they need to be committed. Just to pick a committee and know that

doesn't matter and you don't have to be on it. That's a negative thing in my opinion. And the bottom line in I am the chairman for the Special Needs committee and I had six people in the beginning and they never showed up after March. So I got new people that are going to be at the meeting on Tuesday. We need to make it a positive thing and not a negative thing. We shouldn't say you're not married to it. If you give an alcoholic and out, he's gonna take it. I don't care what it is.

I've been involved in district for about four months. It was important for me, as an alcoholic, to remember when I take a position in General Service. I am taking a step down. That my group is actually what is important. When I go to district it is with my group in mind that I have to do this. It's interesting that the point was brought up that it is not a lot of fun. I kind of never looked at it as having fun. It is an important job. For me, going to the district meeting, and looking around, and people looking like this is such a burdensome chore that we have gotten ourselves into. It just makes sense to me that people do not want to be involved. I've seen people at district that are so happy about their sobriety and so cheerful and take on their jobs as important as they are to their group and I think if more of us had that attitude perhaps we would attract more people.

One thing that I heard mentioned in a couple different ways is that when we take service positions we are taking a step down. There is an upside down triangle, in case you are not familiar with it that is in our AA service manual. I know that AA members, at times, have this idea that people near the bottom of the triangle are the Crim da la Crim. They think they are so a DCM or a district chair or an area officer that somehow think "I think I am something" When what happens is when we go down that triangle we are actually in service to more people above us. We report back to the people above us. That is just a perception that seems to be out there.

What I was taught, and I am new to the area, but not new to service, and what I actually see happening in our district is sponsoring people into service, helping someone along to keep the district alive and service going. I do see that happening here so I don't think we are failing in that way. I think it's just moving more slowly.

First, I have a question. What do you mean when you get to be a GSR and get involved in district that you take a step down? I don't understand that.

Our service structure for General Service is an upside down type triangle. Are you familiar with that? The groups are at the very top and when I serving at a GSR, I am in service to those groups; my group, as the GSR. Essentially if you think about the traditional corporate structure, the person at the top has all these people report to him. That's the top; the boss. As the GSR, I am not the boss; I'm representative of my groups conscious so I have to report up to them. So I am taking a step down on the triangle. That is what I meant.

I don't look at my time in service as taking a step down. I have been in district for a number of years and the way I look at it is that it is a privilege. It is something I do for my group to give back. I go to district and get all the information for my group. I am the in between person. I don't look, and this is just me,

that I am taking a step down or a step up. I am just looking at it as I doing something for my group for being able to be a member of that group.

Question 3: Are we reaching enough people and do the groups know what the district is and what it does?

I've heard some people touch on that already.

I don't know what's going on really with the groups. You talk about we should attract people to come in here. I know a lot of young people meetings and some young people will stay and some won't. But in our group, the group I belong to, we can't even get anyone to make coffee. If a young person comes in here and they ask to be part of the group. When I came here, I was told I needed to make coffee and I had to be here. You better be there. Sponsors have changed I think. My sponsor said if I didn't make that damn coffee, I'll tell you what it would be judgment day. You had to be there & it was an honor to do for your group. Then you did what you needed to do to help the group out. Now people come in today and sit, listen and leave. Some stayed and some are doing well but we used to clean ashtrays. You can't get someone to do that now... you aint going to get someone to sweep the floor. AA is changing. If changing for I don't know why. AA used to be AA. When I came in I was told to take the cotton out of my mouth and put it in my ears. You listened. You got people now chairing meetings that have 1 month (30 days). AA's changing. It's the groups. We decided in our group a people show have nine months to chair. That's the way it should be. That is the way it was when I came in. The groups are not taking care of the group.

I've been around for a little while & I think it has been touched on it the groups are getting watered down and it's a shame. If we tell a newcomer today to take the cotton out of their ears and put it in their mouths we are liable to get cussed up one side and down the other. We just don't know what the reaction would be. I started out washing ashtrays also. I didn't like it but I understood the need for it. The old-timers, as such, that have been around in service & know what they are talking about, in my opinion, need to speak more directly in meetings to the reality of staying sober and service work. If we don't provide the leadership to the newcomers then they don't have anything to fashion themselves after anyway and I am guilty of that. My service work lately has been very saporatic but I think the old timers, and I hate to say that but back in the day, we listened. If they said sit in that corner we figured they had a good reason to tell us that and if we wanted to stay sober we did it. We didn't get to ask why. I think that the old-timers do bear a lot of responsibility. I get into discussions with a dear friend of mine about the disillusion of AA. The traditions are there to keep the groups alive and we are so far away from what the traditions present these days, I think. I think AA is in real danger. I don't think it will ever go away but I wonder how many people aren't being responsibly sober because they haven't been guided with the leadership that some older timers have or even people that have gone out and come back that have had some sobriety. It's different and I don't like the delusion personally.

I am hearing what you guys are saying but the question is are we reaching the groups and do the groups know what the district is and what it does?

No. I am hearing No so what is the district doing to address that?

Again, groups don't know. I know a lot of groups that don't know because they are not been told. We have had some discussion before about getting the GSR's together, as per say, like a study group. I don't know how to be a GSR. The curriculum hasn't changed but the generational gaps have. A child will learn better from a young teacher than he will from an old teacher. In the same fashion if we don't change our communication methods there is going to be a barrier because it's not the same old AA. I mean the curriculum is the same but it is not the same AA as educating the groups. I am speaking from experience, unless we are told, and I have heard it said, unless we are told so there's not a method of educating like a DCM or GSR class going and taking that message therefore creating an interface to learn with.

I would like to think for me, whenever the subject of service comes up I've been doing my best to get over myself and share the knowledge I know like what district does do and how everything works. I have to say a prayer to make sure I am not preaching because I have that fear that AA is going to be diluted and all that. Sometimes my sponsees never act the way I want them to act. So I try to share my knowledge of how this works if even a little opening happens for me. I freaks me out because sometimes I do it in a room full of old-timers and I feel like they are all looking at me and maybe because it's all about me but I do it anyway because it is that lack of anybody knowing. Even if you had a GSR class, there are a lot of people who are not going to show up so if I am at a meeting that I can share the knowledge that I do know about how district works, what we do, all the things that trickle down I do my best to do it.

Part of my friction when I thinking about this is when I feel pulled in so many directions, in my role as the DCM (and until recently being the only DCM in the county) and spending all my time delivering thank you letters really makes it so I do not have time to be in touch with my groups, attend the business meetings. I have had days where I have been to three meetings a day just saying I am your DCM here are your thank you letters I have to get to the group up the street. So I feel very ineffective quite frankly. I think there is a couple reasons my groups don't know what the district is doing. That is one of them. But I think also, sometimes in conversations that have a certain feel to them my ears turn off. I don't want to be told what to do. I don't want to be beaten with the traditions by the district. To have them come into my group and tell me what to do. I think that is why having a GSR is so important because it is not the DCM coming in saying District says you gotta...who am I , right? I am here to be helpful. By helping a GSR understand, I think it is easier for the group to hear because they are hearing from one of their own. Not that I am not an alcoholic or part of it but they don't know me. Even if I am the best DCM in the world and attended every one of their business meetings (which is never going to happen) they are not going to know me to know that I have their best interests at heart. They're going to be here's this girl who tells us what the traditions say. When my group hears from the GSR and hears the GSR say tradition one says we sure be together on these things if we are going to make big changes, the group is like oh. But if somebody from outside comes in and says tradition one says you should all be...As soon as it is you and not me it closes my mind and I know I am part of that plugged ears. I think

that is one of the things I'd like to do when I am actually there is to be more helpful in explaining how the district is helpful.

Question 4: Are the district 6 officers fulfilling their purpose and are we choosing them with care and how can they be more effective?

At my group we read the announcements pertaining to what is going on in the area when it is a fundraiser or a fun get-to-gether to keep us out of trouble. Like with the gratitude dinner coming up and the being read all the way til it happens. You emphasize to support the district and if a representative is there just stand up and give a word about the district to maybe catch some of the people's attention. I really do believe it does start with sponsorship of another individual. Early on I was told to say yes and that stayed with me. It's an individual choice of what kind of sobriety you want to have. For me, if I stay involved, I have... It's really up to the individual. It's the same ones who make the coffee but everyone else wants to complain but they are not doing anything. What are you doing for your group? Or are you just complaining? That is the time I would use to get somebody involved.

So how do you guys choose your district officers? Your district chair, treasurer, secretary, registrar, your committee chairs?

I don't know about other people but in our district if you are willing to stand for a position; it's your position. We never have elections because there are never two people standing for one position. Since I have been coming around it has never been you have a choice of five people for a DCM position. There is not enough people. And also, time in service. It seems to me that there is a progression (a ladder that you go up). You become this person, then next you become that person, and next you become that person. It doesn't seem to me that all the time you are taking into consideration the person's qualification for the job. It more about time in service and other positions they've held to be elected to be officers. And, even on the area level, it seems to work the same way. You seem to go up a ladder of progression to get different service jobs. Getting back to the thing on the last question; It seems to me that Bill W wrote somewhere "if AA ever gets destroyed, it will be from the inside out". I see that happening in AA all the time. Well-meaning people thinking they are doing the right thing and not telling the newcomer what is expected of them. Letting them talk about drugs in an AA meeting. We are shooting ourselves in the foot all the time because we are trying to be cordial to people coming in and we don't want to chase them out by telling them shut up. I think we are destroying ourselves with well-meaning intentions.

As far as the Dias, it seems to me there is a progression. Each time the panel changes.... As far as the face of AA, it doesn't change as much as we let it. Here's my part in it, to protect the face of AA. You talked about Bill Wilson; Dr. Bob said the same thing about Freudian complexes. AA has only worked one way. I don't think AA has changed. We people, let it. If we want to blame it on anyone else, we need to look in the mirror.

A couple of people talked about progression in service. Why do you think that is? Do you think there are good reasons for that happening? And do you think about that? Do you think that it helps to serve in previous positions and then go to the next position with that experience?

I would say yeah. I think you don't come in off the street and run for president of the United States. You don't learn as you go. Anybody could read the book and say I want to do that job. I think I can do it. Meanwhile you have no idea how it runs. I mean I don't. It's an honest program. I'm being honest. I am here to learn. There is not enough of that. You don't hear too much about district meetings; I don't. I go to two meetings a week, seven days a week. I'm surprised how many people are here. That's the difference. What do you mean small? Yeah, like when they had the roundup. A lot of people were complaining. What are you complaining about? It's for you; support it. There doesn't seem to be any support around here.

As far as the officers standing; I think it is sort of it goes up because other people don't stand. You may have people stand for treasurer or secretary but when it comes to chair or alternate chair there is nobody else standing for the position. Nobody step up to do it.

Why not? Does anybody have an idea on that? Why not?

I think the idea that you kind of move up in rank (for lack of a better word). I think it has been that way for a while, long enough and even the vote counts when there is somebody who stands is so obvious. There is an overwhelming majority for the person; like the alternate chair moves into chair that there is not much room for compromise. As far as whether that is effective or not, I think it encourages fewer people to stand. I don't want to do every position on the Dais. I think there are a couple that might be fun. I've read that service manual and I think there are a couple positions I could do. Why do I think I can do them? I think I can do them because I have been involved in service as GSR. I've done a few things. I see how things operate. I've been in service long enough to know the first year I am really going to suck at it. Maybe by the end of the term or the panel, I might know what I am doing. I think maybe this is how our officers can be more effective. I think part of that effectiveness needs to be a more reasonable expectation of what the outgoing officers in that position ought to be doing. This idea of rotating or trickling around is not helping because the person who just left the position is now learning something brand new and is spending all their time on their learning curve and cannot help the person who is stepping into the position they just left. They don't have time for that because they are so busy learning their job. Or they know everything so they are not as helpful. Does that make sense? Like, I already know the answer so it looks so obvious to me and I don't understand why you don't get it. I see a lot of the personalities that go on both sides. We are not being kind to one another. I think that one of the ways we are being ineffective right now on the Dais is that the people on the panel right now frankly are not being kind to one another. We can see it at the meetings. We can see the tension between them. It is uncomfortable for everybody in the room and no wonder nobody wants to sit there. I don't want to be at the meetings. I am uncomfortable about how unkind people are to one another during this panel...unhelpful, condescending. I feel that creates very little effectiveness.

Attraction? We need to somehow make things more attractive. I notice the tension as well. We all have an opportunity in life to choose our path. We chose that path as to what we are best suited for. And there are pre-requisites to get to certain places. ..things that we have to do. For the most part, anybody to starts to volunteer at a committee level or wants to do something has been educated enough and has gone through those pre-requisites that they should be able to maybe skip one of those levels of service work because they don't feel it is their highest interest; therefore, they are not going to do a good job. They are not going to be able to teach it. Personally, if I don't like something and have to do it because it is part of the process (I have no choice) but if I....That person should not be excluded from a job.

I don't think being a treasurer helps you a bit with being a secretary. Its like taking a whole new job. To go from one job to another is like leaving one job and going to another. Like I said the treasurer and the recording secretary are totaling alien as far as the duties. The recognition, and it is not as bad in district as it is in area, when there is 400 of us sitting out there and we know the panel (what they did and what they didn't do) so that's just standard recognition of that person. And the person we believe can do the job and I know nothing about the other person.

I would like to address a couple things. First off, are the district 6 officers fulfilling their purpose? I believe they are. Are we choosing them with care? I think we are because if you go to tradition two (our leaders are but trusted servants). How do you get to be a trusted servant? You serve. If you haven't served, how can I trust that you have my best interests and needs? The more service you have, the more trust I have in you. How can they be more effective? I was taught that the GSRs are the guardian of the traditions. Most GSRs (when they are newly elected) don't understand the traditions. I would like to see the dais have some kind of a class. I know it is the DCMs job to help them out but they need help learning the traditions. They need help learning the concepts. These are all foreign things to new GSRs. Being in service is how you get to be a trusted servant; by serving.

At this moment, I would not have any desire to run for a position on the dais. I would feel very intimidated by that. Of course you need the experience to continue on to do the next thing. I think more experienced people can be more qualified to move up but also I would hope that people wouldn't feel intimidated to run just because; just for example the alternate chair would get it anyway. Today, I would not feel comfortable. This is just my opinion; I just feel a little intimidated by everything.

Question 5: Are the standing committees fulfilling their purpose and how can they be more effective?

I am the current Archives chair and I feel I have not fulfilled a whole lot of purpose this year. In year two, I feel like right now I have some committee members and we are starting to meet. I feel to be more effective, when have the new GSRs pick a committee. I think it would be wonderful thing to say what the committee does. In the meetings, we just say "listen to the reports" but it really doesn't say what we really do. It's hard when you have to hurry up and pick a committee now because I am supposed to. It would be nice; do we have service fairs so people know what the committees do? Or to have time (I know our district meetings are crunched for time) but to have a time to let people know. I know some

people don't know what these standing committees are. I understand that because I didn't either and I still don't know a couple of them really well but I can go to that committee member and talk to them about it. I think we can be more effective by giving more information.

I am stuck with this because I am a standing committee chair and there is a lack of participation. The committee chair is not a committee; he's just the chair. I have not done some of the things I've wanted to get accomplished as a committee. We need to have some sort of commitment to a committee. If you commit to be a GSR and you are asked to be on a committee, you need to know what they do. And you need to be willing. And it is a lot to ask of anybody but for me, I keep plugging along. I have a meeting called for half hour before the district meeting hoping people will show up. But if they don't show up, what do I do? I still go to the quarterly. I get the information. I do my report. That is the most I can do. I cannot effectively be a committee; just being one person. So how do we get this participation? How do you maintain the participation once they join the committee?

Does your district fund the district committee chair to attend the quarterly? Yes. And the GSRs know that? Yes.

Service Fairs were brought up. Early in my sobriety, there was a service fair here (right in this room) and the committees were here. They had about 30 pizzas. And there were three or four of us that showed up. I thought wow, this would be cool! I had 20 pizzas to myself. That's how many people showed up to a service fair. So, with that being said, I am still in the learning process. I can tell you it is about educating and making it more attractive. Nobody is going to show up unless it is attractive.

This is the first meeting I have ever been to at this level. I think it is really good because I can pass the information I got here to my home group. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion. I think that we need to promote this inside AA because I really didn't have a clue until it was suggested I get involved at a different level. I have been involved in service before but at the clue level. I have never heard anything about this stuff. I think it is very important.

I think, at times, some of the committees fulfill their purpose but I think a lot of times some of them don't. I think it has been said already, a lot of it has to do with participation. We have two of our biggest committees without chairs. Our corrections committee and our treatment committee both do not have chairs. They have chairs so to speak running at the committee level but not the district level because they do not have the requirements. As far as the GSRs, you step up to the plate, you figure you have to spend 2-3 hours once a month at a meeting. And then you go to this meeting and you are told you have to be on a committee. I didn't have a problem when I came here getting involved but I was involved with service up north but I don't remember them telling me I had to be involved in a committee. I know me, as an alcoholic, if you tell me I have to do something, I guarantee I'm not doing it. That is just the way it is. Don't tell me I have to do something. Even if I want to do it and you are telling me I have to, I am not going to do it. When people give their reports, they should, in their reports have something about their committee. I know when I was treatment chair; I always had stuff in there, at the very beginning, about what our purpose was and what we did. So that is something maybe

people could add to their reports. Just a couple sentences saying what the committee does. You only have 3 minutes to give a report so it is not like you can tell a long detailed description of your committee. Participation is horrible.

We do have a General Service Representative Service tool that is given to all the GSRs that does have a description of the committees. And our website now has this on the website.

Up until about 3 or 4 years ago, every committee report gave a little synopsis of what that committee was about. That has gone by the wayside because of time. People start complaining about time. You know what happens in April. By the end of the day we are ready to chew each other's heads off but there is still only a few there and that is what happens at the district meeting at nine o'clock, it just started dwindling. I don't like it as much as anybody else, but I did commit to do it.

I have heard some things that are the root of some core issues (if you will) but I'm still not hearing enough of what you are really thinking. I hearing some of the things you are thinking but I know from doing inventories in the past, there are still some things that need to be brought out. I'm sure of it. Also, if you are comfortable, I would like to hear from some people that have not shared. Don't be afraid, everybody gets a chance to talk and share what is on your mind.

Question 6: Do you feel like your district utilizes an informed group conscious in decision making and is the minority opinion heard?

When I came into AA, there was one absolute, was that I had to change some things. The only way I could change things was to hear other people. So when I am at district, when I hear other people talking about ideas, it is very important that I hear a lot of other opinions. The more I hear, the better I can make my own decisions. I definitely want to hear from the people who disagree with the way I am thinking at that moment. I already know how I feel. If I am for it I need to hear who is against it. That is going to help me. I don't feel we have enough time for that. One reason is the clock. Even though I want to hear it I don't want to spend the time. I don't know if that makes sense but the clock is ticking. How can it be more effective? It's something I want the district to really look into how to streamline our business meetings so we don't stop the person from expressing how they feel about something. I would never like to see that area cut. To me, that is a very important area, getting other people's opinions on matters. It seems like we need to cut that off too often for me.

A more informed opinion is all too often leads to arguments. It needs to be shown or demonstrated it is not our decision, its important to do so we can be more informed. That is one of the problems we have in district. I'm not going up there because all they do is argue. They don't understand the informed position. That is something maybe we need to figure out.

The last part, no one has really talked about that. Is the minority opinion heard? I feel, in our district, it is because we have had votes changed because of minority opinion. So it is definitely being heard. Does everyone get a chance to talk? You should have a chance to talk but you don't have to say something someone else has said. There are a lot of times people say the same thing over and over. When we are

limited on time, nobody wants to stay til eleven o'clock at night to hear the next person say the same thing that another person said. I don't know what the solution is to get everyone heard but I do think the minority opinion is taken into consideration. There are times a vote goes through and we do have a re-vote and the minority opinion makes a difference. It does work. I've seen it work at the area too.

Does everyone feel they have an opportunity to express their opinion at the district meetings?

In the eight district meetings I have attended, I've found it interesting how my vote has changed. I have experienced that. And that was due to an uninformed background on it. When a motion appeared to be one way but it really wasn't. It was just poorly expressed. The question came up on the arguments with that...and again, being unfamiliar with all the processes that take place. I still have not gotten a piece of paper that explains to me what happens at the time of minority opinion. I learned at the area meeting that the time for a minority opinion is not the time for someone who is for the motion to complain. It is time for the minority opinion to be heard. And not for the whining and that is the facilitator's responsibility to shut somebody off. Am I correct? Yes, the facilitator or the chairman is. One of the primary purposes of the chairman for the facilitator is to facilitate in such a way that all the business gets done in as timely a manner as possible and that everyone gets heard. And to conduct it with, and if you loosely use Roberts rules, even in the area we don't exactly follow Roberts rules, but we use it as our guide. So if that is what your district does or your group even, then whoever is leading that meeting can use that to facilitate the minority opinion.

Question 7: What topics would you like to see the district discuss?

I have only heard one person reference service sponsors and I like that. At the end of a lot of meetings I go to we ask "who is willing to be a sponsor" so maybe we could promote (just a suggestion) I feel like people think I am trying to shove things down their throat and I am not but offer a suggestion is there anyone here willing to be a service sponsor? That is very attractive to me. That term is very attractive to me. It allows me to not take on a lot of responsibility but to get educated first. I really like that. I'd like to hear more about that.

I'd like to hear at our district meetings more about Robert's rules of order that we use. We have a lot of new GSRs, we have DCMs, and committee chairs that haven't seen those. They have no way of understanding how the meeting is supposed to be run. If we could inform them it would be better at our district even at the area level to have more information on Robert's rules that we do allow to be used at area and district.

I would like to hear a lot of topics discussed. At our district meeting there is no forum in there for discussion of ideas except early in the meeting but our meeting doesn't officially start until 7:30 so DCMs and committee chairs don't show up until 7:30. If I have something I want to talk about all I am talking to is usually the new GSRs who come to hear the orientation. A lot of times I have an idea but to discuss it, I have to bring it in a motion instead of just bringing it out in front of the group to get ideas and feedback to see how people feel. Instead, you have to bring it in a motion. And when you bring it forth in a motion, then all of a sudden, everyone picks a side. They are either for it or against it then you

go at it tooth and nail. There is no place in our meeting (and I have been saying it for a long time) for an actual discussion of ideas. I understand our meeting is very time constrained and I myself usually leave by nine because I have to get up at 4:30 in the morning so I can't be there til 10:00 at night. That is something I have always wanted to see. A place where we could bring an idea and have people discuss it without bringing it forth in a motion. It seems to me every time you bring a motion; you have a big deal instead of just a normal discussion.

Kind of like what's on your mind at the area quarterlies? Something similar... Correct me if I am wrong but a "what's on your mind" session is like I've been thinking about this thing that we do in our district and maybe we can make it better. What do you guys think about it? Maybe we could do it this way? Maybe that way we could get more participation? Something like that? Is that what you are saying? Yeah. I know at some districts they have workshops where they will pick a topic that people have been talking about, that people have had questions about and make that a workshop topic for a half hour. I am not sure what your forum is.

We do this at the 7pm; however, the majority of the people are not there. So if you talk about something at that meeting in particular, you need to talk about it again at the very end. But again, once you get to the end, more than half the people are gone so you are not getting the consensus of the meeting. It's like that with half the motions. Half the body has left when you are doing the motions. I don't know how to do anything about that. You see it happen at the area. It happens everywhere. You say you are going to put in this time (and I understand some people have to work and they have to leave). When we have a quarterly here, years ago, they were going over the motions for GSO, there were very few people who stayed. It was shocking. I see that at the district level. By the time you can actually talk about it nobody is around to talk about it to. I don't know what the answer is.

Question 8: Is the website effective and is it fulfilling its purpose?

I found the district website before I even moved here. I got information about the district. I found it helpful.

How many people have used the district 6 website? Less than half the people it looks like. Do you guys know what the website address is? Can somebody say what the website address is?

District6AA.org

So those who have used it, what do you think? What is the purpose you would expect out of your website and is it doing that? Anybody? Is it just a meeting finder? No. What else is the purpose of the district website? Anybody?

The website, now, has a calendar listing our events going on in the whole district (all four counties) plus what is going on for the quarterly. It has a link to General Service Office, a link to Area 15. It's good but there is always room for improvement. We have only had it three years or four years, maybe. We do

have things on there that are official (or whatever, if you want to use the word) and it is quite simple to maneuver. It is not a complicated website.

Question 9: Do our GSRs fully understand the importance of the group inventory?

I would have to say no. It was announced today at my home group, and I am new at this, that we were having a district 6 inventory. And they actually had to say "Does anyone know what a district inventory is?" It goes back to the group doesn't have a GSR. I guess what it boils down to is the fact that there needs to be time to just sit back and listen and try to put these principals in all your affairs. You may get to a position that you can actually be helpful. So now that I am aware that my home group does not have a GSR, we are talking about a bunch of old-timers (a lot of years of sobriety). They have never heard of a group inventory. I guess it is something that I am going to have to find a way to not tell them but to inform them of what it is and the beauty of it. As soon as I heard that, it brought me back to the time after a year and a half in AA I had to open the pamphlet "the AA group", which I had never even opened. In there, it recommends a group inventory on a yearly basis. In my group of forty guys, I will have to take it upon myself to take this opportunity. I am going to have to come up with some creative ways to have that open (maybe highlighted) or something like that to get the group to respond.

Just by way of an open offer to any of you, I did a presentation, during my term as delegate at our South East Regional Forum on how to do an effective group inventory. I researched a lot of material and if you want that presentation, I would be glad to email it to you and if you are able to use anything out of it, you are welcome to use it. So if you are interested, give me your email (at the end) and I will email it to you.

Anything else on the group inventory? Does everyone in here understand the importance of a group inventory?

Do you think the district should maybe make it a panel? Put it in the bylaws that every panel do a district inventory? If the group pamphlet recommends every year, what would make the district any different?

Question 11: Do we encourage service sponsorship and participation in our standing committees? What I heard you guys say is that you encourage participation but that it is not working.

As far as the service sponsorship, I have been going to district for 6 years and every month for 6 years it is said "get a service sponsor" so it is said, whether it is heard or not I don't know but it is said. It is not like it is a big surprise or something like "I'm supposed to have a service sponsor?" It is clear every month. And as far a participation in the standing committees, we are lacking there.

It's right here in print and I know that it is said a lot but I didn't know. I am humbled. Good place to be.

Anybody else? Do you encourage participation in your standing committees? What I heard you guys say is that you ask new GSR's to choose a committee to serve on. They are forced to choose...they are required to choose a committee. They are not allowed to leave without choosing a committee. At the

end of the meeting, after reports are given, the chairperson asks the new GSRs to choose at that time. And what do the committee chairs do? Do they go and talk to that person at that time or what happens then? They do. OK. Still not working though, right? Any other ideas on that?

I see a catch twenty-two in that because most of the newer GSRs that come in are newer in AA; a year or so, sometimes in less in sobriety. The problem with that is, when you get people who are new like that, the leftover from their previous life is irresponsibility. They are not really willing or able to accept the responsibility of doing what is required. I see that is a catch twenty-two, we get the newer people who are finally standing up to do some type of service but yet they are not really capable of being responsible yet.

To add to that, when I first became part of district 6 and chose a committee, for the first two years I was on the committee, the committee never met. So that has been a problem as well. Not always the unwillingness of the committee members.

I don't know if the term "required" to join a committee is appropriate. That's like saying "you are going to do this". You can't tell an alcoholic to do anything if he doesn't want to do it. It should be a voluntary suggestion. It is highly suggested you get involved in service because that is the first step in becoming a trusted servant. If you are a brand new GSR you need to build a little trust so the district can understand where you are coming from; understand your values and make better choices as to where you are going to be. If you are going to tell me I got to do something, I'm not going to like it. If you allow me the choice to do it and say it is highly suggested. It's just terminology to me, I guess, but personally you can't tell me anything.

There's a thing we used to say in my old home group, you can tell an alcoholic but you can't tell them much. Sponsorship, for me, has always been about... My service sponsor is my sponsor. I always did what she did and that included service. That there's so many ways that are differences between the service sponsor and a step sponsor is kind of foreign to me. Really we have a responsibility individually to talk about service; at least to my way of thinking. But it is a matter on showing not preaching. If there is an opportunity to fill up the car and bring someone. I'll do it. There is a big difference between going to somebody and saying "do you want to do this with me?" rather than just making an announcement at a meeting. If I am invited, and I know a lot of these people need engraved invitations.

I am a GSR and really by the time I volunteered to do that. I was making a commitment at that point. I was seeking to be told what to do at that point. Oddly enough, I had to sign up for a committee. Which I was not aware I had to. But I signed up for that committee, and the person in charge of that committee, said he didn't know I was on that committee. Fortunately, I know that person. And then that person several months later asked me if I had a service sponsor. And I said "oh, I thought you were it". So I would have to say no to this question because I don't think I am not listening and not hearing. I am volunteering and I am trying to absorb as much information as I can and I attend the service manual studies. I am putting myself out there to absorb the information. There is no method out there

explaining or bringing it to every new GSR; at least it wasn't to me. I am just speaking from my personal experience.

It wasn't brought to me either. It was just you're going to be a GSR. Good. Go. I am learning by flying.

You guys are all certainly familiar with the AA service manual, right? We do have a workshop, every Tuesday night. I find the service manual fascinating, myself. I served on the conference committee for report and charter which takes care of the service manual. We change stuff in there every year.

I just want to say you don't have to be in district service to be on a committee. You can be any person in any district to help me on my committee. I don't believe it should be, and maybe it isn't, restricted to people at the district level. A lot of people in other groups that don't have GSRs don't think they can be involved because they are not a district level. That might need some explaining.

My experience is that most of the people on the treatment and corrections committees are not involved in service in any other way than being on those committees.

Question 12: Do we encourage GSRs to share their experience after attending the area assembly?

No. You mean at the district meeting? No.

I will share one little tidbit with you. I attended a district meeting in another district a few weeks ago and they had the GSRs in the room who attended share their experience and especially the GSRs who attended for the first time. I mean, it was like WOW. It was almost a spiritual experience just listening to those people. It was fantastic! So, No is all I got on that one. Is that your final answer?

Question 13: Are we keeping principles above personalities in all district 6 business? No. Ok we can share about that. How does that affect your business and the participation?

I know I have fallen short on that. I causes uncomfortably. Sometimes I have allowed my emotions to over-ride my desire for peace and tranquility...for anybody in here that I have offended; my sincere apologies.

I know that I have been at a meeting before with a brand new GSR (who I knew) and it is just not very pleasant. I told her it is not always like this. We are all alcoholics and we are not perfect. I just encourage them to keep coming back. It makes it uncomfortable.

I know I have participated in passionate conversations at group conscious meetings before. I do know that in the middle of that to be reminded about principles before personalities. Number one it kind of tops off some of the angst but it does remind me what my goal is. I have found it to be very effective in the middle of passion that my goal is to practice principles before personalities.

In my observances in everyone practiced tradition two, it would be better for the district as a whole because we are trusted servants. We are not governing, we are servants and sometimes the personalities run rein over the principles. We need to remember the second tradition and practice it.

I think a lot of times at district meetings we are passionate. I know a lot of times I go in with that passion. There does end of being conflict. I think that at every district meeting just a simple reminder at the beginning of the meeting would knock off a lot.

I know that is said at the end of the secretary's report every meeting. When I hear that conflict, it reminds me that by the grace of God there's goes me. I try to stop and ask myself is there anything I can say here? Is there anything that could be helpful for me to end this? There sometimes I hear the same thing over and over. I have seen our chairperson speak up and say this has already been said. It is that whole passionate thing; I have seen people interrupt others. When I have somebody new near me, I say it is not always like this. We are all alcoholics and our defects have to flare but we can learn how to get over ourselves, hopefully. And hopefully, we call our service sponsors and talk to our service sponsors about it. Do we all do that? I am going to go with probably not. But hopefully we do.

I am guilty of that myself. I am an opinionated person and sometimes I get upset when people don't agree with me. I am a firm believer in the group conscious. And I go home and grumble to my dog, who is my service sponsor. And eventually I do get over it because I have become a believer in the group conscious. It is not saying I don't let my personality and opinions get in the way. I do. But I do get over it and I think we are all like that. We want things to go our way. I am not much but I am all I think about.

I am guilty as others are but...if we are not going to put it into practice. It's just that we all get involved in the emotion. The principles go out the window. We need to stop, take a deep breathe. Sometimes that is hard to do but I know it can be done. You just explode when you shouldn't explode and I am guilty of that.

Question 13: How can we increase our effectiveness in serving groups and still suffering alcoholics in district 6?

Somewhere along the line when I was in early sobriety, my sponsor instilled in me even if it wasn't true I could imagine the person I am dealing with has good intentions...no matter how those good intentions are affecting me. When I think about what is going on in the district, serving our district and our groups, I think about that in the same vein; in our unity. When we are doing personalities over principles... instead of the other way around...when I get over the top because I am feeling passionate about something, I know it is because I have these good intentions. My goal is to be helpful. It is not always a need to just be right. I did not get involved in services because I needed to be right. I got involved because I want to be helpful. And if I believe that about everybody else in the district meeting, that the purpose of the district meeting and the reason that every one of us got involved in service was to serve. To be helpful, it is a lot easier to see the unity in what we are doing. ..even when it does get overly personal to remember even if it sounds mean. The intention is to just be useful. It is hard to do that in the middle of it. It takes stepping back, making those phones calls, taking my own personal inventory to have any of this work. The answer here is the same as everything else in my life. The

district cannot be as effective if I am not taking my own inventory. I have to be doing my own work to be effective.

This is one area that I am going to not to get passionate about. It has been my experience that the voting members of the district dedicate the time to how the district is going to run their business they are taking away methods in which we can reach the suffering alcoholic. Our district, I don't believe is designed, to just enact motions and laws on how we conduct our motions and laws and that's what I believe most of our time is on. It tells us right in the traditions that we are not to be organized. We cannot get too anal in our meetings. It takes away from our purpose. Which brings me to the other part; I don't know where I could have injected this in the past. We got bylaws here and I don't see it. I was wondering what our district statement for the district? Is there a mission statement for district? If not, we should have one. And in there somewhere say the majority of time and efforts should be to organize ourselves to help the suffering alcoholic. It says that for our own personal purposes in the steps and the groups and the district. So why should it not apply to us as a district?

Do your bylaws for district 6 say what the purpose of district 6 is? I don't consider that a mission statement. I consider that a legal document for the 501C process. Do you guys have a book of current practices or a book of guidelines for your district? I have it right here. So, yes, you do have. Is everyone aware of the existence of your guidelines? Or what do you call them guidelines or current practices? Is everyone aware of the book of current practices in your district? Who knows where is see the book of current practices in your district? It is on the website. Three people...four people. I passed them out a few meetings ago. Very good! That might be useful to...to share.

There is not this question on your list but it seems absent to me. I want to ask you if you have any ideas on the effectiveness in your district on practicing the seventh tradition of self-support. How is your district at doing that? Are you guys being effective?

I will comment. Most people probably don't like my opinion on it anyway. I sometimes get annoyed. If we send too much money off to General Service and the area. The groups donate money to benefit the alcoholics in this general area. We send a lot of money off. The same thing happens at the area. Money is put into the area and then sent up to GSO. I understand the trickle up effect. When it comes to money we argue about little amounts like a budget or something like that. We argue over a hundred dollars when we are sending thousands of dollars away. To me, that just doesn't make sense. I don't understand why we don't take care of the alcoholics' right here in our four counties. Like I said, that is just me.

I am the group treasurer in my home group. We have sixty or seventy group members and I have to brawl beat to get six or seven to attend the business meeting. And then I have to force them to sit there and listen to a treasurer's report. They don't care. They just don't care where the money is going. If the meeting is there and they have a cup of coffee, that is all they care about. And you just can't spark the interest. And you just can't get people interested. Like I said we have sixty-seventy group members and we can't get 10 people at a business meeting. We talked about sponsorship a little and in my personal

opinion that is the biggest obstacle we face in service is sponsorship...because most of the people that do the sponsoring have never done any service. I can't tell you how many people I have approached to try to get to be GSRs and such. They tell me my sponsor told me not to get involved in service. You don't need that. It is not important. And to me, that is the biggest problem we face in service is sponsorship. People come in, they get sober but they haven't lost their ego. They go out there sponsoring ten or twenty people and they've never done any service work. They've never even make a pot of coffee. They tell the people they sponsor that it is unimportant. Their only job is to... which I believe is important but you can't give what you don't have. That is what I see is the biggest problem we have as far as service.

It's after learning, it's my white light....I see it in my group and in other groups the education level of a sponsor. I cannot get a lot of people in my group to get involved with even just coming to an AA event like the Gratitude Meeting or the Spaghetti Dinner because they have a couple of years in with a sponsor that is uninformed and the group being run the way it was. But the group is not run as a functional group. It was suffering bleeding deaconitis. We have a good sponsorship base. But these people feel that this is just it. It's like pulling teeth just to get people to make coffee. Somehow we are lacking the formal education I guess in retrospect...educating on how to sponsor. It's not like you could offer a class...nobody's going to show up. But there should be a class on service sponsorship. And GSR, like you mentioned, I think that's a think tank where we get a chance to get together because we are all new. Every day as a GSR is a new day. I get a lot out of every district meeting. That is exciting to me. We talked about the lack of participation on committees and the levels of qualifications and having to go through the ranks and things. I believe that there are some people that are more than qualified to pick up a committee, like the treatment committee, but they don't have enough time and therefore, they can't. And that is vacant right now. And that we should be focusing more on not how much time and what have you done but what are your sincere qualifications. And then if there was any reservation about that person taking the job. If anyone is knowledgeable about district and how that committee operates to sort of oversee that. That way the committee can get on its feet. We have to figure a different way of communicating with the disruptive population, meaning and not disruptive in a way that...if a business doesn't keep up with technology it's going to fail. We have more rehabs popping up everywhere and these people are not being told about AA prior to their field trip here. They do not deposit money in the basket...they're just coming here. They don't know the core and what is up and coming in AA. And they are not being told how AA operates and some of the rules and regulations prior to getting to a meeting. They just show up. I think that somewhere along the line and I don't know how it could be done but we need to start the intervention prior to those rehabs getting there.

I have been in AA for a lot of years. I am in love with Alcoholics Anonymous! I have just been a GSR for seven or eight months. The first meeting that I attended in district I think was five hours. There were so many proposals on the floor. I volunteered for a committee and I got myself a service sponsor the very first time. And I asked my service sponsor "I am so confused". That is the very first thing that I felt at a district meeting. I don't have all the answers. When you brush your ego aside and you start listening and you remember that we start our meeting several times with the serenity prayer. If we were to bring

the spiritually and remember that we are starting our meeting with the serenity prayer and asking our Higher Power to guide us perhaps that would help us. I am totally in agreement we should...I all boiled down to sponsorship. You can't make an alcoholic do what he doesn't want to do.

The women I went through the steps with vehemently opposed to service at the General Service level. We had two meetings and we flipped out about this big, big controversy over funding a GSR to go to a quarterly. She was over twenty years sober and it didn't stop me from getting involved in service. I just want to say that because we all think that whatever your sponsor says you're going to do but apparently that doesn't work out so well for me. The other thing is when it comes to money, and not just at the district level, but at the group level; if it's a big, heavy controversy. You are going to weigh it out. It's going to be really difficult. Your group has a certain set of difficulties, my group has another. Almost every single group member attends every single business meeting at my group. We made a decision several years ago when I was a GSR the first time (my unfulfilled term) that it was important to fund the GSR for the quarterlies. That was a priority of ours. But in order to do that, and pay rent, and have cake and coffee; we had to kind of formula a budget. This is how much we are spending. Kind of like what we do at the district, the area, and even our homes. We decided if this is how much we are going to spend and that is not including the prudent reserve and that's not including funding intergroup or the district. How much do we need to bring in and how many of us are there? Despite the fact that there are no dues or fees, we decided as a group, we were not going to depend on people that came to our meeting as visitors. As members we are responsible to pay our own way. If you happen to show up and you happen to put a buck in the basket that's great. And maybe that gets sent off to the district and intergroup. But we said this is what we are going to spend and basically it takes members showing up each time and putting \$5.00 in the basket because we are a small group. And like I said if you came and you put a buck in that's wonderful! But if I don't show up I still owe \$5.00 because that is the obligation I chose with my group and this is what we decided was important. And it was a very big controversy. We lost a couple of members. That we were not observing the traditions or what they thought of it. They didn't want to be obligated. But it turns out those people that left were the people who always forgot their wallets. So what we kept were the people that were very involved and were willing to make the financial commitment. As it is the same with the district. The groups that want to be involved will find a way to be involved...either through sending GSRs, which is what our group does more often than sending money, my group sends people. And most often they are people that are sponsored into service. The question at the district and the area, "how do we get people involved?" Bring people! That's how we get people, we bring them. We drag them by their ears if we have to. The women I sponsor are required to attend at least three district meetings over the course of their first year of sobriety to see what it is about. You can't go once because you are never going to understand it. It's uncomfortable. This stuff is uncomfortable. Raise your hand if you really wanted to come today? I love this! So people are going to make coffee but I love general service! I love controversy! I will stay til midnight. You go on, I'll be there! But I don't always want to get involved in the hard stuff. I don't want to be the one to make waves. I don't want to be uncomfortable. But that is the only way to make progress.

We are right at two hours so I will take a few more comments (burning desires) or we will be here until midnight, which is fine with me, I love this stuff too!

In case any of you GSRs don't know, if you look at the service manual, it tells you in self-support that you are supposed to send your GSR to AA events before you distribute to anybody. That is in the service manual so you can take that back to your groups and beat them over the head with it.

I just wanted to get back to the last question, I think one of the problems in this area, and I don't know if it is all of Florida or what. I know people up North with sobriety and a long time in service and then when I came down here; it appears that a lot of people with a lot of sobriety if you talk to them they will tell you they have already done their work for AA. They're retired or they are this or that.

Unfortunately, sponsorship ...people don't talk about service. People tell you service is making coffee, greeting people at the door, and maybe, maybe going to a treatment center or the jails. But even that, you don't hear that too much. It is usually just for their group. It like they just want to be one. They don't want to be a part of. You see that happening with a lot of things. You have the young peoples and then you have the mens meeting and then you have the womens meeting. You have meetings popping up with bleeding deacons. I don't want to use that term but people with long term sobriety. You have all these people trying to have a meeting just for one class of people. I think that is kind of getting us away from what AA was really headed for in the beginning. That is the way I look at things. I take people through the traditions. I talk to them about service. Out of all the people I sponsor, I have three people involved in service (one at the district and two at the intergroup level).

When I talk service with someone, they are either I've done it. I hate it. I don't know anything about it. Ok I will give it a try. I have been told in AA meetings I would be the only Big Book an alcoholic sees. You might be the only district representative somebody sees. So when I come across a person that has had experience in service and didn't like it. I tell them have you been lately? I know it is just as bad as it was back then, but they don't know that. I say come with me because we are having a blast up there! And ask God to forgive me later. Then I leave them alone. And those who have never done it, I try to invite them. The ones that are interested, they are the easiest ones. I have found and I want to relate this to a restaurant. If I go to a restaurant and have a bad meal; I don't go home and say next week I'm going to go there again to see if it was really a bad meal or maybe it's just me. I'm not going back. I'm not going to say, I'm going back and having another bad meal to make sure the first bad meal was bad enough. So why would somebody come to a district meeting out of an invite; have a bad experience and raise their hand next time and say when are we going back? So just like we might be the only Big Book somebody sees. As district representatives (for lack of my vocabulary) we might be the only district somebody gets to see also.

Thank you so much everyone for allowing me the privilege of facilitating this for you. I will compile this in the next couple of weeks. I have some ideas about some times that I'd like to point you guys to; to take a look at for possible solutions. You all also came up with some ideas for good solutions for some of the things you are facing. I applaud you for doing your district inventory. I encourage you that when

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the solutions and suggestions come around that you get involved and try to implement them and make changes.

I would like to thank the area 15 past delegate for coming over here and helping us out.

Thank you everybody that showed up. I am a little disappointed in the crowd that turned out but the people that were here were supposed to be here.

Closed with the responsibility statement.