

Fall Assembly October- 2016

Inventory

Six break out groups with a facilitator and a recorder to address questions regarding the Area, Committees and Districts.

Group 1- John F facilitator and Marc C recorder

Area

Good:

- Officers and members bring enthusiasm and love to AA. Process is respected. Meetings are well run and a lot of information is presented. Important reports are given every month.

Do better:

- Committees and districts reports can be too repetitive and contain unneeded area information which contributes to lengthy meeting. Need to be focused.

Committee

Good:

- Meetings are formatted with agendas and organized. Receives will by committees. Area officers are involved and show up monthly and report events. Calendar-good reference guide to service events. Website contains all information on service events. Delegate, Alt Delegate and Chair reports on events helpful. Officer's and rotation is important for Area information, always a presence. Co-chairs appointed. Discussed transition and preparation for co-chair to chair. Use of kits or workbooks as a good reference source.

Do better:

- Purpose and content of events not discussed openly enough. Information going back to home groups needs to be filtered and how to inspire home groups. Service sponsorship not spoken of enough, very important for service work. Homegroups should have a library of kits for new representatives going to committees. Kits are important for participating in these committees. Need for outline to define vote, this is where a service sponsor used for guidance.

Districts

Good:

- Experiences of various Districts are different. Good source of input from DCM's

Do better:

- Solutions to problems not always addressed at District meetings. Delegate sometimes is the only information source. Local issues at times more pressing. 7th tradition, discussion on how to approach the 7th tradition not consistently discussed. It can be a heavy and oppressive topic.

Group 2 Sally facilitator and Rich recorder

Districts

Are they interesting and informative? Participants stated that some are very informative and interactive and others a little on the "dry" side. Most districts have a core group of GSR's that show up regularly and

are enthusiastic, but all agree that participation is relatively low considering the number of groups out there.

How to encourage participation from groups and GSR's?

- DCM or LCM visit groups and encourage them to send a GSR to the District meeting. GSR's could also help with this.
- Show enthusiasm about what we're doing
- Ask for experience from other DCM's to see what is working for them in their formats.
- GSR Sheppard for Districts to send reminders
- Make new GSR's feel welcome and comfortable.
- GSR presentation video/20minutes

Communication seems to be a problem in some Districts and throughout our Area.

- Are group problems or concerns being addressed?
Some problems don't seem to make it full circle and group problems go unanswered. Where is communication lost?
Some topics are not being brought up at the Area meeting so concern has no chance of going much further than the GSR's @ the District meeting.

Committee Meetings

- Go over the traditions and concepts of the month
Most committees have
Explain the function of the committee to newcomers
Encourage attendance.
- Communicate details of the position you are leaving to whoever is taking over the position is sometimes not possible.
- Is Tradition 7 being discussed?
One district talked about it and had a very good response.
- How to get more people involved?
Communication and participation.

Group 3- Tania E facilitator and Mary M recorder

Area Meetings

- Area officers are elected, 3rd legacy procedure.
- Is orientation provided for new Area Officers, not exactly...Area Handbook and some prior experience usually qualifies.
- Do we provide orientation to members new to service?
Available by invitation to District. GSR slide show by Alternate Delegate. Promotion of service sponsorship.
Concern: slide show by "invitation" may not be the best method. Area should take the lead and promote the slide show.
Suggestions: GSR/DCM Orientation Day-Workshop (1/2 day in January)
Carve time out of the 1st assembly (2 hrs-slide show with questions)
Elections should take place (GSR's) at the same time as Area Panel Elections.

Encourage Service sponsorship, utilize pamphlets, service manual

Districts utilize Area Handbook, beginners' packets and have Service manual available at first meeting (GSR)

Co-Chairs share the responsibilities of the chair, doing the work together prepares them better to chair. 1st year they are getting oriented, 2nd year they are orientating new chair.

- What are we doing to encourage members to serve our Assembly?

Sponsorship (encouraging)

Increase more District workshops (4-5 this year)

Area Commitments to groups

- What are we doing as an Assembly to improve our existing communication with each other and with groups that may not know about us and about what we do?
- Issue-Current Assembly location is limiting to some Districts. Possible solution, need to move central location or maybe the Districts should host the Assembly (Area to fund them). This would generate enthusiasm, rotating the assembly at different Districts.
- Communication Outreach-
Flyers need to have content that will capture enthusiasm, not just the information.
Topics: What topics would we like to see the Area discuss over 6-12 months
Singleness of purpose. How are we as an Area with carrying the message?
Use of the blue card and more Traditions meetings

Is there a way to improve communication to the Districts about what the committee's are doing?

- DCM reporting and Area representatives visiting and updating
Maybe bring copy of the secretary report
Encourage exploring the Area website (all about what we are doing)

District:

- Are GSR's given time to share and report on current status of their group-Yes
- Do DCM's keep GSR's informed about conference activities? This is done through Area visitor reports.
- Are groups that don't participate in District and Area Assemblies visited and encouraged?
DCM/LCM responsibility. "We do the best we can, some groups not very open to participating"
Need to continue to take the action of visiting the dark groups.
- Are all informed and encouraged to attend NERAASA and NERF-Yes
- Is the District mindful of AA's principle of rotation? Generally-Yes

Group 4- Dave E facilitator and Carl recorder

District:

- Is GSR's given time to report group status?
GSR needs direction, orientation, GSR presentation, and possibly a "group buddy". More time for GSR's to report back. Packets need to get to GSR's in a timely manner. Difficulty seems to lie with more frequent turnover, how to connect them to service.
- Does the District feel connected to Area and assembly? Partly Disconnect with GSR's, "What's going on?"

Area:

- Is the Area communication about Service Sponsorship? Some are unaware of this. Some have just started hearing about this within the past couple of years
- How does the Area communicate this to the fellowship? People are hearing about this once becoming involved themselves. Once in service. Not hearing so much outside of that. Should the Area necessarily promote this, to the fellowship at large?
- Enthusiasm, work being done. Area meeting inspiring? Too much distraction and off topic. Concern with redundancy, overly informed!
- Individual attitudes distract how people attend.
- Area visiting districts helps carry enthusiasm.
- Excessive agendas stay focused. Keep time down at Area meeting. This would help with attractiveness.

Do we provide orientation to new members?

- No, the Area could do better at orientating new people to the area committees. Groups choose qualified GSR's, not necessarily always the Area.

What is being done well: Reaching out by officers, shared experiences.

Improvement:

- Making the Area map more visible.
- Possibly through a hand out.
- Display at the Area Meeting? Is it on the Website?
- Communicate to service people they should attend meetings.
- Communicating information is good, but can encourage greater participation and the importance of service.
- Are we doing a good enough job?

Why officers need to show up at meetings?

- We have a structure in place, DCM, GSR's in gaining information. Concern with redundancy of information being shared, the cost/expense to do this. Officers not being utilized in the best way.

Areas to improve:

- Too many meetings affecting area as a whole and service structure. Belief, it is the Areas responsibility to communicate this?
- Too many committees, hard time supporting structure. Round tables at assemblies for new folks.

Group 5- Connell facilitator and Beth recorder

District

- Do districts hold workshops on service from time to time? Yes
Light attendance. Area officers could provide guidance by recommending weekends without conflict with other events as well as topics that GSC is considering and /or issues coming up in District meetings. Clarify purpose for workshops. Educate ourselves on these topics to better serve our Area and AA as a whole.
- Are the Committees mindful of 2nd tradition when handling issues and voting? What do Committees do to bring God into the meeting-3rd legacy voting? Suggestion: read tradition 2 at beginning of each meeting and again after report and before business discussions. Remind all of not only right but responsibility to express opinions. Ask all given reports not to repeat what was repeated in earlier months; ask all contributors to discuss not on report points already made by another. Encourage inter committee collaboration.

Area

- Are Area meetings informative and enthusiastic? Yes
However sometimes individuals get impatient, fidgety and tend to not hear all information, thinking about what they want to say and get impatient when same point is repeated.
Recommendations: reports from Districts and Committees not repeat information reported in previous month nor should extraneous information be shared. Discussion on motions, don't repeat points already voiced. Encourage all AA's to read posted minutes. Keep the flyers coming; don't need to note dates and places when you can pick up a flyer. How about keeping a flipchart of key points at each meeting. If anyone asks to be added to an email distribution for District, Committee or Area, make sure it happens.
Consider changing Area meeting room in summer, too hot to think.

Is the Area prudent in its financial affairs and with use of group contributions?

- Policy on self support. Are we adequately supporting our committees and activates-Yes. Annual budget meeting, periodic finance committee meeting to discuss financial matters. Any balance remaining at the end of the year flows into next year. This is how we survive dips in contributions and fund all Committees and Districts. Would be desirable to send more \$ to GSO.
- Recommendations:
Post detailed treasurer's report. Make sure your group has a GSR. Encourage attendance at NERAASA and consider more financial support for GSR's to go.

Are groups too willing to abandon authority to the Assembly?

- If groups don't send GSR or GSR attends without voicing his/her opinion as well as that of group representing.
- Educate groups on their rights and responsibilities to engage in the service structure by electing and listening to GSRs
- Sponsors must carry information at service and encourage participation
- In one group, GSR gives report during announcement in meeting rather than us at business meeting
- Respond to "Don't want to get involved in politics" with your experience of the inclusiveness off AA Service Structure.
- Include service experience in your story from the podium
- The preface of the Big Book changed since last printing as a result of 1 GSR sending a suggestion through the service structure. Was considered and voted in at a General Service Conference.

How do we treat each other with dignity and respect?

- Read Tradition 2 then hear reports, and then repeat Tradition 2 before business part of meeting.
- Try to resist through education and persuasion moves to shorten meetings. The first thing to go will be discussion of Traditions and Concepts
- Remember principles before personalities.
- Remember we are "all emotionally ill and frequently wrong." From 12 & 12 before pushing my own agenda.
- As an individual AA continuously work Step 11.
- Keep God in the meeting.

Group 6- Bobbi facilitator and Kim recorder

What is our policy on self support?

- Pie chart is suggested for this Area (other Areas may have other chart divisions)
- Too many groups = less donations due to more rents to pay
- Better to give to pie chart monthly seeing they have monthly bills (no matter how small the amount)
- What to do about new meeting opening (especially close by). Talk top groups about combining to save on rent and better support pie chart.

Are we sponsoring people in service?

- Doesn't seem to be discussed enough bring up in meetings and business meetings
- Keep service manuals handy to answer questions.
- Explain differences between meetings and groups. Groups have a responsibility to AA locally and as a whole (pie chart)
- Start service early with sponsees – group service first then explain other service. Bring to Area Committee meetings and assemblies/Round-up
- Share enthusiasm for service/power of example.
Fine line between enthusiasm and too much exuberance which can turn people off.
- Discuss service sponsors and what they do
- Invite people (not just sponsees) to committee meetings and to join in service.
- Have committees come to your meeting

Young people meetings need more support. Talk up at home groups/meetings. Ask young people to speak.

AA suffering (growth of AA) because on influx of drug addicts?

- Younger generation/never alcoholics seem to be more dual addicted.
- Is addiction simply addiction (no matter the acting out/substance)? Is influx of drug addict diluting the message?
Some felt addiction is addiction; everyone shared "get help". Some felt it's not ok to have drug addicts (not dual addicted) could prevent message reaching the alcoholic
Stagnation of growth could be because we're not the only game in town (treatment centers/other types of fellowship)
Growth is in Higher Power's hand, lead by example.

District: (members in group 6 primarily GSR's)

- Format changes with each DCM, should there be a formal template for all GSR meetings?
- Are GSR packets timely, no, but DCM's can get temporary packets.
- Is there time for solving group problems? Discussed, but limited to time.
- Aware of conference activities? Yes
- Knowledge of service manual? Yes. It's read but normally not discussed.
- District workshops available? Yes
- District connected to Area? Pretty much – DCM/CoDCM do good job.
- District low to Area? Not as good as flow the other way

- LCM visiting? Yes, but large area
- 7th tradition contribution discussed? Yes
- 3rd legacy? Yes
- Intro in GSR done? Got power point but not enough. DCM get only written pamphlets, how many DCM/GSR's read it? With constant turnover a better method needs to be done.
- Need better help for new GSR's
- All encouraged to go to NERAASA etc.
- District mindful of second tradition? Not normally. Suggested that 2nd tradition be brought more into the meeting rather than have "control" depend on DCM.
- District mindful of rotation? Yes
- Communicate the Conference Process and the evaluation of a Conference Agenda Item, some felt they were aware but not always explained to new GSR's until the moment it happens and then the procedure gets explained.

Disconnect between District and groups

- How to connect? Go to Traditions / Concept meetings
- GSR reports, short, sweet, exact (report only GSO information) humor if possible.