

**The Augustine Fellowship, S.L.A.A., Fellowship-Wide Services, Inc.**



**2019 Annual Business  
Conference/Meeting Minutes  
July 23-26, 2019**

**Sheraton Grand  
Sacramento California**

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## **Conference Theme**

The 5<sup>th</sup> Tradition - “Each Group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the sex and love addict who still suffers.”

## **Abbreviations You Need to Know**

(see Appendix A of the **CSM 2019**):

ABC/M ..... Annual Business Conference/Meeting  
ARS ..... Agenda Review Subcommittee  
Basic Text.....Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous ©1986  
BTC.....Board Copyright Translations Committee  
BFC..... Board Finance Committee  
BFSC.....Board Fellowship Self-Supporting Committee  
BHRPC..... Board Human Resources/Personnel Committee  
BDC..... Board Development Committee  
BPMC.....Board Programs and Membership Committee  
BOC.....Board Outreach Committee  
BOT ..... Board of Trustees  
CSM ..... Conference Service Manual  
HP ..... Higher Power  
IFD ..... Item for Discussion  
IRC ..... International Recovery Convention

### **Conference Committees**

CAC..... Conference Anorexia Committee  
CBC ..... Conference By-Laws Committee  
CCC ..... Conference Charter Committee  
CDC..... Conference Diversity Committee  
CFC.....Conference Finance Committee  
CHIC..... Conference Hospitals and Institutions Committee  
CHRC..... Conference Healthy Relationships Committee  
CICC ..... Conference Intergroup Communication Committee  
CJC..... Conference Journal Committee  
CLC..... Conference Literature Committee  
CMRC.....Conference Member Retention Committee  
CPIC .....Conference Public Information Committee  
CSC.....Conference Service Committee  
CSPC..... Conference Sponsorship Committee  
CSTCC ..... Conference Steps, Traditions and Concepts Committee  
CTIOC..... Conference Translation/International Outreach Committee (formerly CTC)

## **Tuesday July 23, 2019**

After a Conference Committees Chairs Meeting, Facilitator Training, New Delegate Orientation, and lunch, the General Assembly began.

### **First General Assembly: Tuesday July 23, 2019 – 1:05 pm**

- Facilitator – Rita H. – CCC Chair
- Assistant Facilitator – Rich K. – BOT Chair
- Back-up Facilitator – Marc S. – CFC Chair
- Record Keeper for this ABM – Austin H.
- Timekeepers– David M., Greg G.
- Spiritual Reminder – Christina H.

The General Assembly opened with a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer and the following readings:

- 12 Steps – Ava H.
- 12 Traditions – Christian A.
- 12 Concepts – Steven U.
- 12 Guidelines for Dealing with the Media – Celia G.

For this General Assembly there were 49 voting members present of 50 checked in: 40 or 80% is the Quorum required to start the General Assembly; 2/3<sup>rd</sup> is 34 and the number required to be binding on the Board for a Motion or to pass a By-Laws Motion; and, the simple majority is determined at the time a vote is taken based on the voting members present in the room.

### **Safety Statement**

**BOT Chair, Rich K.**, went to the microphone (mic) to read a statement from the BOT: The Board cares about the safety of all members of the Fellowship and is prepared to take immediate and appropriate action if an individual or group feels threatened. Our group endeavors to provide a safe meeting place for all attendees, and encourages each person here to contribute to fostering a secure and welcoming environment. As our Traditions remind us, the formation and operation of a group resides with the group conscience. Therefore, we ask that group members and other refrain from any behavior compromising the safety of others. Also please take precautions you feel necessary to ensure your personal safety. If you feel your safety is in jeopardy, or a situation breaches the law, the individuals involved should take appropriate actions. Calling the proper authorities does not violate any Traditions and is encouraged when someone has broken the law or endangered the safety of another person.

### **Welcome - Local Planning Committee (LPC)**

**LPC Chair, Gabriel G.**, welcomed the Conference to Sacramento and said a few words about tonight's outing hosted by Sacramento Intergroup. Meet in the lobby at 7pm to participate. Hospitality room is 422. Recovery meetings are available during the Conference at 6am and 9pm, except for Friday. See Gabriel G. or Sean H. if you have questions during the week.

There was a question about the definition of the Spiritual Reminder and the Facilitator directed everyone to page 30 of the CSM 2019 which was read by the Back-up Facilitator.

**Introductions** of the 55 participants (stating name, position/role, where they are from and how many ABMs attended) in the room were begun.

**BOT Chair** read another statement from the BOT: Thank you to the New York City (NYC) Intergroup for filing an application to host the 2019 ABM. The BOT regrets any confusion or upset they may have caused. As a result of

the experience with NYC and others, we have taken steps to rewrite and approve a new host city application. The BOT thanks everyone involved, including the BPMC for their help in crafting the new application.

- CCC members present identified themselves: Joe C. (Vice-Chair), Gabriel G., Rita H. (Chair), and Anthony P. The CCC facilitates the ABM. See any of these people if you have questions.
- Board Members present identified themselves: Rich K. (BOT Chair), P.A. K. (BDC Chair), Seth S., Ned J. (BFSC Chair), Jay G. (BFC Chair), and Nancy G. (BHRPC Chair).

#### **CCC Chair Reminders:**

- The CCC, in coordination with the CFC Chair, helps Conference Committees do the work necessary to help the Fellowship grow and develop as a 12-Step Fellowship.
- Regarding photographs: In the spirit of anonymity and our 12<sup>th</sup> Tradition, no video or still images are to be taken at General Assemblies, Conference Committee meetings, or social functions.
- Participants are to wear name tags at all times and to silence cell phones/electronic devices in the General Assembly.
- We'll need Time Keepers, Vote Counters, and a Spiritual Reminder each day. When votes are being counted, please keep your hand held high until they are done.
- Check in at the beginning of each General Assembly with Pam (Executive Director). If you leave the room you must let her know as well as when you return to the room, especially during Motions. We need to know the total voting members present at any given time.
- Please go to the microphone to speak if you have a question. Exception for calling a Spiritual Reminder (30 or 60 seconds). For Challenge to Group Conscience you must go to the microphone
- Everyone who is eligible to vote must vote on Motions – in favor, opposed, or abstain.

**The BOT Chair** reviewed the contents of the Supplemental Packet.

**F.W.S. Executive Director, Pam Martin**, announcements: Wear nametags at all times. Let me know when leaving/returning during General Assemblies for vote count accuracy. Housekeeping details regarding meals, noise level in the hotel. Refrain from discussing S.L.A.A. in public hotel areas for yours and others' anonymity. Do not leave ABM Binders or S.L.A.A. information in public areas. See the side table for extra forms. Remove all personal items from General Assembly room during breaks for meals and Conference Committee Meetings. For hotel needs, see me or Rich K.

This General Assembly ended at 2:04pm with an 11-minute break.

#### **Tuesday July 23, 2019 – 2:15 pm**

- Facilitator – Lindsey H.
- Assistant Facilitator – Rick S.
- Back-up Facilitator – Chris M.

#### **Getting to Know the BOT**

Each BOT member introduced themselves and explained their duties:

**Rich K.** – BOT Chair this year. On the Board 3.5 years. Treasurer and/or Board Chair past three years. Am choosing not to run for reelection. Not the right time in my life to continue this level of service. Chair and BFC Chair take more time per month than other positions on the BOT. About 40 hrs. a month for me, going through financials, Office issues, Board and Conference Committee meetings. Wouldn't trade these last 3.5 years. It's the right time for me to step away for personal and family reasons. I'm grateful to have been able to serve.

**Ned J.** – Chair of BFSC. What a trip being on the BOT. Voted in last year. It's a different level of service, a different commitment. It has pushed and expanded my boundaries, bringing up some of my worst character

defects and some of my best qualities. I continue to learn a lot working with these six great people. Ashly and Earl left the BOT this year, Seth joined us, my service sponsor is leaving. Dealing with transitions and change are all part of the mix. I try to remember service at this level supports the Fellowship. Without service on all levels, this thing doesn't quite work. This thing saved my life. It took me from my darkest days to being the best I've ever been, the happiest I've ever been in my life.

**Jay G.** – Chair of BFC. Appointed to Board September 2018, appointed Treasurer in December. Prior I was Vice-Chair of CCC for two years, previously on CPIC, which absorbed the CFC that I had chaired. Active in Intergroup as well. I probably put in about 30 hours a month. I'm not counting them but I'm counting on them. It's an honor for me to serve as an Officer and not every Board member needs to put in that amount of time. Service keeps me sober. I'm motivated by three things in my Board service: sobriety, be of service, and have fun. Sober since 2010, being of service, and quite often we do have fun. I could improve my ability to have fun and think of financial statements as an opportunity to have fun. The general ledger is a real hoot. I'm really grateful to be on the Board. Appointed to a term ending 2020 and am on ballot for confirmation.

**P.A. K.** – Chair of BDC. Sobriety date is February 15, 2004. When I got with my current sponsor 10 years ago, I was only doing meeting level service and sponsoring. A friend got me onto Intergroup and from there I became a Delegate for five years. Same friend got me onto the CAC and I became Chair of CAC. I was getting a push from BOT members to join the Board, and someone suggested I come onto a Board Committee first. I did that and joined the Board last year. The experience from that level of service has completely changed my life. I look at things completely different and I have more patience and tolerance. If you want to get something great out of this, get yourself involved in Board Committees.

**Nancy G.** – Chair of BHRPC. Have been in S.L.A.A. 13 years. This is my 4<sup>th</sup> 12-Step program. I get real value from all of them, but this became my real home where I had some deep growth in my intimacy disorder. I always thought I knew how to do intimacy and I needed to help my partners learn. In S.L.A.A. I learned that when I'm having an intimacy problem, I need to work on intimacy with myself. I felt so grounded and supported I really wanted to pay back. I've been in service at every level. Being on the Board for three years has been a real stretch for me. One of the main stretches has been the technology, and I'm grateful and I've grown a lot with my technological skills. Isn't it the Army or Navy that had the old poster that said "We Need You"? Anyone in this room can serve on the Board. If I can do it, I'm sure you can handle it. It's very purposeful and one of the roles we play to make our Fellowship work. We updated the Employee Handbook this year. Personally, I have three children, four grandchildren, in a relationship for 2.5 years, both of us in recovery with a lot of tools and support and I feel like that's a real success in the program for me.

**Seth S.** – I'm from Boston and a practicing attorney. This program saved my life and my career and I owe a lot to this program and doing service is a way I can give back. I chaired the LPC for the 2016 ABM and IRC in Boston, and again the next year for the ABM in Framingham. I served on the BDC, BHRPC, and was Chair of the CICC before I was appointed to the BOT in April of this year. This program saved me and I owe it a huge debt, and this is my way to pay that debt back and I'm grateful I get this opportunity. I was born with a mouth and two ears and I want to listen twice as much as I talk.

**BOT Chair** recognized other members who served last year: Bob G (5.5 years, stepped aside in December), Earl D. (almost 3 years, stepped aside in July), Ashly B. (2 years, stepped aside in July).

**About the BOT:** We meet once a month for either 2 or 3 hours, typically serve on 2 Board Committees, liaison to 2-3 Conference Committees, and prepare reports. Currently 7 BOT Committees, only 6 of us at the moment so there's some doubling up. If anyone is interested, you can see P.A., BDC chair, or reach out to former and current Board members if you have interest in this level of service.

#### Questions from the Floor

- Do any of you serve on Conference Committees simultaneous with being on BOT, and/or as Intergroup officers?

Seth S: I was Chair of New England Intergroup and CICC the past two years.

Nancy G.: I have not been an Intergroup officer since joining Board, but attend most Intergroup meetings. They appreciate BOT reports. I am liaison to 3 Conference Committees, but not a member. I think as a Board member you cannot be a member of a Conference Committee.

P.A. K.: I was Vice-Chair of Houston Intergroup and liaison to two Conference Committees.

Jay G.: I am liaison to two Conference Committees. Not customary for BOT members to be a member of Conference Committees. Previously on CCC and CPIC. Was an Intergroup officer for several years and spearheaded a mail-out to therapists.

Ned J.: While on BOT, have not served on Conference Committee, but have been liaison to several, and it's great to see how other Conference Committees work. Blessed to live in Palm Beach County FL. Intergroup is very involved. I show up and give BOT reports, and I participate in Intergroup for another "S" fellowship.

Rich K. No rule against BOT serving on Conference Committees, but it's discouraged because it denies others that service opportunity, and the level of work on the BOT can detract from one or both of those places.

- Thank you for your service. I had no idea how many things you were all involved in besides sitting on the BOT. Regarding a decision from BOT this year about reimbursement of travel funds for people doing Fellowship wide service, why was there was no provision made for reimbursing transportation to/from airports?

Ned J: Answering on behalf of myself that policy was put forward by the CFC and BFC. I voted against it because it didn't consider travel to/from airports and parking. I suggested a flat fee, like \$50. And this is a democracy. The BOT hashed it out and it passed and I accept that.

Jay G: My understanding: not reimbursing door to door was the unwritten practice/policy before it was made official.

Rich K: Part of the discussion was that we need to be responsible for the things we do. Often, flight and hotel are paid for the BOT. Lots of people pay a lot to be here and we need to be responsible as well.

- I appreciate all your service. BOT structure changed and you added a new Board Committee. I believe our copyright is important, how are you going to cover that with five Board members and six or seven committees?

Seth S: We'll figure it out. We know we have to cover it and we will.

Ned J: And you all are going to put in your applications to run to serve on the Board. It's a legitimate question. If you have 3 yrs. of continuous sobriety, this Board, your Board, needs your help. There are so many issues. Our copyright is a legal issue, and we have to look at our digital footprint in the realm of that issue. There are long range issues and projects that need to be addressed by the Board, so come on down.

- Question for Jay G. This is your first year on the Board, right? In the past, you've been in contention with the BOT, how has it been for you to work with the BOT as a member?

This is my first year on the BOT. This is a great group of people, as were the former Board members. We all get a long and support each other. I'm grateful for their service, and I look forward to continuing with this group. I look forward to new people coming in, particularly people who are new to the Board. I wouldn't support, at this time, former Board members returning to the Board. The torch has been passed; we are doing things differently. I worked well with liaisons when I was on Conference Committees. If there was any contention, it went both ways. It hasn't been an issue with any of us this year.

- On the issue of diversity, it's rather low. How do you go about or how might we attract, recruit, support a more diverse Board?

P.A.: We can say this all day long about the diversity stuff, but we don't vote; It comes down to you all to do that.

Jay: I value diversity on the BOT of all kinds and have heard it from everyone on the Board, I'd like to see more diversity on the Board, you might consider running – nominate someone or yourself. Apply for a Board Committee. No service requirement, only a sobriety requirement.

Nancy: We ask ourselves that question, we see it to. Please run for the Board, especially young people, we really appreciated Ashly's service, she brought the perspective of a different generation. Please run and help us add to who we are.

Ned: Great question. I was on CDC for two years, I'm a gay man in my 60s. It's the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Stonewall this year and it really took me back to what it was like as a young gay man on the east coast and watching my friends die of AIDS. I hadn't been in touch with the trauma of that for a long time. Here's a challenge: how many people think they are from a marginalized community? [show of hands] How many view themselves as coming from/being part of an ethnic minority? [show of hands] How many who have self-identified are willing to serve? [little to no response] This is the problem. We need self-participation and to expand our program into more diverse communities.

Rich: As BDC Chair last year trying to fill open seats, we looked for diversity in many ways – non-US Delegates, women, not straight, transgender. If you have people in mind reach out to the BDC. There will still be two open seats on the BOT when we leave on Friday and we can appoint people to those seats. Of the current Board, only one was elected outright, the rest of us were appointed. I would love to see a younger Board. Ashly did bring a better perspective. The fuller the Board, the less work done by each person. If you have people in mind, recommend them to us. I reached out to 45 people last year and only one said yes. We are making the best effort to be as diverse as we can, and we can only take the people willing to serve.

Seth: This is a big tent, and we need to make the tent bigger. Look around the room, there are ethnic minorities not present. How do we reach out to those people? The Board is only a reflection of the people in the room and those willing to do service. We're looking for greater diversity and more participation. This shouldn't be a group of old white men; it just happens to be right now.

P.A.: If I can do it, anyone can do it. I'm not great with technology, but people help me. The Board sticks together and helps each other.

- I started a non-profit myself 25 years ago and it's harder and harder to get volunteers. It's a giving thing. That's a lot of time, a lot of us are asking do I have those hours to give? About 5 years ago in Houston we started a 6,000 therapist mail-out every other year and doubled our meetings. We followed SAA's fundraising program and raised \$7,000. Other ways to do things. SAA has good ideas. Has the BOT looked at other alternatives? What AA and SAA are doing? SAA has doubled their income; we're still relying on book sales.

Ned: Board Fellowship Self-Sustaining [Supporting] Committee (7<sup>th</sup> Tradition committee). We're a 12-Step program and our Traditions dictate that we be self-supporting through our own contributions. On the BFSC (and we need members) we meet 1/month. We've done a study of 4 different fellowships to see how they handle the 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition, including SAA, AA, Al-Anon. Our 65% reliance on literature sales/35% contributions is a dangerous mix, in my mind. We are pushing and seeking new ways to raise more revenue.

Seth: Two ways to grow a business – lower your expenses or raise your revenue. Lowering expenses only works for a couple years. After Rich leaves, there are five of us, we need ideas, creative solutions, from



the people in this room. We can't solve this problem on our own and we're looking to this group to give us guidance.

Jay: All our fundraising goes back to an individual person, whether it's a direct individual contribution or one that comes through Groups or Intergroups. People are very generous and we can do better. We can do more by doing better. Each of us spent someone's hard earned money to come here. Whether individually, or sent by a Group, Intergroup, or F.W.S. We rely on contributions even for things like the ABM because there's a shortfall.

- Based on 12-Step model of attraction vs. promotion – how do you see S.L.A.A. growing into other communities if we can't actively promote?

Rich: The way we carry ourselves is one way, informing therapists of the program and that the program works. I've seen people come in from therapist referrals, they found us on search engines, through our website and literature. Being there when people need a meeting. I found the program through Patrick Carnes' book, Out of the Shadows, that has a list of 12-Step programs in the back. I called the local number for the Fellowship and there was a meeting 25 minutes away. I went and one other person showed up. That person is why I'm here today, and that one person stopped coming, but they were there when I needed them. When people that know you see and are able to say I know somebody else, or maybe you know somebody. This is a difficult disease to talk about. I'm in another 12-Step program and it's rare that I talk about this one, but it's allowed and I know of two people who started coming because they heard me. When we're living the program and we see people who are hurting we can approach them and say "I see what you're doing and there is help out there."

Jay: See the F.W.S. website for the CPIC developed Suggestions for Public Outreach that was created to help people understand attraction vs. promotion, whether you can advertise and how to attract people.

Ned: I love the beverage program, have over three decades of sobriety. Hang around outside AA meetings.

- S.L.A.A. website has a donate now section. Maximum donation is \$20K. If I wanted to consider F.W.S. in my will, what is the reason for that max amount, and is there an area you could donate to that would help get more lone Groups and Intergroups to the ABM?

Rich: \$20K individual contribution limit applies to the general operating fund or any of the designated giving programs, which includes the ABM scholarship fund. You can donate up to one year of expenses (current BOT policy) to the prudent reserve. The \$20K limit, which is higher than any other 12-Step fellowship giving limits, is to prevent any influence over the Fellowship as described in our Traditions.

- To revisit diversity and attraction vs. promotion, I bring my recovery into all parts of my life, which obviously includes an ethnic minority. Looking around the room, if this is the starting point for attraction, how do we get traction in other communities? There's a chicken and egg problem. Therapy is excellent, and it's a white wealthy solution to a white wealthy problem, even in the age of the Affordable Care Act. I work in the tech industry and am keenly interested in social media, and we have a policy of complete non-intervention in those realms. So how can we penetrate into communities where we don't have a presence?

Jay: CPIC has been working on YouTube videos, someone has been working on bus stop advertising (BOC), social media is not necessarily prohibited by that Tradition in many people's opinion. Anonymity does not necessarily preclude any social media.

Ned: The Board can do a certain amount. There's more flexibility at the Intergroup level – can commit to start, fund, and maintain people of color meetings or go to specific communities and decide to open a meeting. Those are great ways to appeal to people who might not otherwise know about or be served by S.L.A.A. local Groups and Intergroups have a responsibility in this too.

Nancy: In San Diego, we rotate where our Intergroup meets to be more accessible to different parts of the county.

- I was hesitant to come as a Delegate because I didn't know if it would bring value to the members in Sweden. We went to the Florida Round Up by accident in 2018 and got the picture that we need to come here and that to bring something back to Sweden I should also bring something from Sweden. But what is the benefit of international Delegates?

Rich: There have been international Delegates at every ABM I've been to. People from the UK, Australia, France, and Poland. We've had international Delegates and work with them to accommodate time differences for meetings. We are an international Fellowship and it's something we need to express more and move more towards, but if the Delegates don't come, we can't hear their concerns. Another chicken and egg problem. There's a 25% discount on literature sales outside North America to defray shipping costs. We have an international Delegate scholarship fund to increase opportunity. And we need to hear from international Groups what we can do to help them.

Seth: BOT has a willingness to reach out and connect with Delegates from all over the world. We're frustrated that there aren't more international Delegates at ABM. How do we attract more people internationally and from other communities around the world?

Nancy: This issue has come up before and the CICC online forum platform was a result of that. With a good platform time zones don't matter. You can get on there any time with an issue and get responses from people in other time zones and develop an online network and community.

The session ended at 3:26 with general announcements and a 19-minute break.

## **Tuesday July 23, 2019 - 3:47 pm**

- Facilitator – Marc S. – CFC Chair
- Assistant Facilitator – Joe C. – CCC Vice-Chair
- Back-up Facilitator – Sam E.

### **F.W.S. Financial Report**

Jay G., BFC Chair and Treasurer, gave the BOT Financial Report with a PowerPoint presentation that was also a handout/digital copy provided to all participants.

- List of functions of the F.W.S. Office was provided
- As 501 (c)(3) organization, we are not subject to federal income tax, and individual contributions can be tax deductible as charitable contributions. We do provide a form 990 federal return for tax-exempt organization to IRS. We pay Texas personal property tax on equipment and inventory, collect and remit Texas sales tax for purchases made in Texas, and we remit employer's share of payroll taxes.
- Through March 31<sup>st</sup> of this fiscal year, 32% of income is from contributions/donations (up from 25% in the same period the previous fiscal year) and 61% is from literature (down from 64% in the same period the previous fiscal year). Slight increase in reliance on donations and decrease in reliance on sales.
- Our financial condition is stable. We have the resources to do what we currently do, but not much more.
- The Fiscal Year is October 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup>. Remainder of report is based on this past fiscal year ending September 30, 2018 and the first half of this fiscal year, ending March 31, 2019.
- The BFC reviews the monthly financial statements, approves and sends to the BOT for review and approval. Once approved, the financial reports are published quarterly in the **F.W.S. Newsletter**. For the past three years, financial statements have been reviewed by the CPA firm Williams, Crow, Mask of San Antonio.
- Four members on BFC, two BOT and two non-BOT.

## **Balance Sheet/Income Statements**

- The Balance Sheet, also known as the Statement of Financial Position, is a snapshot of our financial condition at any one given moment. The Income Statement, also referred to as Profit and Loss statement, is the detail of money that comes in and money that goes out.
- Cash on hand as of March 31<sup>st</sup> Prudent Reserve: \$197,175, up from last year; Operating Fund: \$138,950, up from last year.
- Up to March 31<sup>st</sup> of this fiscal year, the total liability and equity is \$378,284.

A comparison of the last 4 years was presented for both the Balance Sheet and Income Statements.

## **Expenses**

- The BOT expenses which include travel to the F.W.S. Office, flight, accommodations are lower last year. ABC/M costs for the BOT were also lower last year because the ABC/M was in San Antonio.
- Conference costs also lower last year because it was in San Antonio.
- Contract services include: Accounting fees for audit \$5,000; legal consultation costs for copyright/trademarks are up from last year; webmaster services are the same.
- Facilities and equipment costs were in line with last year. Includes rent, website platform, phone, and personal property tax. Slight rent increase this year.
- General Office expenses: Vendor fees are up (fees we pay for credit card processing, PayPal, etc.)
- Last fiscal year had a surplus of \$23,734, as opposed to a loss of \$36,628 in 2016/2017 fiscal year.
- This past weekend the Board passed a preliminary budget for 2019-20. 2018-19 budget was distributed to Fellowship and is in your ABM Binder.
- The tentative budget continues the subsidy for literature sales outside North America and the scholarships for international ABM Delegates.
- Conference Committees have spent less than 6% of the money allocated for this fiscal year. If Conference Committees have work that they are doing and need more funding than allocated in their budget, they can come back to the Board and ask for more money.
- Explanation of the difference between fiscal year (October 1st to September 30<sup>th</sup>) and Conference year (ABC/M to ABC/M) was given. Conference Committee budgets are allocated for the fiscal year. Budget requests submitted at the end of this week are for monies to be spent after October 1, 2019.

## **Additional Comments from Treasurer:**

- For questions, there is a Treasurer's link on the F.W.S. website; you can submit comments and questions to the BOT.
- The BOT will be using Williams, Crow, Mask to review this year's financial statement at their recommendation. Not the same as an audit.
- We could use help on the BFC. No financial or accounting experience necessary to serve on BFC. Would be great to have people who don't have that background because they ask great questions. Simply an interest in office operations and the financial aspect of running the F.W.S.

## **Questions from the Floor**

- **Q**-On general information slide with percentage breakdown of donations per year, are the previous year comparisons for full years or to the March 31<sup>st</sup> date (same 6-month period as shown for 2018/19 fiscal year).

**A**-The previous years are full years.

- **Q**-Cash on the balance sheet, showing \$13,000 worth of ABM deposits, that's all, correct?  
**A**-Yes, that is the cash on hand.
- **Q**- On the graph showing the cash is that current 6 months vs full years or are they all cash as of 6 months into the fiscal year?  
**A**-Each year shows cash on hand as of March 31<sup>st</sup> of that fiscal year.
- **Q**-Why are we not getting more recent numbers for profit and loss?  
**A**-Because the BFC did not approve June numbers until July 15<sup>th</sup> and the Board did not see April-June or approve them until this weekend. Board receives balance sheets and income statements quarterly.
- **Q**-The Board approves finances every quarter? Might be helpful for future ABMs for the Board/BFC to provide more recent numbers  
**A**-That's correct. The BOT approves balance sheet and income statement every quarter. BFC sees these reports every month.
- **Q**-What is the burn rate for F.W.S.? On average, how much does F.W.S. spend per month? Seeing an average burn rate would be helpful.  
**A**-For the last fiscal year we made \$28K and lost \$36K. That's essentially the burn rate because we operate on a modified cash basis. It fluctuates too much month-to-month. That's why we provide information on a 6-month basis. COGS depend on how much we sell and some of that cash is used to buy inventory and that is not on an equal basis. For example, we just bought 3 years' worth of the Basic Text.
- **Q**-On the income statement, sales make up 80% of income and other pieces are broken down very specifically. It would be helpful to have a more granular breakdown to see where we are making our money. Is it Basic Texts, is it pamphlets?  
**A**-Basic Text the #1 revenue generator, pamphlets/booklets are #2. Combined they are over 50% merchandise revenue in an average month.
- **Q**-How do you determine prudent reserve? Is it 6 months of expenses?  
**A**-Right now it is what it is because that is what has been allocated to the prudent reserve by the BOT over the life of the F.W.S. I think your question is who determines such things as how much it should be, should there be a goal, should there be a maximum. That would be a BOT decision with Conference input. BFC is working on a prudent reserve policy with input from CFC.  
**Q**-So, we don't have a prudent reserve policy?  
**A**-We have a BOT Motion that says it should be (using a formula) about \$390,000 (about double current amount). Motion states until we get there, all interest remains in prudent reserve fund. Current policy (voted in by BOT 19 years ago) says it should be \$390K (based on a formula – every expense + COGS) and when we get to that number, we will not add to prudent reserve.
- **Q**-On the Income analysis, jump to contributions for 2018 reflected a big donation from one intergroup, is there a similar explanation for the difference between 2016 and 2017?  
**A**-Not that I know of.
- **Q**-On red and green lines, does the report track any difference in numbers of individuals or Groups making contributions?  
**A**-No, theoretically we could go back and reconstruct that information for some period of time by hand, but we don't automatically capture it in our accounting system.

The session ended at 4:39 with general announcements and a 21-minute break.

## **General Assembly: Tuesday July 23, 2019 – 5:00 pm**

- Facilitator – Rita H. – CCC Chair
- Assistant Facilitator – Rich K. – BOT Chair
- Back-up Facilitator – Joe C. – CCC Vice-Chair

For this General Assembly there were 49 voting members present of 51 checked in: 41 or 80% is the Quorum required to start the General Assembly; 2/3<sup>rd</sup> is 34 and the number required to be binding on the Board for a Motion or to pass a By-Laws Motion; and the simple majority is determined at the time a vote is taken based on the voting members present in the room.

### **BDC Board Election Report**

Electing Trustees at the ABM is one of the legal requirements to maintain the 501(c)(3) status as a non-profit corporation.

P.A. K.: As BDC Chair I am responsible for facilitating the election of Trustees for the Conference year. I'll explain the process and what to expect. First, thanks to BDC members for this year (Bob G, who was Chair of BDC until he stepped down from the BOT. Lindsey H., Rick B., and Corey H., who were non-BOT members, and Earl D. and Seth S. BOT members).

These Trustees are rotating off from service. Earl D. has stepped away from the Board, while Ashly B. and Rich K. have chosen to not run for re-election. Thank you for all of your service

Jay G., who was appointed to the Board this Conference year, will be on the ballot for confirmation for a term ending at the Conference in 2020.

Seth S. is currently on the Board of Trustees and is running for election for a three-year term.

The Board of Trustees can have up to 9 people serving on the Board at any one time, and at each ABC/M, there are three Trustee positions which are up for election.

As a member of the Fellowship, in order to serve on the Board of Trustees, you must have three continuous years of sobriety, and during your term you must maintain that sobriety.

Tomorrow morning, at the start of the General Assembly, I will open the floor to nominations to the Board of Trustees. Any person can nominate themselves, or be nominated by another individual. When someone has been nominated, I will go to this microphone, and ask the person being nominated to go to the opposite microphone. At that time, I will ask you two questions – “1. Are you willing to serve on the Board of Trustees? and 2. Do you meet the sobriety requirement?”

If you answer yes to both of these questions, you will be given a written application, which will be due by 9 pm on Wednesday night. An oral interview will also be scheduled as early as possible. Both the written and oral interview will be distributed to the Delegates.

Nominations will close at the end of the last General Assembly tomorrow. The goal of the BDC is to have all of the oral and written interviews distributed to the Conference members prior to the Questions and Answers being held on Thursday afternoon.

At the Thursday General Assembly, the nominees and candidates will be presented to the Conference. They will have an opportunity to share about themselves, on this year's Tradition, which is Tradition 5. There will also be time for Conference members to come to the mic to ask any or all of the people up for election or confirmation questions, which they will then have 1-2 minutes to answer.

On Friday morning, the election of the new Trustees is held. The doors will be locked at 8 am sharp, and no one will be allowed in after that time. When a count is presented by the Executive Director, the ballots will be counted out to match the number of eligible voters, and any excess ballots will be destroyed on the spot. For this year's election, there will be 2 separate voting requirements.

The first will be to elect up to three Trustees. When the ballot is presented, the candidates will be listed in random order. You may vote for zero, one, two, or three candidates. If you vote for more than three candidates, your ballot will be considered null and void. The top three vote getters who receive 50% or more of the eligible votes, will be elected to the Board of Trustees. If more than three Trustees receive greater than 50%, the top three vote getters will be elected.

The second part of the ballot will only contain Jay's name, along with a box. If you wish to confirm Jay to complete the term that ends in 2020, you will check the box. If you do not wish to confirm Jay, you would leave the box blank. Jay's confirmation has no effect on your voting for the candidates. You can vote for three candidates, and still vote to confirm Jay.

When you have completed your ballot, you are asked to fold it in half and raise your hand, with your ballot in the air, to be collected.

After all of the ballots have been collected, myself, two vote tabulators, and an observer will count the number of ballots we have before leaving the room. We will then go to a room to count the votes. Once we are all in agreement of the ballot count, we will then seal the ballots in an envelope to be presented to the Executive Director. We will then come back into the General Assembly room to announce the candidates that have been elected, and whether Jay has been confirmed.

During the time that the votes are being counted, no one will be allowed to leave the General Assembly. Upon the announcement of the results, people will be allowed to leave the General Assembly.

Thank you for the opportunity to be of service, I would be happy to have some questions answered, and if after we are finished and you have any questions, please feel free to approach me, or someone else you may feel comfortable with so that we can provide you the information you need.

### **Board Committee Reports**

- **BOT** Chair Rich K. – Got a lot done this year, lost three Trustees, appointed two, passed a designated giving program policy, approved financial statements reviewed by Williams, Crow, Mast, approved a budget fully funding Conference Committees, passed edited literature for State of Grace Meditation book and Anorexia 4-5-6-7 booklet. Meditation book is largest undertaking since the Basic Text. BOT worked extremely hard all year and I'm grateful for their service.
- **BCTC** Chair Rich K. – Worked with international Intergroups to license some of their literature. Created workflow for licensing international literature, updated copyrights. Sam E., Pam Martin, and Earl D. were on the committee and I appreciate their service.
- **BDC** Chair P.A. K. – Became Chair during the last six months. We recommended appointing Jay G. and Seth S., who were approved by the BOT, reviewed By-Law Motion to clarify BOT end of term; updated candidate list, gave self-assessment questionnaires to Board Committees, also created Board development flowcharts.
- **BFC** Chair Jay G. – Monthly financial statement reviews include current month and year-to-date (YTD) income statements against budget amount and prior year amount; two statements are published quarterly in **F.W.S. Newsletter**. We passed a purchasing policy and procedure (approved by the BOT) with goals and guidelines regarding buying goods and services for F.W.S. such as when you need to get multiple bids for an item. We need additional non-BOT committee members. This year we'll continue looking at prudent reserve policy and making a recommendation to the BOT on what it should be and what it should function as.
- **BFSC** Chair Ned J. – Thanks Cory F. for joining, acknowledge Christiane S. from Germany for their service. We talk a lot about how we can sustain and bring 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition to bear in our Fellowship, previously there were limited ways to donate to F.W.S. Can now donate to prudent reserve, general operating fund, or ABM scholarship fund. New designated giving program passed (and approved by BOT), similar

to a GoFundMe page for S.L.A.A. You can create a giving opportunity for specific projects or purposes, such as an S.L.A.A. Archivist.

- **BHRPC** Chair Nancy G. – Thanks to Scott F., our HR specialist and editor/word processor, Pam for supporting the Office, Seth S., our legal expert in updating Employee Handbook, and Rich K., as Office Supervisor. Thanks Curtis B. and Cheryl-Lynn D., who rotated off after 6 and 7 years of dedicated service. Big accomplishment was updating the Employee Handbook. It is now in line with federal and state laws. See printed report for strategic plan goals we addressed.
- **BOC** Ned J. – Member, not Chair, kudos to Earl D. for chairing. Yeomans work accomplished with passage of State of Grace Meditation book, kudos to originating authors, outside editors, BOC for editing 99,000 words and get BOT approval to publish. BOC spent 240 hours on Meditation book plus edited Anorexia 4-5-6-7 and got BOT approval to publish. Spent \$5k on an outside editor, best money ever spent.
- **BPMC** P.A. K. – not Chair, Ashly B. was Chair and has decided not to run for re-election. Members P.A. K., Gabriel G., Jim B., and Ashly B. We evaluated application for hosting ABM, implemented new guidelines for hosting, facilitated planning for the ABM. Revised and updated ABM host application, thanks to Steve B. for his help with that. Revised/updated ABM Manual, researched and discussed creating safety statements for meetings.

### Conference Committee Reports

- **CAC** Kelly R. Chair – Committed and productive group. Mission: to carry the message to the entire S.L.A.A. community that emotional, social, and sexual anorexia can be an inherent part of sex and love addiction as a whole. We work to integrate this idea into all areas of the Fellowship and literature as a service to those who identify as anorexic. Meet monthly, 7-8 members. Very active. 4-5-6-7 passed, let's keep it going with 8-9.
- **CBC** Rick B. Chair – Core committed group, Anita C., Barry B., Philip W. and Board liaison Jay G. Meet monthly and review By-Laws for issues. We noticed pronouns in By-Laws, and brought info to Chairs call, overwhelmingly said pronouns didn't belong in By-Laws. Did research with help of BOT liaison and put IFD on the ABM Agenda. Found an error in previous By-Laws change where integration of 12 Concepts was missing, created a red-line for CCC and BOT to take care of it.
- **CCC** Rita H. Chair – Mission statement: we plan and facilitate the ABM in cooperation with BOT and F.W.S. We create ABM Agenda, chair the ABM, and liaison to BOT for the Conference. Chair is a voting member of the Conference as of vote in 2015. Recognized members present earlier. Main focus this year will be the CCC Manual.
- **CDC** Christina H. Chair – This was a hot topic last year, and this year. If you feel inclined, get involved. We have four committed members, and need more support, especially if you're fired up about this Fellowship reaching out to more diverse demographics. Go beyond looking around the room to determine if you see diversity represented. As defined in the Diversity Statement, there are a huge number of components, not just perceived racial/ethnicity. We commit to creating a safe, supportive space for individuals of all appearances, generations, races and ethnicities, gender identifications and identity, sexualities and sexual orientation, family structures, abilities and disabilities, cultural and natural origins, political beliefs and ideologies, religious tenets, agnosticism, atheism, and so on. Our first session will be a conversation about Diversity & Inclusion.
- **CFC** Mark S. Chair – Worked with the BOT to develop designated giving policy and started review of prudent reserve fund policy, created individual contribution month flyer, and discussed budgeting process. Need more people to get involved. Put forward an IFD on budgeting process. Clarification on CFC position about the travel reimbursement policy: we were told to defer to another committee on this issue. There was a strong feeling on CFC that all BOT travel expenses should be paid.

- **CHRC** Anna F. (on behalf of committee) – Healthy Relationships pamphlet was published; Gift of No Contact pamphlet draft is a Motion this year. Noted that incorrect draft is in the ABM Agenda Attachment, tomorrow's update distributed with 4<sup>th</sup> Version of the ABM Agenda will be correct and incorporates feedback from last year. Come join us to help create resources for learning how to have healthy relationships.
- **CIC** Rick S. (on behalf of committee) Jeff C. Co-Chair/Active Chair) – Committee is working on putting together/instituting the S.L.A.A. forum (see flyer) where people can swap ideas, encourage conversations. We have 20 different categories available. Open for setting up accounts. Still refining process.
- **CJC** Susan G. Chair – *The Journal* editor and others are here. We're working on an issue or booklet of spirituality shares; we want to do one on diversity and need articles. Also doing issue on healthy relationships and need more international shares for a dedicated issue. Free issue of *the Journal* in your Supplemental Packet with ABM Binder.
- **CLC** Dave G. Co-Chair – Recognize Ron G., who was also Co-Chair last year. His passing left a big hole. We did not get to do the work groups of administration, planning, and writing, but worked on lots of other things. Had some copyright issues, reviewed the Is it Really Necessary pamphlet, developed process for submitting literature so that literature submitted to CLC gets an F.W.S. copyright. IFD on role of the BOC reviewing literature after Conference approval. Wanting to get it done quicker and include author collaboration as needed. We review literature that comes for IFD or Motion. At 9pm there is review session tonight for draft CLC literature.
- **CMRC** Mona E. Chair – We develop and implement tools and methods to retain members and access wisdom, experience, strength, and hope of long-term members. Committee was resurrected last year, active core group, many are here. We have a motion to create 18-month sobriety medallion. Working on a new pamphlet (see flyer) to identify challenges of long-term members and provide tangible solutions to keep them engaged and active in S.L.A.A. Email is on flyer if you can't come to a meeting this week.
- **CPIC** (no one present to give report)
- **CSC** Jack H. Chair – Responsible for educating and increasing members' commitment to service. I never knew about these committees until my first year as a Delegate. We want to increase awareness outside of ABM of Conference Committees. Researching whether video conferencing is a more efficient way to get things done than phone meetings. Submitted Super Service Dog brochure as IFD. Working on another brochure Why Not Get Involved. We have a motto for our meetings: Have a Happy Meeting.
- **CSPC** Anne K. Chair – Very active and supportive committee. Five of six committee members are here. Three primary working groups: (1) Sponsorship phone meeting – Mondays 8pm EST. (2) Reply to requests for information on sponsorship: 60 contacts in the past year. (3) Literature we're working on, plus maintaining info on our website.
- **CSTCC** Sam E. (on behalf of committee) – Very active committee, we field questions from the Fellowship (and outside the Fellowship) about Steps, Traditions and Concepts. Working on updating description of 12 Concepts. Working with CLC to review drafts for conformance with Steps, Traditions and Concepts.
- **CTIOC** Seth S. (BOT liaison) – Fredrik L. of Sweden Chair. All international members. Focused on providing literature to members worldwide and reaching out to international Intergroups to create international dialog. Working with CICC to find contact info for other international Groups/Intergroups. International Groups are important part of the Fellowship and we need more support.

CCC Chair pointed members to the ABM Binder. This is our 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Business Meeting. Reviewed the color key for the 2019 ABM Schedule: New gray color designates when BDC Chair will address the Conference on Board Elections, which is, according to our By-Laws, the most important reason we meet. ABM Binder also



includes Conference Committee information and contacts, BOT liaisons and BOT Committees, BOT candidate information, CSM 2019, CSM Appendix, By-Laws, and Index of Motions.

Announcements by Executive Director, Pam Martin

ARS member, Nora B., announced that ABM Agenda IFDs/Motions Deadline is 7 pm tonight.

This General Assembly adjourned for the day at 5:56 pm with the Serenity Prayer

## **Wednesday July 24, 2019**

After a scavenger hunt Tuesday night (organized by Sacramento Intergroup) and breakfast the General Assembly began.

### **General Assembly: Wednesday July 24, 2019 – 8:00 am**

- Facilitator – Gabriel G.
- Assistant Facilitator – Nora B.
- Back-up Facilitator – Christina H.
- Timekeeper – Cate B.
- Timekeeper – Greg G.
- Spiritual reminder – Rick B.
- Vote Counters – Not designated

This General Assembly began with a moment of silence and the Serenity Prayer followed by the reading of the:

- 12 Steps – Christian A. (in French)
- 12 Traditions – Kelly R.
- 12 Concepts – Jenny K.

For this General Assembly there were 50 voting members present of 51 checked in: 41 or 80% is the Quorum required to start the General Assembly.

**BDC Chair**, P.A. K. announced that BOT nominations are now open and will close at the last General Assembly tonight.

- Marc S. Nominated Christina H.  
Q – Are you willing to serve on the Board of Trustees? – YES  
Q – Do you meet the 3-year sobriety requirement? – YES
- Ari F. nominated Rick S.  
Q – Are you willing to serve on the Board of Trustees? – YES  
Q – Do you meet the 3-year sobriety requirement? – YES

Note: The 4<sup>th</sup> (final) ABM Agenda will be distributed after the Executive Director and Webmaster reports.

Announcement of the Question of the Day from *the Journal* editor.

### **F.W.S. Executive Director Report**

At the F.W.S. Office we answer phones, help people find meetings, and ship out literature.

Who are we reaching? What are we shipping at the Office? July 2018 – June 2019 Report handed out.

- Shipped 3069 orders with 2262 shipped in box/envelope, 807 other download-only or email outreach items.
- Of the 3069 orders, 2962 (96%) went to US recipients and 107 (4%) to international, even with 25% subsidy.
- International shipments included: 52 to Europe/UK; 21 Australia/New Zealand; 21 N. America (Mexico/Canada); 7 Asia; 6 S. America.

- Who got *the Journal* this year? 174 print subscriptions that are printed and shipped in-house. 20 are international subscriptions (11 Canada, 3 Australia, 1 ea. UK, Brazil, Ireland, Iceland, France, and Spain); there are 40 digital subscribers with 12 1-yr and 28 2-yr subscriptions.
- Who is buying the Basic Text as an e-Book? Available on Amazon and iTunes. 1887 total downloads: 1417 US, 280 UK, 70 Canada, 62 Australia, 18 Germany, 7 France. Also, Brazil, Ireland, Spain, India, Mexico, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Netherlands, Portugal, New Zealand, and Costa Rica. English-only version.

### Questions from the Floor

Q-UK gets shipments sent to NJ, do those count in UK totals?

A-Yes, because end destination is UK.

### F.W.S. Webmaster Report

Beth S. indicated this ABM represents 12 years as the F.W.S. Webmaster and 6<sup>th</sup> ABM. Report is in two parts: 1- *What are we doing now?* 2- *What are we doing next?* and a handout has been provided.

#### What are we doing now?

- F.W.S. website has SSL certificate, so entire site is secure, is mobile friendly, built in WordPress, and is scalable for future growth. 2017 saw some serious outage and speed problems. We have moved to a new hosting company based in San Antonio; negotiated special pricing and moved email server as well, saving over \$700 a year. We now have faster load times, zero outages, a more efficient, reliable, and secure email server. Have received some reports of F.W.S. email going to spam, so we're working on deliverability.
- The front page focuses on the newcomer, explains what S.L.A.A. is and has links to the 8 Core Documents in 19 languages-thank you to CTIOC for that.
- What is in the F.W.S. website?
  - 8 Core documents (12 Concepts are being translated)
  - F.W.S. Store – all literature and recovery items
  - Worldwide Meeting Directory
  - Free digital meeting starter kits (regular and business meeting formats)
  - Online forms for contributions, ABM registration, surveys,
  - Committee Resources, Projects, and Documents, Committees have a Committee Corner on the website where they can post events and flyers and ask for participation from the Fellowship.
  - CSTCC Articles – Discussions of issues and questions posed to the CSTCC over the years by members, Groups and Intergroups, and how those issues relate to the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts. Archived in a searchable data base and is really useful. Latest discusses the presence of a non-member language interpreter at a closed meeting. Real issues with lots of insight. Articles don't represent a consensus of F.W.S. or the CSTCC, but info is really useful.
  - S.L.A.A. event listings for Groups or Intergroups
  - Contacts for F.W.S., BOT, Conference Committees. F.W.S. website fields over 100 support and outreach emails a month.
  - F.W.S. Newsletter (over 1,200 subscribers)
- Website had 248,011 visitors in 2019 (up about 4,000 from last year). Average 74% returning visitors and 26% new.
- 1000+ unique domains link to us from the Internet. Most of those come from Intergroup websites. Also links from counseling/therapy practices, hospitals, universities, addiction treatment centers, and articles

on popular news outlets and talk show websites. On most of those, we are the only “S” fellowship mentioned.

- 203 Countries Reached. Top 10: US, Canada, UK, India, Australia, Italy, Netherlands, Germany, Brazil, and France.
- 947 Registered Groups
- 79 Registered Intergroups
- Store accepts PayPal. Can check out as a guest or create an account. Account allows Intergroups to keep track of orders and \$ spent and easily reorder previous items. Also has Wish List.
- There is a 25% reduction off all international orders in an effort to defray some of the shipping costs, duties and taxes for orders outside the US and Canada. Showed where to find discount code to enter.
- Free shipping code for ABM Delegates, international members can use both codes at once.
- 2060 online orders placed in 2019 (up 319 from 2017).
- Hector hand packed 81,492 items (not including phone and mail orders)
- Online Contributions: we use a cost-effective service for one-time and auto-recurring contributions. Can make an account to keep track of Intergroup giving. Credit, Debit, and e-checks accepted.

#### **What are we doing next?**

- Continuing web development, I welcome feedback and suggestions
- Evaluating Group/Intergroup database to make it easier for newcomers and allow for groups that choose not to be associated with a local intergroup.
- Expanding resources (new literature approved at previous ABMs)
- 2018 membership survey 841 responses (more than double response of 2013 survey) BOT, Conference Committees, and F.W.S. Office will be using this data.

#### **Questions from the Floor**

- **Q**-lots of international interaction with web, is there a way to contact the international Intergroups? Is there a way for Conference Committees to access emails of international Intergroups?  
**A**-You can search on the meeting directory for publicly available emails for international Intergroups. CICC keeps an internal list with private emails. F.W.S./BOT will need to discuss whether those emails could be released with a confidentiality agreement.
- **Q**-Would like to see Conference service tab improved. All the Conference Committees are at the bottom of the page. Makes it hard for newcomers or first-time visitors to see how they can get involved. Could we move the list of committees higher up on the page?  
**A**-I can easily swap the location of that content and I'd love to see some text on that page explaining what the Conference is. I can work with the Committees and the BOT to put a good description on there: What the Conference is and what the Conference Committees do.
- **Q**-Are the CSTCC archives listed on the page of links you provided?  
**A**-Not sure, it's linked on the member resources page and I'll get you that link.
- **Q**-My Intergroup has a hard time keeping track of which Groups are sending 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition contributions to the Intergroup. Is the Qgiv infrastructure that F.W.S. uses for contributions available for Intergroups to tap into?  
**A**-The F.W.S. system would have to connect to every Intergroup's bank account. I can ask if Qgiv does that and it would need to be run through F.W.S. When we register a Group, we assign an ID number and

we ask for that ID when contributions are made so we can acknowledge that Group and keep track of who's giving what. I know some Intergroups have their own similar internal Group ID system. I can let you know what service we use for that.

- **Q-New Meditation book and Anorexia literature – when can we buy them?**

**A-**(Ned, on behalf of BOT/BOC) Anorexia being published in house and has been sent to F.W.S. Meditation book passed on the BOT on two conditions – (1)attorney confirmation that there are no copyright issues, (2) needs to be bid out/priced out because of the size of it, things like the artwork, paper, limited edition with hardcover. Hoping to get all that done and the book published in this Conference year.

- **Q-How long have the F.W.S. employees worked there?**

**A-**That may be a question for Pam. 12 years for me. Pam, I think 7 years. Not sure about Christina. Hector's been there a long time.

- **Q-Is an electronic copy of your report (with website links for 8 Core Documents) available to us?**

**A-**Yes, in supplemental packet in the ABM Digital Binder.

- **Q-What percentage of registered Groups use their ID on group donations?**

**A-**Don't have that on hand. We get cash, checks, PayPal, and online contributions. The office asks for Group/Intergroup IDs so we can assign contributions to Groups, but don't have statistics for online. I can get those from Qgiv because there's a field on the form. It's not a required field because there are also individual contributors who donate not on behalf of a Group. Hard to gauge which contributors are/aren't a Group but I can look and give you some numbers.

**Announcement from Facilitator:** If you are a voting Delegate entering or leaving the room for any reason, please check in with Pam. We need this information to keep track of total voting members in the room.

#### **Distribution of 4<sup>th</sup> ABM Agenda and updated ABM Attachment.**

**CCC Chair** Clarification of 4<sup>th</sup> Version of the ABM Agenda, which includes the corrected draft for "The Gift of No Contact" proposed literature. As a result of just now receiving the appropriate draft of this document, which is the first item on the Agenda, we are postponing that Motion (19n01/18-08) until this afternoon. We will start with the second item on the Agenda (19n02/19-01) so that you have time to read the new draft of "The Gift of No Contact."

#### **19n02/19-01 IFD: Discuss Draft Chapters of the S.L.A.A. 12 & 12 Book Project**

Submitter Comments: 90 seconds

- **CLC 12x12 subcommittee facilitator:** This collection of essays has been in progress for a number of years, I believe at an ABM 12 years ago it was asked that this project be started. Here are six chapters, we think we'll have a majority of the book ready for an IFD next year, and in two years have complete book as an IFD. It's slow. We want to make this the best we can. Want it to be a great asset to S.L.A.A. and think it will sell well. Our goal is to make this the best 12x12 book out there for all 12-Step groups, but especially for any "S" groups. We've sent this IFD and other chapters to meetings and overall 90% of comments have been very positive.

BOT Comments: None

Conference Committee Comments not on the ABM Agenda: 90 seconds per comment

- **CSTCC –** We have reviewed this literature. We find the six draft chapters of the S.L.A.A. 12 & 12 consistent with the Steps and Traditions and support the further development of this important piece of literature.

15 minutes allocated for discussion of this IFD at 1 minute or less.

Comments:

- Do we risk future sales through electronic distribution of this literature now in its current format?
- Thanks to everyone working on this project, grateful it's in process, grateful it's an IFD. Lots of positive comments and some concerns and suggestions we've detailed and will turn over to the authors. We hope the literature process will include more discussion, and input from groups taking it on to review see how it feels with their experience. The AA 12x12, which we're guided to use, is an amazing document and we're hoping this will be the same quality but pitched to our needs. We look forward to the back and forth improvement of the document before it gets to the BOT.
- One of our meetings has taken on this document, read it 15 minutes at a time in their meeting, discussed it, and find it in line with their experience, strength, and hope. They love this piece of literature, and support this project.
- Thanks to everyone working on this, on behalf of my Intergroup, advocate in the spirit of progress not perfection and hope we can push forward and be ok with it not being a perfect document. Go ahead and push it out to Groups and Fellowship and we can revise it in the future.
- My meeting uses this document and feedback is overwhelmingly positive. Personally, it is a very serious project we are working on it very seriously, it's an amazing group working on it 2x a month, and whenever we distribute a chapter, we include an introduction that warns people it's not Conference approved.
- My Intergroup supports this, would desperately like a 12x12. My issues and concerns: Page 23 2<sup>nd</sup> to last paragraph, every sentence begins with "we." The last paragraph, of 10 sentences, 8 begin with "we." I appreciate this is about our experience, but I've never seen so many "we's" in a document. I recommend finding ways to state things without using "we" and "us." I implore the BOT to start looking for an editor/writer to give this one voice and make it something so valuable and worthy that other fellowships will want to buy it.
- I attend several meetings where we've been reading the draft aloud and feedback is overwhelmingly positive and people are asking when it will be published. To hear it read aloud is a different experience than reading it alone. I think it's functioning on the levels we hoped it would.
- Great job on a huge effort. We would like to see more inclusiveness (most of us, some of us, for example – not all things apply to all people), and less jargon or an explanation of jargon (what do we mean by denial, abstinence, etc.)
- I'm drawn to AA 12x12 because of the stories that explain why each Tradition existed. The essays in this draft are great but I ask the subcommittee to include historical information on why, for example, the 12<sup>th</sup> Step is worded differently, 3<sup>rd</sup> Tradition is the long form, and other ways S.L.A.A. is different.
- I counsel sponsees to stay away from absolutes. In the beginning there's an absolute statement "we were all in pain, and perhaps were directed here by a therapist or relationship partner, but S.L.A.A. was never a place we intended to be." That's not everyone's experience. Not that absolutes can never be used, but use them judiciously.
- Thank you to the committee, supremely grateful for this literature. My experience with this – Groups are actually reading from this draft. Some resistance from members because it's new, but I never hear anyone saying they don't get anything from it. I remember working with the Basic Text and hearing the same thing take what you like leave the rest. I speak in gratitude for the service of the committee and look forward to the 12x12 being published.

- I want to note the two different purposes I hear. 1. Making the text the best it can be, the best 12x12 available. 2. Progress not perfection, use it while we have it, get it out as soon as possible. I'm in favor of both of those things, but would like us to choose one direction to pursue.
- The addict part of me deeply resonates with this text, the anorexic part of me does not. My request to the writing group is to incorporate the anorexic viewpoint and experience into this text.
- Thank you for all your work with this text, it's amazing. It's very clear in the beginning of our Basic Text that the solution is coming from AA. From the AA Big Book and 12x12. I would love to have that at the beginning of this 12x12 because the solution is there. Fantastic to have our own text and important to refer back to the AA origins.

The time for discussion of this IFD has expired. This IFD is closed for this ABM. The information gathered during discussion will be captured in the official minutes of this ABM. Space will be reserved for a Motion related to this IFD in the First Version of the ABM Agenda for next year's ABM.

Session ended with announcements at 9:32am. Return 2:15 pm Sharp

## **General Assembly – Wednesday July 24, 2019 2:15pm**

After Conference Committee meetings and lunch, the General Assembly reconvened.

- Facilitator – Anne K.
- Assistant Facilitator – Rich K.
- Back-up Facilitator – Kirsten C.
- Time keepers – Greg G., Cate B.
- Spiritual reminder – Rick B.
- Vote Counters – Jenny K., Seven S.
- Mic Paddles – Jaclyn P., Kelly R.

For this General Assembly there were 50 voting members present of 51 checked in: 41 or 80% is the Quorum required to start the General Assembly.

**BDC Chair** opened the floor for Board nominations. There were none.

Announcement of the Question of the Day from *the Journal* editor.

### **19o01/18-08 Motion: Approve “The Gift of No Contact”**

Submitter Comments: 90 seconds

- CHRC Representative: I hope you have had a chance to read the revised version in today's Agenda. We chose this topic because [no contact] is used frequently but there has been no guidance from the Fellowship on it. We've gotten lots of positive feedback and request your support.

BOT Comments

- BOT supports production of literature and looks forward to having another tool available in the store for the Fellowship.

Conference Committee Comments not on the ABM Agenda: 90 seconds per comment.

- CSPC: Approves this pamphlet as another valuable addition to the literature for our Fellowship.

### Pros and Cons

- Pro – Our Groups/Intergroup strongly support approving this literature.
- Con – Literature is incredibly important, as member of CCC I wish there was full discussion time allotted even if we don't make it through the whole Agenda. Speaking for Chicago Intergroup we have used this pamphlet and love it, thanks to the author/authors. One concern is the word “qualifier” which is

adapted from Al-Anon – only place I’ve ever heard it – where it means “I react to another’s disease.” Not that they “cause my disease,” which is how it seems to be used in this document. From the dictionary – a qualifier is something that modifies something else. It reinforces the idea that you changed me into this. I wish there was a definition and I wish we had another word.

- Pro – I learned about no contact a long time ago and I’ve passed it along to others. It really helped me focus on myself and especially not my qualifier.
- Con – I could easily be turned pro, but this literature needs more info on how to adapt my qualifier/no contact to a close family member (for example, parent or sibling). It’s fantastic for a partner or ex or someone who needs to be cut out of my life. Only a small paragraph talks about how it can be applied to family members That can be so different and nuanced with a close family member. It needs more sponsor direction or something that directs you to another resource. Needs to reinforce it doesn’t have to apply in that way in regards to family. I implore you to add something to address these issues.
- Pro – We got overwhelmingly positive feedback from Groups that used the old version of this document. A well -needed document. The spiritual benefits and recovery benefits of no contact are hidden in all the practicalities and could be longer and nearer the beginning.
- Con – For those individuals who experience a mix of addiction and anorexia, the type of control exercised via no contact can be harmful to anorexics because it can be a loss of sobriety. Would love to see more in the document warning how this can track with anorexia.

**Q on Voting**-When literature is approved, is the content set in stone, never to be changed in the future?

**A**-When literature is approved, there can be a percentage of change after the fact. Refer to CSM [Appendix I](#) for explanation of the process.

30 seconds of silence before the vote.

50/51 voting members present.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Vote 45-4-1 for 19o01/18-08 Motion**

#### Minority Opinions

**Point of Clarification**-Is literature handled differently by the ARS? If it is rejected can it be reintroduced immediately, and you don’t have to wait a year or two?

**A**-Yes, literature rejected by the Conference is eligible to be resubmitted as a Motion the following year. Any non-literature item that is rejected must wait a Conference year before coming back.

- The use of the word qualifier, to me, emphasizes that it’s somebody else’s problem or fault. I was upset by somebody and I told my sponsor “they pushed my buttons, they triggered me” and my sponsor replied “why do you still have buttons to push?” I need to be connected to my Higher Power and then I guarantee, somebody at the same level of sick, I won’t be interested in them or they in me. My picker has been healed. Words matter in literature and this word has a very different meaning in another fellowship. I prefer “acting out partner” or some other word.
- I haven’t read the whole thing, so interrupt me if I’m incorrect. This is a great piece of literature and I want it to pass. I don’t see that the word qualifier is defined. The term is dehumanizing. Another fellowship that originated the term has removed it. Other options: my ex, my alcoholic, my acting out partner, my playmate.

30 seconds of silence before the vote.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vote 42-7-1 for 19o01/18-08 Motion passes with 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority and is binding on the BOT.**

## 19n03/19-02 IFD: Discuss the H.O.W. Step and Sponsorship Guide

Submitter Comments: 90 seconds

- H.O.W. writing subcommittee representative: Draft is the latest version of H.O.W. materials. We changed layout so it's easier to understand how it works if you've never done the Steps before. Easier to use so people in areas where no one else has worked the Steps in this way can also use it. We want feedback on how it's working for people, and how people feel about the material itself.

BOT Comments: None

Conference Committee Comments not on the ABM Agenda: 90 seconds per comment

- CDC: Great example of diverse meeting format and diverse form of recovery. Last year several delegates held special meeting to share their H.O.W. knowledge and expertise, their experience strength and hope, and they were very passionate and committed. Very glad to see them back with this material. I've used H.O.W. in another area and it offered me the support and structure I needed to get me out of addiction.
- CSTCC: We believe the proposed H.O.W. guide provides another way for suffering addicts to work the 12 Steps of S.L.A.A. and support its publication.
- CTIOC: H.O.W., which comes from the UK [from Australia but draft H.O.W. literature from the UK] is an efficient way to work the 12 Steps, we support integrating this approach as a sign of the international aspect of our Fellowship.

20 minutes allocated for discussion of this IFD at 1 minute or less.

Comments

- Interesting to me that we are in a Fellowship that produces a variety of material on how to work our Steps. Is it because original authors of the Basic Text didn't tell us how to work our Steps? We have the Anorexia Step booklet, Companion to Chapter 4; we'll be looking at the 12-Step Workbook, and H.O.W. I support generating new material to work the Steps, it's not one size fits all.
- Concerns about copyright implications of taking material that is in use in another fellowship and have we talked to that fellowship or considered this?
- From an email I received: I treat my addiction as a life or death situation...joined S.L.A.A. UK...huge fan of H.O.W. program... continue to be sponsored in it despite move to US...goal to finish the H.O.W. Steps and start a H.O.W. meeting in US...reasons I love H.O.W.: timed outreach style teaches boundaries, awareness on codependency, how to simply listen, and mirroring. Given mandatory 3 calls/day and structure, the program is less sponsor-centered. Other tools of the program: Higher Power, outreach calls, meetings, etc. are intrinsically encouraged...and there's more. This person is very happy with H.O.W. even though she's now based in the US.
- In the CMRC breakout we identified deficiencies in culture of S.L.A.A., a lot of which are addressed by H.O.W. approach. Stressing the importance of service, creating culture of sobriety. This is one approach. I belong to another fellowship where there are multiple conference-approved workbooks on the 12 Steps. Take what you like, leave the rest. This is a well-written, useful piece of literature. I support more prominent disclaimers that it's only one way to work the Steps.
  - Intergroup supports adaptation of this literature. Some concern about being ready to sponsor at Step 3 because they were not in a position to sponsor others at Step 3. Personally, I'm taking two sponsees through the Steps using H.O.W. and finding it very valuable. Sponsees are eager and excited and getting a lot out of working the Steps in this way.
  - Intergroup in favor of this tool. On behalf of myself, it gave me clear guidelines to work the Steps, and as a sponsor also clear guidelines and protects me from my ego.



- Intergroup strongly in favor of this document. Sponsorship can be a huge problem. Very helpful tool for those who need structure.
- Thanks to writers for their hard work. Too many questions! Sort of daunting.
- I opposed this last year. I hear of lots of people in meetings, cities, countries who can't find a sponsor who's worked the Steps. This is a fast, easy way of getting it done. I don't like any part of it myself, but people in our meetings swear by it, are passionate about it, say it saved their life. It works.
- My area is 95% H.O.W. We are very torn and conflicted. Lots of people are disillusioned with H.O.W. First three Steps are very good and the idea of pushing people into sponsorship is good for building fellowship. The quality of questions drops after that. Many people stop at 4, never do 4, and don't move on. Many people resist starting because they hear daunting stories about calling 3 people a day to talk about your life. That only suits certain personalities. It has turned away anorexics and probably constrained the growth of S.L.A.A. in countries that have picked it up. Not everyone loves talking about themselves four times a day. It's terrible for people with social anxiety. Some of the questions are re-traumatizing. Some people have been unemployed for 4-10 years after working S.L.A.A. H.O.W. because it brings up childhood trauma in an unsupported manner.
- Our Intergroup finds the concept is very good and endorse the literature, but structure and writing need a lot of work. Possibly because it came from another country?
- **Point of Clarification**-Does asking a point of clarification take away from my time at the mic?  
A-No.
- **Point of Clarification**-What is the name of this document?  
A-The H.O.W. Step and Sponsorship Guide
- Top of document says "S.L.A.A. H.O.W. format for working the Steps." Three times it calls itself the "H.O.W. Program" That's contradictory. Uses the term "Holy Bible" is that necessary? Bible instead? Can denigrate others who have holy scriptures. Need to capitalize Fellowship, Steps. We need a style guide for these kinds of things.
- Haven't worked Steps using H.O.W. On the comment about starting to sponsor at Step 3. Step 12 "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to sex and love addicts and to practice these principles in all areas of our lives." For me at least that's the guideline. To do the Steps first, then start sponsoring.
- Intergroup was very concerned about the proposal. It is confusing to hear that it's being presented as one way but that's not what the document says. Very affirmative they're proposing "the way", not "a way" to work the Steps. Would be confusing to adopt it as Conference approved and then try to explain that it's only "a way" when the document doesn't say that.
- I'm excited for creators of H.O.W. in the UK because this process ushers in an amazing way to improve this document, make it more accessible, help more people recover, and possibly be used worldwide. A lot of good comments. Other points: Use of the word mandatory. In the AA program of recovery (Big Book), even the Steps are offered as a suggestion. Needs to be an overview.
- I've seen this adapted as an idea and a way for some of my friends. One of them shared: "H.O.W. as a structured and disciplined approach to working the Steps gave me the framework to achieve sexual and emotional sobriety. It was life changing. I saw clear patterns and was able to create bottom lines to help me maintain black and white sobriety. It helped me become disciplined." From her sponsee: "It's a bit like recovery boot camp – rigid and unforgiving, but life changing."
- First got my recovery in a food program modeled on H.O.W. and it changed my life. As an addict/anorexic – the ability to have that much strict control over my food abstinence was deeply

intoxicating and it did a lot of harm. I came into S.L.A.A. because the culture expressed there, at least in my area, is opposite of that H.O.W.-inspired food fellowship. If approved, I would strongly oppose our local literature person stocking it because I think it would have a negative impact.

- My experience is in working multiple fellowships. The Steps are the same, there are multiple ways to work them. Just because it doesn't work for someone does not mean we shouldn't look at approving it. I agree with a lot of what has been said, both pro and con. Please keep an open mind. There's more than one way to do the work. Take what you like leave the rest.
- Would like to see the words "must" and "suggested requirements" removed from the document. I've been a member of CEA HOW for 15 years and feel some shame at every meeting hearing "we must do this" and "we must do that." I don't follow it that way so I've been able to stay and stay abstinent. Use "we have a structure that works for us," instead.

This IFD is closed for this ABM. The information gathered during discussion will be captured in the official minutes of this ABM. Space will be reserved for a Motion related to this IFD in the First Version of the ABM Agenda for next year's ABM.

This General Assembly closed with announcements at 3:13pm.

### **General Assembly - Wednesday July 24, 2019 3:30pm**

After a short break the General Assembly reconvened.

- Facilitator – Scott F.
- Assistant Facilitator – Ned J.
- Back-up Facilitator – Carol S.
- Time keepers – Greg G., David M.
- Spiritual reminder – Mona E.
- Vote Counters – Jenny K., Seven S.

For this General Assembly there were 50 voting members present of 51 checked in: 41 or 80% is the Quorum required to start the General Assembly.

Announcement of the Question of the Day from *the Journal* editor.

BDC Chair asked if there were any nominations to the Board. There were none.

### **19n04/19-03 By-Laws Motion: Approve Change to Article VII, Section 3, Officer Qualifications**

Submitter Comments: 90 seconds

- Learned after last ABM that one person was holding two corporate office positions on the BOT. Corporate officers meet periodically between BOT calls to conduct business by group conscience. Tradition 2 states our Higher Power makes his will known through group conscience. Concerned that there are not enough people in an emergent situation – when there are not 9 deciding it should be 3 deciding, not 2 or 1 and the way the Bylaws are written it could be one person. I know Texas law may be different, but our By-Laws, the framework by which our Fellowship functions, say one person could be all three officers. That is not supported in our Concepts or Traditions.

BOT Comments:

- BOT unanimously opposes this Motion, which removes flexibility the BOT occasionally needs to have one person hold two offices, which was the case for a few months last year. The proposed incorrectly states one person could serve all three offices; this is prohibited by Texas law; each Board member gets one vote. The BOT provided a written statement explaining their position in more detail.

Conference Committee Comments not on the ABM Agenda: 90 seconds per comment

- CBC: There wasn't sufficient group conscience and there were not enough unbiased people for this committee to make a statement.

#### Pros and Cons

**Point of Clarification**-How many Corporate Officers are there?

**A-Three** – Chairman/President, Secretary, Treasurer

- Pro – Intergroup concern is for loss of group conscience. This is a spiritual program, we are led spiritually, and that's essential. Don't want loss of that to occur. This is a useful change to protect our group conscience.
- Con – Speaking for myself, I was elected to be both Chair and Treasurer of the BOT last year. No one in their right mind would choose to do that. It was a necessity at the time and as soon as able we changed that. In my three years as a Corporate Officer, the Officers met by conference call one time. Regardless of the number of Officer positions I hold, I only get one vote at BOT meetings. This handcuffs the Officers and the BOT for temporary situations.
- Pro – It's not about extra votes, it's when action needs to take place between Board calls and you can't get all the people together, the Board Officers meet, come up with a plan of action, and actualize what they need to do. That's where I'm concerned there are not enough votes and not enough people to talk for or against something, it says here adhering to the laws of the State of Texas is enough of a restriction to protect the Fellowship. If this were a \$300K/year corporation, yes, that's awesome. This is a 12-Step Fellowship and we need to adhere to and make sure we infuse our Corporation with enough spirituality to make sure we can hear HP's voice. If we reduce that avenue from three to two or one, it reduces that avenue.
- Con – On behalf of my Intergroup, if this change goes through it would hamstring the Board when they are hurting for members. It's clear they utilize this small loophole only when needed and have no desire to consolidate power. On behalf of myself I'm very bothered by BOTs view of the By-Laws as a constitution, and think they should be more open to their changes. Thomas Jefferson quote "Each generation should have the solemn opportunity to update the constitution every 19 or 20 years, thus allowing it to be handed on with periodic repairs from generation to generation to the end of time."
- Pro – In our Commonwealth, the solution would be to appoint an alternative Officer from BOT. A benefit being that it's the pathway to eventually holding that position. There's a reason there's three minds coming together and it needs to be three minds on the executive team. If your constitution allows it, each Officer should have an alternative in place in case of emergency

**Point of Clarification**-Does Texas law prevent one person from holding all three positions?

**A-Texas** law says President and Secretary cannot be the same person.

**Point of Clarification**-Is it unusual for the whole Board to not want something to happen?

**A-There** was one other time while I was on the Board that the Board was unanimous against something.

**Q on Voting**-Because it's a By-Law, is there a voting requirement for the Motion to pass?

**A-By-Law** changes require 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority, in this case 34 to pass.

The count is now **51 voting members present**.

30 seconds of silence before the vote

**1<sup>st</sup> Vote 14-33-4 for 19n04/19-03 By-Laws Motion**

## Minority Opinion

- There's a good governance reason for each office to be held by a different person. Good governance is not about not trusting our Board, or about doing things that are convenient though they might fly in the face of good governance, or about having integrity. It's about being seen to have integrity by outsiders, and for protecting the Officers themselves. Were anything to go wrong, and in a potential investigation, anyone would question why a corporation with three clearly defined officers gave two of the jobs to the same person. I don't think "we were in a hurry and there was no one else to do it" will fly.
- In the business world we don't combine those roles There are reasons to keep those roles separated and we have people in roles all the time they may not be a perfect fit for in Corporate Officer positions and people could step up and take those roles. Until we have fewer than three trustees there's always someone who can take a position.
- In research on 12 Concepts, they are fashioned after Tradition 2, "for our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority, a loving god as this power may be expressed through our group conscience. Our leaders are trusted servants, they do not govern." To limit the avenues for HP to make its message known is a detriment to us and our Fellowship. It's not a business, it has to have spirituality. [AA] had to go beyond the Traditions to create the 12 Concepts to make sure fellowship stays healthy and spiritual in all its activities. I'm concerned with decision making going from nine to three to two or possibly one.

**Point of Clarification**-What does a yes or no vote mean? Does a yes mean two offices can be held by the same member?

**A**-A yes vote means two offices *cannot* be held by the same Board member.

- I can think of at least two years where a member of the BOT was actually running the Office in the case of training a new General Manager or when a General Manager left. If the person who was running the Office was the Chair and the Treasurer, they could decide they should be paid to run the Office and vote themselves in a raise and as Treasurer cut the check. We have a lot of safeguards and this adds one more layer of protection for the Fellowship.

30 seconds of silence before the vote

## 2nd Vote 25-21-5 for 19n04/19-03 By-Laws Motion

**Point of Order**-It has failed to get 2/3rds majority twice; it has not flipped sides. The people who voted yes in first vote had a chance to speak. It still did not pass by 2/3rds and I believe the Motion should be closed.

**A**-That is correct.

This Motion did not pass by group conscience of the Conference. This Motion is closed for this ABM and removed from the Agenda.

**Point of Clarification**-Can I challenge the group conscience?

**A**-You can only challenge the group conscience if the Motion was approved.

**Point of Clarification**-Can the Motion return to the Agenda next year?

**A**-We will get back to you with an answer.

## 19n05/19-04 IFD: Discuss “Super Service Dog” Brochure

Submitter Comments: 90 seconds

- CSC created a cartoon service pamphlet in 2015 and feedback from several Intergroups and ABM said there was too much text, including the pyramid, which is included on the back of the new draft. We started this draft in 2018 as revision of the 2015 cartoon draft. Different areas encourage service on meeting, Intergroup, and especially Conference Committee levels. Intended to be a color brochure.

Conference Committee Comments not on the ABM Agenda: 90 seconds per comment

- CSC: Creator is a talented graphic artist. It's different and it makes you look at it, makes you read it, which is great. Biggest goal of advertising is to get you to look at it. I approve it and thanks, Ari, for the hard work.
- CSTCC: We reviewed this literature. The brochure is in keeping with S.L.A.A. 12 Concepts and we appreciate the innovative approach explaining the benefits of service and support its publication.
- CSPC: We are delighted to see this one-page, tri-fold, easy to pass out, easy to see brochure that will encourage people to do service. People were concerned the previous brochure was outdated. Service is essential and it's hard to get people involved because they don't know what it is. This is an easy way to introduce it and we hope it goes forward.
- CHRC: The document is great. We like the simplicity of it as well as how it incorporates ideas to get people involved with others, which helps them develop boundaries in working with others

10 minutes allocated for discussion of this IFD at 1 minute or less.

Comments

- UK Intergroup has talked a lot about how to encourage service. One problem is people don't understand the structure, there's a lot of jargon, and it looks like something serious and difficult. I support the style of this document; it makes it clear and appealing to people.
- San Diego Intergroup had negative reaction to service dog title of the brochure.
- Good idea. Very few people in S.L.A.A. Sweden know what ABM/Intergroup is. It explains it very easily and doesn't even need translation to Swedish, it's so clear.
- All for a service pamphlet. Some things I see: grammar issues, TM on one of the dog images, would need to get a license for use by S.L.A.A. I'm OK with the dog theme, some people might not be.
- Orange County Intergroup: Groups read it in meetings and business meetings. Negative feedback included referring to us as dogs, looks like a cartoon, they're treating us like children. I interpreted those comments as coming from a place of ego. Positive comments included encourages service, easy to read, colorful, it's fun. Service can be fun. Culture of this pamphlet has already infiltrated our Intergroup and I've been referenced as a super service dog many times,
- North East Ohio Intergroup: This got more comments, more immediate comments than anything else I presented at Intergroup. Well liked for simplicity of presentation, not liked for characterization of dogs.
- Tampa Bay Intergroup, when first introduced people were skeptical of dog reference. When they saw it, said it was very cute and appealing and really loved it.
- San Francisco/East Bay Intergroup -In Islamic culture, if we are concerned with how S.L.A.A. is perceived internationally, a dog is a difficult symbol for characterizing what a person would be.
- The criticisms are valid. I think the people with those viewpoints may already know of ways to be of service. And I think the people responding to pamphlet as cute fun way of being of service need that inspiration. The people who don't respond to it can maybe figure out their own ways to be of service.

The people who do respond maybe hadn't thought about service and find this inspiring and whimsical. I can use this with down in the dumps sponsees and ask them, have you checked off all these boxes? Do you get there early, help set up chairs, offer to talk to newcomers? Because sometimes they can't think of stuff on their own and this can spark some inspiration to help get them out of themselves.

- I was bullied as a kid, being called names was not helpful, so I was concerned about use of dog theme. Then I saw the pamphlet. It sets the perfect tone, it's not serious, it's fun, playful, and colorful. Definitely check legal requirements for pictures. There are a lot of ands in one sentence, commas can be helpful. Recommend removing Inspiration line – it is not Conference approved. We used to have a “Do's List” CPIC created. It has a new name, don't know what it is, but there are other documents, like the Ladder of Service you could mention on the back.
- I ask originating authors to think about ADA standards of color and size of print/font for accessibility. I'd be happy to share my airplane row with an S.L.A.A. Super Service Dog.
- I appreciate that the pamphlet asks the reader to consider their own strengths, which can provide affirmation and validation of what they're good at and use that as a strength to give back to the Fellowship. Revisit the word qualify (share and qualify), in light of earlier discussion today.
- Ontario Intergroup is strongly in favor of this brochure. Really like it and want to see it published. Document. Speaking on behalf of myself, what about Super Service Llama to avoid negative connotations?

#### **Spiritual Reminder**-30 seconds of silence

This IFD is closed for this ABM. The information gathered during discussion will be captured in the official minutes of this ABM. Space will be reserved for a Motion related to this IFD in the First Version of the ABM Agenda for next year's ABM.

General Assembly closed with announcements at 4:31 for a short break

### **General Assembly - Wednesday July 24, 2019 4:45pm**

After a short break the General Assembly reconvened.

- Facilitator – Rick B.
- Assistant Facilitator – Seth S.
- Back-up Facilitator – Kelly R.
- Time keepers – Greg G., Cate B.
- Spiritual reminder – Mona E.
- Vote Counters – Jenny K., Seven S.
- Mic Paddles – Kirsten C., Jaclyn P.

For this General Assembly there were 49 voting members present of 51 checked in: 41 or 80% is the Quorum required to start the General Assembly.

Announcement of the Question of the Day from *the Journal* editor.

BDC Chair asked if there were any nominations to the Board. Nominations will close at the end of this General Assembly.

Former Board members shared their experience, strength, and hope, and why they served on the Board.

- Rick B: Came to ABM as a volunteer, was Delegate for three years, was appointed to the BOT, finished out my term and was elected to another term. Served about 5 ½ years. I got to work on parts of me and my character defects I couldn't work on anywhere else. I got to work on my triggers and I got to give back to this Fellowship that not only saved my life but gave me a life worth living. Not even AA could do

that for me. Being able to give back and work with people who not only care about the Fellowship and have a passion for it, but truly love it was a wonderful, nurturing, growing experience and I'm grateful for it.

- Rita H.: I'm a sex and love addict and was a Board member from 2008-2013. It was like going back to university. I had to learn about non-profits, and corporations, and Board of Trustees, but it suited me, I loved it. Do I want to do it again? NO! But I'm here, I'm still kicking, and I'm still helping. My Board mentor at the time was this lovely young man.
- Chris M.: Look at these people, and at Nancy over there. Being a colleague with these people on the Board was one of the most heartwarming experiences. Program saved my life so I really wanted to give back to it but I didn't know I'd get so much from being on the Board. It's been absolutely wonderful and a true honor. If I added it right, I've been to three ABMs and on the Board five additional years and I'm telling you it's really worth it. I never acted out in those eight years. I didn't have a minute to do it, but it is so worth it and developing these lifelong relationships with these wonderful people, it's a miracle.
- Susan G.: I completed my sixth year of service at the last ABM. It was a wonderful experience being part of a team and at first, I wondered what I could bring to this because I'm a therapist, and I thought the Board needed business people with all this experience. But actually, what we need is someone who is willing to be of service, who can be a team player and it doesn't mean you always have to agree but you can disagree without being disagreeable. That's a big lesson I learned in my time with the Board. I'm glad I did it and I encourage anyone who's thinking about doing it, please let P.A. know.
- Rick B.: I'd like to add one more thing. I worked in a grocery store. I was a cake decorator. I came onto the Board and I had to learn how to use Word. And Excel, is that what they call it? I gave my very first PowerPoint presentation here. I spent three hours trying to get a triangle upside down and couldn't do it and one of the Trustees said, "There, let me help you," and it took him three seconds. I learned things I wouldn't have learned anywhere else. You don't have to be a lawyer or intellectual.
- Rich K.: I wouldn't change what I have done. It's been a phenomenal opportunity to serve the people here and the people that you serve and filter down. It's absolutely worth it. If you're interested, even if you need to think about it. There will be two positions eligible for appointment after this ABM. Reach out to P.A. or another Board member, ask one of the former Board members, and consider doing service.

There were no nominations.

### **19n06/19-05 IFD: Discuss Adding "Social Media" to the 11<sup>th</sup> Tradition.**

Submitter Comments: 90 seconds

- Submitter Representative: Social media in Sweden has exploded and we have seen challenges with people that didn't intend to become public with things they entered into social media. The point of this IFD is to make people more aware they should take care when using social media.

BOT Comments

- The BOT will need to examine all copyright issues that might require the consent of AA to our change of the Tradition. The BOT recognizes that if the Conference approves a change to one of the Traditions, the Board would sell all inventory of each piece of literature that contains the old text of the Tradition before changing that item to reflect the new text of the Tradition.

Conference Committee Comments not on the ABM Agenda: 90 seconds per comment

- CSTCC: We do not support revising Tradition 11 to include social media for two reasons. The term public media, which is already in the Tradition covers the public part of social media. There are S.L.A.A.

members who use social media to communicate in non-public ways with other members. Adding this term could cause confusion for those members.

15 minutes allocated for discussion of this IFD at 1 minute or less.

#### Comments

- Orange County Intergroup: I can appreciate that S.L.A.A. needs some direction with the public media aspect of our culture, I don't feel it's appropriate to change our Traditions because public media covers social media. The complications of this change outweigh the benefits. Personally, I believe social media is a problem in sex and love addiction.
- Chicago/Milwaukee Intergroup: I appreciate the need for it but it seems like social media is constantly evolving, and what is it really? Every app seems to want to bring that in to play. I pay bills with an app and they call it a "story" Tell your friends what you're paying for and what you're buying. Interact with your buddies. Can I just pay the cash?
- Speaking for myself not all social media is public. This is an anonymity issue and I agree the Traditions are important. But anonymity is an issue in regard to public information. I use a social media app with my sponsees. It's a private group, we invite people in and use it to do gratitude lists, give each other boosts, post memes, and I don't want to limit that. Not posting publicly is covered in the Tradition as it is written.
- San Francisco/East Bay: Many of us work at these tech giants, and understanding the mechanics of how these things work, one of the things that makes social media, and any public media problematic, is the platform is not under your control and we're not explicitly consenting to who sees what you're disclosing. I record all my calls except the ones I blacklist. Those get automatically uploaded into my Google drive, and are saved, outside of my control in a platform owned and operated by Google. I understand the concern, but not having a deep enough understanding about what goes on behind the scenes, I feel like we're reacting without knowing what we're jumping into. This requires much deeper discussion.
- Washington DC Metro Intergroup: We would like tips or guidance to help individuals in the Fellowship maintain their anonymity online.
- For myself, if we were talking about the 11<sup>th</sup> Tradition today, writing it now, no one would say TV falls under other public media. Social media is the #1 thing done on the Internet and it's a huge part of our lives. As such it should be included. It's bigger than TV, press, radio, and film. Should definitely be added to the 11<sup>th</sup> Tradition. Also, please add an Oxford comma to the suggested new wording.
- San Antonio Intergroup: In favor because social media is prevalent and the words "other public media" are general and people don't understand what that means. If you say social media, everyone in this room has a picture, thought, word attached to it and know what it means. To say that in a meeting would carry the message we are trying to get across about anonymity on the internet. We didn't consider the literature factor because the Traditions appear on every piece of literature that we sell.
- Social media is a huge topic that needs to be addressed. One concern is that adding social media to the Tradition could limit how we could potentially attract people to our group (YouTube, for example). Consider adding social media to our Guidelines for Dealing with the Media. This would not incur costs and would not have as much impact, while still being able to make the point.
- Intergroup: Would we need permission from AA? Will it bring clarity? One suggestion use "all public media" instead of listing press, radio, TV, etc. Or don't change it at all.
- Australia: We have been trying closed social media to do recovery work and it's reaching anorexics and people in remote communities. I think it would severely curtail our ability to carry the message to anorexics if we couldn't use communication features of social media. I think there's a lot of confusion



about the meaning of anonymity. It's different in S.L.A.A. We are less likely to be out there in public media. I would appreciate the CSTCC addressing the issue of anonymity, including how to use social media in the spirit of the principles.

- Personally, when the CSTCC voted on the statement for this IFD I was in favor. Having listened to the comments, I believe there's a point to be made for modernizing this Tradition. I don't think adding "social media" is the answer. We could look at the overall phrasing to modernize it so we don't have to revise it again in a year or five or ten because of technology changes.

This IFD is closed for this ABM. The information gathered during discussion will be captured in the official minutes of this ABM. Space will be reserved for a Motion related to this IFD in the First Version of the ABM Agenda for next year's ABM.

### **19n07/19-06 Motion: Add an 18-Month Sobriety Medallion**

Submitter Comments: 90 seconds

- CMRC: In the spirit of member retention, we think the medallion will help to publicly acknowledge sobriety to ourselves, to our Higher Power, and to our Fellows. It's a way to be of service, to show that it is possible and that it's ok to have a slip and come back and start over. In 2018 we sold 723 1-year medallions and 337 two-year medallions. An 18-month medallion will help bridge that gap and encourage people to continue on to their second year.

BOT Comments: None

Conference Committee Comments not on ABM Agenda: None

#### Pros and Cons

- Pro – Speaking for myself, I really enjoy chips, I carry them with me. It's a tangible thing that reminds me of the work I've done, and why I'm doing it. After a year you have this momentous occasion, at 18 months, having something more to celebrate would have been good to help me keep going.
- Con – None
- Pro – I have experienced that sobriety chips were so close and dear to me as I hit milestones. I carry them with me on a key chain with a pocket, and my sobriety date is written on the outside. I know the 18-month medallion will help because I remember it was a long time in between.
- Con – None
- Pro – I believe in coins, I have a 9 year from here, a Higher Power coin, and a 14-year coin from my food program. This medallion won't do much for my coin collection, but it's important for a lot of people to have that validation. It takes a lot of effort to get to a year. To have a little boost halfway through the second year is a great idea and could really make a difference.
- Con – None

**Point of Clarification**-What is the anticipated cost over the normal cost of a medallion to offset the \$220 one-time setup fee?

**A**-Sold at \$5.50 each (same price as other medallions), we will need to sell about 40 to recoup setup costs.

The count is now **51/51 voting members present**.

30 seconds of silence before the vote

**1<sup>st</sup> Vote 50-1-0 for 19n07/19-06 Motion**

No one from the minority opinion spoke. The first vote stands.

**19n07/19-06 Motion passes with 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority and is binding on the BOT.** This Motion is closed for this ABM and removed from the Agenda.

### **19n08/19-07 IFD: Discuss Conference Committee Project Development and Budgeting Process**

Submitter Comments: 90 seconds

- CFC: We are looking for ideas from the Fellowship/Conference on how you can be supported in the project development/budgeting process. Some ideas we already have: have a set budget (like \$100) for every committee for copies etc. so you don't have to think about that; what are some stepping stones/markers/recommendations throughout the year? What are some things the CFC, CCC, or Chairs call can do to support you and your projects through the year? I want to highlight: it's not policing ("why aren't you spending that money?"), it's how can we support you so the energy you put in carries the message to the still suffering addict and uses the tools and budget at your disposal to carry the message beyond this room?

BOT Comments: None

Conference Committee Comments not on the ABM Agenda: None

10 minutes allocated for discussion of this IFD at 1 minute or less.

Comments

- From my personal experience with CSPC budgets, my first year at ABM I was the only person on my Committee here and I knew nothing. Someone said request \$200 and see what happens. The next year I was more involved, Vice Chair, but still the only Committee member here. It was in the midst of the issues of how we were connecting people to sponsors and we had to ask for \$2700. I would love to have guidelines. It's not clear that you can ask for more later in the year if something comes up. So, people ask for a bunch, just projecting what if we need it and thinking we won't get anything in the middle of the year. Support discussion at Chairs Meeting.
- For myself, I agree with previous comments. Guidance is important. I think some training could be offered on how a member or leader of a Committee plans and sets a strategy for the Committee. That's what usually spawns projects, which spawn budget needs. Make it clear there's an option to ask for budget midyear. There's lots of pressure to turn budget in by Friday. With that option, we might see a more considered budget.
- Some personal thoughts: I like previous comments. Provide list of approximate costs for common requests. For example, if a Committee is planning a Motion for a tri-fold brochure literature, what might that cost? And for how many [copies?]. Some guidelines would be helpful. For example, is it something required to be printed in-house? And what does that cost vs. printing at a copy center throughout the year and getting reimbursed?
- See page 61 of the CSM 2019, form D-2, Conference Committee Budget Request. It's my understanding this is the form to ask for \$ from F.W.S. I suggest changing this somehow to be a formalized line item budget instead of one flat number to give a better understanding of what's going on.
- I came here not knowing what I'd end up doing on my Committee. Having to know what needs to be done and how much in two meetings is challenging. I don't know if any of our ideas and things we want to do have a cost associated with them so my gut reaction is to say I don't need anything, but what if I do?
- I think part of the problem is so many Committees have such a quick rotation of members. When they come to the ABM and have all this enthusiasm and request money. The members of that Committee may drop off and then you have Committee members who may not know money is there. I suggest incorporate a budget discussion/update into Committee meeting agendas.

- CLC: We've put in a request for money for Office staff support then when we asked for that support, were told to ask for volunteers. Things we need help with have fallen by the wayside. For example, our folders are not well-organized because it's a volunteer effort. We really could have used the money in that way but were turned down. Another unanticipated request was denied because it wasn't in our original budget.
- I chaired the CFC for three years. My understanding back then is you could move monies over and the Board was cooperative. During my tenure no one ever spent the amount requested.
- As a Committee Chair, it's difficult to feel pressured to have a budget before anything really gets started. I agree with the suggestion for line item budgets. I do that a lot for creative projects and it's easier to ask for what I need when I know the components of the project. So many of the projects are amorphous at this point and hard to articulate what we might need. Is that something we could do throughout the year? If we knew there was a certain amount available and from that devise a feasible project, we could do to spend that money.
- I don't understand why we don't have funding for these Committees. Why isn't it simple? We have a business turning around \$200K and we're talking about \$100 here and there. The BOT and Conference Committees should have some thousands of dollars mandated from the Conference rather than slow down the work of our volunteers.

This IFD is closed for this ABM. The information gathered during discussion will be captured in the official minutes of this ABM. Space will be reserved for a Motion related to this IFD in the First Version of the ABM Agenda for next year's ABM.

BDC Chair requested nominations from the floor. No nominations were made.

**Floor Nominations are now closed for this ABM.**

This General Assembly closed after announcements at 5:47pm.

## **Thursday July 25, 2019**

After a live auction fundraising activity Wednesday night and breakfast, the General Assembly began.

### **General Assembly - Thursday July 25, 2019 8:00 am**

- Facilitator – Joe C.
- Assistant Facilitator – Dave G.
- Back-up Facilitator – Nancy G.
- Time keepers – Robert F. and Jenny K.
- Spiritual reminder – Anna F.
- Vote Counters – Doug P., David M.
- Mic Paddles – Kelly R., Jaclyn P.

The General Assembly began with a moment of silence and Serenity Prayer followed by the reading of the:

- 12 Steps – Robert F.
- 12 Traditions – Maj S. (in Swedish)
- 12 Concepts – David M.

For this General Assembly there were 48 voting members present of 51 checked in: 41 or 80% is the Quorum required to start the General Assembly.

BDC Chair, P.A. K. introduced all candidates for election and confirmation:

- Jay G. up for confirmation
- Christina H., Rick S., and Seth S. up for election.

Interview responses were distributed for Christina H. and Rick S. Responses for Seth S. and Jay G. are in your ABM Binder. Later today the candidates will share about themselves and the 5<sup>th</sup> Tradition and you will have the opportunity to ask any or all of them questions as time permits. At 8:00am sharp tomorrow morning, the doors will be closed and locked and voting will take place. You can vote for 0, 1, 2, or 3 of the candidates. In addition, you can vote to confirm Jay G.'s appointment to the BOT. You are allowed to vote for all three candidates and confirm Jay G. The floor was opened for questions. There were none.

Announcement of the Question of the Day from Kirsten C. on behalf of *the Journal*.

### **19n09/19-08 IFD: Discuss 3% Limit to Edits of Conference-Approved Literature**

Submitter Comments: 90 seconds

**Note:** The Assistant Facilitator, Dave G., recused himself from Facilitator responsibilities for the course of this IFD because he is the Co-Chair of the CLC.

- The submitter read Concept 10. "Every service responsibility is matched by equal service authority - the scope of this authority is always well defined whether by tradition, by resolution, by specific job description or by appropriate charters and by-laws." Additional information has been distributed to you this morning. The question is not whether we're all living up to our responsibilities, we need to do that and we need to work harder and we're talking in the CLC about how to improve our side of responsibilities. However, as a body, we're not honoring the Concepts or following them closely and that's what we need to look at and I hope the discussion will bear on that.

**Point of Clarification**-CSM and Appendix I are in the ABM Binder and supplemental package given to all delegates?

**A**-Yes, it's in the ABM Binder, not part of the Supplement.

BOT Comments

- BOC asks you to consider the following: The Meditation book has been approved. The Anorexia booklet has been approved. Both are going to print. In 1996 this Conference approved a meditation book, 23 years later it entered the BOC and in 10.5 months we edited it. This IFD makes some assumptions, one being that great literature has not been created within the longstanding and historic standard of the 25% editing limit. Any assumption that this process is in violation of Steps and Traditions diminishes the work of this Conference and all previously approved literature and the BOC rejects that. The suggestion of a 3% editorial limit is too restrictive. On a 100-word document, the BOC could only change 3 words. A previous Motion dictates that Steps and Traditions be added to a piece of literature. The Meditation book did not have that. Consider whether adding Steps and Traditions to the back of a piece of literature violates or is part of that percentage change. The CLC, CJC, and BOC need to improve communication and form a working committee as the needs arise. The Conference needs to research a preferred vendor for editing software that actually calculates the percentage change.

Conference Committee Comments not on the ABM Agenda: 90 seconds per comment

- CSTCC: We support reevaluating CSM policy allowing the BOT to edit up to 25% of a piece of literature after Conference approval. Conflicts of Concepts 1, 3, and 10 appear to be created by the policy and we believe Conference discussion can find a resolution to the conflicts.
- CJC: We support the IFD, having personally experienced this process with the Meditation book that the CJC generated. It was held up for a year and still must go through a legal process before it goes to a publisher. We'd like to see what the Conference approves, as is, sent to a publisher as soon as possible.

25 minutes allocated for discussion of this IFD at 1 minute or less.

## Comments

- Austin Intergroup: Vote no, unless there is a hell no category, then vote that. Literature reaching the BOC has numerous errors including misquoting previously published S.L.A.A. literature, misspellings, incorrect usages, and none of the literature edited by the BOC has approached the 25% change level currently permitted by the CSM. Until 2017 no literature had been published in 10 years, so no one was familiar with the process and what it takes to reach publication. The real solution is to solve the systemic problem of how literature in S.L.A.A. is produced.
- Speaking for myself, though I am a member of the BOC and literature review committee that worked on these documents. We work on one document at a time. We held two (2) three-hour meetings a month. We edit grammar, spelling, and references to other literature. Examples of some actual content we edited: “piece of crap” to “unworthy”, “pissed off” to “angry”, “pastor” to “spiritual guide”, and translation issues such as “on the fence” to “undecided.” A 3% limit would severely hinder the ability to deliver quality literature. The BOC was extremely careful to maintain the original intent of the literature.
- 25% to 3% is an awfully big jump. How were these numbers decided? Is there something in the middle that would give both sides more options and flexibility?
- Speaking for myself, there was discussion earlier about the CLC starting the editing process before going to the Board. As written, even if the CLC touched it, they would be limited to 3%. It needs to be consistent overall. 3% is too small. I know how hard the BOC worked this year to make the documents proper.
- Speaking for myself the process needs to be improved. There are problems. The Meditation book is approved, it is the largest piece of literature the Fellowship has ever tackled. It’s bigger than the Basic Text and so it took a long time to edit. We need to be more cognizant as a Fellowship about the process. And the BOT and CLC need to reach a better understanding.
- Representing myself. I believe the CLC responsibility is to draft literature, send it out, make sure it comes out good. I don’t think we have writers. It’s taken 23 years for the Meditation book. Having an editor on staff or on retainer would help the process. I appreciate trying to get it just right but I think right enough is good enough. The CLC has sent literature to the Trustees with a triggering term, and wanted it published for the Fellowship. 25% may be excessive but I also know the BOT are, by delegation by you the Conference, making sure they are doing what is best for you and for the Fellowship. To denigrate the work they have done is counterproductive. 3% is a really small amount.
- Speaking for self and Intergroup: We do not support this IFD. If 3% is the only stopgap that feels effective, based on the quality, the rapidity. When you’re hungry, any food will feel good to you. Once you’ve had a meal, you start to discriminate. Lots of concerns about the process. Biggest concern is that the word Fellowship only appears at the end, “released to the Fellowship”. I don’t think the problem or the solutions are being accurately understood. For example, “this is a selfish program” appears in the Traditions released to us. If anyone believes that I suggest it’s a complete misunderstanding of our program. This is where we learn how to be unselfish. We need collaboration. The BOT needs to speak with the CLC. Collaborate.
- I think we all agree we want our literature to reflect group conscience, but there’s a problem with the process. I don’t think literature should be presented to the Conference. One body, the CLC, should have sole responsibility for quality. The BOT should have said sorry, this isn’t Conference ready yet and sent it back to the CLC with money for an editor and send it over to BOC. The CLC should have primary carriage as custodians of that collective conscience and shouldn’t be presenting it to you, and to us until you were sure that any pickups of the 3% were typos.
- Last year was the first I heard of the 25% rule. There was literature up for a vote, it was very contentious. There was an argument in favor of approving literature and they said the BOT will revise up

to 25% of it and things you don't like they'll probably fix. I was shocked! I thought we were voting on the actual literature that would be published. 25% is way too much to change, 3% is too restrictive.

- Yesterday the Conference approved "The Gift of No Contact." There were good comments: qualifier is problematic because it gives too much power to others; no contact could work negatively for anorexics; need more information on no contact with family members. These comments would take more than 3% to edit.
- The inverted pyramid comes to minds, and how all the autonomous groups have a say and are filtered down to our Committees toward the bottom of the pyramid creating literature. When we bring literature to the Conference, something powerful happens. We get lots of input in a formalized, general setting, we get good quality edits and notes. But people get one minute to comment, it's incredibly rushed. From that it goes back and sometimes comes back the next year and people have not had a chance to thoroughly review it and then it goes to vote for approval as written. So, I think that process of it going back to the BOT is important. Having trusted servants, elected by the Conference, give it another review. 3% is not feasible.
- My Intergroup gave a collective gasp at 25% edits. We felt a middle ground was more appropriate, suggested 15%. Also revisit entire process.
- Personally, we need to avoid rushing. We want literature that is the conscience of our Higher Power as directed through this body.
- I'm on a Committee that had literature approved yesterday. I'm a nurse. There were no other writers on our committee. My hope is that the document will be cleaned up. I'm not sure 25% is too much, but 3% is too little. I hope the literature's intent is maintained, but is presented in a way and with wording that does not distract from the message.
- The process is broken. The 25% does not include syntax or spelling corrections, but there is lack of transparency of what goes on with the BOC, and not enough between the CLC and writing committees. There needs to be collaboration. Right now, the CLC gets something from a writing committee, we toss it over the wall to the ABM, they toss it over the wall to the BOC, and there is no feedback from BOC on edits they've done so authors can be collaborating with them. Needs to be more communication between CLC and writing committees.
- Intergroup in favor of IFD. When a piece of literature comes before Conference as IFD, then Motion, the BOT has plenty of time to make comments and voice concerns. Traditionally they have not done so. We think perhaps 10% is a better number. This is a work in process and it takes all of us together to put out a quality product that will help us in our recovery.
- Two issues: % of editing and the length and opacity of the editing process. Maybe a Motion for a cap, such as 12 months to edit before release, so we can know when to expect new literature.
- I did not know about the 25%. Someone earlier said at the end of the process it should go back to the Fellowship. It should be possible for the Fellowship to give input. In Sweden we did not know what content we should vote on. The Attachment was sent in June when everyone is away. Involve the Fellowship earlier in reviewing literature.
- My Intergroup was shocked at 25%. For myself, number is not the issue. As a newcomer, I had my local groups, my sponsor, and the literature. My experience of the Fellowship as a whole is entirely in literature. The idea that there is a very small segment of the Fellowship illuminating the will of Higher Power and is ultimately responsible for approving what goes out the door is difficult to accept. For something like "pastor" not to be caught...San Francisco is spiritually eclectic and that word would drive away 80% of our Fellowship. This needs to be a democratic process.

- In Sweden, we read 12-Step literature as if it was the Bible. We try to believe in and follow every word. It's super important what we publish as S.L.A.A. and to pay attention to the words. Printed words have authority.
- It would be useful for the literature editing and feedback process to be done over a longer period in smaller groups. To get feedback at the ABM where it is very quick, and sometimes heated, is not the most effective way to edit a document. Needs to be a lot more involvement at this level and at meetings where people are reviewing literature and giving feedback. What's accepted here shouldn't need much editing.
- It's about communication and collaboration. The CSM says the BOC "can" invite writing groups/authors to the process. I'd like it to say "will invite."
- It's easy to imagine what that committee over the fence might be doing. I strongly support a member of the CLC being present on literature editing calls. I also support an S.L.A.A. style guide for general rules, like adding periods to the S.L.A.A. acronym, and capitalizing Steps, Traditions so those issues can be corrected before literature comes for a vote.
- This whole thing was a nightmare. What part do I have in it? I experienced a lot of anger and fear during this process. I want to be held accountable. As a member of the BOC I could have done better in terms of reaching out to originating authors, to the CLC, to the CJC. If my personal actions hurt anyone, I want to make an amends and apologize. This IFD goes too far, but I know we can do better. A BOC person should be mandated to be on the CLC and vice versa.
- Our entire goal is to carry the message. It doesn't get spread any more effectively, widely, or broadly than through literature. Literature matters. There are historical misunderstandings: we don't have a two-year process; we have a process that takes as long as it takes for Higher Power to get the message right. We don't have a Board in opposition to our writers, we have a Fellowship that should be working for the best. These divisions need to fade away in the interest of the newcomer. Whenever confused, ask yourself "what would a newcomer think of this?" Over the last several years we have been rapidly publishing. It should be a requirement, not an amorphous hope, that you'll get input from someone besides the writer.
- I think the intent of IFD is not to limit the amount of changes to 3% but to limit the amount made without consulting original authors. I agree with increasing communication between authors and BOC. 3% is too restrictive, but if you're going to put a limit on what you can change without author's consent, I also support a limit on what you can change with consent of authors. These are items we've voted on and extensive changes without input do not reflect group conscience of the Conference.
- Grateful for this conversation to improve the process as a whole. Don't think it's a conflict with the Concepts. Having dual duty between CLC and BOC would be a conflict if the BOC were completely revising the piece. Regarding being discouraged as a writer when changes are made, as a Fellow, sometimes you have to give up your writing. It's not a personal, artistic piece of writing you're being of service at the highest level and you have to surrender it and trust that the people you've elected to be in the position to make these decisions are working for the good of the Fellowship.

This IFD is closed for this ABM. The information gathered during discussion will be captured in the official minutes of this ABM. Space will be reserved for a Motion related to this IFD in the First Version of the ABM Agenda for next year's ABM.

### **19n10/19-09 IFD: Discuss By-Laws Pronoun Usage**

Submitter Comments: 90 seconds

- CBC: Our yearly By-Law review revealed one section using he/she. In the part with indemnification it seemed important to have it there. When brought to the [Committee] Chairs call, they were opposed to

gendered pronouns. The state of Texas uses person or individual, not he/she, so there is no legal requirement. When we adapted the 12 Traditions, we were very conscious of pronouns.

BOT Comments: None

Committee Comments not on the ABM Agenda: None

15 minutes allocated for discussion of this IFD at 1 minute or less.

Comments

- Two points – I sponsor several people who refer to HP as neither he or she and being vague with pronouns we use benefits that portion. My youngest child's pronouns are "they/them" and being sensitive to the pronouns of others makes me more sensitive to the pronouns we use in our literature.
- I think it's a good idea to be more inclusive with pronoun use. An observation, the AA Big Book and 12 x 12 have not changed, and it doesn't seem to affect the AA message. Do they need to change? I don't know, but if there's something we can do and we are able, we should. If it doesn't happen, I don't think the Fellowship will suffer.
- It's a wise opportunity. I have a lot of issues myself with using he/she. I'm trying to be more aware of it. Good idea and nominal cost is worth it.
- I support any deletion of he/she on any writing; The university community is changing all manuals to use they. Makes reading easier, doesn't call attention to anything, and it's becoming standard.
- My pronouns are they/them. This is a simple issue and could have been a Motion instead of IFD. Doesn't actually change the By-Laws. Perhaps it was brought as an IFD to introduce the idea of removing gendered pronouns from all the literature? That's a good idea for inclusivity. My home group has a few people who use non-traditional pronouns. Good idea for S.L.A.A. to look inward at their literature around gendered aspects of this addiction.
- Against making complicated changes to legal documents that took a long time to create and can be complicated and hard to follow. All for simplifying. Only change I would support is alternating usage of he and she.
- Cleaned up our Intergroup directions and we changed all instances of "he/she" to "members."
- This is not the Steps; we're talking about By-Laws. For lay members/lay fellows, who knows about the By-Laws? This is a legal document required by the state in which we're incorporated. We have a model we use for that. We're talking about avoiding legal ambiguity and there's centuries of common law behind that. It's a no brainer for the By-Laws. For any literature that touches lay members, that's a very different thing.
- He/she doesn't trip off my tongue as well as "they" does. That's a good edit to make in general. On CLC we discuss new literature and making it more inclusive using "they" instead of "he/she".
- We've done some of this in all my other recovery programs. There's a historical document on use of individual "they." This is not new stuff. My greatest concern is that we're still using language like "manning" and "deploying." The more we can include everyone in our literature, so that people can see themselves in our literature the better. I love being a member, and belonging, and the term "member" can be problematic. Love that we're talking about all this.
- In favor. Reminder of 2012 Motion to change S.L.A.A. Preamble in Basic Text from "we find a common denominator in our obsessive-compulsive patterns, which renders any personal differences of sexual or gender orientation irrelevant" to "... which transcends any personal differences of sexual orientation or gender identity"



- My Intergroup agrees it's a no brainer. For myself, I realize as a Fellowship we set a tone when we describe who we are. By-Laws are not one of the first places people look, but they may eventually get there. Read a news article that Berkeley cast "man" out of the city and how changing our laws changes our society. The way we speak about ourselves can affect acceptance in our community.
- Words are important and need to get changed. We also need to prioritize how we spend our time here. If a committee were to design a horse, it would come out looking like a camel.
- We did start from AA, but if AA were good enough for a sex and love addict, we wouldn't need S.L.A.A. S.L.A.A. is different and different from alcoholism and that needs to be taken into consideration when we say "it's good enough for AA".

This IFD is closed for this ABM. The information gathered during discussion will be captured in the official minutes of this ABM. Space will be reserved for a Motion related to this IFD in the First Version of the ABM Agenda for next year's ABM.

This General Assembly ended with announcements at 9:30am.

## **General Assembly - Thursday July 25, 2019 2:15 pm**

After Conference Committee meetings and lunch, the General Assembly began.

- Facilitator – Ari F.
- Assistant Facilitator – Jay G.
- Back-up Facilitator – Jaclyn P.
- Time keepers – Jenny K., Robert F.
- Spiritual reminder – Anna F.
- Vote Counters – David M., Doug P.
- Mic Paddles: Rick S., Nancy G.

For this General Assembly there were 48 voting members present of 51 checked in: 41 or 80% is the Quorum required to start the General Assembly.

Announcement of the Question of the Day from *the Journal* Editor.

### **19n11/19-10 IFD: Discuss Creating an S.L.A.A. Archivist Position**

Submitter Comments

- NEI Intergroup. I attend the Founders meeting. We have observed and experienced the power of holding on to the history of our Fellowship and remembering where we came from, so that we have a better understanding of what happens moving forward as well. Members of our Fellowship have held draft copies of the Basic Text with notes in the margins. It's a powerful thing to make sure those documents stay with us as we grow. We've seen other 12 Step Fellowships that have an archivist role and we want to know what the Fellowship thinks about having that role and a place where the documents and historical items are kept and cared for as well.

BOT Comments: None

Committee Comments not on the ABM Agenda: None

15 minutes allocated for discussion of this IFD at 1 minute or less.

Comments

- I've held the original manuscript of the Basic Text with handwritten notes of founders in the margins and it's one of the most powerful tools you can imagine. To hold on to these things is extremely important. The de facto archivist, who's in this room, has a huge museum of S.L.A.A. artifacts and we need to protect that stuff.

- There is someone in the room who collects a lot of this stuff and its very important. In my other program I love looking back on the history of that program. Our program is a lot younger and I think it would be great for us to have something like this.
- Speaking for myself. CMRC discussed how important it is to remember where we came from and what brought us here. The archivist discussion has similar ties. Our program is growing and flourishing and let's not forget where we came from. It's important to remember our history. I got to attend the Founders meeting once and there's something powerful about being in that room where Rich and the other founders were.
- This is a feel good IFD we can all agree on. The mention of the Newton (Founders) meeting made me want to cry. I'm in the beverage program and know people who've had powerful experiences going back to Akron and seeing Bill's house and Dr. Bob's. It's also a big recovery thing. I'm going to Hawaii this week and will see the house I lived in when I was a child. My life there wasn't always good. Going back to what you remember and where things began and being able to have a lovely connection to it can be a sign you've transcended negative experiences. I think we're all responding positively to that concept.
- Our Intergroup loves the idea of protecting the archives of the Fellowship and we don't like the idea of creating an office position for it. Perhaps an outsource or subcontractor instead, and this could be funded through the designated giving program.
- The local Intergroup office in my other Fellowship has a whole room with archives, richly steeped in history of that fellowship. Having something like that for our Fellowship would be awesome. Doesn't matter where it's located, central office or elsewhere. It could lighten the load of some of our members who lug this stuff to every ABM. Good for us and for those who haven't come in our doors yet.
- We see the importance of history every time we gather – at a meeting, people there know our history, have worked our Steps, and know our Traditions. You can use that as a source of personal strength. I see the importance of that in every field of daily life. As we forget where we've been, where we've come from, what we learned along the way, we make mistakes and lose valued wisdom. It's great to keep all of that alive.
- Appreciate this, great idea. Now is the best time, we are getting to the age where paper starts to break down unless you archive it. I would love the opportunity to touch the Basic Text manuscript, even through a plastic bag. It's powerful, a powerful message that connects me to the past. Would like more research on it. Bureau of Labor and Statistics says salary range is \$30K-\$90K. Ask BFSC to make it a designated giving program.
- BFSC would love it as a designated giving program. The original manuscript of the AA Big Book was given by Bill to a woman. It was sold at auction for \$2.7 million. It was then published in a very successful publication. Archives are worthy of preservation and provide a rich resource for pamphlets, documents, and literature. Important to remember we're archiving paper, which hates water, humidity, change in temperature. Important to focus on care, custody, and control and document and catalog these vital resources.
- In addition to archiving paper, we are archiving God's intervention into our lives.
- Newton/Founders meeting going for 43-44 years? We've been there longer than any of the church staff. None of them know when we started. We're all going to die, if we don't start archiving now, we're going to lose stuff and time. We've already lost documents. We want to make sure it's a secure position within the office of F.W.S. and that it will continue onward.
- I started my recovery in a food fellowship. I did my Step 0, got abstinent, my recovery didn't begin until I became willing to do the 4<sup>th</sup> Step, and I did not become willing until I learned about the history of Bill and Bob. Going word by word through How it Works and Into Action. This history saved my life. Nuts and bolts of implementation – making sure archivist work is up to modern information science standards,

that it's discoverable. More than just physical archives, also digital presence. Merits more discussion from us and BOT.

- In my 12 years as Webmaster I've collected a lot of archival material, partially thanks to what Rita has sent over the years. Would love to see an archive. Rita and I both have things no one else has and I would love to see them captured and saved for the future.
- NEI has earmarked \$1500 to put towards it if the Fellowship creates the position.
- Like the idea. Questions about money. Is it a full-time or part-time position? Would they be connected to the Board? Would there be a BOT liaison? Want these things addressed before it comes as a Motion. This is much more complicated than we want an archivist. Need a committee with a goal to determine how this will be addressed. The job description, etc.
- Is the intent for English or all the languages? We have audio recordings; would international Groups send them to you? Would they be centralized or not?

This IFD is closed for this ABM. The information gathered during discussion will be captured in the official minutes of this ABM. Space will be reserved for a Motion related to this IFD in the First Version of the ABM Agenda for next year's ABM.

### **19n12/19-11 IFD: Discuss the Literature Creation, Editing, and Approval Process**

Submitter Comments: 90 seconds

- Interesting this IFD follows the one we discussed earlier. For me they both are linked to where we are going as an organization and how we are growing. In any endeavor, when the volume of product, in this case literature, starts to grow, it's worth thinking about what quality control looks like. That is not a reference to any particular piece of literature. It's important to have a practice and a process around it. We have a process map; the literature approval process, Appendix H of the CSM, and we just received a form. Those are great. When I look at the chart, I know as a Delegate I haven't seen any literature drafts for review outside the ABM Agenda Attachment. I see friends of the CLC; I don't know who that is? These questions are similar to what we discussed earlier.

BOT Comments: None

Committee Comments not on the ABM Agenda: 90 seconds per comment

- CLC is aware the current literature creation and approval process is cumbersome and not wholly satisfactory. We are in the process of examining this and creating a concise, clear flow chart, which includes substantial feedback from the Fellowship on all draft literature, professional level editing, and close collaboration between the author(s) and BOT and F.W.S. Any Group developing literature should contact the CLC as early as possible for information and guidance. We have distributed the CLC Evaluation Form, which was instituted a year ago with the goal of getting better feedback. We've had ten responses to date. We've been addressing for the past couple of months our own challenges with the process not being as clearly delineated as we would like. We are brainstorming on all levels. How to get draft literature to Groups and Intergroups to get more feedback instead of the dribs and drabs we've been getting.

15 minutes allocated for discussion of this IFD at 1 minute or less.

Comments

- Chicago Intergroup. The 11<sup>th</sup> Step prayer encourages me to understand others, but it feels really good to be understood. I thank the CLC for a very clear roadmap for addressing these issues. This is the first IFD our area has put forth. This got our attention. It was a difficult experience three years ago for me to realize most of the Delegates and BOT members didn't read the literature. We want more literature;

I value the literature. Can we consider the pacing and the feedback? And you covered a lot of that in the CLC statement.

- I love that these processes are being reflected on, reviewed, and updated. The more feedback the better. I share draft literature with countless members of our Intergroup and get 0 zero feedback. Are there mechanisms that can be put in place to improve that process? I'm all for it. As trusted servant, I'm being trusted because I have certain skills and willingness to serve. Not everyone is willing and has the wherewithal to edit literature. It's not in every member's purview to do that.
- In CLC meeting this afternoon, I sensed the negative result of the lack of structure and lack of communication between the originating authors and F.W.S./BOC. Would love a clear, concise procedure so that when we create literature, everyone is respected and all opinions are valued from the Group to the BOT.
- It's been a problem for many years in the CLC getting people to give feedback, and who do we contact and how do we get it. We set up reading meetings that have worked really well. I encourage you to strong arm your sponsees to go on the Dating Workbook reading meeting. Otherwise, we bring them to Intergroup, we send PDFs we'd love your ideas on how to change it.

**Point of Clarification**-Is the CLC Evaluation Form part of this IFD discussion?

**A**-It was passed out from our discussion in the past CLC session. This is what we use with each project. It's a Google doc and we send a link to people who want to give feedback.

- Noting the transparency regarding prioritization of pieces of literature. I feel strongly about having a 12x12 in this program. We talked about how long it would take and do we want to get it out faster or take our time. This issue really addresses that. I would prioritize the 12x12 project because of the volume of content and necessity of that document that could reach every person in the Fellowship.
- Appreciate the work being done to move forward. Would be helpful in terms of receiving feedback if the CLC or we as ABM/Conference can provide structure for the type of feedback you need and best methods for providing feedback. Maybe that's the Google form? Do you just want to know how I feel about a draft? About the structure of it? Be clear what kind of feedback you want/need.
- I'm confused. The IFD description (what the item is) sounds negative when the intent is puppies and kittens. Nice to have things prioritized and a clear path forward, but I'm concerned with the volume of literature being put forward by the CLC. Last year we approved the largest piece of literature, plus a Companion to Chapter 4 workbook and other things, but there seems to be disapproval in the item.
- Qualifier is a hard word to translate in Swedish, don't know about Polish, Spanish. Good idea if international Intergroups could have drafts with suggestions and requests for help – to hand them out at Groups, use them in meetings, and bring feedback. Include us in Europe. First time I saw the new workbook was in print. We could help before things go to print.
- My responsibility even with the most negative criticism is to find what my Higher Power wants me to hear and take something I can use to maybe address my character defects. Turnover is a terrible problem in most Conference Committees. Definitely a problem in the CLC unless there are actual writers and authors in CLC, it's not their responsibility to create a piece of literature and say "here you go." I think you should come up with a draft, come up with things that are important, put as much content into it as you can, send it to the BOT and say "hire a writer to make it something really awesome". A serious feedback process needs to be developed on the CLC. Maybe the Delegates are the feedback process. As soon as you register: Here are the things you need to look at, bring them back with feedback, if you lose them, we'll charge you \$1000.
- I bring draft literature and draft literature CDs from ABM and very few at Intergroup are interested. At meetings a few might be interested. Don't know that anyone provided feedback. 3-4 years ago, a Delegate started a meeting where they worked through Chapter 4 Companion draft, gave feedback,

talked about it at Intergroup. Working through draft literature in meetings seems to work for getting feedback.

- Not enough people looking at literature, how do we get more people to look at it? A committee I'm on wasn't able to get to draft literature for an entire year. That will be a committee focus this year. Who wants to review it? Two 2 members of the committee. I suggest joining Google Groups of Conference Committees so you receive their emails and know about opportunities to read drafts and provide feedback.
- Challenge for us in Sweden we don't receive enough material and it's not in an easy to comment format. Without Adobe Professional hard to comment on PDFs. We use Google for our own directives.
- I'm a visual person, [to Beth] I'd like to see a flow chart showing what writing projects are out there and in what stages. In WANA we receive drafts via email and word of mouth and stressed they wanted feedback. I still don't know how to provide feedback. A dynamic "contact us" form would be good. Not a generic form.
- An issue on the CLC is other groups doing writing then coming to the CLC expecting us to rubber stamp their documents for the ABM. Work with us earlier so we can collaborate and help you meet style requirements and create a better product for the Fellowship. Collaborate early and polish writing before the ABM.

**Point of Clarification**-Can draft literature make it onto the Agenda without CLC approval?

**A-No.**

- Change the job description of Delegate to include responsibility for giving feedback on literature. NA has two paid full-time writers creating beautiful literature. Maybe we need a part-time author/writer/editor, or someone on retainer, to review and polish drafts.

This IFD is closed for this ABM. The information gathered during discussion will be captured in the official minutes of this ABM. Space will be reserved for a Motion related to this IFD in the First Version of the ABM Agenda for next year's ABM.

CLC formally requested the red-line marked up copy of the Meditation Book "A State of Grace" to review edits made by the editor or the BOC.

This General Assembly ended with announcements at 3:14pm. Return 3:30.

## **General Assembly - Thursday July 25, 2019 3:30pm**

After a short break the General Assembly reconvened.

- Facilitator – Nora B.
- Assistant Facilitator – Sam E.
- Back-up Facilitator – Susan G.
- Time keepers – Jenny K., Robert F.
- Spiritual reminder – Anna F.
- Vote Counters – David M., Doug P.
- Mic Paddles: Kelly R., Nancy G.

For this General Assembly there were 48 voting members present of 51 checked in: 41 or 80% is the Quorum required to start the General Assembly.

**Point of Clarification**-When people come to the mic, is it common policy to say "Hi [name]" and "thank you [name]" to people when they are done?

**A-There is no official protocol for that.**

**Point of Clarification**—I would like to ask people to do that. It helps keep us awake, helps identify people who don't often speak at the mic, and encourages people to get up here, say their names, be known, and feel like they are a member of our group.

Announcement of the Question of the Day from *the Journal* Editor.

### **19n13/19-12 Motion: Approve the Step Questions Workbook**

Submitter Comments: 90 seconds

- This project started in 2000 with Steps 1-4, a sponsor and sponsee reading and answering questions together. It was brought to CLC in 2014, was an IFD in 2016, and widely distributed through the CLC for feedback. It was a Motion in 2017 and 2018. Delegates voted to approve. There was a Challenge to the Group Conscience vote at both ABMs. Because of feedback from many Groups and individuals, including Los Angeles Intergroup, Ravenswood, Santa Cruz, members of the CLC, and comments at the ABM, the workbook went through many changes over the years. In the most recent version, Steps 1 and 2 changed to include the Characteristics and Signs of Recovery (S.L.A.A. Core Documents), and remove objectionable material. Feedback from the reading meetings and people who have used previous versions with sponsees say these changes make the workbook better. Heartfelt feedback from an S.L.A.A. member in a thank you note for a wedding gift said "the Step Questions Workbook is a tool that has helped him be of service to others and made him a better partner to his wife." Feedback from the 9pm Tuesday reading meeting at this ABM: we'd like to see many ways to work the Steps represented and we can choose what we like.

BOT Comments

- BOT supports the production of literature and looks forward to having an additional tool available in the store for the membership.

Conference Committee Comments not on the ABM Agenda: 90 seconds per comment

- CJC three members at the ABM have used the workbook at workshops and with sponsees, found it very useful, and impactful for some. We like the addition of characteristics and signs of recovery and like the recommendations of Journal focus booklets on Steps 6 & 7 instead of outside literature.

#### Pros and Cons

- Pro – I was taken through this workbook for the Steps in S.L.A.A. and had a spiritual experience as a result. I've worked with 5 women using the workbook, the last two in its current format. All expressed gratitude for the format and had good experience with it. The last two appreciated changes to Step 1 that enabled them to go deeper to identify their disease and get clear on powerlessness regarding the characteristics. It felt rigorous, and I enjoyed it.

**Amendment proposed:** In addition to offering it for sale as a print version, also offer the workbook as a free digital download.

**Submitter does not accept the amendment.**

- Pro – I worked through the draft with a sponsee. It created a very powerful experience for the sponsee, and for me.

**Point of Clarification**—Is a friendly amendment considered a Con?

A-No.

- Con – I don't view literature in financial terms. If we have recovery, we'll have money. How I view the Step guides: H.O.W. is a way I can go about doing things. For a weekend inventory, I'd use the Companion to Chapter 4. This workbook is comprehensive and I'm a little concerned. Love that it incorporates S.L.A.A. literature. I question placement of Signs of Recovery in Step 2, think they belong in

the workbook, but later. This comprehensive guide is for folks who come to us from AA and for whatever reason it didn't happen for them there. When we apply only part of AA, and not the full wisdom of the Big Book, it's concerning. Forgiveness is not mentioned in this document (in Steps 4 and 8 of AA).

- Pro – Our group has very few qualified sponsors, so we've been doing this workbook together two meetings a month and I've seen people who hardly said anything open up and participate in ways they never did before.
- Con – As someone working Steps first time, starting with Gentle Path, moving to this draft, then the published Chapter 4 Companion, I am now thoroughly confused about what is the official Step Study for S.L.A.A. My sponsor didn't know the difference between this and the Chapter 4 Companion. Need to create a clear distinction between Step study guides.
- Pro – Many of us really wanted this to pass last year. There were specific problems noted, and it didn't feel like group conscience to approve because of the difficult discussion about the issues with the draft. The edits have dramatically changed the first 4 Steps to address those problems. I've compared the two versions and feel comfortable passing the current version. Fantastic tool I can use with my sponsees, and I would use it myself to work the Steps again.
- Con – This Motion was put into the ABM Agenda late, and this version of the document didn't get a widespread view by the Conference and Fellowship, and I think that's important.
- Con – Another example of cherry-picking parts of the AA recovery process is relying on the seven parts of self-identified in the Big Book but not the four major character defects. Would love to do an analysis of the things that are missing, and discuss rearranging some things. I would count on a professional editor, hopefully with a 12-Step background who could utilize that 25%. Would also like to reset expectations to the original literature approval process timeline of 8-9 years. We're halfway there, we're not exhausted, not hurting people's feelings. We're trying to create something to allow people to recover. Half the people we get in Chicago are from other programs where it didn't happen for them and they need to go deeper. Let's help them go deeper and give them the best shot we possibly can.

30 seconds of silence before the vote

The count is now **50/51 voting members present.**

**1st Vote 40-6-4 on 19n13/19-12**

#### **Minority Opinion**

- I want a Step study guide, but it needs a little more work. That probably doesn't feel good to hear or do. I'm counting on our Board and their 25% because there are some gaps. Quickness doesn't necessarily get you what you want. Confusion is already happening [about the different Step study guides] and the pieces need to be positioned in a way people can understand. How do you work a program of recovery without forgiving anyone? Is that possible? The word isn't even mentioned. Please reconsider.
- This is heartbreaking to me. I spoke out of turn last year. I was a last-minute alternate Delegate and wasn't there when my Intergroup voted to support this literature, and I spoke in opposition to it. I agree wholeheartedly we need a Step workbook. Comments from a member of my home Group who asked to review the workbook: This one feels like it has made something basic...

**Point of Clarification**-Does an abstention count as a no?

A-Definition of abstention was read from CSM, page 28. To abstain means to not vote at all. Technically not a vote.

**Point of Order**-Question regards to procedure and calling time. My thought is that you wrap up your sentence when time is called, and not get cut off. Can we ask the last commenter to finish their statement?

A-Yes, it was not our intent to cut anyone off. The last minority opinion can return and complete their statement.

- “This one feels like it has made something basic, clean, and simple, though not easy, complex, involved, and overproduced.”

30 seconds of silence before the vote

## **2nd Vote 37-9-4 on 19n13/19-12**

**Passed by 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority and is binding on the BOT**, this Motion is closed for this ABM

## **19n14/19-13 IFD: Discuss Developing the “Dating Workbook” for Conference Approval**

Submitter Comments: 90 seconds

- This workbook was part of the Step Questions Workbook for a number of years as the Dating Supplement. There were questions raised about including it with the Steps. So, we wanted to create a separate workbook. There were questions about having discussion questions on Focus Booklets of *the Journal*. The Sober Dating Focus Booklet is pretty popular and we wrote questions about each article in that booklet. Would love feedback.

BOT Comments: None

Conference Committee Comments not on the ABM Agenda: 90 seconds per comment

- CAC has been discussing a healthy dating plan/pamphlet/workbook and we support the need for workbooks and to include issues of anorexia, avoidance, and deprivation.

10 minutes allocated for discussion of this IFD at 1 minute or less.

Comments

- Because the Sober Dating Journal Focus Booklet is such a big component, bundle it with the Dating Workbook as a complete product. Doesn't apply much to people already in relationship. Might help to add that perspective. Address things about financial independence and other financial issues with dating (who's paying, can I afford where I'm going on a date).

**Point of Clarification**-Is this the last item on our ABM Agenda?

A-Yes.

**Point of Clarification**-When was this submitted into the ARS process, and when was it released for reading [on the ABM Agenda]?

A-It was added to the Fourth Version of the ABM Agenda, distributed Wednesday morning.

**Point of Clarification**-Not counting BOT and staff, 39 of the Delegates are new.

A-41 Delegates of which 15 new.

- I'm for good quality literature and dating is a tool of recovery. Who has actually read this? If new? If not new? [4 people indicated they had read it] That's not how you get feedback and informed discussion or group conscience to pass a Motion. I ask the CLC to be fair and reconsider how this is happening.
- My dating plan was to fall in love. You need to have some trust in God. Step 3, I turnover my will and life to God as I understand God. For me, anything I really want to take from life, has hurt me. Every time I let go of that and let God it has improved fantastically. I got a new life.
- In favor of more tools, something that can help people. In another Fellowship they come up with food plans so you have options and can add and remove things. Add some sample dating plans. Not sure a



workbook is necessary, but support creation of more tools. Create free downloads of sample dating plans.

- I am pro dating plans, have used them. As a serial monogamist I've done a lot of dating, got into relationships too quickly. I used my dating plan as my Higher Power, and it paced me better, I had more fun dating and more success keeping my sobriety. Compilation of dating plans is a good idea and I'll share feedback on that with the author.

**Point of Clarification**-Is the Dating Workbook included in the Step Question Workbook?

**A**-No, the Dating Workbook is not part of the Step Question Workbook.

- In favor of Dating Workbook. Dating Workbook is different from dating plan. Dating plan is unique, tailored to the individual in cooperation with sponsor, no two are alike, much like a food plan. On the Dating Workbook – look through these questions and ask yourself are there any red flags glaring at me about the questions being asked.
- Over 1000 copies of the Sober Dating Focus Booklet sold, most popular one. That's the Fellowship saying we need this. Record number of returning Delegates this year, so you had your eyes on this last year when it was still part of the Step Questions Workbook. I've used it and suggest it to my sponsees and find it really helpful.
- Two points – no mention of app usage. Apps are a big part of modern dating and need to be addressed. No mention of texting either. Strongly recommend adding info on technology and dating. Also make sure the language is inclusive of more than just straight relationships.
- Where is the sponsor? Where is the fellow traveler? Where is our Higher Power in this dating plan? When my sponsees are starting to date, it's fragile and always different. Some have to rush; some have to pause. It's Higher Power, sponsor, and sponsee. So much time on this paperwork when it's human work we need to do.
- Not in favor of a dating workbook, but yes to a sober dating workbook. The point of sober dating is sobriety. Would like to see it as a tool for sobriety not a tool for dating. CMRC has been talking about singleness of purpose. The purpose of S.L.A.A. is sobriety from our bottom-line behaviors, not dating, not relationships.
- Have done several dating plans with sponsees, they're challenging and difficult for sponsees to follow. Hazelden has a dating book and there are 4 great CDs on F.W.S. website on dating that are excellent.
- I've worked through this guide myself and with sponsees and found it helpful. I believe the role of sponsor is to help you through Steps and to keep you sober, not necessarily be a life coach.
- A lot of this doesn't pertain to people in a relationship and it should include a section on sober dating in a relationship. Suggested questions: during an argument how should I handle myself? Is drama or being right necessary? Is being happy with any outcome OK with me? How do I feel if my partner walks away or takes time to process the argument? Can I walk away from an argument to process?

This IFD is closed for this ABM. The information gathered during discussion will be captured in the official minutes of this ABM. Space will be reserved for a Motion related to this IFD in the First Version of the ABM Agenda for next year's ABM.

**We have officially completed the ABM Agenda for 2019**

This General Assembly ended with announcements and a break at 4:41pm.

## General Assembly – Thursday July 25, 2019 5:00pm

After a short break the General Assembly reconvened.

- Facilitator – Anthony P.
- Assistant Facilitator – Fiona M.
- Back-up Facilitator – Kirsten C.
- Time keepers – Jenny K., Robert F.
- Spiritual reminder – Anna F.
- Vote Counters – David M., Doug P.
- Mic Paddles – Kelly R., Nancy G.

For this General Assembly there were 49 voting members present of 51 checked in: 41 or 80% is the Quorum required to start the General Assembly.

### BOT Nominees Tradition 5

BDC Chair, P.A. K. 1 minute for Board nominees to introduce themselves:

- Rick S. I'm an anorexic sex and love avoidant. My service history: I've been from greeter to chair in local Group, from Intergroup rep to Chair of GDVI Intergroup, 3<sup>rd</sup> time at ABC/M. My service has been instrumental in my recovery. I always wanted to hide and stay in the background. I'm an incest survivor from a young age and my principal coping mechanism was overeating.
- Jay G. sex and love addict. My sobriety date is April 2010. My bottom lines are any sexual behavior/activity outside a committed, exclusive relationship. My 6<sup>th</sup> ABM, 2<sup>nd</sup> in a row. I was an active member, then officer of my Intergroup, and led an outreach mail-out to therapists about S.L.A.A. Began Conference service at 2012 ABM, on CPIC, 2-year Vice Chair of CCC. Took two years off and was a last-minute attendee last year. Was appointed to the BOT in September 2018. Became BOT Treasurer in December.
- Christina H., sex and love addict from Los Angeles. Grateful, nervous, and excited to be sitting up here. Came into program November 13, 2011. I had serious obsession issues with exes and trying to find a partner/soulmate, and fantasy issues. I was a mess. I had no idea I was going to get the recovery I got. Didn't know it was possible. I didn't know what healthy relationships looked like, what family looked like, what it felt like to love and accept myself. I have those things today so when I'm called to do service for this Fellowship I have to say yes because I have to give back what I've so freely received over and over again.
- Seth S. I'm a sex addict and I qualify to be in this room. I want to talk about my vision. My problem is I can't see the trees for the forest. I look at the big picture a lot. Three things I want to accomplish in my Board service. 1. Increase the revenue of the Fellowship, 2. Make it a more international Fellowship. 3. The big tent. The upside-down triangle is a big funnel and we want to bring in as many people as we can that are still suffering from this disease. I see the role of the Board and the Fellowship is to increase that big tent.

**Two minutes to speak about Tradition 5:** "Each group has but one purpose—to carry the message to the sex and love addict who still suffers."

- Seth S. [using a funnel for a prop] – This [funnel] is the Fellowship; we want as many people in it as we can. We want to grow the Fellowship. There are a lot of sex and love addicts out there who are not benefiting from what we have to tell them and how we can help them. The Board is at the bottom, everything flows downhill to the Board, and the Board listens to the Fellowship. This Conference directs the Board, and I believe that's why this works so well – we are serving the Intergroups and serving the meetings. We do that by listening. Not talking, listening. I want to do more listening as a Board member. I'm newest member on the Board and at the end of every meeting I get to read the Humility Prayer. It

says we must park our egos so we can do service. You can't be on the Board if you don't have an ego, but it's important to park that so you can do the service. The Humility Prayer, and humility in general is a great way for me to renew that. I'm looking forward to serving on the Board again. Thanks.

- Christina H. – Our primary purpose is to carry the message. What is that message and is it strong and clear? For me, it's this: there is a spiritual solution in the Steps. I could not find recovery unless I worked the Steps, found a Higher Power of my own understanding and turned my will and my life over to that Higher Power. I am utterly committed to helping addicts who are willing, and come to me and participate, to find this message for themselves. The clearer I am about that message and how it was delivered to me, what I did to get it, how I continually show up for that message – that creates ripples of recovery throughout the community, regardless of whatever diverse pattern of the disease you've been afflicted with, regardless of background and how it manifested in you. The message is a beacon of light that leads us and guides me when I get distracted or get back in my ego. I'm always asking how does this relate to the message of S.L.A.A. and a spiritual program of recovery? That cuts through the BS and helps me be a more effective sponsor and Fellow.
- Jay G. – When I think of the words “primary purpose to carry the message to the sex and love addict who still suffers,” first I think about the traditional understanding of the Traditions dealing with us acting as a collective group carrying the message. Old-timers and newcomers alike, including me. I'm not an active addict but I am a sex and love addict and suffer from the disease. As a group we do our best when we keep our minds on that. We leave a lot of things at the door of our meetings – professions, jobs, preferences, politics, anything. We're there because we're sex and love addicts and to help sex and love addicts. That Tradition and a few others help inform me on the Steps. I am there and working this program for one reason only – to stay sober today. I have to have a single-mindedness of purpose. I'm not there for any other reason. Certainly not there to hurt anyone or make enemies, but I'm not there to get a new best buddy or for my social life, either. I've made great friends in the Fellowship, but that's not why I'm there. I have a singleness of purpose just like each Group does.
- Rick S. – I carry a message every day I leave my house, and that message can vary. I know where I am when I'm really feeling good and I know where I am when I'm not so good. But I still have to carry a message of hope. When I'm not in the best shape in my head I have to work on the message I present to make sure it's authentic. Whether it's as high and good as it was yesterday, or not as low as it was three weeks ago. My message is clear that recovery in S.L.A.A. has given me a life, not just changed my life. My principal reaction to my abuse was to overeat. My last known high weight was 376 pounds. My last known low weight was 203 pounds – a difference of 173 pounds. I did it with the Steps and I made it even better with the Steps...when I was able to address my sexual abuse and love addiction. Two minutes is just unfair. I think about my sponsees a lot and how varied they are and how I deal with each of them is different.

#### **Questions for Board Nominees: 1 minute per person for responses**

**Q for All: What should the Fellowship do to better carry the message at the international level and how will you invest yourself for this goal?**

- Rick S. – Support the efforts of international committees to accomplish part of that. I had two years of Spanish 40 yrs. ago so can't help with translation, but we should support all the literature we have the best we can to the foreign Delegates and other International meeting locations not represented here.
- Jay G. – Do more than we're doing now to help the CTIOC develop a database of Intergroup contact addresses internationally so they can reach out. Be proactive about getting information to the CTIOC. Keep the literature subsidy, be more supportive of overseas literature production, including English printing in the UK to lower costs.

- Christina H. – I’m a big fan of reaching out to people, looking up websites, finding out where meetings are. I know there’s a New Zealand group we can investigate. WhatsApp allows us to communicate internationally when people don’t have cell phones/cell service. Trading WhatsApp contacts, starting message boards. Social media such as private international Facebook groups, private WhatsApp message board, GroupMe is possibly a good International app. Doing legwork and pounding the pavement to get this stuff done.
- Seth S. – Very important question for the Fellowship. I chaired the CICC for 2 yrs. and they built a platform for Intergroups to communicate with each other, including international Groups and Intergroups – should be ready in the next Conference year. And here’s a radical idea – that we have an ABM in London.

Q for Christina: We’ve worked together on the CDC. A few months ago, you shared with the CDC you’d been experiencing some issues and felt out of balance and offered an amends to the group for times you were unavailable. What’s changed in the last few months that has you feeling confident about this significant service opportunity? 1 minute

- I had a slip in another program and chose to reset my clean time in that program. I had to meditate on it and talk with my sponsor about it. It forced me to a new place of humility. It was an arguably negotiable slip but I had to be true to myself about what clean meant for me in that program. I wanted to be transparent and let my committee know what I was dealing with. I wanted them to know I wasn’t willing to walk away and to allow what was a minor slip to become a major fallout – my old behavior was to spiral and become avoidant and walk away from commitments. I don’t do that anymore and kind of have to grit my teeth, gut it out, be rigorously honest with myself and my partnerships and that’s what I was able to do.

Q for Seth and Jay: You’ve both served on the BOT for part of the past year and this is new to you. What have you learned in that time that makes you think you should continue on the BOT?

- Jay G. – I learned I have a lot of patience. We typically speak in order of seniority and the most junior person goes last. I was the caboose for several months and learned I could sit and be patient, listen and learn and use that in making my comments, or defer to others. I also learned to defer in the sense that no one on the BOT can get into the weeds on every issue that comes to the board. There’s too much. The details are worked out in Board Committees and I learned to limit comments and concerns to bigger picture items.
- Seth S. – I’m the junior member and last person to weigh in on anything. I learned this is work but it’s fun work. We enjoy each other. We work hard, but we enjoy it. The other thing I’ve learned is getting to yes. As a Board, we talk about things, we brainstorm, and at the end of the day we get to yes. We don’t all agree, but we get to group conscience, which is part of the decision-making process. It’s taught me a lot about myself.

Q for All: Should you be elected or confirmed, would you support hiring a professional editor with a 12 Step background to work collaboratively with the Board and CLC and authors?

- Rick S. – I don’t know I can categorically support that. I’m in favor of budget for a temporary or having a retainer. We’re putting a lot of literature out. We could use it – the literature and the position. Full time? We’d need to look at cost and be responsible about it. If we could do that, I have no objection, but I certainly support a retainer.
- Jay G. – The current year budget has \$5K for a professional editor. That editor was used for Anorexia 4567 and meditation book. It was money well spent. She did a good job, efficiently. I support hiring her or someone like her and recommend budget for that. The preliminary budget for the next fiscal year includes money for a professional editor.

- Christina H. – I’m not opposed to that idea but I think it needs to be on a case by case basis. Something like the 12x12 would definitely benefit. For the pamphlets, I don’t think there’s a lot of major editing needed. On the CDC we were told diversity training would cost \$3-\$5K if we outsourced it. We actually had people on the CDC who were very proficient at writing, editing, and creating content. I think that’s also happening in the CLC, but a lot of the feedback I’ve heard here about literature is about stylistic choices and content choices, a lot of which is subjective and I don’t know that one editor can find a common voice regarding those issues, but I’m open to it.
- Seth S. – As a Board we need to evaluate the entire process of how literature becomes literature, we do have \$5K in the next budget for editing. I have no problem spreading that around to the CLC as well as the Board, but the Board needs to address the issue of how we do literature.

**Q for All:** Technology advancements and the ever-present digital world creates challenges around our privacy and anonymity. For example, some meeting spaces require you to register at a computer that takes your picture, name, and phone number. Phones don’t work the same as they did 10 years ago, much less 40 years ago. Traffic cameras can surveil parking lots. We need wisdom, knowledge, and spirit coming together in one person to address these challenges. What will you do to cultivate this in the trusted servants of the fellowship? I don’t think it’s something we can hire.

- Seth S. – Technology is not my strong point and it’s not a strength of the current Board. That knowledge exists within the fellowships and we need to reach out to those people and pull that in.
- Christina H. – Hard to address this at a big picture level. Addressing the specific example where meeting attendees are required to register, they’re autonomous and can have a group conscience to decide whether they’re ok with that and if they’re not, find a new meeting space. Regarding the growth and rapid changes in technology, we have to be flexible, open minded, willing to ask for help, willing to risk discomfort while waiting for an answer. I pray and meditate when I don’t have a solution. I would start there and work outward.
- Jay G. – Every Conference Committee has resources available to them. If a committee has expertise in technology and believes the use of technology would help them fulfill their mission, whether public outreach or helping intergroups do public outreach, to keep that in mind as they put in their budget requests. Resources are there for committees to use as they see fit, as long as you let us know what you’re using it for. Can ask CFC to reallocate funds if they’re available. There is at least \$5K that can be spent in the next month. Most of our work is at Conference Committee level. I encourage them to utilize it and ask for resources to use technology.
- Rick S. – I’m really short in this area. Part of it is self-defense. Part of it is the necessity of not having access to this kind of equipment. Got a laptop less than six months ago, still have challenges connecting to Internet. Only turned on smart part of my phone a few weeks ago. Fortunately, I haven’t acted out on either of those yet. My bottom-line regarding computers is in my statement. Not ashamed of it, it’s just how it turned out. I am willing to do what I need to do to stay current with this Fellowship.

**Q for Jay:** Very happy when I heard our finances are stable, and then I hear fundraising, fundraising, fundraising, are we really stable?

- Jay G. – It’s both. We are stable, if we want to do more, including things that have been brought up this week and today, we need more resources. We can keep doing what we’re doing. If we want to do more, like giving away literature instead of selling it, we have to replace that income somewhere, which would come from fundraising. We are heavily dependent on literature revenue in this Fellowship. Some people would like to increase contributions, not by selling less but by increasing the contribution base.

**Q for Christina:** Can you reflect on your concerns about burnout?

- Christina H. – When the question came up “what do you think are going to be issues for you on the Board,” because of the stories of burnout I’ve heard from former and current Board members, that was

the only issue I could imagine because of how much the Board has to take on. I am also powerless over that. God does not give me anything I can't handle. Knowing that and redefining "burned out" to "being challenged" "being uncomfortable in growing." Becoming pregnant is the biggest challenge I've ever been handed and I'm a firm believer God didn't give that to me, and have y'all nominate me to the Board if that was something, I'm incapable of doing. I'm not going to control it. I'm going to show up, follow direction, and be of service.

**Q** for Seth and Jay: How much structure are you given as a new trustee? Were you lacking in tools or resources? Are there examples of the Board being stuck or frustrated for lack of tools or structure to help make decisions?

- Seth S. – The Board struggles all the time with the issues before us. Do we always have the tools we need? No. We have an obligation to figure out the best alternative based on the issue presented and the tools we have to solve that problem. We use the entire Board knowledge base and the interaction of Board members in discussion to solve problems. It's a chaotic mess, and it works.
- Jay G. – Generally, the most finite resource the Board has is time. As an Officer, I probably spend 40 hrs. a month on Board business including liaising to Conference Committees, serving on Board Committees, Board meetings, Officer stuff. When I became Treasurer, I continued the practices in place from my predecessor as far as what information I shared with the Board, when they got it, and how often. How often they would receive and approve financial statements. A few Trustees requested certain information more often but there was no space to include it in Board meeting agendas, so I posted what "dashboard" information I could in Dropbox.

**Q** for Christina: In the spirit of principles before personalities, I feel it's important that the Board members of S.L.A.A. who are sex and love addicts have their own personal recovery program in our rooms. You stated you attend S.L.A.A. Intergroup monthly, speak at meetings once or twice a month, and attend an AA meeting almost every day. Why don't you attend more S.L.A.A. meetings?

- Christina H. – I was in an S.L.A.A. meeting almost every day for several years consecutively. I decided to work another program in addition to my S.L.A.A. recovery. I still work the Steps, have not lost contact with my sponsor, and my Higher Power was calling me to serve S.L.A.A. in ways that went beyond the autonomous meeting. My Intergroup service increased. I created a position on LA Intergroup I thought was necessary. I became a Delegate. My next step is to create meetings in the South Bay area where I live. If there were S.L.A.A. meetings in my area I would probably attend those meetings several times a week. AA meetings are more prevalent and as long as I'm in a meeting every day I feel like I'm practicing my program.

**Q** for Jay: It takes money to run things and to grow. SAA has grown from \$300K income to \$700K with a few simple fundraisers. They use the money to have a presence at psychological association conferences, where they get names of psychologists and call them individually after the convention. That's how they get new people. Could we do something similar? Any reason we couldn't? If we did, could we grow?

- Jay G. – Yes, no, yes. I'm sure whoever is on the BSFC would be open to any means that is not inconsistent with the Steps, Traditions, Concepts, or Guidelines for Dealing with the Media.

Announcements by BDC Chair, P.A. K., elections tomorrow morning; must be here and seated by 8am to be able to vote. Sacramento Intergroup indicated speaker meeting 7-8:30pm tonight in this room with 2 speakers.

The General Assembly ended at 5:59pm.

## **Friday July 26, 2019**

After an evening of guest speakers organized by Sacramento Intergroup and breakfast the General Assembly began.

### **General Assembly – Friday July 29, 2017 8:00 am**

- Facilitator – Chris D.
- Assistant Facilitator – Carol S.
- Back-up Facilitator – Mona E.
- Time keepers – Marc L., Sean H.
- Mic Paddles – Ava H., Rita H.
- Spiritual Reminder – Ari F.

Opened with the Serenity Prayer followed by the reading of the:

- 12 Steps – Marc L. (in French)
- 12 Traditions – James B.
- 12 Concepts – Jaclyn P.

For this General Assembly there were 48 voting members present of 51 checked in: 41 or 80% is the Quorum required to start the General Assembly.

### **BOT Elections**

**BDC Chair, P.A. K.:** We have the count of 48 voting members from Pam. We'll count out the ballots, hand them out, and rip up the rest. P.A. requested the two volunteer ballot counters to verify that there are 48 ballots before distribution:

- Ballot Counter – Jaclyn P.
- Ballot Counter – Sam E.
- 1<sup>st</sup> year delegate as an observer – Anna F
- Ballot Opener – P.A. K.

Ballots were explained: top part has three names, Seth S. Rick S., Christina H. You can vote for zero, one, two, or three. The bottom part has Jay G. You can vote for one or none.

There were 48 ballots counted; three were ripped up.

Ballots were distributed.

Any questions about the voting process?

**Point of Clarification**-This is a confidential/anonymous vote and you do not need to put your name on the ballot.

**A**-Correct.

**Point of Clarification**-You said don't vote for more than three and there are four items on the ballot.

**A**-You can vote for zero, one, two, or three on the top part and zero or one on the confirmation section. You can't vote for more than three on the top.

BDC Chair, ballot counters, and observers will now go upstairs to count the ballots and tabulate the votes. Votes will be counted by the two counters, until they match. The doors remain locked until the votes are announced.

### **Presentation: Re-Entry**

**Gabriel G.** It's been great having you all here this week, reconnecting with some of you and meeting new people. I'm a big proponent of the ABM for my Intergroup, because I love this experience. Look at how far our program reaches around the world. We've been in this wonderful environment all week here, sheltered from

the outside world, with our people, our family, who speak our language. After this, you'll be traveling back home, some through airports, some traveling by car, going back to our normal lives. Some things to be mindful of – remind yourself where you've been and know where you're going. As you do with program, set up a plan for yourself. Connect with your sponsor before you go home. Make sure you're present for meetings in your homegroups. Remember the tools of the program like the Serenity Prayer. Be gentle with yourself, do something kind for yourself. Don't jump into service right away when you get home. Service will be there. Get a massage, take a walk, do something to honor yourself. Something that's been helpful for me, it's not really talked about a lot, is having a service sponsor. You have a sponsor to work the Steps, the Concepts, the Traditions, get a service sponsor. Someone who has what you want in the way they do service.

Connect with the people you met this week; you shared this experience. Fellowship with others is helpful for me, I like finding out how other Intergroups run and taking that back to my Intergroup, and sharing that with others. Be a resource in your Group to share all that you learned here. Hopefully you'll be doing a report, there's a guideline in the CSM, I'm happy to share past reports from Sacramento as a guideline. Be willing to share, be a resource. Most of your Intergroups have supported you in coming here, so share with them. Bottom line, be kind to yourself, honor yourself, be grateful for the wonderful experience you've had this week.

Please use me as a resource. Ask questions if there are things you need. Please visit the hospitality suite, we'll be open until Noon. If you want to take snacks home with you, there is more than enough. I want to share the gratitude in my heart for being able to host you here all week.

**Q-**How do you deal with the jet lag going home, which is different from the jet lag getting here?

**A-**I know a bit about jet lag having visited India 5 times in the last two years: Be kind to yourself, listen to your body, eat good food, hydrate, be mindful, connect with your sponsor before you go home and let them know what you've been up to and your plan for travel and returning home.

**Shares on Re-entry-1 minute or less**

- This is a mountaintop experience and going home is like going down, down, down. We're so emotional. I've wanted to cry already. There's so much activity and so much to process. Having to keep my intelligent service hat on all the time can be emotional. You will get cranky with the ones you love, partners, children, workmates. Communicating about the ABM is on page 46 of the CSM.
- Last year was my first year in this wonderful beautiful bubble, and I left so excited and eager to be of service to the whole world. I followed the advice, no service for a week, and went back to my meetings and got discouraged and pissed off. Being back in the real world was very jarring and no one prepared me for that, so here's your warning.

**Spiritual Reminder-30 seconds of silence**

- I get on this service high and want to take everything back and tell my Intergroup and tell my meetings. I have to remember I'm only one person and can't be responsible for everything. I wrote this to myself when I got here: "I don't have to do everything there are plenty of others contributing their experience and knowledge. Take care of me." That has really helped me this time around.
- I want to express my deep heartfelt gratitude to the Fellowship, the Delegates, and the Board. This has been a very personal ABM for me and I wasn't expecting that. I haven't told many of my immediate family members I'm pregnant and this is a place where I can do that. I've heard others share very personal stories here. Going back to the "real world" is hard every time I leave an S.L.A.A. meeting because it's always such a safe place. I learned the willingness to be vulnerable and authentic in S.L.A.A. Your vulnerability inspires my vulnerability and keeps me going and willing to do that for the people I love and I hope that happens for you too.
- For some of us who travel in our daily lives I have a helpful document, "Tools for Making the Program Portable" take what works and leave the rest. It has a reentry program. It has a few sample questions



you ask. I give this to my sponsor, and my spouse. When will you call your sponsor when you get back? Which 2 or 3 program friends will you call immediately after you get back? It's got a lot of good tools. if interested I have it in doc format or pages.

- Driving home last year I was feeling great. Leaving San Antonio, it looks like the truck stop capitol of the world, I stopped for a sandwich and gas. Saw a family that needed help with a flat tire. Bought them a tire. Told my wife I bought a tire. She said "that's not in the budget!" So, don't buy anyone tires without checking with your wife.
- Emotions and feelings. I have no idea what to expect so I'm not expecting anything. I'll either leave here with a new big responsibility or maintain the one I have. I'm grateful for this setting, my recovery, for the people I'll be returning to. The real love/hate relationships when you're working closely with people.
- I do a lot of traveling professionally and I've had terrible jet lag. What I've found to work best is to adjust to the new time zone right away as far as meals and sleep.
- Thinking about all the things I forgot last year – to get people's names and contact info, to read my manual when I got home, to stay in touch, to actually get on my committee phone calls. Get numbers, get connected here. When you're home take a walk, take a bath, get plenty of sleep, and get to your home Group and remember you're their link to this Group.
- Every year I get so excited about all the stuff I'm going to get to do with the website, all the great connections and great ideas in the Committees. Then I go home and I get some things from people, and then it starts to dwindle. Here's my email address: [beth\\_s@slaafws.org](mailto:beth_s@slaafws.org). if you have any info for the website, Group/Intergroup registrations, mission statement changes, event flyers, committee project flyers. Send it to me, I want it. I love doing work for this Fellowship. The more stuff we can get out the better and I love my job.
- I usually go right back to work after the ABM. I like being of service at work and it's not a huge transition because we don't have kids and my husband and I are very active in S.L.A.A. But this year I'm going to a family reunion and I'm a little worried. I'm remembering we can go off by ourselves, we can go to the Founders meeting and I think it will be a good experience.
- With my ego I'm tempted to go home and tell everyone what I accomplished here. Would like to be faithful to what I've lived here, what I have been given, and what we've done together with Higher Power.
- I have a toolbox with tools I use regularly. One thing that is slow to regenerate in me is my sense of humor. I'm a pretty serious person all the time. Here I get to be a more authentic me and laugh a lot more. It's hard to go back home having expanded and squeeze back into my pigeonholed life. So, I look in my toolbox for tools I haven't used in a while and throw something extra in the mix. I go to extra meetings or go to dinner with a friend to make sure I stay open and expanded.

### **Results of the BOT Elections - Friday July 26, 2019 8:56 am**

**Point of Clarification**-There are people still outside, are they allowed in to hear the election results?

**A**-No, doors remain locked until the results are announced.

P.A. K., Chair of the Board Nominating Committee, announced the results of the BOT elections:

- Rick S., Seth S., and Christina H. have each been elected to a 3-year term on the Board.
- Jay G. has been confirmed as a Board member (appointed by the Board this past year).

Congratulations to all our new Board members.

## Continued Shares on Re-Entry

- Gratitude for this week. I've been having challenges with my leadership at work back home and it's been so healing to see the model of the leaders here and how we do business in a spiritual way.
- I have been feeling like one of you even though I'm an Observer. Thank you for your kindness, your humor, and your humbleness. On jet lag, I have one watch and turn it back to Swedish time when I get home and follow that for eating/sleeping. And I talk a lot about my experience. We went to the Florida Round Up last year and couldn't stop talking about it.
- It's been scary for me and fantastic, listening, learning, and trying to share. On another occasion of reentry, I had a challenge with my sobriety. I ask God, why is it so hard when I do all this work? The answer was "it's not about you and it's never been about you." The challenge for me now is to share something you have given me this week with my Fellows in Sweden and get some of them into committees.
- Feels like I'm leaving my family reunion, you are my family of choice, and where I can be me the most. Usually when I get home, I need God and me time. But tomorrow I'm being picked up by my cousins, who I can't be quite as open with. I just managed to tell them why I'm really here. Then I go to Albuquerque and won't be home for 3 weeks. Thank God for phone meetings.
- Gratitude for the support everyone has given me, especially the people who have joined me on the CHRC. It's been a phenomenal experience.
- This is my 4<sup>th</sup> ABM, but the first where I wasn't retired. It's been a much bigger challenge than I realized to deal with emails from work. I now understand why people sometimes need to walk out of meetings to take calls because I've had to do that. Don't know if I'll have a reentry problem because I feel like I haven't really left.
- I want to offer some hope after my earlier share. I did call people from ABM and they grounded me. I wasn't prepared for the discouragement I experienced but I was prepared to deal with it.
- At my first ABM I walked in the room and thought I cannot sit down in this room. As an anorexic this is really scary. This year I just came in and sat down. There is hope and recovery in this program and thank you for helping me find it.

The General Assembly ended with announcements at 9:19am. Return 2:15pm.

## Final General Assembly – Friday July 26, 2019 2:15 pm

- Facilitator – Rita H. (outgoing CCC Chair filling in for new CCC Chair – Phillip W. who is not present)
- Assistant Facilitator – Seth S. – BOT President for 2019-2020
- Back-up Facilitator – Seven S. – CFC Co-Chair for 2019-2020.

For this General Assembly there was a Quorum with 43 voting members present.

**Announcement from BOT:** Yesterday the BOT received a request for a redline copy of the recently approved Meditation book. We've had little experience with this kind of request, so we met with the CCC for help. Thank you to the CCC for meeting with us, your time and opinion really mattered and you really helped us. The CCC and BOT agreed the requestor should be provided the redline copy of the Meditation book. The CCC and BOT also agreed that any further edits at this point would not follow the current CSM literature process, specifically [Appendix I](#). The BOT looks forward to working with all the Conference Committees and Fellowship members in the production of literature. The BOT is moving forward to publish and print the Meditation book.

## BOT Officers

- President – Seth S.
- Secretary – Christina H.
- Treasurer – Jay G.

## Board Committee Reports: None

## BOT Liaisons to Conference Committees

Will be chosen after this meeting and provided over the weekend to the CCC chair and F.W.S. Webmaster.

## Conference Committee Reports

- **CTIOC** – Christian M., Vice-Chair on behalf of Fredrik L. new Chair; Budget \$500 (instead of \$20,000 to bring delegates from other countries to next ABM). Project – make sure everyone knows there are finances to help Delegates come to ABM, and IRC. Call day/time last Sunday of the month, 5pm European time.
- **CSTCC** – Sam E., Vice-Chair, on behalf of Jim B., Chair, Requested budget of \$100. Continuing project: answering questions from Fellowship and community. Working on the draft of 12 Concepts that we expect to present as Motion at 2020 ABM. Meets 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month 2pm Pacific, 5 pm Eastern. Next meeting August 25<sup>th</sup>.
- **CSPC** – Ari F., Vice-Chair on behalf of Chair Anne K. We simplified our mission statement asked Beth to update it on F.W.S. committee page. Tested our contact form on the F.W.S. committee page. Three working groups – we are continuing to support the Focus on Sponsorship meeting, but it is becoming more self-sufficient. The literature group is working on the current sponsorship pamphlet with a possible new title “Strengthening Our Sobriety Through Sponsorship.” Will reach out to CAC to include section on anorexia in the pamphlet. Outreach committee will continue to respond to requests for information about sponsorship. Budget \$100. Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month, 9 pm ET, 6pm Pacific. Next meeting August 19<sup>th</sup>.
- **CSC** – Jack H. newly elected Co-Chair, with Co-Chair Rob S. and 5 members Working on Super Service Dog brochure, budget of \$2000 for licensing images in brochure. Improving the document that goes out with all literature orders about service. Defined four areas of service. Making lists of all the ways you can serve in those areas and how to communicate that info to the membership. Talked about how we can improve our service, be more efficient, not over-serve. Total budget \$2,200. Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month 6 pm Pacific, 9pm Eastern. Next meeting August 14th.
- **CPIC** – Jenny K. Co-Chair with Shoki P. budget of \$1000 to continue ongoing work with hospitals and institutions, and responding to requests for information and materials. New initiatives: outreach to educational institutions – colleges and universities. Internet technology project: Digital attraction, digital outreach. Dormant effort for the Interfellowship Committee we absorbed – we are looking for someone to lead that effort. No budget requests for the new projects yet. Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month 4 pm Eastern. Next meeting August 19<sup>th</sup>.
- **CMRC** – Mona E, Chair. Vice-Chair Chris D. Continuing on the long-term member flyer project, budget \$100. Meet 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month at 10 am pacific, 1pm Eastern. Next meeting August 11<sup>th</sup>
- **CLC** – Lee W., Chair, Chris M. Co-Chair. Budget \$5000 for editing and proofreading help throughout the year. Meets 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month. Next meeting 9am tomorrow, July 27th.
- **CJC** – Susan G. Chair. Working on International access to e-Journal. \$480 budget to develop a Journal app to roll out to a subcommittee for testing. Addressing problems accessing the e-Journal, and possible restitution for past subscribers who couldn’t access it. Focus Booklet in process on Spirituality. Looking at publishing policy because some things no longer apply. For example, translations must go through the CTIOC. Meets 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday, 10am Pacific. Next meeting August 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- **CICC** – Rick S. (newly elected BOT member presented) \$250 budget for website fee. Forum should be up in a couple of months. Encourage people to sign up for an account. Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month 2 pm Eastern. Next meeting August 18<sup>th</sup>.
- **CHRC** – Fiona D. (presenter) and Anna F. Co-Chairs. Projects: Start a healthy relationship focus phone meeting; Start a healthy relationship podcast; Review current resources on healthy relationships; Revise

mission statement; Review previous projects for what to restart and what to archive. Budget of \$600. Meets 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday 11 am Pacific. Next meeting September 1<sup>st</sup>.

- **CFC** – Marc S. (presenter) and Seven S. Co-chairs. Projects: Revising/reviewing/improving project development and budgeting process; Working with the BOT on prudent reserve policy/process; Working on pamphlet where spirituality and 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition meet. Meets 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday 11 am Eastern. Only meeting electronically in August to discuss budget. Next meeting September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- **CDC** – Scott F. (presenter) Chair and David M. Co-Chair. Budget \$1500. Projects: Finish building Diversity & Inclusion workshop for BOT and possibly F.W.S. staff; Form research subcommittee to gather data on who is not being included and better understand the barriers to entry into recovery from a societal standpoint; Present the diversity statement as IFD at the next ABM; Work on Diversity pamphlet; and submit articles to *the Journal* for the Diversity theme issue. Meet 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month 8 am Pacific. Next meeting August 4<sup>th</sup>.
- **CCC** – Joe C. Vice-Chair (presenter) Phillip W., new Chair. – New ARS Chair/ABM Agenda Editor – Nora B. No budget requirement and our projects are ongoing/recycle each year. Facilitate ABC/M 2020 with the BOT and F.W.S. Meets 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month 12:30 pm Eastern for 90 min. Next meeting August 4<sup>th</sup>.
- **CBC** – Rick B., Chair. Approved current mission statement. Projects: Draft a motion to address By-Laws concerns from ABM this year. Sent By-Laws concerns to the BOT and the CCC. Continue to review and update By-Laws. No budget requested. Meet 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday 4pm Eastern, 1pm Pacific. Next meeting August 18<sup>th</sup>.
- **CAC** – Kelly R, Chair, Kelly C., Vice-Chair. Budget \$550. Projects: Anorexia Step 8-9 workbook development. Send us your stories and experience, strength, and hope on Steps 8-9! Recommendations for revising existing anorexia literature and outreach materials, including glossary of terms. Meets 4<sup>th</sup> Sun 11 am PT, 8pm Swedish time. Next meeting August 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **Motion to Confirm the 16 Conference Committees**

**Voice Vote:** All those in favor of approving the Conference Committees say “aye”; all opposed say “nay” (0).

**Motion passes.**

**The BOT has not yet determined the 2020 ABC/M location.**

### **ARS Report**

Nora B. (presenter) Report prepared by outgoing ARS Chair/ABM Editor, Phillip W. – 16 IFDs/Motions submitted, 14 made it on to the 2019 ABM Agenda. The two items (IFDs) that did not pass the preliminary review and did not make it onto the 2019 ABM Agenda were:

- To discuss the development of a new pamphlet and booklet on healthy sexuality.
- To discuss an addendum to the Basic Text or producing a booklet specifically with updated stories and solutions relating to modern technology and its effect on acting out patterns of sex and love addiction.

While these IFDs did not make it on the Agenda, the members of the ARS believe these are great ideas and hope to see them on a future ABM Agenda.

### **Closing Announcements**

- BOT Chair, Board Committee Chairs, and Board Liaisons to Conference Committees have not been announced.
- The Conference Chairs Meeting will meet in Compagna room at 3:30 pm.
- Executive Director: When we adjourn, take everything with you. The room and equipment will be broken down, everything must go.

- Appreciation to F.W.S. Office and Staff
- General announcements.
- Thanks to LPC Chair and Sacramento Intergroup volunteers

**Motion to Close the 2019 ABC/M**

**Voice Vote:** All those in favor say “aye”, all opposed say “nay” (0).

**Motion passes.**

**The 2019 ABC/M is now closed.**

**Final Note:** For the 2019 ABC/M there were a total of 56 participants: 51 voting members - 41 Delegates (15 new); 6 BOT; 2 Staff; 1 Journal Editor, and 1 CCC. There were 5 other members present – ABM Record keeper, CLC Rep, LPC Chair and 2 Observers. Six countries were represented: USA, UK, France, Sweden, Canada, and Australia; as well as a Phone Group and Online Group.