

**Main Menu**

Select Language | ▼

- [Home Page](#)
- [Trustee Guidelines](#)
- [GA Reference Material](#)
- [Keyword Search](#)
- [Download Center](#)
- [Contact Administrator](#)

**Cherry Hill, NJ - Spring 2015  
Information Section**

[Cherry Hill Conference Info](#)

**Rolling Agenda**

- [Cherry Hill Absentee Ballots](#)
- [Agenda Information](#)
- [Conference Bids](#)

**Submit an Agenda Item**

**BOT Committees**

- [Anonymity](#)
- [Blue Book Revision](#)
- [BOR/BOT Revenue Review](#)
- [Conference Oversight](#)
- [Digital Media](#)
- [Hotline Implementation](#)
- [Hotline Files](#)
- [Intergroup](#)
- [International Relations](#)
- [Literature](#)
- [Member Retention](#)
- [Pressure Relief](#)
- [Prison - Canada](#)
- [Prison - US](#)
- [Public Relations](#)
- [RSO](#)
- [Rules and Procedures](#)
- [Telephone Conference Call](#)
- [Trustee Election Guidelines](#)
- [Trustee Removal Merit Panel](#)
- [Trustee Website](#)
- [Website Revisions](#)

**Trustee Line & Other Features**

- [Trustee Line Home Page](#)
- [Login For The Trustee Poll](#)
- [Trustee Poll](#)
- [>>Trustee Information Update<<](#)
- [Trustee Website Tutorial](#)
- [Area Event Flyers](#)
- [Local Area Website Guidelines](#)
- [New Area/Trustee Accommodation Fund](#)
- [Local Area Help Flyer](#)
- [Board of Regents News Page](#)
- [Trustee Memorial Honor Roll](#)

**Future Conferences**

[Upcoming Conferences](#)

**Trustee Line for April 2015**

A PDF version of this issue to distribute to your rooms, or to print out for easier reading, will be available after 4/30/15.

**Thoughts From The Trustees - Current and Past**

The subjects listed below are themes that have been submitted by other Trustees. You may respond to any of them, or start an entirely new subject

Item	Subject	Last Entry	Entries
1.	<a href="#">How To Improve Gamblers Anonymous</a>	4/22/15 12:53 PM	2
2.	<a href="#">Evidently, Money Is Our Problem</a>	4/18/15 1:51 AM	3
3.	<a href="#">Outside Issue?, or Time to Change Step 6?</a>	4/11/15 1:26 PM	4
4.	<a href="#">Apathy</a>	4/22/15 1:00 PM	4
5.	<a href="#">Agenda Item 29</a>	4/23/15 12:02 PM	1

**How To Improve Gamblers Anonymous**

4/1/15 - 12:01 AM

1. Allow the "owners" of Gamblers Anonymous to be the voting body that elects the Board of Directors; each member has one vote and each group tallies their votes and submits to the International Service Office (via written and signed ballot (note the designation of "Regent" was, I believe, to offset the ego of the word "director".)) Every corporation has a Board of Directors, let's call "Regents" by their real functioning position - "Directors".)
2. Have the business side of Gamblers Anonymous, its Board of Directors, submit appropriate outside directors for election that have expertise to help our fellowship (note, professionals from the service area, a Certified Public Accountant (not the same one that now prepares our audit), a Human Resource expert, an attorney focused on business non-profit issues, members of the medical profession including research and clinical experts, business leaders and other appropriate experts)
3. Continue with some Directors who are recovering members of Gamblers Anonymous
4. When the current International Executive Secretary is no longer an employee of Gamblers Anonymous, the IES will be not be a recovering gambler nor a member of Gamblers Anonymous
5. New IES will be presented to the Directors from an Executive Recruiting firm that has passed appropriate reference checks and an outside business contract attorney that we engage will prepare an appropriate contract with the Recruitment firm and an employment contract for the new IES, all with Directors input
6. Financial reporting by the Directors will be in accordance with AICPA (American Institute of Certified Public Accountants) Rules and Regulations as defined in GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principals); including the ongoing annual certified audit and annual budget and monthly balance sheets and monthly and cumulative statement of income and expense as compared with accepted budget and monthly explanations of any positive or negative variances
7. An annual balanced budget will be required starting with fiscal year July 1, 2015 ending June 30, 2016

8. All International Conferences will have a mandatory \$10.00 portion of the overall registration fee of the gambler who registered directed to the International Service Office as part of the conference expenses and not linked to profit or loss of the individual conference
9. Research to ascertain if Gamblers Anonymous has ever received written permission from the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous to use the Recovery & Unity steps; if not, apologize and request permission to use the original steps as written by AA changing only the type of addiction of Alcohol to Gambling and note the permission in all of our literature
10. Use only paid outside business and professionals to take care of all needs of website, internet, computers, software, legal advice, insurance and any other business or service issues with no member, past or present, engaged to perform such business duties, whether compensated or not
11. That the Directors of Gamblers Anonymous, a California Corporation shall report to the members, not to the Board of Trustees (I wonder if the California Commercial Code allows a layer of authority to be between the Directors and Owners?)
12. Engage an outside professional firm to aid us in fund raising techniques from our membership
13. Place the monthly Bulletin on Internet via our website or coded access web address and eliminate bulletin printing & mailing expenses
14. Have 1 Face to Face International Conference per annum in North America
15. If needed, have Trustee conference in same calendar year approximately 6 months after face to face conference in Chicago
16. Eliminate anniversary/birthday pins (how many "anonymous" members display their pins on a shirt or jacket each day? 3, 4 or 5 in North America, or none?)
17. Use the anniversary/birthday coin as the acknowledgement as it can be transported daily in your pocket or purse without a need for explanation
18. Canvass the entire current population of Gamblers Anonymous and ask each member if they had "a desire to stop gambling" at their first Gamblers Anonymous meeting? Would it be 5% of the new members? Why did we let the 95% of new members stay in the room? Let's get real and ask new members "Do you have problems as a result of your gambling?" Ask yourself "How long did it take you to have a desire to stop gambling?"
19. Change the use of the word "Sponsor" to "Mentor" as sponsor is defined as being responsible for another person, not what a "sponsor" is supposed to do in GA, be realistic and become a Mentor
20. Experiment one or two times to have a Trustee meeting via video conference and/or audio conference; what a cost savings to the program

I'll stop at 20 items.

Bill B. - Area 6, South Florida

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4/22/15 - 12:53 PM

I wish to respond to Items No. 12 and 19

No. 12- As a GA member and also based on my own personal experience sitting as a director on the board of several non-profits, I would not support hiring an outside agency to assist with fundraising among our members. I have experienced how this actually works and the cost is very high unless there are a few targeted donors who have the funds to make it worthwhile. If the general membership does not see the need for fundraising, the outside agency will not convince them otherwise. I would however strongly support an initiative to reach out to current and former trustees for financial support. It is commonplace in many non-profits for the board to take the lead in contributing to an organization. How many of us are "lifeliners"?

No. 19 - I like the word "sponsor". It has a history in 12 step programs going back to the early days of AA. I am also a mentor and mentee in my life outside of GA, and those roles are very different from my role as a sponsor and sponsor. A sponsor is more of an equal while a mentor is typically someone who is in a higher position than the mentee. We have enough problems with status in our program. I would not support this change.

Mary S. - Former Trustee- Area 12, New Jersey

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## Evidently, Money Is Our Problem

4/4/15 - 3:20 PM

I suppose the only way to say how I'm feeling going into Cherry Hill, is that I am saddened over some of the items on the Cherry Hill agenda.

The items that are problems for me, are the ones that are centered on money issues. One such item is to change Unity Step 7, that comes out of the Revenue Review Committee. Is the message that we should now accept family and friends to come in and bail out our Fellowship? Which family? Which friends? How is this validated?

Another item is from the Board of Regents that covers the By-Laws, saying specifically that we can do this but only when someone dies. What is the message with that? That also has an ally with the Revenue Review Committee about us providing legal advice to the members of this Fellowship with pre-emptive clauses to be set into the wills of members. Maybe we should have a new tab on the ISO website? I can see it now... Financial Advice for Non-GA People Contributing to a Self-Help Program.

I am very much in favor of an external analysis of the income and expense loads of ISO, the corporation of Gamblers Anonymous, for the purpose of stimulating income while retaining the core values, or be an extra set of eyes to give recommendations to the Board of Regents in cutting costs, but this outright attempt to change the workings of the Unity Steps just because we face a money squeeze is beyond my understanding.

It's very clear that not all agenda items will get passed. Those items that do not pass, may not have been thought out properly for acceptance by the necessary majority. I, like everyone else, will be voting against various items. Items will get passed that I vote against. Such is the democratic and deliberative process of the Board of Trustees. But to trash the principles in a manner that is so clearly tied into raising money, just can't be tolerated by any Trustee, who bound by the Guidance Code, more specifically, Article 8, Section 8: "The Board of Trustees shall act as guardians of the Twelve Steps of RECOVERY and the Twelve Step UNITY PROGRAM and must be guided by these precepts in all their decisions."

Certainly nobody needs my approval to post any items, nor would I care to do that, but these related items are very emblematic of a serious attempt to weaken the principles of the Fellowship.

And for those who think that the word "ought" is not a mandatory situation with our Unity Steps 6, 7, 9 & 10, let me just add the first definition for ought – "Used to indicate duty or correctness..."

The Trustee Line got polarized very quickly last month. How do the people who write in feel about this issue? It's time for those who only read the Trustee Line, to step up and be heard. Illuminate us with your insight to these items. I, for one, am anxious to hear how my thinking is possibly off the reservation.

David M. – Area 12, New Jersey

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4/4/15 - 6:31 PM

Hi David

I am directing this to you since you seem to be in opposition to some of the Revenue Committee items on the Cherry Hill agenda. So please put this letter on the Trustee Line under Evidently, Money Is Our Problem. Yes money is a problem and being part of the Revenue Review Committee I would like to make a few points. If it were not for the large donation from a member we would be severely hurting financially.

1-Since I am also Treasurer of the BOR I will first discuss the money problem. Yes we need money and go negative almost every month. We have cut expenses as much as we can. We thought about raising prices on literature but decided that would hurt the fellowship.

2-The item on adding donations to the Guidance Code is mine. As I state Unity step 7 clearly states Groups are self supporting not the ISO office. When this was put into our literature the idea was to keep any influence from effecting our program. This was mainly aimed at companies like IBM or General Motors. This was not meant for the families or friends of members that pass away. Sometime the family might state please make a donation to Gamblers Anonymous in leu of

flowers. In this case should we send the money back. In most cases we're looking at \$10-\$30.

3-Don't think for a minute that other 12 step programs do not take donations from family and friends. Sending these checks back is like an insult.

4-If you check the ISO bulletin you will see that California makes up more than 25% of the lifeliners and contributes more than 30% of the dollars. Why is that? If we could get the other states to even get one lifeliner per meeting with a \$20.00 each donation we might not have a financial problem.

5-In California we take the time after each meeting to talk about the ISO office and being a lifeliner. I have been to meetings in many states that do not mention either ISO or being a Lifeliner.

Bob W. - Area 1B, Inland Empire, CA

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4/18/15 - 1:51 AM

I am writing to express my concerns about Items 48 and 56 on the agenda for the upcoming BOT meeting in Cherry Hill. These proposals will allow donations from family and friends. I feel this would be unwise.

When gambling, many of us relied on 'outside contributions' whether from borrowing, stealing or just allowing others to subsidise us. It is an important part of recovery that each of us now meet our obligations inside and outside the fellowship.

I do not agree with the strict interpretation that Step 7 only applies to groups - I believe it applies to the fellowship as a whole and the ISO is an integral part of GA. Indeed, under Step 7 of the Unity Program, both A New Beginning and Sharing Recovery Through Gamblers Anonymous state 'By allowing outside contributions both groups and members would be deprived of exercising responsibility over their affairs and their obligations to the Fellowship'.

Recently the ISO received a bequest from the estate of a deceased member for over \$200,000. Would we, as a fellowship, be comfortable receiving a similar amount from the estate of a deceased non-member? What message would it send to the fellowship about our individual responsibility to GA being self-supporting. If we allow the By-law change we will have no choice but to accept such contributions.

I believe that this issue is being linked to the ISO's financial position. It is accepted that the ISO is currently losing money at an alarming rate and the BOT has created a Revenue Review Committee to address the issue.

A current Area 18 Trustee was advised that the Revenue Review Committee decided against increasing the price of literature because they felt that would hurt the groups.

I believe there is scope to increase prices. I do not believe, for example, increasing the price of A New Beginning or Sharing Recovery Through Gamblers Anonymous from \$6 to \$7 will have a significant affect on groups. Further, I believe that a full cost analysis should be done to ascertain the true cost of literature and this should be the starting point for pricing. The cost of producing literature includes handling charges i.e. cost of wages to employees while they process orders and an equivalent figure for office lease, electricity, telephone and other costs.

The experience of the New South Wales RSO in Australia is as follows. We started in 1978. For many years we had little money. We often delayed payment of basic bills such as telephone and rent until after the monthly RSO meeting where the bulk of group donations were handed over in cash. (These were the days before electronic banking became widespread). No real effort was made to change our financial position because we had a wealthy member and he could be relied on to pay any unexpected expenses such as a replacement photocopier.

In about 1993 we formed a committee to look at ideas to become self-supporting. Of the ideas introduced, the most productive was increasing the price of literature to cover associated costs. Within a year our finances were healthy and all bills were being paid immediately. We now have a prudent reserve. We do not believe groups suffered and we still supply free literature where appropriate.

Lifeliner contributions is another area where the fellowship may be able to

increase income. It is likely that several current Lifeliners pay by direct deduction and have not given a second thought to increasing their contribution for many years despite inflation and an increase in their disposable income. We should consider writing to all current Lifeliners who have not altered their contributions for more than, say, ten years. Obviously we need to make it clear that Lifeliner contributions are voluntary and we are only asking for reconsideration from those members whose income has increased. We are not seeking increased contributions from those who have retired or those whose disposable income is relatively unchanged.

The take-up rate in Australia for Lifeliners has been poor. This may be because the bank charges for cheques converting to the United States currency is high. It is just as likely due to apathy and 'I have not got round to it yet'. I will discuss with current Trustees here to develop strategies to remedy this situation.

Andy D. - Former Trustee, Area 18, Australia

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<b>Outside Issue? Or Time To Change Step 6</b>
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4/8/15 - 3:47 PM

Greetings, Fellow Trustees,

I would like to go on record as being opposed to the first two (2) items on the agenda of the upcoming Cherry Hill Conference; namely, deleting Chapter 7, pages 97-101 of our "Red Book, A New Beginning", and removing the back inside cover of our Group Handbook, both of which deal with Gam-Anon. Although I'm sure the items were submitted to try to bring us into accordance with the letter of the law of Unity Step 6, depending on how you look at it they either go too far, or not far enough.

Obviously, by even mentioning Gam-Anon in ANY piece of our literature, we are recognizing their existence, thereby tacitly endorsing them in violation of Step 6, and implying an opinion in violation of Step 10. What a crock!

Gam-Anon are not the 'bad guys', WE are. If not for us, they'd have no need to exist. They are a result of the damages we caused. They're the parents and spouses and children we were destroying with our behavior. We certainly couldn't help them, so they formed a fellowship to help each other recover from us and with us. (And protect themselves from us.) Does this sound like a bad thing? Does this sound like a threat to Gamblers Anonymous? Does the fellowship of Gam-Anon lessen our recovery, or enhance it? If the latter, shouldn't we embrace it?

If we're so afraid of Gam-Anon, why do we invite them to participate in our conferences? Our "Hosting an International Conference" tells us to ensure there is meeting space for Gam-Anon delegates, and have a space for them to sell their literature. (Actually, isn't supplying them with space and time at our conferences, and giving them a percentage of any profits much more of an endorsement than just mentioning them in our literature?) What's next: removing any mention of them from ALL GA material? Deleting reference to them from the GA web site? Will they become "the 'G' word", not even to be spoken aloud, lest it hurt my recovery?

I believe we have an OBLIGATION to not only endorse Gam-Anon, but to advertise their existence and purpose as another 'tool' in our 'recovery tool box'. They do only good for us. Let's stop treating them like the "boogey man".

In closing, I've always been in favor of adding those 6 Magic Words: "With the sole exception of Gam-Anon" to the beginning of our Unity Step 6. Let's stop treating them like an 'outside issue', and instead recognize them as allies in the war against our addiction.

Do you want to change something for the good of the entire fellowship of GA?  
Change Unity Step 6!

Your friend in recovery,  
John B. - Trustee, Area 13, Philadelphia, PA

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4/9/15 - 4:22 PM

I am also writing about the Agenda item regarding a change to Unity Step No. 6 to add the words "except Gam-anon" after "never affiliate with". First of all, I am wondering how this is going to be addressed at the trustee meeting. Is someone

from Gam-anon going to speak to the board? Will this person read Gam-anon literature? Will they speak from their own experience? Will they be available to answer questions? It seems odd to me that the board might have to decide this very important issue without hearing directly from a representative from Gam-anon, but I'm not sure if the Guidance Code allows anyone other than a GA member to address the board.

If the trustees are going to have to make a decision without any outside input, they are only left with the board's collective experience. Again, this seems really odd to me because how much does each individual trustee really know about Gam-anon and its internal workings and structure. Moreover, what happens if Gam-anon changes its fundamental purpose and operation (as it is completely entitled to do) and GA is still affiliated with it? Will GA get a vote on Gam-anon's board of Trustees? (Does Gam-anon even have a board of trustees?) Likewise shouldn't there be members of Gam-anon on the GA board? I can't answer any of these questions but I believe that this is the reason for the Unity Step in the first place. Our fellowship cannot monitor how another fellowship operates; nor should it. We have enough issues of our own. The proposed changes to Unity Step #6 divide us more than unite us and should be rejected.

Moreover, not all of us have someone in Gam-anon. Believe it or not, some of us have to deal with our gambling problem completely on our own by working the 12 steps of recovery without any "outside" support. That is the reality for many of us. If we have to read about Gam-anon at every meeting (don't forget that the Unity Steps are typically read at every meeting) we will be reminded at each and every meeting that we are "alone" in the program and that there are two classes of GA members. If we are reminded over and over that no one outside of the program is there for us, we might then believe that our situation is hopeless, when, in fact, nothing could be further from the truth. Our program offers hope to each and every suffering compulsive gambler that working the 12 steps of recovery will lead to a better way of life. Please be inclusive and not exclusive. A change in Unity Step 6 will only weaken us as a fellowship, not strengthen us.

Thanks,  
Mary S. – Area 12, New Jersey

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4/9/15 - 6:06 PM  
John, fellow trustees,

I've no desire to try to change any opinion but I have an overwhelming desire to put on record some facts which don't appear to have been a consideration in John coming to the above conclusions.

1 ) Nobody on a program would or did refer to Gam Anon or anyone else as "The Bad guys or Bogey men " as you put it "

That's just emotionally motivated, uninformed opinion which is a clear insult to "The Majority " of the Board of Trustees who voted in favour at the first vote on the items you quote.

2 ) There was somebody named John who opposed these items and who referred to himself as " Also a member of Gam Anon "

His views were heard and the majority voted in favour of the items on the first vote nonetheless.

I mention this before I state the following facts :

3) In order to be a Trustee in Gamblers Anonymous there is a requirement to be a member of Gamblers Anonymous

3A ) In order to represent Gam – Anon at ANY LEVEL beyond group level, there is a requirement to NOT BE a member of Gambler Anonymous.

That's right, it would seem that one can be a representative of Gam Anon if one is a member of AA, BA, CA, DA, EA, FA, ... HA...NA... OA...SA...ZA ETC. but not if one is a member of G. A.

That's their prerogative and none of our business.

The point is, whoever the other John is is irrelevant, there is no representative of Gam Anon elected by them to represent their views on the floor of our BOT, according to the guidelines adopted by Gam Anon themselves , when they adopted in full the program of AI – Anon.

4 ) The argument that other references to Gam- Anon or anyone else in our literature justifies turning a blind eye to the merits of the two items presented to the BOT of Gamblers Anonymous has been rejected by the majority of the BOT, who voted in favour of these items on their own merits on the first vote.

I would like also to place on record that I reject the suggestion that ANY OTHER fellowship would be referred to as ( ... bad guys ... or Bogey men ) as you put it and also, for all it's worth, your description of the purpose and structure of Gam Anon as being set up to deal " With Us " as you put it, could rightly be taken as the ultimate insult to Gam Anon. I do not support your view on that and I would be surprised if any member would agree with it.

Odie. B. - Trustee, Area 36, Ireland S - E

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4/11/15 - 1:26 PM

To All Current Trustees and Former Trustees:

To include Gam-Anon or not include Gam-Anon in everything Gamblers Anonymous does, is an emotional issue at best. We all have very strong feelings one way or the other. What is the politically correct thing to say today? - 'some of my best friends are Gam-Anon members.' Are all Gam-Anon members supportive? Some are; some are not.

I joined Gamblers Anonymous in an attempt to stop gambling and become a better person. I did not join Gam-Anon, nor do I have anyone in my extended family that has. My main purpose is to stop gambling and help other compulsive gamblers to do the same. It is not my role, nor should it be, to aid or assist anyone in Gam- Anon; but it is my new responsibility to be kind, honest, open-minded and willing. I have some very dear friends in AA who encouraged me to join GA and have been very supportive. Should we not include them in Unity Step 6? I have a sponsor who attended a noted treatment center which is very supportive. Should we not include them in Unity Step 6? I have outstanding friendships with NA members. Should we not include them in Unity Step 6? As a current sponsor has advised me: "I cannot be all things to all people." I can advise a newcomer that their family might find some comfort in the Gam-Anon program. Some will; some won't. I can't guarantee anything nor can I sit in judgment of anything or anyone.

However, I do have a responsibility to live and work the 12 Steps of Recovery and the 12 Steps of Unity in my daily life. The last clause of Unity Step 6 advises me not to let anything 'divert us from our primary purpose.' If I chose to add Gam-Anon to Unity Step 6, would that not also violate Unity Step 10 which advises me to have 'no opinion on outside issues?' I would then have to embrace every issue that Gam- Anon embraces and I'm not sure I am ready to do this. As Odie has pointed out, one of their tenants is that no one at one level can be a member of Gamblers Anonymous. Would I have to support that? There are married couples in our Fellowship who belong to both groups. How would this affect them? Would other Steps be impacted as well?

The BOT voted against allowing conference booklets be approved GA literature in part due to Gam-Anon writings. Would adding Gam-Anon to Unity Step 6 negate this vote? We already force Gamblers Anonymous members to listen to Gam-Anon readings in a Combined Meeting. Would that negate the Guidance Code's advice to only have approved GA material in a meeting? Would the Guidance Code then have to be changed as well? Will this alter Gamblers Anonymous as a whole? The Guidance Code tells the BOT to be 'guardians' of the steps. The Encarta Dictionary defines this as 'protector.' I ask myself from what? Is it from 'outside influences,' or 'undue influence?'

The Red Book, Chapter 7, includes "A Message from Gam-Anon," "A Message from Ruth S., The Founder of Gam-Anon," and "How Gam-Anon Started." And we sell this to GA members. Does this not violate our principle not to use, display or distribute unapproved GA literature? In the first paragraph, in bold lettering and all caps, it states "YOU NEED NOT WAIT FOR THE COMPULSIVE GAMBLER TO SEEK HELP BEFORE YOU CAN COME TO GAM-ANON." Surely, this message is not intended for the compulsive gambler - the person for whom this book is intended, nor to whom it is sold.

The last page of the Group Handbook describing Gam-Anon states ".....and is not directly affiliated with G.A. though cooperation is essential and consistent." Then I have to ask myself, why is this part of our Group Handbook? Then I also have to ask myself, why are we spending so much time and money supporting Gam-Anon and so little time worrying about the compulsive gambler who still suffers -

supposedly our primary purpose.

With respect for all,  
Linda S. - Current Member Area 7C, Oklahoma  
Former Trustee, Area 3A, San Diego

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<b>Apathy</b>
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4/22/15 - 5:34 AM

On April 1st I submitted 20 ideas as to "How to Improve Gamblers Anonymous". As an infrequent contributor to the "Trustee Line", I was surprised that no one had a comment or suggestion to either opine on one of my 20 points or even submit their own point(s) for discussion regarding a very important topic...

Bill B. - Area 6, Southern Florida

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4/22/15 - 10:38 AM

Bill,

You sound frustrated at the lack of response to your items. Your reception is not much different than most of the posts. I can assure you that what you wrote was read by many, but the difficulty is getting those people and others to step into the batter's box and at the very least, just try to hit the ball (respond to a posting).

For years, I have fielded complaints from Trustees who have problems with how many postings I make to the Trustee Line. I do that, to try and get something started in the area of a dialogue about issues pertaining to GA. The items I choose are easy targets for those who might have opposing views, yet little if anything happens here each month.

There are those who think that they are going to get attacked if they put in an opposing view on something that has been posted. That used to happen, but the Trustee Line always ends up regulating itself. Last month, there was an inflammatory topic that was started and all the responses were directed to the point, not the personalities that were implied in the original posting. That alone was proof of how the old escalations of tempers has subsided. Score 1 point for the Trustee Line.

Another complaint is that I respond to too many items. I have not responded to your 20 items to improve GA, because I wanted to see if others were going to do so. You and I could debate for the better part of a week on the pros and cons of your items. And yes, you left the door wide open for others to chime in with their opinions. Yet 3 weeks later, you write this posting. It is truly sad.

What really gets me crazy is that when we get to the Trustee meetings, the Trustees coming up to the microphone have so much to say, either for or against the items. Where was this support or opposition to items as the rolling agenda was being compiled? Who is being contacted about problems others have with the agenda items BEFORE the deadline hits for making changes? I understand that some people just want the items defeated and have no interest in working with the authors for a better agenda item, but what about those who feel strongly in favor of defeating an item or strongly about passing the item?

The topic of improving the Fellowship should be overflowing with ideas and postings in response to your initial item this month, Bill. I hear that there are people who are complaining about all the rules, and constantly throw out the statement of us concentrating on our primary purpose. However, I don't see those same disgruntled Trustees and members coming up with any ideas how to do that.

Bill, my hope is that you get elected to the Board of Regents in Cherry Hill. We need business-minded people running the corporation of Gamblers Anonymous. The decisions, changes and voting that has occurred with the Board of Regents this term has been demoralizing. We have a financial crisis in our midst and we need bold thinkers on the BOR to deal with the situation, not to just talk about it.

But as it relates to the Trustee Line and the apathy that seems to be an integral of Gamblers Anonymous, maybe just getting those talkers to be writers would be a great step forward.



David M. - Area 12, New Jersey

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4/22/15 - 11:47 AM

David,

With all the ideas and opinions that you have about the way the BOR should be running and doing business, I have never seen your name on a BOR ballot.

If you want major changes, then run for the BOR, and then you have the opportunity to make what you think are changes for the best of the Fellowship and the corporation as a whole.

Everyone seems to complain, but nobody steps up to the pipe. To me that's Talking the Talk and not Walking the Walk.

Arnie B. - Area 8, Chicago - Former Trustee and current BOR member

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4/22/15 - 1:00 PM

Arnie, It's great to see you submit something to the Trustee Line. I guess my response to Bill rubbed you the wrong way. I would image what I have written in this response will irritate some others.

As you know, a GA member cannot serve on more than one board at a time, it's either the Board of Regents or the Board of Trustees. My calling is to the Board of Trustees, to help the Fellowship side of GA.

I believe if you look back on the history of BOT agendas, I have been very active in coming up with new things that have passed with high margins. I have chaired many committees and participated on many committees with end products that were eagerly accepted by the BOT. Although some may argue otherwise, I feel I help to make a difference with the ideas, but the BOT is the deciding body.

As it relates to the BOR, it has long been a closed network of members who initially were nominated by a committee. Luckily, that has changed. The BOR fought my direct actions to allow more than 2 BOR members to be electable from outside the 200-mile radius of the ISO. Finally that number was increased to 4 in Orlando '13. I have fought for a financial report that make sense to the members. One that would show where we stand each month against our annual budget, not just a cash flow statement. Multiple chairs have squashed that alone, just because they said what we get each month is sufficient. I have argued for more detailed minutes and that improves slightly once in a while, but we elect the BOR members and we have no idea about what they are saying or who is bringing new ideas to the BOR internally.

The list goes on and on, Arnie. I still feel like salmon swimming upstream with each issue I try to bring to the BOR. Change is not an operative word with the BOR. Openness is also not a theme. Since you are a BOR member, maybe you can enlighten us as to exactly what the BOR has done in the last 12 months to help alleviate this financial mess to which we are now hostage.

The Guidance Code, Article XIII, Section 5, states that: "The sole purpose of the Board of Regents is to supervise the operations of the International Service Office (I.S.O.) and see that it is operated effectively and efficiently." I would submit that without any evidence of real actions in this financial mess, the BOR is not carrying out its sole purpose. The BOR is elected for a specific job. Yes, maybe it's time to clear the deck and get people in who can act on business problems and have the vision to keep GA financially on track, but pointing a finger to others and saying they are talking the talk, is very disingenuous, at best.

There are too many constraints on who gets elected as a BOR member to make those with good ideas look as though they are trouble makers. A non-BOR coming up with an agenda item, can't even pitch the item to the BOR, unless he/she comes to California to do so. The intensity by which the BOR looks to exclude others is astounding. Conference calls have stopped for members who may want to hear what is going on. Agenda items have to be approved for content by the Chair. Items that are not popular with the BOR get tabled. The attendees are more interested in going home rather than do some real work. Is there any wonder that the rest of the Fellowship finds this part of GA to be an elitist group of GA members and not embracing of those who are not BOR members? How ridiculous is that? The BOR is operating as it has for too long without a major overhaul. A committee was formed a number of years ago, and that helped get rid of the ambiguities between the By-Laws and the Guidance Code, but the internal problems still persist.

Unfortunately, you have to see and accept that the responsibility always comes back to rest in the lap of the BOR. Maybe you should be pleading with those who don't get involved in either the BOR or the BOT. What about all the wealth of knowledge from those who are past Trustees? They do their time on the BOT and then most of them disappear from being active. What's that about?

David M. - Area 12, New Jersey

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<b>Agenda Item 29</b>
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4/23/15 - 12:02 PM

An observation regarding item # 29 on the agenda, which currently proposes as follows

Change internet to social media

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

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

My thinking is that removing " Internet " would be a mistake, for the following reason.

" The Internet " includes website based social media, whereas " Social Media " is merely a part of the internet and does not include everything on the internet. Therefore removing "Internet " leaves very large " Loopholes "

We all know the trouble loopholes cause, the massive scarce resources of time and money taken to fill the even larger " Potholes " left by those who exploit even the tiniest " Loophole "

My suggestion of an amendment would be along the lines of rewording the item to read .....press, radio, films, television, social media and internet.

I was going to wait until Cherry Hill and mention this if it hadn't been mentioned,by someone else, I also convinced myself that " Someone else " will already have discussed this with the author. That felt like a cop-out on my part, so I'm throwing it out here,primarily for two reasons, at least.

1) It may help, allowing the author time to consider if he wishes to propose an amendment and if so how he would word it, planning in advance rather than trusting in the inspiration of the moment, to quote our literature. Or perhaps even garner other suggested amendments

2) I feel and I know others have made this point before, this is one of the type of situations where the trusteeline could really be utilized to everyones benefit.

Odie B. - Area 36, Ireland S - E