

Main Menu

Select Language | ▼

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

Cancun, Mexico - Fall 2015

Information Section

[Cancun Conference Info](#)

Rolling Agenda

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

Submit an Agenda Item

BOT Committees

[Monthly Committee Reports](#)

- [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](#)

International Areas

- [Australia](#)
- [Eastern Asia](#)
- [Europe](#)
- [Pacific Rim](#)
- [Scandinavia](#)
- [South Africa](#)
- [South America](#)
- [United Kingdom](#)

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 July 2015

A PDF version of this issue to distribute to your rooms, or to print out for easier reading, will be available after 7/31/15.

Questions and Answers Involving Individual BOT Committees

Any GA member can contact the Chairs of the Committees listed below with any questions or concerns they might have. The Chairs will answer the emails and the resulting issues will be posted under each committee involved in the email. This will serve as help for other members, Intergroups or areas, who may be going through the same situations. The emails will not breach anonymity and will be redacted to make sure names and areas are not included in this section. You are also invited to click the individual committee links on the left margin, for more information.

1. [Blue Book Revision](#)
2. [BOR/BOT Revenue Review](#)
3. [Conference Oversight](#)
4. [Digital Media](#)
5. [Hotline Implementation](#)
6. [Intergroup](#)
7. [International Relations](#)
8. [Literature](#)
9. [Member Retention](#)
10. [Pressure Relief](#)
11. [Prisons - Canada](#)
12. [Prisons - US](#)
13. [Public Relations](#)
14. [RSO - Regional Service Offices](#)
15. [Rules and Procedures](#)
16. [Telephone Meeting Conference Calls](#)
17. [Trustee Election Guidelines](#)
18. [Trustee Removal Merit Panel](#)
19. [Trustee Website](#)

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.	Unity Step 3	7/3 11:05 AM	2
2.	We Don't Have To Do Any Work, Do We?	7/14 3:45 PM	2
3.	Request For Feedback On 4th Step Guide	7/15/15 10:20 AM	6
4.	Current 4th Step Guide	7/15/15 2:12 PM	2
5.	How Do We Better Serve The Fellowship?	7/15/15 10:04 PM	1

Unity Step 3

7/2/15 - 10:58 PM

Tonight, I had a discussion after my Intergroup meeting regarding Unity Step 3, "The only requirement for Gamblers Anonymous membership is a desire to stop gambling."

A few thoughts/questions that I have and would love others feedback/opinions

etc.

1) I remember having a discussion item at a Trustees meeting about 10 years ago about the first part of this step. At that time, the group conscience of those trustees was that someone who was at a GA meeting and stated that he/she doesn't have a desire to stop gambling should still be at the meeting and should NOT be asked to leave.

I have been at meetings where both a person stated that he/she didn't have a desire to stop gambling. The person was asked/told to leave the meeting quoting Unity Step 3 and at a different meeting (different person), that person was Not asked/told to leave.

I believe this effects GA as a whole and "self-governing" or room autonomy doesn't apply.

How has your area dealt with this?

2) I also would like your feedback on the second part of this step, "Gamblers Anonymous membership."

What/when/how does someone (new person) become a member of this fellowship, the first meeting?

Have a great 4th

Sincerely,
Mike A. - Area 14, Long Island, NY

7/3/15 - 11:05 AM

Unity Program #3 to me is quite mis-leading and not worded properly. I would recommend that the wording would be better defined for all if it is stated: "The only requirement for Gamblers Anonymous membership is having a problem as a result of gambling".

At my first Gamblers Anonymous meeting I had problems as a result of my gambling. Did I have a desire to stop gambling on day one? Hardly, what I needed to help my situation was more money. How many members of Gamblers Anonymous had a desire to stop gambling when attending their first meeting? 5%? Why was I asked 20 questions? Did I have to pass a test to stay at the meeting? Could I join without answering those questions? If a desire to stop gambling was necessary to join, how come nobody asked me? I should have been asked to leave the meeting.

Should we now have it mandatory that all rooms must advise any new member or existing member that does not have a desire to stop gambling to leave the premises at once! Hmmm.

Or, change number 3 to suggestion above and change the first sentence of the second paragraph on page 2 of the Combo Book. That makes sense to me. Anyone else agree?

My belief is that if you announce your name at a meeting, you are member even without stating you are a compulsive gambler. No mandatory rule that I am aware of that states you must state you are a "compulsive gambler" to speak, be a member or be allowed to stay at the meeting.

As reported, current members have challenged first time members to state they have to have a "desire to stop gambling" to "become a member"? No common sense with that approach.

Bill B. - Area 6, South Florida

We Don't Have To Do Any Work, Do We?

7/3/15 - 12:02 PM

It's a given, that some of you roll your eyes, when you see me posting something on the Trustee Line. I do this for a few reasons. First would be to stir the pot and hopefully get some Trustees, both current and past, to join in a 'spirited' discussion/debate over a multitude of issues.

The other reason is to try and point out issues and/or problems that seem to be overlooked or ignored, with little if any effort being done about them. It's about awareness and getting others to help make some changes, as we attempt to figure out what to do to improve the Fellowship, with all it's moving parts. Let us not forget the Guidance Code, Article VIII, Section 7:

"The Board of Trustees primary function shall be to insure the most effective

exchange of thoughts and ideas between all Gamblers Anonymous groups and to act for our Fellowship in an official and executive capacity on all matters affecting Gamblers Anonymous as a whole, except in matters coming under the jurisdiction of the Board of Regents or International Executive Secretary.”

The Board of Regents has been a recurring area of interest for me, and it is clear that change is not an operative word for how things get done with the BOR. My list is long in that area, and I was asked to give the new board some time to figure things out. They have their first meeting with the new board on July 18th. Unfortunately, we won't know what happened until the minutes are released on August 7th. The agenda will be closed by then, for the August meeting, so if anyone has something they want to submit, it won't happen until September. I was also told of all the procedures that have to take place in that first meeting. Is that code for no new business? A word to the BOR – the clock is ticking.

Important to all this is that when I see something that is not right, I point it out; not just with the BOR, but with the BOT. Today, it's about commitment and the general appearance of doing the minimum, if that, when so much good can come out of doing something a bit more than what's required.

In Cherry Hill, we passed an item to have non-standing committees submit monthly reports before the end of each month. We have 19 committees and Tuesday, June 30th, was the first deadline for such submissions. If you go to the first link under the BOT Committees menu on the website, you will see those reports. Don't get too excited, because there are only 3 and 2 of them come from standing committees. By the way, kudos to Bea A. for going the extra distance to submit a report for her standing committee. That means that 6 of 7 committees did not submit a report.

So how does the BOT vote for something at a BOT meeting, which had representation from all the committees and only 1 fulfills the duty, with 2 others completing reports as an optional move? I'll leave that one open for discussion, but I don't believe the passing of the baton to the new Executive Board should have anything to do with it. The committee chairs should have done it on their own, without having anyone to prod them.

The BOT is struggling with being relevant to all areas it represents. My area even has those who are complaining that our biggest expense is for the Trustees and those who make repeated efforts to try and divert money in our treasury away from the Trustees.

Committees should be active on a monthly basis, and the standing committee chairs should not be sitting back and saying that they don't have to submit reports because the ruling doesn't apply to sitting committees. Where is the motivation to go the extra distance? Why can't we have some initiative by our committee chairs to raise the bar? We have a new Executive Board in place now. Why can't each of us step out of our comfortable slippers and cup of coffee doldrums and make some magic happen? I was told early on in my recovery... 'If you are not growing – you are dying.' What does that say about the BOT that sounds any different from 'complacency'?

We passed the provision to submit monthly committee reports and the Chair of the BOT now has remedies to fix the problems of those committee members who don't comply. Let's see how that all works out.

We owe it to all members of GA to be more accountable than we have been in the past. The 'sit back and relax' attitude should not be how we move forward.

David M. – Area 12, New Jersey

7/14/15 - 3:45 PM

Dear Trustees,

My very sincere apologies for my neglect in getting a timely report from the Blue Book Revision Committee submitted for the month of June.

Accountability is a very necessary part of recovery; I allowed the deadline to pass without performing the required action in submitting the report.

I hope this will not reflect poorly on the excellent work of the Committee or on the dedication of the other Committee members.

Jeannie B. - Blue Book Committee, Co-Chair Area 8A, Minnesota

Request For Feedback On 4th Step Guide

7/14/15 - 10:45 AM

Dear Trustees,

The 4th Step Guide was approved on a Merit Vote in Cherry Hill. Many of you who were there expressed opinions on the content of the guide.

To date, no one has made any suggestions as to possible changes in the guide. Time is running out, as the deadline for opinions from Trustees is July 27th. The feedback that Tom S. and I got in Cherry Hill indicated that most Trustees thought the Guide would be a good addition to the GA library, but concern was expressed by several people about sections of the Guide they felt need to be changed or tweaked.

If there was anything that you felt needed to be changed in the Guide, I ask that you get to the document and submit your suggestions. It would be disappointing if, when this is presented in Cancun, these minor issues that were not brought up now caused this item to fail.

The item is on the Trustee Website. Go to the Download Center link in the Main Menu, then click on attachment #59A under Cherry Hill Agenda Attachments. Let the Literature Committee know about any concerns you have or changes that you think should be made.

Your Grateful Sister in Recovery,

Jeannie B. - Area 8A, Minnesota - Past Trustee

7/14/15 - 3:06 PM,br> Hi Jeannie,

I think the 4th guide is a great piece of new literature to add to GA's tool box. I'm Glad to see it pass a merit vote. If this item fails a first vote and the guidance code change to allow donations from family of GA members passes a second vote I would really question the BOT's competence regarding the 12 steps and 12 traditions...let me rephrase that..the recovery program and the unity steps..

Joe T. - Area 2, Northern California - former trustee

7/14/15 - 6:26 PM

Joe, great to see a past trustee sticking up for the guidance code of Gamblers Anonymous, that said, I don't know how helpful it is to sit back, wait (hope) for something controversial to happen and then give out. That attitude strikes me as along the lines of " ...don't join committees, don't volunteer and when something goes wrong, be the first to complain..." or words to that effect which exist or existed in our literature, was it a new members guide ? In any case, fair to say our program cautions us against that type of thinking.

Jeannie, I hope these will be seen as constructive comments rather than negative, as, while I voted and will likely again vote against this item, I think the idea is a good one, I think it's an area very much needing attention, I respect and acknowledge the effort put in by you and others and I would like to eventually see something come of it.

As it stands I have major concerns, mainly around the omission of ' Financial ' from step 4 and the imposition of views of all the other steps into what is a difficult enough step of itself and comes after 1 to 3 and before 5 to 12 for a reason, but other concerns as well.

while I am very much open to reviewing the item at a later stage to see what, if any, changes come about, I seriously feel that these issues point to a confusion, effort at quick fix and just getting beyond the aims of the fellowship without complete input from the fellowship, so not even suggestions to the literature committee can overcome the major concerns I have with the item.

Nonetheless, as I believe it was a great effort at a very difficult task, I would like to see the fellowship respond positively and constructively. As a mark of respect to your pro-active efforts to present and help this item I will send some suggestions to the literature committee and I recommend others do the same, speak up or forever remain silent, so to speak.

I presume the omission of " Financial " from step four was a typo and has long since been pointed out , also I am at a disadvantage to those who attended Cherryhill as I didn't get to hear the debate which may or may not have alleviated some of my concerns as to the genesis of some of the material, also I have a couple of other questions I would have liked to ask you / or the author which would have a bearing on my approach, I will remain open to any development of the item and, regardless of any outcome, respect due for the way you are going about this and I sincerely hope you get the input requested, it's not much to ask.

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

7/14/15 - 9:11 PM
Hi Odie,

Thanks for your input. Thanks for expressing your concerns for this new piece of literature. GA already has a guide to 4th step inventory. I'm not sure if you've ever worked a 4th step, but if you have, did you use the current approved literature? If you did I would love for you to share how it works and how it helped you. I hope you respond in great lengths as you do other issues on the trustee line, but any feedback would be greatly appreciated. :)

Joe T. - Area 2, Northern California

7/14/15 - 11:42 PM
Joe,

I'm sure if you resubmit your previous Step 4 topic you will get a better response, I can only suggest you use any trustee listing you have and don't do it alone, I doubt any trustee would leave you stuck, sponsors and fellow members also come to mind. In my 20 years abstinence I did manage at least one visit to step 4, it also comes into play at most meetings and particularly step meetings, however, I don't have that much belief that my version would work for anyone else so I don't bang it round too openly, it also changes and adapts as time passes, which is one reason I would like to see a positive development of item 59.

Meanwhile, let's both get some practice and do a quick moral inventory and see if we can agree to summon up the decency not to hijack Jeannie's topic. It's a good topic put on the trustee line for a good reason, I believe it was intended to encourage a positive, constructive response to an important situation regarding an item that affects all trustees, rather than suggestions for step 4 per se, I think we shouldn't hijack it.

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

7/15/15 - 10:20 AM
Hi Odie,

Thanks for your response. My gut tells me our current 4th step guide gets utilized by a very small percentage of the GA membership regardless of what sales of the booklet suggest. Of those that have "worked it" I doubt anyone can explain how it works and it's benefits otherwise someone would have on the trustee line already. How did it get passed? Did it get as much scrutiny as most new literature up for vote? I never hear anyone in area 2 meetings even mention the current 4th step guide in 12-13 years even been going to GA meetings. I find it odd that according to a trustee poll that majority believed it shouldn't be removed from GA's library yet no one to this day can explain how it works.

Joe T. - Area 2, Northern California

Current 4th Step Guide

7/15/15 - 10:57 AM
Hello fellowship,

My gut tells me our current 4th step guide gets utilized by a very small percentage of the GA membership regardless of what sales of the booklet suggest. Of those that have "worked it" I doubt anyone can explain how it works and it's benefits otherwise someone would have on the trustee line already. How did it get passed? Did it get as much scrutiny as most new literature up for vote? I never hear anyone in area 2 meetings even mention the current 4th step guide in 12-13 years even been going to GA meetings. I find it odd that according to a trustee poll that majority believed it shouldn't be removed from GA's library yet no one to this day can explain how it works. Any feedback will be helpful.

Joe T. - Area 2, Northern California

7/15/15 - 2:12 PM
I am facilitating a Writing the Steps workshop each Thursday evening in Boca Raton FL (April to October) using 3 pieces of our approved literature; Step #1; Writing the Steps & Step 4 Guide which is referred to in the Writing the Steps booklet. We are in the midst of step 4 and we are/will be utilizing the entire booklet.

The proposed new 4th step guide is too encompassing and features the other 11 steps too. If this was the intent should have the authors combined all of the step literature into one booklet?

Bill B. - Past Trustee - Area 6, Southern Florida

How Do We Better Serve The Fellowship?

7/15/15 - 10:04 PM

A few days ago, I received an email from a GA member asking what happened to the Anonymity Committee. I responded with a reference to the minutes of the Cherry Hill meeting and what was reported. That email exchange turned into a series of issues about anonymity in general. This morning, I received the most disturbing reply that I believe needs to be shared as an overview of how we don't take care of our members in the Fellowship of Gamblers Anonymous. This member had actually sent a question to all the Intergroups in the US and received more 'return to sender' than answers. This person says he has asked his Trustees, and that hasn't worked out. Responses from committee chairs have been equally disappointing. But the overriding question is, where does that regular GA member get their questions answered?

I hope that this topic evokes a lot of responses. Opinions in this Fellowship vary from border to border. Let's see if we can all become unified in a procedure to provide answers to these members who are looking to the Fellowship to help them.

The Trustee website is probably the best platform for this, but how do we get it done?

David M. – Area 12, New Jersey