

SECTION 8

TWELVE CONCEPTS FOR SERVICE IN GREAT BRITAIN

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The text following should be regarded as an appendix to, but in no way a substitute for, Bill W.'s Twelve Concepts for World Service as printed on the preceding pages. The appendix has been drawn up in order that the charitable company The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous (Great Britain) Limited may properly describe the governance of A.A. in terms appropriate to the law of England and Wales, and was so adopted by the General Service Conference 1995.

Concept I

The final responsibility and the ultimate authority for British AA services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship in Great Britain.

Concept II

When, in 1995, the British AA groups confirmed the permanent charter for their General Service Conference, they thereby delegated to the Conference complete authority for the active maintenance of our services and thereby made the Conference - excepting for any change in the Twelve Steps, the Twelve Traditions or in Article 12 of the Conference Charter - the actual voice and the effective conscience of the Fellowship in Great Britain.

Concept III

As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relationship between the groups, the Conference, the General Service Board and its General Service Office, and of thus ensuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested we endow each of these elements of service with a traditional "Right of Decision"

Concept IV

Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional "Right of Participation", taking care that each classification or group of our servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

Concept V

Throughout our service structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.

Concept VI

On behalf of AA, in Great Britain, our General Service Conference has the principal responsibility for the maintenance of our services, and it traditionally has the final decision respecting large matters of general policy and finance. But the Conference also recognises that the chief initiative and the active responsibility in most of these matters should be exercised primarily by the Trustee members of the Conference when they act among themselves as the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous (Great Britain).

Concept VII

The Conference recognises that the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the General Service Board (Great Britain) are legal instruments: that the Trustees are thereby fully empowered to manage and conduct all of the British service affairs of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is further understood that the Conference Charter itself is not a legal document: that it relies instead upon the force of tradition and the power of the AA purse for its final effectiveness.

Concept VIII

The Trustees of the General Service Board act in two primary capacities. (a) With respect to the larger matters of overall policy and finance, they are the principal planners and administrators. They directly manage these affairs. (b) But with respect to the executive services provided by the General Service Office, the relation of the trustees is mainly that of custodial oversight which they exercise through their ability to appoint staff who are charged with carrying out their policies.

Concept IX

Good service leaders, with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety.

Concept X

Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority - the scope of such authority to be always well defined whether by tradition, by resolution, by specific job description, by appropriate charters or by legal instruments.

Concept XI

While the Trustees, acting together as the General Service Board (Great Britain) hold final responsibility for A.A.'s service administration, they should always have the assistance of the best possible committees, service executives, staffs and consultants. Therefore the composition of committees and service assemblies, the personal qualifications of their members, the manner of their induction into service, the systems of their rotation, the way in which they are related to each other, the special rights and duties of our executives, staffs and consultants, together with a proper basis for the financial compensation of these special workers, will always be matters for serious care and concern.

Concept XII

General Warranties of Conference: in all its proceedings the General Service Conference shall observe the spirit of the A.A. Tradition taking great care that the Conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Conference members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the Conference may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself shall always remain democratic in thought and action.