

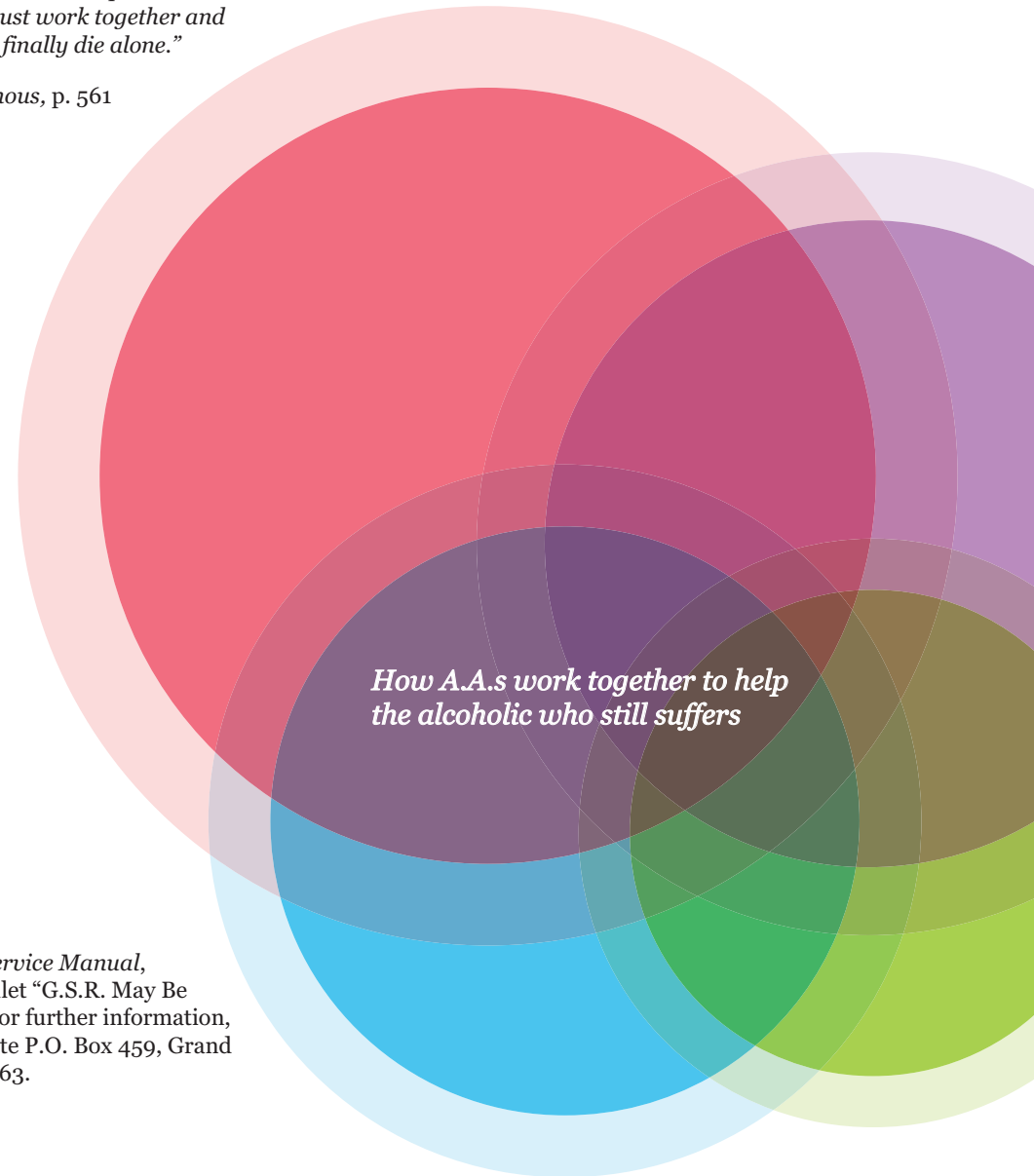
## IN ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, WE ALL WORK TOGETHER

*“To those now in its fold, Alcoholics Anonymous has made the difference between misery and sobriety, and often the difference between life and death. A.A. can, of course, mean just as much to uncounted alcoholics not yet reached.*

*“Therefore, no society of men and women ever had a more urgent need for continuous effectiveness and permanent unity. We alcoholics see that we must work together and hang together, else most of us will finally die alone.”*

—Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 561

# Circles of Love and Service



## HANDLING A.A. SERVICES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Central/Intergroup offices provide vital local services and Twelfth Step opportunities. All areas function independently and handle local A.A. services in the manner best suited to local needs. While G.S.R.s, D.C.M.s, area committees, area assemblies, and the General Service Conference are concerned with matters affecting A.A. as a whole, Central/Intergroup offices and answering services fill a different need. They handle local services only – such as coordinating local Twelfth Step calls, providing meeting lists, and in some places furnishing public information speakers for non-A.A. groups and for A.A. meetings in institutions.

Central offices and general service area committees are complementary, rather than competitive, A.A. operations. They exist to help insure A.A. unity and to fulfill A.A.’s primary purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

In 1990 the General Service Conference stressed the importance of communication and recommended that delegates establish and maintain contact with offices in their areas to share Conference information and assure that Central/Intergroup offices have a voice in the Fellowship through their existing service structure.

This leaflet is based on *The A.A. Service Manual*, *A.A. Comes of Age*, and the pamphlet “G.S.R. May Be the Most Important Job in A.A.” For further information, contact your group’s G.S.R., or write P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163.

[www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)

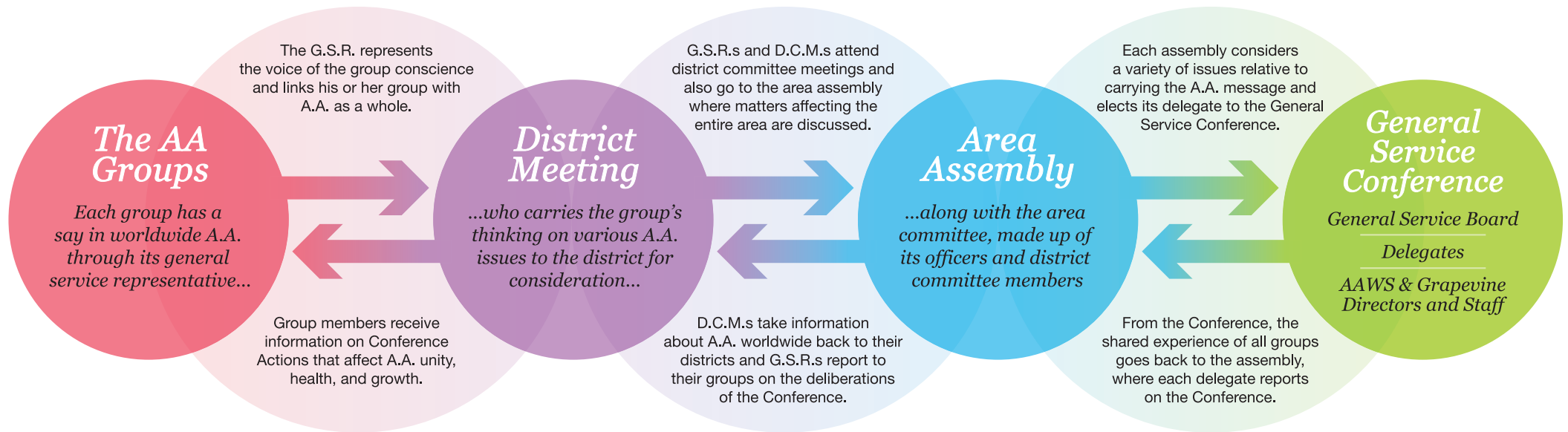
P-45

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This is A.A. General Service Conference-approved literature.

“For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.” –TRADITION TWO



All parts of our Fellowship – group meetings, committees, offices, Conferences, and group jobs – share one common purpose: to help the alcoholic who still suffers.

A.A. is made up of interconnected circles of people within the Fellowship, who work together to carry A.A.'s message of hope. But in order for A.A. to run itself without bosses or rules, in accordance with our Twelve Traditions, we need a system of communication for finding out how A.A. as a whole feels about its world affairs, and how it wants to operate.

For A.A. to run its own affairs, each A.A. group needs to make its voice heard on overall A.A. policies. This starts with a group's general service representative (G.S.R.), who represents the voice of the group conscience and has the job of linking his or her group with A.A. as a whole. G.S.R.s make sure their groups receive services from the U.S. and Canada General Service Office (G.S.O) and help groups stay informed about worldwide A.A.

For every district of about ten groups or so, the G.S.R.s elect a district committee member, or D.C.M., to communicate

the districts' conscience to the area assembly, which elects an area delegate to attend the annual A.A. General Service Conference for the U.S. and Canada (other countries have their own separate structure).

Every group in an area is encouraged to send its G.S.R. to its area assembly. The D.C.M.s help to make up the area committee – a sort of steering committee for the assembly.

Each group sends its own ideas or problems to the assembly, where other groups can share their experience and provide help and support. From the assembly, each G.S.R. can take back to his or her group the shared experience of the rest of the assembly.

Every area elects a delegate to the General Service Conference, held each spring in New York. Delegates serve a two-year term only and, like G.S.R.s, D.C.M.s, and trustees, Conference delegates are never paid for A.A. service.

The General Service Conference serves as the group conscience for A.A. in the U.S. and Canada. The Conference

meets for six days a year, yet the 135 or so Conference members are active in Conference affairs throughout the year. Every A.A. group shares its experience with other groups through its area delegate to the Conference.

**DELEGATE:** The 93 elected area delegates make up over two-thirds of the Conference, but there are others at the annual Conference session.

**GENERAL SERVICE BOARD:** The 21 trustees of A.A.'s General Service Board (U.S. and Canada) are part of the Conference. Fourteen trustees are alcoholics (Class Bs); seven are nonalcoholics (Class As).

**A.A. WORLD SERVICES:** The directors of A.A. World Services, Inc. (the legal entity responsible for the business of the General Service Office), and the A.A. staff members at G.S.O. are Conference members.

**A.A. GRAPEVINE:** Directors of The A.A. Grapevine, Inc., and its A.A. staff, are members of the annual Conference.