

Minutes of the Meeting of the DA World Service Organization
October 4, 1992
Boston, MA

The meeting opened at 9:10 a.m. with the Serenity Prayer.

The chairperson, Marjie M., outlined the plan for the meeting. A representative of each World Service Organization (WSO) committee would report on the work of that committee. Four items would be brought up for a vote: permanent adoption of the Interim Conference Charter and three pieces of literature. The chair explained that the four items would be brought to a vote without discussion, since the conference had decided that this convocation was not a discussion meeting. The Charter had been developed over a six-year period, and the literature had been in process for two years. The four items in their current form had been given to GSRs at the 1991 World Conference, leaving one year for review before today's vote.

It was clarified that non-GSRs do not vote; Board members do vote. The conference registrar stated that 80 GSRs had registered. By show of hands, 61 voting members were present.

Public Information Committee

JoAnna D., chair, reported for the PI committee. As the committee had done at its first session, she led the convocation in a two-minute meditation vision, asking each person to imagine the debtor who still suffers. She then outlined the 1992-93 agenda for the PI committee:

(a) distribute to groups the *International PI Manual* (formerly called *Slow is the Way to Go*), which has been written over the past two years. Within the spirit of Traditions 5 and 11, the manual gives guidelines for helping each group or individual represent DA to the press and the public;

(b) solicit and collect press reports about DA, to add to the DA archives and to alert local area groups to possible influxes of newcomers. Copies of such press reports should be sent to the WSO, Attn: PI Committee.¹

(c) through the Outreach Subcommittee, develop a "press kit" for local and regional PI use. Next steps are being planned for creating audio and video tapes and public service announcements for the kit;

(d) send informational mailings to outside fellowships and corporations, such as credit counselors, credit unions, and employee assistance programs, to inform them of DA's existence, following the model of AA and within the

¹ World Service Organization, P.O. Box 400, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163.

guidelines of Tradition 11;

(e) establish a regional network of local PI contacts to serve as contacts for newcomers and as information sources for the Board. GSRs were asked to give the committee the names of current local PI people, and to invite DA members who are not GSRs to become PI representatives. Such local contacts will be solicited in a future mailing from the committee;

(f) in the same mailing, offer suggestions for how to establish a local or regional PI committee;

(g) set up local and regional speakers' bureaus.

JoAnna D. invited others to join the committee by giving her their names. She acknowledged the committee for their clear and hard work at the conference; applause from all. She ended her report with a pause for the debtor who still suffers.

Finance Committee

Mark K. and M.D.P., co-chairs, reported for the Finance Committee. The committee's overall mission for 1992-93 is to increase contributions to DA-WSO by addressing financial matters, education, and communication within the fellowship, serving DA's primary purpose of ever expanding our outreach to the debtor who still suffers. The agenda for 1992-93 is to (a) increase contributions from each region in the U.S. by developing a GSR regional area network; (b) educate GSRs on groups' contributions to DA-WSO; (c) change attitudes about giving to DA-WSO through communication, distribution of literature, and addressing issues such as hoarding; (d) investigate costs and feasibility of a DA big book; (e) evaluate and make recommendations for pricing of literature and publication of DA pamphlets; (f) work with the DA treasurer to follow DA's spending plan and service needs.

The Financial Matters Subcommittee has three goals: (1) inform and educate members by producing quarterly analyses of WSO financial reports, including pictorial images, to be published in *Ways & Means* and distributed to Board members; (2) examine the current cost of literature, including a feasibility report on financing a DA big book; and (3) increase contributions through long-term and short-term means.

Long term, the committee hopes to organize a money-raising event in each of the eight regions² (e.g., the AbunDance in NYC last year), to encourage giving through 12 monthly themes (e.g., April is DA's birthday), and to address, through

² See the report of the Communications Subcommittee, p. 3, for a list of the eight regions.

education, the issue of hoarding. Short term, Claire B. asked GSRs to consider paying for their subscription to *Ways & Means* (\$8.00). She announced that the WSO had \$529.65 in its treasury now. She passed a basket and asked members to contribute any money left in the "miscellaneous" category of their conference spending plans. Subsequently, \$501.00 was collected. (It was announced, to applause, that \$222 had been collected in the free-will offering on Saturday night and that the conference as a whole had made more than its spending plan.) Claire B. distributed two flyers, called "fellowship self-support" and "a message of encouragement from the world service convergence finance committee" (attached) for GSRs to take back to groups to give a boost to WSO contributions.

The Education Subcommittee plans to distribute, in 3-4 months, a one-page information sheet about the 7th Tradition and contributions, for individual groups and treasurers, to be handed down from treasurer to treasurer. In 15 months, the subcommittee intends to produce a sheet on creditors and the regulations that govern consumer protection (the information will be cleared through legal counsel and will take into account state-to-state differences in the law); and a sheet on the tax exempt process that DA groups have to go through. In addition, the article on the 7th tradition published last year in *Ways & Means* is being reprinted in a new format. It was noted that any flyer will be submitted for approval to the Finance Committee and the Board.

The subcommittee endorses and intends to support WSO's current process of sending a return envelop, voucher, and receipt for every contribution that comes in. A discussion ensued about the receipts; the WSO treasurer, Alan S., stated that there is not the person power to write the amount of the contribution on the receipt and do the extra bookkeeping that entails; he asked groups to keep track themselves of what they send in.

The Communication Subcommittee in 1992-93 intends to set up a regional network of 16 GSRs (two in each region) for the purpose of carrying out the work of the Finance Committee. The job of these GSRs would be to serve as a link between the regional GSR group and the Finance Committee, communicating the needs of each group to the other. (Their job would not be to do the work of raising the money.) Gina G. asked for volunteers by region. It was suggested from the floor to let the chair of the regional GSR group be one of the liaisons. After volunteers were requested from four regions with only one response, Mark K. ended the subcommittee's report. Gina G. named the eight regions: New England, Greater New York, Mid-Atlantic, Southern, Great Lakes, Plains & Mountains, Southwest, Pacific, and Greater World.

Mark K. asked committee members to stand and all acknowledged them with applause.

MOVED, seconded, and APPROVED to accept the report of the Finance Committee: one abstention, all others in favor.

MOVED, seconded, and APPROVED to accept the report of the PI Committee: 3 abstentions, all others in favor.

Fellowship Committee

Rob S., Chair, and Jane P., Vice-Chair, reported for the Fellowship Committee, whose mission statement is to address the needs of more effective communication within the DA fellowship. Its goal for 1992-93 is to increase contacts with orphan groups by 66-75% (ultimately, the goal is for 100% communication). The committee sees *Ways & Means* as the official conduit of communication between the WSO and DA individuals and groups. The committee asks all GSRs to make a conscious effort to read the contents of *W&M* to groups.

The committee's goals as reflected in its subcommittees include: (1) loner outreach; (2) computer communication; (3) using marketing techniques to increase circulation for *W&M*, perhaps providing a group-rate discount; (4) slowly increasing the number of issues of *W&M* to one per month.

In regard to (4), publishing *W&M* more often would require having more material to publish; hence, the committee encouraged all DA members to submit articles, poems, and stories. Submissions can be sent to *W&M* c/o the World Service Office. Any stories not printed would be saved in the DA archives, perhaps for use in the DA big book. As part of gathering material, all committee chairs and Board members were asked to give Rob S. brief job descriptions after this meeting, to be print in *W&M* in the near future.

The committee recommended that GSRs should not have to pay for *W&M*, because the groups need it and GSRs need a perk, but that subscriptions should be encouraged. Through increased circulation the committee hopes to raise the funds necessary for more frequent publication.

A member of the Literature Committee stated from the floor that his subcommittee, which is collecting stories for the big book, would like a liaison from the Fellowship Committee. Mary M., editor of *W&M*, volunteered to be the liaison.

A member of the Degenderization Subcommittee of the Literature Committee asked from the floor that the Fellowship Committee consider changing

its name. The conference chair ruled that this matter should be dealt with during the report of the Degenderization Subcommittee.

The committee report ended to applause.

MOVED, seconded, and APPROVED (one abstention, all others in favor) to accept the report of the Fellowship Committee.

The chair then called for a short break (10:25 a.m.). The meeting reconvened at 10:38 a.m. The chair reiterated the request that all committee chairs to give Rob S. (Fellowship Committee) their names, addresses, and phone numbers before the end of the day.

Literature Committee

Eric R., chair, stated that the committee had compiled a list of 44 issues/problems from groups and complaint forms. The committee discussed two of these issues at length: the cost of literature, and people dropping out after six meetings. Nicole L., for the Literature in Process Subcommittee, called GSRs' attention to two items in their packets: the visions pamphlet and the service paragraph for the tools pamphlet. She asked for comments on them to be sent to her address on the packet by November 15. She listed current works in process: "Abstinence and Service" (this pamphlet completes the Tools), "DA Twelve and Twelve" (with a step work book), "Family Issues in DA," "Dealing with the IRS," "BODA" [Business Owners DA], a "Numbers" booklet to go with the record keeping book, and "Working with your Creditors." The process for approving literature is the following: an idea comes before the subcommittee; an outline for the pamphlet is proposed to and approved by the subcommittee and then sent to the Literature committee for approval. The first draft of the document is sent to the Literature committee for comments; the second draft is sent to the GSRs for comments. The final draft is sent to the GSRs for voting.

Marty R., for the Degenderization Subcommittee, reported that a monitoring process on existing literature has begun. Revisions will be made as specific pieces come up for reprinting. The agenda for 1992-93 includes providing the Literature Committee with guidelines for writing new literature and creating a procedure for DA to vote on degenderization of the 12 steps and 12 traditions. Both these items will be submitted to the Literature Committee and then the GSRs at the 1993 world conference. Marty R. asked all members to be conscious of the degenderization issue, and, specifically, asked the Fellowship Committee to consider changing its name to Unity or Community Committee.

A question was raised from the floor about whether the conference had

approved the concept of degenderization, and about what authority had been given the subcommittee to make changes. It was confirmed that the issue had never been brought to a vote of the fellowship, although it was noted that it had been discussed at three conferences. A motion was offered and seconded to bring the issue to a vote of the convocation. In the following discussion, there was some confusion expressed. One person said that by virtue of being created the subcommittee had been empowered to begin revising the pamphlets; later the same person said the committee had been empowered to watch out for gender issues. One person said the committee had not felt entirely clear about its mandate. One person said there were two issues being lumped together: "he/she" changes involving grammatical reference; vs. changes in words long-accustomed to 12-step programs such as "fellowship." She thought the subcommittee should be able to make the former kind of changes, but that the whole community should have a role in making the latter. Several people thought that the subcommittee should proceed with revisions and follow the regular approval process, submitting a draft to the Literature Committee and then to the whole conference for a vote. Finally, the chair decided not to entertain the motion: because this was a committee report; because the committee was not bringing anything to a vote; and because the conference had decided not to use the convocation for discussion. Marty R. concluded her report saying that she believed the issue should be brought before the community for a vote at the 1993 world conference.

Aishlin O'C. and Willis B. (Subcommittee on the Big Book--the "DA Book") described the intent of their subcommittee as being not to create literature, but to express words -- to reveal DA stories. They expressed the hope that a book could be put out quickly, since in some areas of the country a non-Program book is becoming a DA big book of sorts. The subcommittee intends to following the model of the AA Big Book, including an historical perspective. The 1992-93 mission of the subcommittee is to review the group of stories already collected, see which are ready for inclusion, and solicit stories from the community. Stories can be sent to the WSO, Attn: Literature Committee. In particular, the subcommittee is asking for stories that fall under the following categories: catastrophic illness, phases of recovery, solvency, underearning, pauperism, sex and money, and other non-money issues such as time debting. The subcommittee is open to suggestions from members regarding format of the book.

Jerome S. reported that the Pricing Committee had recommended to the larger Literature Committee that the price of literature be reduced to \$1 per pamphlet (\$5 for 6 pamphlets and \$10 for 12 pamphlets), based on the philosophy that the primary purpose of literature is to carry the message, not to produce income. (Literature now generates 65% of the income of the WSO.) The vote of the larger committee on this recommendation to reduce the cost of literature was: 9 for, 12 against, 3 abstentions, i.e., a stalemate.

Since the subcommittee reports were concluded, the chair called for a vote on the three scheduled pieces of literature. A new count was taken of the number of voting members present: 73.

MOVED, seconded, and APPROVED that "AA Literature" be accepted: 49 for, 16 opposed, 6 abstentions.

MOVED, seconded, and APPROVED that "Sponsorship" be accepted: 59 for, 5 against, 5 abstentions.

MOVED, seconded, and DEFEATED that "Awareness" be accepted: 24 for, 42 against, 7 abstentions.

It was MOVED and seconded that the report of the Literature Committee be approved.

The following discussion ensued. The work of the degenderization subcommittee was questioned: was it a violation of procedure for the subcommittee to move ahead on something which had not been decided by the conference? Was the committee empowered to investigate or develop literature, or actually to change literature? It was clarified that he/she changes had already been made in the pamphlets just approved by the convocation, and that the subcommittee was empowered to make recommendations for change, which would be submitted to the larger Literature Committee and then to the GSRs at the next conference, presumably to be voted on in 1994.

The Literature Committee report was APPROVED: 62 for, 6 against, 2 abstentions.

Service Committee

The entire service committee presented the report. Anne R. described the mission of the service committee: to produce and distribute information on how service is done on international, national, and area levels of DA. The committee's goal for 1992-93 is to write a manual clarifying the DA service structure, including the General Service Conference, the five conference committees, Intergroup, and DA World Service Bylaws. An additional element of the structure was included following a suggestion from the floor: GSR area representatives. One person from the committee is assigned to each topic. The committee's mandate is to describe what exists, not to create policy. It hopes to have a draft of the manual to the GSRs by the 1993 Conference.

Marjie M. added an historical note: at the first pre-conference conference, it was decided not to form specific area groups. Now there are more people and therefore a need for -- and the possibility of -- more structure. The frustrations felt over communication are the result of growing pains, and a sign of moving forward, not of previous short-sightedness. She asked the convocation to give itself a hand.

MOVED, seconded, and APPROVED that the Service Committee report be accepted: 71 for, 0 against, 2 abstentions.

Conference Committee

Arlene H. expressed the feeling that the intensity of the debate over certain issues shows that members care. Dale P. reported on the committee's future goals. The registration packets for the 1993 conference should be out by April 1993. No city came forward to host the 1994 conference, but New York City has expressed interest and will decide by February 1993. Detroit, Los Angeles, and Sacramento have expressed interest for the future. England or Ireland, 1996? A subcommittee is developing guidelines for future conferences, including their structure, qualifications for a host city, the conference packet, and allocation of time at conferences. The committee is recommending to the Board that the World Conference date be changed to the third week in June; approval of the recommendation requires a change in the Board's bylaws. The primary reason for the change is that conference space (at colleges, for example) is half the price in the summer as it is in fall. The committee supported last year's agreement that there be no absentee voting at the conference. The committee also discussed the service structure of DA re: intergroups and GSRs, and, in response to a request from some areas, a subcommittee was formed to prepare a document for the 1993 world conference delineating the responsibilities of each.

The vote on the Interim Conference Charter was called. Fred F. from the Board of Trustees gave a brief history: in 1986 the first DA conference began to draft the document, which defines the relation of the conference to the membership and the General Service Board. In 1989, when the draft was complete, it was adopted for three years as an interim charter. The Conference Committee recommended to the convocation that the charter be adopted permanently. In discussion, the process to be followed if the Charter were not made permanent was described (see motion, below). In addition, the following issues were raised: (1) the charter says nothing about Intergroups and the GSR, GSRs and the General Service Board; (2) is there a procedure to amend the charter? Fred F. responded that the charter was not meant to be bylaws -- it is a

philosophical document, not specific; and that at some future date the charter could be amended through adopting bylaws. One person disagreed that it could be amended in future. One person thought it would be difficult to contact the necessary proportion of groups, since the WSO is not in contact with many groups. After a call to question from the floor, the chair (Marjie M.) ended the discussion.

It was **MOVED**, seconded, and **DEFEATED** that the Interim Conference Charter be made permanent: 11 for, 44 against, 18 abstentions.

It was **MOVED**, seconded, and **APPROVED** that the interim be continued as interim for 2 years, presented at the 1993 conference as a draft for ratification, and voted on in 1994: 64 for, 5 against, 2 abstentions.

It was **MOVED**, seconded, and unanimously **APPROVED** to accept the report of the Conference Committee.

The members of the conference committee stood for applause.

Dale P. came forward to accept from Marjie M. the DA Conference Gavel, to hold in trust until the 1993 Conference in Dallas, TX.

Marjie M. thanked everyone for coming and participating in the process. There were rounds of applause for all present, and for the chair. Following some housekeeping announcements from this year's conference organizers, the meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Margot C., Boston DA