



60 Reasons to Love the Concepts

A past delegate from New Jersey celebrates the 60th Anniversary of our Twelve Concepts for World Service

By: Jeff B., New Jersey

1. You and your group are responsible for AA
2. The trustees of the General Service Board (GSB) and our two service corporations (AAWS Inc. and the AA Grapevine Inc.) provide services that the groups can't perform themselves
3. The General Service Conference connects your group, through your delegate, to the GSO staff and GSB trustees
4. They show that AA can manage its affairs with chosen representatives
5. The group conscience of the area is expressed through their elected delegate
6. The charter of the Conference makes the GSB accountable to the groups
7. The Conference charter allows the Conference to reorganize the General Service Board, if necessary
8. These principles enabled a successful transition from the cofounders Bill W. and Dr. Bob to our Fellowship
9. Trusted servants in AA can make their own decisions
10. Trusted servants can decide for themselves what matters they can handle themselves and which ones they will consult with you and your group
11. The Conference and GSB charters define the responsibilities of the Conference and the GSB and their relation to one another
12. While each area delegate understands and represents their area's group conscience, they represent AA as a whole and can vote accordingly
13. Every trusted servant is allowed a vote depending on their service position
14. AA service operates on the corporate, or "participating" model of doing business
15. No group of individuals at each service level has authority over other groups at that service level
16. Our spiritual ideal is that no member or class of trusted servants should be considered second class
17. After any vote, we ask those who did not prevail for their "minority" opinion
18. The minority is our chief protection against the uninformed, misinformed, hasty or angry majority
19. We are protected from the tyranny of the majority as well as the tyranny of the minority
20. Our society protects the rights and opinions of the minority so that we can remain free and democratic
21. The rights of decision, participation and appeal are granted to all service entities and trusted servants
22. Our spiritual objectives can be achieved through effective business operations

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23. The Conference delegates significant authority to the General Service Board so that they can act freely and effectively to implement the advisory actions from the Conference
24. The Conference charter, which guides the Conference and the Board can be easily amended except for paragraph 12 which state the Warranties
25. The General Service Board has the legal authority to fully manage and conduct our world affairs
26. The Conference relies on the spiritual force of tradition and the power of the purse for its effectiveness
27. The spiritual, practical power of the Conference will nearly always be superior to the legal power of the Board when a disagreement arises
28. The Board should consult with the Conference whenever possible before taking any major actions to avoid problems, disagreements and controversy
29. The General Service Board focuses on the larger, more serious questions of policy, finance, group relations, public relations and leadership
30. The Board has custodial oversight rather than direct control over our two service corporations, Alcoholic Anonymous World Services Inc. (AAWS) and the Grapevine Inc.
31. The Board exercises its authority over the service corporations by electing the directors for these entities with Conference approval
32. To avoid the concentration of too much money or power, the working capital and executive authority is divided between our two service corporations
33. A leader in AA is a person who can put policies and plans into place that make the rest of us want to back and help them
34. An AA leader can accept criticism and determine what information is valid and requires action
35. Good AA leadership originates plans to improve the Fellowship, never passes the buck and has the ability to compromise
36. Vision is an important characteristic of an AA leader and allows for developing plans for the immediate and distant future
37. Harmonious and effective functioning of our service entities is guaranteed by how these entities are related
38. Every service entity has one individual who has the ultimate responsibility and, therefore, the ultimate authority
39. The group conscience is the ultimate authority and you, as a trusted servant, are the delegated authority
40. Currently, 11 of the 13 trustee committees do the work of the Conference
41. The success of the GSB relies on capable trustees and their associated GSO staff, non-trustee directors and executives, all working in harmony

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42. The GSB no longer owns the stock of the two service corporations but, instead, appoints trustees as members of these entities who elect the nine directors of each corporation annually
43. Merging our two service corporations would result in too much concentration of money and executive authority
44. Paid staff workers are essential to our functioning and they should be fairly compensated and allowed to fully participate
45. The six Warranties, which form Concept 12, are considered so important that, like the Steps and Traditions, they can only be changed by vote of 3/4 of the groups in the world
46. The Conference should have just enough money and authority to function
47. Our protection against too much wealth is a healthy reluctance to create unneeded services while our protections against too much authority are rotation, participation and the charters of the various entities
48. The groups need the right information and education to determine whether money should be provided for a given service
49. Prudent fiscal policy can be seen by the maintenance of a reserve fund which ideally will contain up to a year's worth of operating expenses
50. Selling books for more than they cost, in Bill W.'s view, is not spiritually bad and the solvency of our world services rests on the contributions and sacrifice of those buying our books
51. Our world servants, both as individuals and groups, should be entitled to voting rights in proportion to their responsibilities
52. No Conference action can overturn the rights of its trusted servants to participate
53. The concept of participation is the practical means by which we guard against absolute authority in our service structure
54. Each decision should be, time permitting, extensively debated
55. Wherever possible a vote should be done using substantial unanimity
56. There will be no punishment for one's beliefs or principles
57. We should not enter into public controversy, even to defend ourselves
58. The harmony, security and future effectiveness of AA will depend on a non-aggressive attitude in our public relations
59. The Conference and all the entities in our service structure should try to act in the spirit of mutual love and respect
60. The freedom to serve is the freedom by which we live.