

V.

AA GRAPEVINE

AGENDA

Conference Committee on AA Grapevine

Monday, April 20, 2020 – 9 a.m.- Noon

Room: Poplar

Chairperson: Jeff B.

Secretary: Jon W.

Conference Committee Members

Panel 69

Jeff B.

Jenny D.

Rhonda F.

Stephen S.

Panel 70

Johnny C.

Ruth L.

Jess N.

Nikki O.

Jerry S.

- A. Consider the list of suggested AA Grapevine book topics for 2021 or later.
- B. Review progress report on AA Grapevine Workbook revisions.
- C. Review progress report on actions taken from the findings of the AA Grapevine Fellowship Feedback Survey.
- D. Consider revising the A.A. Preamble to use gender neutral pronouns. For example, "Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other..."
- E. Consider a request to change the language of the first sentence of the A.A. Preamble as follows: "Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of people who share..."
- F. Consider a request to develop an AA Grapevine pamphlet on how the AA Grapevine can be utilized to carry the A.A. message.
- G. Consider a request to change the name of the General Service Conference Committee on Grapevine to the Conference Committee on Grapevine and La Viña.
- H. Consider a request for AA Grapevine, Inc. to establish an Instagram account in line with the Twelve Traditions.

Note: 1989 Conference Advisory Action

Each Conference Committee carefully consider their Agenda items and strive to make their recommendations for Advisory Actions to the Conference at the policy level. To be more financially responsible, when a Conference Committee recommendation involves a substantial expenditure of money, an estimate of cost and its impact on the budget be part of that recommendation.

AGENDA

Conference Committee on AA Grapevine

Tuesday, April 21, 2020 – 9 a.m. - Noon

Room: Poplar

- A. Review report of first meeting.
 - B. Old business.
 - C. New business.
 - D. Election of chairperson.*
-

***Election of chairperson**

- 1. All Panel 70 members are eligible.
- 2. All committee members vote by written ballot (no verbal nominations).
- 3. Election by plurality. Second place becomes alternate chairperson.
- 4. New chairperson serves one year beginning at the close of the Conference.

**CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background
2020 Conference Committee on AA Grapevine**

ITEM A: Consider the list of suggested AA Grapevine book topics for 2021 or later.

Background notes:

From 2002 Advisory Actions:

It was unanimously recommended that the Conference Committee on the Grapevine annually review a list of proposed related items at least one year in advance of possible production, so that the Conference might provide guidance, recognizing that the committee may request more than one year to review some proposed items.

From 1992 Advisory Actions:

The committee recommended acceptance of the following proposal from the Grapevine Corporate Board:

In order to achieve some uniformity of procedure and to gain desired Conference input to Grapevine special items, yet not to compromise the Grapevine Corporate Board's "right of decision" to manage the fiscal affairs of the Grapevine, let it be proposed that:

Based on the positive model of mutual Conference and Board involvement in the production of The Language of the Heart, the Grapevine Corporate Board offer to the Conference Grapevine Committee on an ongoing basis, a general list of proposed special items at least two years in advance of possible production, in order that the Conference should offer any guidance or register any disapproval they might have. Having so presented the conceptual basis of these special items to the Conference Committee, final approval for the completed items would Rest with the Grapevine Corporate Board.

Background:

1. Staff Report for 2020
2. List of Conference approved titles for Grapevine and La Viña
3. AA Grapevine Catalog (mailed to committee members; online at www.aagrapevine.org)

1 of 1

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Staff Report
AA Grapevine Items
Suggestions for production in the year 2021 or later

AAGV items are published for several reasons: first, to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous stories from members and friends of the Fellowship; and second, to help GV maintain its self-supporting status. Furthermore, GV items provide a service to the Fellowship by making GV and LV articles available in a wide range of formats: print, audio and digital. They also introduce both magazine titles through these anthologies to those who are unfamiliar with them; and help deepen member's interest and understanding of the Steps, Traditions, and history of Alcoholics Anonymous.

1.

Step Three – Turning it Over (working title)

Previously published stories from the pages of Grapevine by AA members about their various experiences with Step 3.

Softcover: Approx. 120-200 pps

Projected unit cost (includes printing and design)

\$2.50 per book (10,000 piece print run)

Price: \$11.50

eBook

Estimated project cost: \$2,000.

Price: \$9.99

2.

Character Defects - Steps 6 & 7 (working title)

Previously published stories by AA members about their experience with Steps 6 and 7, from the pages of Grapevine.

Softcover: Approx. 100-200 pps

Projected unit cost (includes printing and design)

\$2.50 per book (10,000 piece print run)

Price: \$11.50

eBook

Estimated project cost: \$2,000.

Price: \$9.99

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3.

AA and Families in Recovery (working title) (La Viña Book)

Spanish-speaking AA members share experiences about how drinking affects the whole family and how AA helps repair them, from the pages of La Viña.

Softcover: Approx. 100-200 pps

Projected unit cost (includes printing and design)

\$2.50 per book (10,000 piece print run)

Price: \$11.50

eBook

Estimated project cost: \$2,000.

Price: \$9.99

4.

Old-timers Stories (working title) (La Viña Book)

Long-time Spanish-speaking AA members share their experience, strength and hope, from the pages of La Viña.

Softcover: Approx. 100-200 pps

Projected unit cost (includes printing and design)

\$2.50 per book (10,000 piece print run)

Price: \$11.50

eBook

Estimated project cost: \$2,000.

Price: \$9.99

5.

Twelve Steps (working title) (La Viña Book)

Spanish-speaking AA members share stories of experience with AA's Twelve Steps, from the pages of La Viña.

Softcover: Approx. 100-200 pps

Projected unit cost (includes printing and design)

\$2.50 per book (10,000 piece print run)

Price: \$11.50

eBook

Estimated project cost: \$2,000.

Price: \$9.99

As of Jan 2020

CONFERENCE-APPROVED GV BOOK IDEAS (TO POSSIBLY PRODUCE):

- Fun in Sobriety
- Voices of Long-Term Sobriety 2
- Accessibilities (formerly Special Needs)
- Diversity in AA
- Gratitude
- Mid-Sobriety Crisis
- AA Inside the Walls (Prison)
- How I found My Higher Power
- Steps 4 & 5
- Twelve Steps II
- All About GV Reps (doing service with GV & LV)
- Meditation & Prayer
- AA & Families
- The Early Days of AA (40s, 50s, 60s -AA's earliest days)
- Getting Involved in General Service

APPROVED LV BOOKS:

- Stories by Hispanic Women in AA
- Stories from LV Workshops
- Carrying the Message into Institutions
- Hispanic members Doing Service in AA
- Surrender & Hope

**CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background
2020 Conference Committee on AA Grapevine**

ITEM B: Review progress report on AA Grapevine Workbook revisions.

Background notes:

From 2019 Additional Considerations:

The committee reviewed the progress report on the AA Grapevine Workbook revisions and looks forward to reviewing a progress report or draft at the next Conference. The committee also forwarded suggestions to the Grapevine office including expanding shared experience and how to use GV/LV as a recovery tool.

From 2018 Additional Considerations:

The committee reviewed the Grapevine workbook with appreciation and suggests that it undergo a comprehensive review and revision, and AA Grapevine Inc. bring back a progress report to the 2019 conference committee AA Grapevine.

From 2017 Additional Considerations:

The committee reviewed the Grapevine workbook with appreciation and made the following suggestions:

- *Review the section Links to Other Sites for additional clarity.*
 - *Update Grapevine, Inc.'s location.*
-

Background:

1. 2020 Office Report
2. Draft Grapevine Workbook (mailed to committee members only)
3. Grapevine Workbook (available online at www.aagrapevine.org)

2020 Office Report
AA Grapevine Workbook

AA Grapevine, Inc. management has contracted a freelancer, who is also familiar with the Grapevine service structure, to oversee the rewrite and redesign of the AA Grapevine Workbook. He was instructed to review the current Workbook's content and expand on shared experience and how to use Grapevine and La Viña as a recovery tool.

In addition, in order to streamline the Workbook and make it easier to use, most of the historical copy and service forms have been removed and will be available on the aagrapevine.org website.

**CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background
2020 Conference Committee on AA Grapevine**

ITEM C: Review progress report on actions taken from the findings of the AA Grapevine Fellowship Feedback Survey.

Background notes:

2019 Additional Considerations:

The committee reviewed the AA Grapevine Fellowship Survey and summary and noted the actions the Grapevine Board and staff have taken on the findings. The committee looks forward to a progress report at the next Conference on further actions taken.

Background:

1. 2020 Office Report
2. AA Grapevine Survey Results Overview
3. AA Grapevine Survey Summary (mailed to committee members only)

2020 Office Report

In the Fall of 2018, a 15-minute survey was administered to both readers and potential readers of Grapevine and La Viña with the goal of measuring attitudes towards the existing publication, their current/intended usage, and their preferences for the future.

Survey — Opportunities Identified**Ongoing actions****1. There is an opportunity to improve perceptions and relevance of Grapevine and La Viña as important personal recovery tools**

- Added a new Outreach Coordinator to the staff to help reach out and communicate with the Fellowship and beyond.
- Improved communications with GV area chairs.
- Conducting workshops on identified content.
- Continuing to work with regional desks, central offices, intergroups, area chairs, GVRs and RLVs to invite and include in local events, news and more.
- Continuing to explore opportunities to include more Class A and Regional trustees' stories.
- Expanding video and audio content on our YouTube channel.
- Exploring digital/audio book opportunities such as placement in correctional facilities.
- Exploring further collaborations with AAWS.
- Increased call outs for Tradition and Step stories.

2. There is confusion about how Grapevine and La Viña are funded, clarifying this may increase revenue

- Continue improving information to the Fellowship that AA Grapevine is self-supporting through our own contributions by including info on many of our outgoing communications.
- Launched a new improved GV/LV product catalog.

3. Current content formula could be improved to reach younger members and be more relevant to members with long-term sobriety

- Exploring other digital delivery platforms for E-magazine, audio and archiving function.
- Website rebuild completed which includes being mobile first, easier to use, and more reflective of the magazine experience.

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- Feature a Young People's Issue every year as well as run Young & Sober stories all the time.
 - GV staff attends ICYPAA each year and conducts GV and LV workshops.
 - Expanding video and audio content on our YouTube channel.
4. **There is a desire for a simpler subscription model and less interest in a stand-alone digital subscription**
- Constantly looking for new ways to improve and simplify subscription model.
 - Auto renew implemented on GV and LV.
 - Pricing, warehousing and shipping under board review.
5. **Existing digital experience problems are barriers to adoption, these should be prioritized for improvement**
- Launching an all new vastly improved AA Grapevine website in early 2020.
6. **There is an opportunity to learn from La Viña engagement strategies**
- New Outreach Coordinator is seeking ways to improve our reach and 12th Step opportunities into the Fellowship.
 - Staff and Board members continue to expand our attendance at AA events to better communicate with the Fellowship.

**Overview**

In the Fall of 2018, a 15-minute survey was administered to both readers and potential readers of Grapevine and La Viña with the goal of measuring attitudes towards the existing publication, their current/intended usage, and their preferences for the future.

Methodology

- Surveys were administered in an online format. Survey was open from 9/4 – 10/26 2018.
- The survey link was distributed via email; from the AAGV website, newsletters, and texts; and in a news announcement within the MeetingGuide app.
- Surveys were fielded in both English and Spanish. 10% of respondents completed the survey in Spanish
- A total of 6,516k respondents started the survey and **4,568 completed** it through the end.
- **89%** of respondents were more familiar with Grapevine, **11%** were more familiar with La Viña

Executive Summary

- **Many “firsts” were accomplished with this survey**
 - First survey to report on readers who have never subscribed
 - First to include LaViña questions
 - First digital survey and first survey to experiment with fielding through a mobile app
- **Positive things about Grapevine and La Viña**
 - Subscribers are very positive about Grapevine and La Viña appearance and variety of stories.
 - Most subscribers feel that a subscription is priced about right or a bargain.
 - Several subscribers report positive resolution to customer service issues
- **Opportunities Identified**
 - There is an opportunity to improve perceptions and relevance of Grapevine and La Viña as important personal recovery tools
 - There is confusion about how Grapevine and LaViña are funded, clarifying this may increase revenue
 - Current content formula could be improved to reach younger members and be more relevant to members with long-term sobriety
 - There is a desire for a simpler subscription model and less interest in a stand-alone digital subscription
 - Existing digital experience problems are barriers to adoption, these should be prioritized for improvement
 - There is an opportunity to learn from La Viña engagement strategies

Next Steps

- **Apply survey results to support and inform Grapevine, Inc. strategy goals**
 - **Content Driven:** use what readers want more of, find content contributors in existing communities
 - **Researched:** use new media responses to prioritize strategies
 - **Digital:** use identified problem feedback to prioritize enhancements
 - **Simple:** use subscription model and pricing feedback to make and support platform decisions
 - **Fully Informed:** use data to understand who is contributing now, and how to reach potential contributors
 - **Self Supporting:** Use data around funding misconceptions drive new contribution messages
- **Conduct Enhanced data explorations to answer new questions**

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background
2020 Conference Committee on AA Grapevine

ITEM D: Consider revising the A.A. Preamble to use gender neutral pronouns. For example, "Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other..."

Background notes:

From 1992 Advisory Action:

The 1986 Advisory Actions (listed below) pertaining to sexist language in the Big Book and other Bill W. writings adequately address the issue:

1. *"As the preface to the Big Book clearly states that the text was written in 1939 and that it has not been changed, no further explanation regarding out-of-date phrases and/or gender-oriented pronouns or chapter titles is necessary."*
 2. *"The A.A.W.S. editorial staff continue to degenderize A.A. literature, with the exception of Bill W.'s writings, as the items are reprinted, e.g. 'staffing the booth' rather than 'manning the booth', etc."*
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Background:

1. 2020 Office Report
2. Letter from Area 29

2020 Office Report
A.A. Preamble

In 2018 and 2019, AA Grapevine received six requests to revise the A.A. Preamble.

The Grapevine Board made the decision to separate the requests into two different Agenda items. One asked to consider revising the "gender-neutral pronouns" and the other made a request to consider replacing the words "men and women" with the word "people."

From: CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background
To: Conference
Cc:
Subject: Request to add an agenda item
Date: Thursday, December 13, 2018 8:36:21 PM

Good evening,

My name is Jackson S: and I'm the GSR for my home group "Happy, Joyous, and Free" in Silver Spring, MD (Area 29). Our group would like to propose an agenda item for the upcoming conference. I'll elaborate below.

Agenda item: revise the Preamble to use gender neutral pronouns. For example, "Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other..."

Why this is important to our group: our group frequently receives attendees that identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. Some of these are newcomers who haven't experienced Alcoholics Anonymous before. There are also members of our group that identify as such. We value the Preamble and want to continue reading it. However, we feel that this wording is not all-inclusive.

Impact to Alcoholic Anonymous: our group feels a revision like this will align Alcoholics Anonymous with our contemporary population and remove wording that may make it difficult for all to identify. We also feel that this does not jeopardize our primary purpose as the intent of the Preamble would remain the same. Most meetings in the Washington D.C. area read it at the beginning of meetings so we expect the impact to be substantial.

I apologize for submitting this right before the deadline - our group just finished an ongoing discussion on this topic that has spanned multiple business meetings. We do appreciate your attention this matter. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like me to elaborate.

In love and service,
Jackson S:

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2020 Conference Committee on AA Grapevine

ITEM E: Consider a request to change the language of the first sentence of the A.A. Preamble as follows: "Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of people who share..."

Background:

1. 2020 Office Report
2. Letter 1 from Area 49
3. Letter 2 from Area 49
4. Letter 3 from Area 49
5. Letter from Area 13
6. Letter from Area 27
7. 1st printing of Preamble in Grapevine, June 1947
8. Grapevine article, May 1992
9. *Best of the Grapevine*, pp. 274-275
10. Report from Trustees' Committee on the GSC, February 1, 1987
11. Grapevine Conference Committee background on Preamble, 1987

2020 Office Report
A.A. Preamble

In 2018 and 2019, AA Grapevine received six requests to revise the A.A. Preamble.

The Grapevine Board made the decision to separate the requests into two different Agenda items. One asked to consider revising the “gender-neutral pronouns” and the other made a request to consider replacing the words “men and women” with the word “people.”

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To Patrick C

General Conference Coordinator:

Conference Coordinator

Added date of receipt

November 11, 2019

My name is Lucky M . I am General Service Representative of the group TRANScend [728180-49-411] in Area 49, The Brooklyn County, New York, USA.

I have a Proposed Agenda Item for General Service Conference 70 attached to this letter.

At the Area 49 Assembly yesterday November 10th in Rockland County the motion was brought off the table for discussion by the DCMC of The Brooklyn County. After a robust discussion there was a vote as to whether Area 49 would send it on with support to you for consideration for GSC 70. The first vote was 103 in favor to 57 opposed. A second vote was tallied after a hotly disputed recount when some no votes were changed to yes. By the time a second vote occurred people had already left the Assembly. The second vote count was 95 supporting and 53 opposed.

This margin of error with Substantial Unanimity from Area 49, yet not reaching the 2/3 threshold, should indicate that this controversial and much needed change ought to be considered for the agenda for General Service Conference 70.

There was a motion made immediately following this to add an agenda item from our area and with NO DISCUSSION WHATEVER was supported by the area due to lack of polarizing viewpoints.

There was a presentation of Robert's Rules in the morning and a discussion of safety and the appropriate responses to it within the Area provided in the morning session after how poorly the September 14th Assembly was managed and with the safety concerns therein.

(a history of the motion's genesis is below)

The Motion was voted on at the group level. It was then taken to the District Cluster, and then to Brooklyn County. The County voted to support the Motion. The Brooklyn County has made a motion and changed their Preamble at the County level. The chair of Area 49 was informed of the Motion and it was placed on the agenda for the South Eastern New York (SENY) Area Assembly on September 14, 2019. Delegate Jane E was aware of the Motion.

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background

Background:

Tradition 3 tells us that AA is always inclusive, and never exclusive. Our AA Preamble is in conflict with inclusivity. An estimated 2 million Transgender People live in the United States and Canada and are two and a half times as likely to abuse alcohol than their Cisgender peers. One in five Transgender people do not identify as male or female. Gendered language in AA is a barrier to accessing our life saving program of recovery from alcoholism. Transgender alcoholics are accessing AA and are often turned away from gendered meetings, sponsorship, and the language of AA. The vision for AA to include all alcoholics in the rooms begins at welcoming them in the Preamble of Alcoholics Anonymous. The copyright for the AA Preamble is owned by Grapevine Inc.

Motion:

I make a motion to submit a request for an agenda item to the General Service Board for inclusion in the 70th General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous to request that our trusted servants at Grapevine Inc. change the language of the AA Preamble to as follows:

"Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of **people** who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety."

This motion was supported by The Brooklyn County General Service.

I ask for your support.

Lucky M. GSR TRANScend

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background

Motion:

I make a Motion to submit a request for an Agenda Item to the General Service Board for inclusion in the 70th General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous -- to request that our trusted servants at Grapevine Inc. change the language of the AA Preamble to the following:

“Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of **people** who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.”

Background:

Tradition 3 tells us that A.A. is always inclusive, and never exclusive. *Our AA Preamble is in conflict with inclusivity.* An estimated 2 million Transgender People live in the United States and Canada -- they are two and a half times as likely to abuse alcohol than their Cisgender peers. *One in five Transgender People do not identify as male or female.* Gendered language in AA is a barrier to accessing our life-saving program of recovery from alcoholism. Transgender alcoholics accessing AA and are often turned away from gendered meetings, sponsorship, and the language of AA. *The vision for AA to include all alcoholics in the rooms begins at welcoming them in the Preamble of Alcoholics Anonymous.* The copyright for the AA Preamble is owned by Grapevine Inc.

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TGNC “Person” in the History of Traditions 1945

Bill W was called by Barry L (who would later author Living Sober) from the 41st St clubhouse. Bill persuaded the group to take in a black **person** who was an ex-convict with bleach-blond hair, wearing women's clothing and makeup. The **person** also admitted to being a “dope fiend.” When asked what to do about it, Bill posed the question, “did you say he was a drunk?” When answered, “yes” Bill replied, “well I think that's all we can ask.” The **person** was reported to have disappeared shortly after. (BW-FH 8, PIO 317-318) Anecdotal accounts erroneously say that this individual went on to become one of the best 12th Steppers in NY. This story is often erroneously intermingled with that of a 1937 incident (“year two” on the AA calendar) involving an Akron member that is discussed in the Tradition Three essay in the 12&12 (pgs 141-142).

Excerpts from LGBTQ Alcoholics in A.A.

Franny - “Accepting that I was powerless over alcohol was easy in light of my own drinking history, but I couldn’t understand unmanageability.”

...“During this time, we discussed our desire for a family, and I began exploring my deep-down, suppressed feelings of femininity. She was open-minded about this unconventionality of mine, and, little by little, we found ways of incorporating it into our relationship. After two years of marriage, our first son was born and then two years later a second son came. Holding those boys in my arms 20 minutes after their birth, while the maternity nurse filled out their birth certificates and footprinted them, were my two greatest days in sobriety. As these boys matured, the reality of father-hood became paramount to me, and I never really felt deprived of my feminine side. The A.A. program had taught me to reduce my demands down to the level of requests. Time seemed to pass by so quickly; my sons went off to college while memories of diaper changing were still so vivid in my mind. Although I missed them so much and still do, a new free-dom presented itself. The A.A. program became even more important to me in an even deeper understanding of my inner world. With the gradual change in my outward appearance, there was some cold reception among a few of my A.A. friends, but my home group was warmly supportive. The A.A. Fellowship is so large that I’ve come to find acceptance and a welcoming attitude in general toward my gender nonconformity”...

Sammy - “I had never gotten truly honest with myself and with other people.”

...“When I first came to Alcoholics Anonymous I knew I was transgender, but it wasn’t something at the forefront of my mind. I was 20 years old, just trying to learn how to live life and stay out of jail. Besides, I felt so alone: I didn’t want to add another thing that would set me apart from other people. But after almost two years of sobriety I drank again. I could name a list of things I could have done differently, but I think for me it all came down to one thing: honesty. During this time in A.A. I had never gotten truly honest with myself and with other people. I was too afraid to trust the people around me. After a short stint “out there,” I found myself back in A.A. This time the pain outweighed my fear. I stopped holding onto all those secrets I thought made me unlovable, unwanted. I got real honest with my sponsor in my Step work. I started seeing a therapist and talking about my gender identity. At one year sober, I started my medical transition. Transitioning in A.A. has been one of the hardest things I have ever done. It was public and people noticed, and sometimes the fear around rejection overwhelmed me. People said things to me — usually in support, but sometimes people said horrible things out of ignorance and intolerance. In the end, what I really found was a community of people that supported me no matter what, and I learned how to tell the difference between the people who loved me and were willing to help me stay sober and those who wanted to

4 of 6

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exclude me or bring me down. Ultimately, service work is what really saved my life. I have always struggled to feel like I belonged in life. I never felt like I belonged in the LGBTQ community, and for the longest time I wasn't sure I belonged in A.A. However, service work in A.A. has become the cement that continues to bind me to people and to this program. A little while after I started transitioning, my friend and service sponsor got me a speaking gig on a LGBTQ panel at a local A.A. event in a neighboring area. I talked about my struggles in A.A. and the struggles of other trans people facing stares and whispers and sometimes outright exclusion.”...

Vincent - “I thought I was different.”

...“Arrested again in a different state, I walked into A.A. defeated. Afraid, I kept my “secret” — which I believed would stay with me until my death. The job I had landed eventually requested I transfer from the West to the East Coast. Petrified of this change, with little sobriety behind me, I shared about it at a meeting. A woman with 26 years sober then spoke up. Looking right at me with her smiling eyes, she said, “Always remember... The joy is in the journey.” Having heard this, two weeks later I ventured off across the country. Once on the East Coast, I immediately found an A.A. meeting that became my new home group. I had trouble finding a sponsor and contacted the woman with the smiling eyes. For the first time, I got honest with another human being about who I was and what happened to me. I asked her if she could sponsor me until I found a sponsor on the East Coast. She agreed and asked me to pray for a sponsor and God would bring one to me. One day a man came up to me after my home group meeting ended and said, “You look like you’re in need of a sponsor, and I’d like to be him.” I just wept; I couldn’t believe that my prayer was answered, that there really was a God. This man became the first man I ever told everything to. I even revealed my deepest secret: My mother, on her death bed, told me that I was born both male and female; I was surgically altered to be a boy. I cried when I got honest because I knew I was so different. This man suggested we look up my birth condition on the Internet, and that’s where we found that I am an “intersexual” individual — and they even have support groups! I am so grateful for what this man did for me. My sponsor with the smiling eyes then said that God makes no mistakes, that I would help other alcoholics someday who are just like me, and she said she was sure there are many in A.A.”...

Moriah - “Eventually, I started relying on alcohol even more for anything, everything and nothing.”

...“One of my earliest memories was not feeling right. I had a lot of anxiety, a lot of fear, and my mom used to call me a “worry wart” when I was only 4 years old. I remember observing my brother growing up, and he seemed well put together. I felt like something was missing, and I realized right away what it was. I asked my mom when my “peter” was going to grow. My mom’s response was, “Never, because you’re a girl, and girls don’t have peters. God made you perfect just the way you are.” I started to get really angry and had this angst inside of me, as though my fists were clenched all the time and my body was tight. When I was 10 years old, I asked if there was a surgery that would take off my chest because I had started to develop early. She told me, “No, honey, you’ll need those for your babies.” I started to hide even more, wearing huge clothes, and my anxiety and anger went up even more. Fast-forwarding through a lot of life-changing experiences, when I was 15, I had my first experience with alcohol. I remember it touching my lips, and swallowing it. It was kind of gross, but I felt relaxed for the first time, comfortable in my skin, and not wanting to die. I just wanted more. I started drinking pretty often, as much as I could get my hands on, but just to the point of where it didn’t matter anymore, and feeling comfortable again. That’s how it was for many years, and it worked — it helped. When I was 20, I found out more of who I was being a transgender man. I transitioned from female to male when I was 22, and that truly saved my life. I was okay for a while, didn’t need to drink as much, and was comfortable being myself. Eventually, I started relying on alcohol even more for anything, everything and nothing.”...

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Service Material from the General Service Office

THE AA PREAMBLE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

THE PREAMBLE was introduced in the June 1947 issue of the AA Grapevine magazine. It was written by the then-editor, who borrowed much of the phrasing from the Foreword to the original edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

In those early years, the Grapevine had just begun to circulate among nonalcoholics, and the Preamble was intended primarily to describe for them what AA is and is not. It is still often used for public information purposes. As time passed, it began appearing in some Conference-approved publications, and many AA groups now use it to open meetings.

The original version differed in two ways from the familiar form we all know: 1) It stated that the only requirement for membership is an *honest* desire to stop drinking," and 2) it contained only the very brief statement "AA has no dues or fees."

People often ask why the word "honest" was deleted. At the 1958 General Service Conference, a delegate asked about the words "honest desire to stop drinking," suggesting that since "honest" does not appear in the Third Tradition, it might be deleted from the Preamble. In discussion, most Conference members felt that as AA had matured, it had become almost impossible to determine what constitutes an honest desire to stop drinking, and also that some who might be interested in the program could be confused by the phrase. Thus, as part of the evolution of AA, the phrase had been dropped from common usage. The midsummer 1958 meeting of the General Service Board of Trustees ratified the deletion, and since then the Preamble has read simply "a desire to stop drinking."

At the same time, the phrase "AA has no dues or fees" was clarified to read as it presently does: "There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions." The current version of the Preamble appears on page one of every issue of the Grapevine.

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AA PREAMBLE©

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

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6 of 6

Rev. 11/18

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GRAPEVINE
Item E
Doc. 3

From: Conference -
Sent: Monday, December 16, 2019 2:22 PM
To: Groupservices; Conference
Subject: RE: Northeast Region: Changing wording of preamble

Received and will process.

Best Regards,

Patrick C.

Conference Coordinator

From: Groupservices
Sent: Sunday, December 15, 2019 5:38 PM
To: Conference <conference@aa.org>
Subject: FW: Northeast Region: Changing wording of preamble

Hi Patrick,
This came in Friday at 7:14pm.
As you'll see below he says the following in his email:

I am writing to request, on behalf of my group, that a proposal to make this change to the uniform AA preamble be added to the GSC 70 Agenda.

I'm not sure how you are handling multiple versions of the same agenda item, so I am forwarding this to you. Let me know if there's anything for me to do at my end.

Jeff

From: noreply@aa.org [<mailto:noreply@aa.org>]
Sent: Friday, December 13, 2019 7:14 PM
To: Groupservices
Subject: Northeast Region: Changing wording of preamble

Here is your copy of a message sent via an aa.org webform to the Northeast Regional Correspondent at G.S.O.

Name: Branden H:
Location: New York
Phone:
Email:
Subject: Changing wording of preamble
Message: Hello! GSR for NYU group here. We have changed the wording of our preamble from "...fellowship of men and

1 of 2

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women..." to "...a fellowship of people..." I am writing to request, on behalf of my group, that a proposal to make this change to the uniform AA preamble be added to the GSC 70 Agenda. Background: Tradition 3 tells us that A.A. is always inclusive, and never exclusive. Our AA Preamble is in conflict with inclusivity. An estimated 2 million Transgender People live in the United States and Canada -- they are two and a half times as likely to abuse alcohol than their Cisgender peers. One in five Transgender People do not identify as male or female. Gendered language in AA is a barrier to accessing our life-saving program of recovery from alcoholism. Transgender alcoholics accessing AA and are often turned away from gendered meetings, sponsorship, and the language of AA. The vision for AA to include all alcoholics in the rooms begins at welcoming them in the Preamble of Alcoholics Anonymous. Sincerely, Branden H.

From: Jonathan St
Sent: Wednesday, December 11, 2019 10:45 PM
To: Conference
Subject: Motion for the 70th General Service Conference

Dear Trusted Servants,

Background:

The Lafayette-Clinton Group of AA strives to provide a safe meeting space for all attendees and works to make sure that everyone feels comfortable, just as mentioned in the yellow Safety Card for AA Groups (F-211). In an effort to ensure that our meeting is as welcoming as possible, our group passed a motion to modify the language when reciting the AA preamble to start "AA is a fellowship of **people** . . ." By using inclusive language like this, we strive to carry the message to still-suffering alcoholics irrespective of gender identity, as our Fifth Tradition states.

Motion:

I make a motion to request that an agenda item for the 70th General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous be added to request that the Grapevine Inc. change the language of the AA Preamble to read:

"Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of **people** who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self- supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety."

This motion is supported by the Lafayette-Clinton Group of Alcoholics Anonymous, District 410 Brooklyn County, Area 49.

Sincerely,
Jonathan S., GSR, The Lafayette-Clinton Group



CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background
Washington Area General Service Assembly (WAGSA) – Area 13
Friendship Station I Washington, D.C. 20016

GRAPEVINE
Item E
Doc. 5

December 15, 2019

Patrick C:
Conference Coordinator
General Service Office
475 Riverside Drive, 11th Floor
New York, NY 10115

Dear Patrick,

It is with great pleasure that I write on behalf of Area 13, Districts 1, 2, and 20, to submit the following agenda item proposal for consideration at the 70th General Service Conference:

*That the Alcoholics Anonymous Preamble be changed to, "**Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.**"*

On October 29, 2019, District 20, followed by, on November 21, 2019, Districts One and Two, approved to move the above. Additionally, Attachment I, has been provided from these districts to support said motion. After the convening of many district sharing sessions, I observed two consistent prevailing factors. Both of these examples encourage modifying the commonly used Preamble to a more inclusive preliminary introduction statement to Our Fellowship.

First, group members report welcoming members as young as 12 years old. In some cases, these young members hardly consider themselves to be men or woman, but simply an alcoholic. In its current form, our Preamble could be misconstrued as being age specific to those 18 and over.

Secondly, as our groups have multiplied, we have grown to be a welcoming place to all persons and our only requirement for membership remains the desire to stop drinking. We feel that we would be better served with an inclusive introductory meeting statement that serves all suffering alcoholics.

I hope that this motion will be strongly considered. Thank you for your time and consideration. Feel free to contact me if you have any further questions regarding this request.

Respectfully yours in service,

Michelle G
Area 13 Delegate, Panel 69
Chair, Public Information Conference Committee

cc: Rob H., District 1 District Committee Member
Kris M., District 2 District Committee Member
Justin W., District 20 District Committee Member

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Attachment I – Page 1 of 2

In the General Service Board strategic plan released on July 27, 2018, discusses a "Key Strategic Priorities," Section 1: Reaching Out the Hand of AA's "Overarching Goal" as follows:

"The General Service Board reaches out to all who suffer from alcoholism by connecting with others; engaging diverse populations; utilizing current, relevant media; and supporting unity within the worldwide A.A. movement."

A "Description of Purpose" cites that,

"Our focus is on helping to widen the doors of A.A. so that all alcoholics who want to stop drinking can have a chance to find sobriety in A.A. We recognize that inclusivity goes beyond ethnicity and age. It includes gender, religion, language, and any factor that may place a person in the majority or minority."

In the "List of Goals and Processes," Goal 1 is listed as,

"The GSB will model inclusivity and acceptance and infuse the spirit of the Third Tradition throughout A.A."

Full strategic plan can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ua2aq8w>

The AA Preamble: Background Information: Service Material from the GSO:

"THE PREAMBLE was introduced in the June 1947 issue of the AA Grapevine magazine. It was written by the then-editor, who borrowed much of the phrasing from the Foreword to the original edition of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous. In those early years, the Grapevine had just begun to circulate among nonalcoholics, and the Preamble was intended primarily to describe for them what AA is and is not. It is still often used for public information purposes. As time passed, it began appearing in all Conference-approved publications, and many AA groups now use it to open meetings. The original version differed in two ways from the familiar form we all know: 1) It stated that the only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking," and 2) it contained only the very brief statement "AA has no dues or fees." People often ask why the word "honest" was deleted. At the 1958 General Service Conference, a delegate asked about the words "honest desire to stop drinking," suggesting that since "honest" does not appear in the Third Tradition, it might be deleted from the Preamble. In discussion, most Conference members felt that as AA had matured, it had become almost impossible to determine what constitutes an honest desire to stop drinking, and also that some who might be interested in the program could be confused by the phrase. Thus, as part of the evolution of AA, the phrase had been dropped from common usage. The midsummer 1958 meeting of the General Service Board of Trustees ratified the deletion, and since then the Preamble has read simply "a desire to stop drinking." At the same time, the phrase "AA has no dues or fees" was clarified to read as it presently does: "There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions." The current version of the Preamble appears on page one of every

2 of 3

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Attachment I – Page 2 of 2

issue of the Grapevine. When reprinted, the Preamble should carry the following credit line: Copyright © The AA Grapevine, Inc. Reprinted with permission."
https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/smf-127_en.pdf

Third Tradition of AA (Long Form) states:

"Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence we may refuse non who wish to recover. Nor ought AA membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an AA group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation."
https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/en_tradition_longform.pdf

From the Quarterly Report from GSO, July 2019 Archives report:

"The committee noted the 2019 Conference Committee on Archives request for discontinuance of gender specific language, when possible, in future printings of the Archives Workbook. The committee requested that the archivist work with the G.S.O. Publishing department to implement the change."
https://aa.org/assets/en_US/f-14_QtrlyRep_july2019.pdf

From: Sue T:
Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2019 3:50 PM
To: Conference
Subject: 2020 Agenda Item for GSC

Hi Patrick-

As a member of Alcoholics Anonymous and the General Service Conference, I am submitting the following proposed agenda item to the 70th General Service Conference, Grapevine Committee, with regard to revising the AA Preamble,

Proposed Agenda Item:

"The Seventieth (70th) General Service Conference consider and recommend to the General Service Board/AA Grapevine Board of Directors and Editorial Board that the AA Preamble be revised as follows: From "Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of **men and women** who.." To "Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of **people** who..."

Introduction

As our world changes, AA must also grow and change to remain an inclusive organization where everyone feels welcome and safe to achieve sobriety through our program of recovery. Our Third Tradition insists on such.

History of the Preamble, as stated in the AA Grapevine Workbook, reveals:

"In 1947, because of the growing interest in AA, the Grapevine editors decided to write a brief definition of the Fellowship. Thus, the AA Preamble was first published in the June 1947 issue. They used portions of the Foreword to the first edition of the Big Book.

The Grapevine had just begun to circulate among non-alcoholics, and the Preamble was intended primarily to describe for them what AA is and is not. It is still often used for public information purposes.

As time passed, it began appearing in all Conference-approved publications, and many groups now use it to open meetings.

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background

The original version was slightly different from what we know today. For example:

1) It stated that the only requirement for membership is an HONEST desire to stop drinking, and 2) it contained only the very brief statement "AA has no dues or fees."

At the 1958 General Service Conference, a delegate pointed out that the word "honest" does not appear in the Third Tradition, and suggested that it should be deleted from the Preamble. Many delegates felt that as AA had matured, it had become almost impossible to determine what constitutes an honest desire to stop drinking, and also that some who might be interested in the program could be confused by the phrase. The mid-summer 1958 meeting of the General Service Board ratified the deletion, and since then the Preamble has read simply "a desire to stop drinking."

The phrase "AA has no dues or fees" also was clarified to read as it presently does: "There are no dues or fees for AA membership, we are self-supporting through our own contributions." The current version of the Preamble appears on the first page of every issue of the Grapevine."

Thus, precedent exists for revising the Preamble.

The Problem

According to the World Health Organization, gender has implications for health across the course of a person's life in terms of norms, roles and relations. It influences a person's risk-taking and health-seeking behaviors, exposure to health risks and vulnerability to diseases. Gender shapes everyone's experience of health care, in terms of affordability, access and use of services and products, and interaction with healthcare providers. Gender intersects with other factors that drive inequalities, discrimination and marginalization, such as ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, age, geographic location and sexual orientation, among others.

In "Alcohol research with transgender populations: A systematic review and recommendations to strengthen future studies," *Drug Alcohol Depend.* 2018 May 1; 186: 138-146, the authors stated:

There are indications that alcohol use is an important behavioral health problem among transgender populations. Reviewing the extant evidence, the IOM report (2011) concluded that **alcohol misuse was highly prevalent in transgender populations, particularly in early to middle adulthood**. More recently, the 2015 US Transgender Survey, the largest assessment of transgender health status and needs to date, found a high prevalence of binge drinking overall, with binge drinking levels much higher in transgender communities of color than in white non-Hispanic peers (James et al., 2016). Those results were congruent with several

observational studies with smaller samples of transgender participants that also found a high prevalence of binge drinking, as well as alcohol use disorder. We caution that these findings should be interpreted in light of contextual factors.

Transgender individuals are not ipso facto “risky” populations; rather, the discrimination and stigma that gender minorities face likely create psychosocial conditions leading to higher risk of problematic alcohol use. Indeed, minority stress models posit that members of some social groups experience excess stress (i.e., above and beyond expected levels) because of their minority status, which in turn may be associated with maladaptive coping behaviors, including substance use. Focusing on gender minorities, Hendricks and Testa (2012) have identified relevant processes of stigma, discrimination, and internalised negative attitudes based on gender identity and presentation, and several recent studies have found an association between transgender-related discrimination and alcohol use. [Emphasis added.]

Discussion

When a newcomer attends their initial AA meeting, the first thing heard is the Preamble. For someone who does not identify as male or female, the words, “men and women,” may seem to exclude them. Being frightened, self-conscious, and feeling dissimilar, these newcomers may not engage in conversation with others after the meeting, if they stay that long, to find out more about the program and learn that AA is for everyone no matter our differences. This small change could indicate total acceptance by AA that could help them achieve sobriety.

Yours in Love and Service-

Sue T.

Delegate, Panel 69

Area 27, Louisiana

Treatment and Accessibilities Committee

— From June 1947 &V

Alcoholics Anonymous

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking. A.A. has no dues or fees. It is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, and neither endorses nor opposes any cause. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and to help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

The A.A. Program of Recovery is incorporated in The 12 Steps. The A.A. book of experience, Alcoholics Anonymous, and other literature, including The 12 Points of Tradition, are available through any group or the Central Office, P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York 17, N. Y.

EDITORIAL:

On the 8th Step

"Made a list of all persons we have harmed and became willing to make amends to them all."

Here the program demonstrates its reality, its understanding of the nature of the alcoholic. How often have we come out of the fog to find the path strewn with persons we have injured or wronged? How often have we stayed awake at night thinking of the wife or mother or sister who suffered far more than we did on our last drunk?

Remember the kindly grocer who cashed our bum checks? Remember the look of anguish on the face of the boss when he had to tell us we were fired? Remember the guys in the company we let down when our part of the work was neglected? Of course we do. But, more importantly, the A.A. program remembers and understands. The 8th Step was written for us when we remembered these things. "Make a list," it says. "Be willing to make amends to them all." In other words, stop being remorseful and do something about it.

The part about making a list is easy. Depending on our history, we make either a long or a short list. But the part about making amends is tough. That part takes courage and humility. A man we know made a list of 43 former employers he had harmed, wrote a letter to each, and—fearing the consequences—left town for two weeks! When he arrived back in town, there were 43 answers. Every employer took time out to thank the man for his letter and to wish him luck!

Many A.A.s find it impossible to make full restitution to all persons. That's not essential if you have *been willing* to make amends. Sometimes, a trip across town to a person you have harmed is enough. Most people are happier to see you sober than you think. It's human nature to root for the horse that's behind in the race. It makes

One In A Million In All London

Strange and wonderful stories have been told of the things that happen to A.A.s throughout the world. Usually, they involve curious coincidences, odd events, out-of-the-ordinary experiences. From London comes another which may be classified as coincidence, luck or something more remarkable.

An A.A., who has had indifferent success with the program for five years, arrived in Paris on a business trip, accompanied by his wife. The temptations of the city were great; his faith was small. Soon he was drunk.

The man disappeared for three days. The wife, accustomed to the drinking pattern of her husband, assumed that he could not make the boat train for London as planned. She decided not to take the train but to wait at her hotel in Paris.

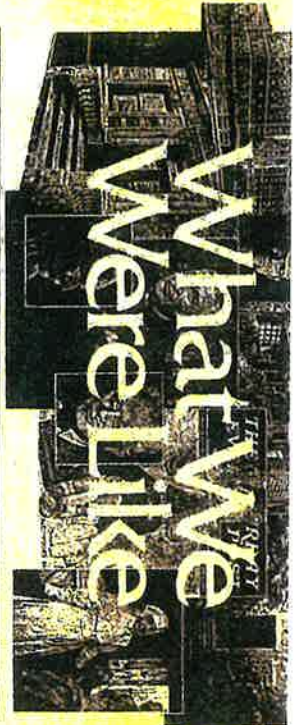
However, on the day planned for the trip to London, the man awakened on the boat train. Rummled, shaky and unshaven, he pulled himself out of a seat to see the fast-moving countryside in the window. A hurried examination disclosed that (1) he had no money and (2) no passport. His watch was missing.

Alone in London

On arrival in England, he convinced the authorities of his ability to obtain his passport by airmail and was admitted to the country. Eventually, he arrived at a large hotel in London.

After rearranging his clothing as best he could, he took a seat in the lounge to ponder his desperate situation. He had no personal friends in London. He was broke. All of his valuables were missing. He was tired and nervous and, by God, he needed a drink.

Glancing at the large clock in the hotel, the man found he was so foggy he couldn't read it, and neither did he know the date. He saw a well dressed Englishman seated on a divan and asked him the time. A conversation followed



Fragments of AA History

The AA Preamble

The words contained in the AA Preamble are perhaps the most often repeated words throughout the AA Fellowship. Used to open many meetings around the world, the Preamble encapsulates the essence of AA's Traditions and gives an overview of the practices and principles so vital to AA life.

Yet, where did these words come from? Who wrote them, and why?

Following the first major surge of AA membership in the early 1940s, due in part to the Jack Alexander article about AA in the *Saturday Evening Post* and subsequent media stories about AA, there was an increasing and widespread interest in AA, both among potential candidates for the Fellowship and among those nonalcoholic family members, friends, and professionals who dealt with alcoholics in their daily lives. With the hope of providing a concise definition of AA for such interested people, the June 1947 Grapevine carried the original version of what

is now known throughout the AA world as the Preamble. It was written by Tom Y., the Grapevine's first editor, who borrowed heavily for the phrasing on the following paragraph in the Foreword to the first edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous*:

"We are not an organization in the conventional sense of the word. There are no dues or fees whatsoever. The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking. We are not allied with any particular faith, sect or denomination, nor do we oppose anyone. We simply wish to be helpful to those who are afflicted."

The Preamble, initially referred to as "The AA Definition," took its place thereafter in each monthly issue of the Grapevine, and soon began to appear in Conference-approved literature and many other AA publications.

The phraseology from the Big Book regarding "an honest desire to stop drinking" as "the only require-

ment for membership" was carried over into the original wording of the Preamble. However, at the 1958 General Service Conference, a delegate asked about the words "honest desire to stop drinking," suggesting that since "honest" does not appear in the Third Tradition, it might be deleted from the Preamble. In discussion, most Conference members felt that as AA had matured, it had become almost impossible to determine what constitutes an honest desire to stop drinking, and also that some who might be interested in the program could be confused by that phrase. Who was to determine what was an "honest desire" anyway? Thus, as a part of the evolution of AA, the phrase had been dropped from common usage. The mid-summer meeting of the AA General Service Board ratified the deletion, and since then the Preamble has read simply "a desire to stop drinking."

At the same time, the phrase "AA has no dues or fees" was clarified to read as it presently does: "There are

no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions."

Over the years, as the Preamble caught on within the Fellowship and with nonalcoholic friends of AA, it has been translated into many other languages — Russian and Danish being the most recent. In addition, the Preamble has been used in television and radio public service announcements, has been adapted (subject to copyright approval) by many other "twelve step fellowships" as a concise definition of who and what they are. It has also been cited in many research papers, self-help books, masters theses, and has appeared in the occasional doctoral dissertation.

Such is the brief history of the AA Preamble — this shining beacon which draws so many sick and suffering alcoholics into its light. And no matter where the Preamble may end up, it will always be best known as the beginning of yet another meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other that they may solve their common problems. Help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking. AA has no dues or fees. It is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution. It does not wish to engage in any controversy. Neither endorses nor opposes any cause. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

CV leave file: May 1992

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background

BEST OF THE GRAPEVINE

PP. 274-5

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking. "AA" has no dues or fees. It is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution. Does not wish to engage in any controversy. Neither endorses nor opposes any cause. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

HERE IS THE ORIGINAL WORDING of the Preamble, as it was first introduced in the June 1947 Grapevine. Written by the then editor to describe AA to the Grapevine's non-AA readers, it has become a part of AA literature. It came to be called the Preamble because it is so often read at the opening of AA meetings. Much of the phrasing was borrowed from the Foreword to the

original edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, where "an honest desire to stop drinking" is described as "the only requirement for membership." The Preamble soon began to appear in Conference-approved literature and in many other AA publications.

At the 1958 General Service Conference, a delegate asked about the words "honest desire to stop drinking," suggesting that since "honest" does not appear in the Third Tradition, it might be deleted from the Preamble. In discussion, most Conference members felt that as AA had matured, it had become almost impossible to determine what constitutes an honest desire to stop drinking, and also that some who might be interested in the program could be confused by the phrase. Thus, as part of the evolution of AA, the phrase had been dropped from common usage. The mid-summer 1958 meeting of the General Service Board ratified the deletion, and since then the Preamble has read simply "a desire to stop drinking."

At the same time, the phrase "AA has no dues or fees" was clarified to read as it presently does: "There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions." The current version of the Preamble appears on page one of every issue of the Grapevine, and on the copyright page of this book.

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background

TRUSTEES' COMMITTEE ON THE GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE
Sunday, February 1, 1987

The Trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference met in the York Suite of the Roosevelt Hotel at 8:30 a.m.

Present were: Jack F. chairperson; Helen H. , Norman A. ,
Joan J. , Shep R. , Garrett T. , Jack W. ,
Ruth C. Jagodzinski, Susan Daly, secretary and
Elizabeth G. , recording secretary.

Also present were: John B. and Tom H.

The meeting was opened with the Serenity Prayer. The chairperson's remarks were brief acknowledging the committee had a very busy agenda.

The minutes of November 2, 1986 were approved as mailed.

The committee addressed several additional suggestions for the Conference Agenda:

1. A suggestion from the Northern Coastal Area to develop a pamphlet for the district committee member was deferred.
2. A film to go along with the finance guidelines that are being written (Northern Coastal Area) was deferred because the guidelines are still in production and film suggestions need cost analysis.
3. A proposed revision of the "Preamble" of Alcoholics Anonymous, which is a return to something of the same form in which it first appeared in the Grapevine. The suggestion for Conference consideration is that a paragraph be added at the end of the Preamble as follows: "The A.A. Program of Recovery, Unity and Service is incorporated in the Twelve Steps, the A.A. book of experience, 'Alcoholics Anonymous' and the Twelve Traditions." The committee felt that this item should be referred to the Conference Grapevine Committee for further review before consideration. (Background material is needed regarding when this paragraph was deleted.)
4. The suggestion from the Rhode Island Assembly asking the Conference to discuss not listing in Box 4-5-9 events such as "Cruise Without Booze" can be brought up at the "What's On Your Mind?" Sharing Session.
5. The Suggestions for Grapevine presentation titles were approved.
What is The Grapevine?
Where is The Grapevine Going?

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Agenda

CONFERENCE GRAPEVINE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, April 28, 1987 - 10:00 a.m. - Noon
State Room - Mezzanine Level

Chairperson: Arthur D. C.
Secretary: Ames S.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Panel 36

Arthur D. C.
Harry J. F.
Richard H.
John J. S.

Panel 37

Terry A.
Diane F.
Katherine F. G.
Chester N.
Dean Rinehart

- A. Review of Conference Committee Composition, Scope and Procedure - Art C
- B. Review of History of Conference Committee - Ames S.
- C. Review results of Grapevine foreign-language cassette tapes (background data will be available in meeting room).
- D. Review Grapevine Workbook.
- E. Consider proposed revision of the Preamble.
- F. Attraction vs. Promotion: a discussion of the GvR program and other ways to use the Grapevine.
- G. Consider the following statement: "Greater acceptance of the Grapevine by the Fellowship equals increased circulation."
- H. Discuss format, content, and distribution of the Grapevine.
- I. Other Subjects

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background

Below is the proposal relating to Item E. on the Grapevine Conference Committee Agenda. As far as can be determined, the last paragraph was meant to be informational only. While the wording has changed slightly, nowhere in any Grapevine Minutes (Corporate or Editorial Board), or in the Archives, is there a recorded reason either for its inclusion or modification.

A proposal for consideration at the 37th Annual Conference of A.A.

From: California Northern Interior Area (07)

We propose a revision of the "Preamble" of Alcoholics Anonymous, which is a return to something of the same form in which it first appeared in the Grapevine between at least 1947 to 1950 or 1952.

We suggest for Conference Consideration that a paragraph be added at the end of the Preamble, as follows:

"The A.A. program of Recovery, Unity, and Service is incorporated in the 12 Steps, the A.A. book of experience, "Alcoholics Anonymous," and the 12 Traditions."

Since the Preamble is often read at the beginning of each A.A. meeting, it is the first exposure a newcomer may have to our Fellowship. It is, both for the newcomer and the oldtimer, a succinct statement of what we are - and are not - and expresses the essence of our Steps and Traditions. We feel that this addition would enhance that first impression by explicitly stating where our program of the Three Legacies is found. It can also serve as a reminder of our singleness of purpose and lay a framework at meetings that may preclude some issues of contention that could arise. This is not an attempt to rewrite the statement but rather to reintroduce material that might well serve us now and in the future.

Proposed by District 17, CNIA, and approved by the Dec. 6th, 1986 Area Committee Meeting.

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON GRAPEVINE
Hotel Roosevelt, 45 Street and Madison Avenue

April 28, 1987 - 10:00 a.m. - Noon

The Conference Committee on the Grapevine met separately following the joint meeting of the Grapevine Corporate Board. The committee considered the following agenda items:

A. Review results of Grapevine foreign-language cassette tapes.

As one year does not seem adequate to fairly evaluate the results of the Spanish and French Grapevine cassette tapes, the committee recommended that staff monitor ongoing distribution and report fuller results to the 1988 Conference.

B. Review Grapevine Workbook.

To be included in subject area of report.

C. Consider proposed revision of the Preamble.

After consideration of a proposed revision to the Preamble from the California Northern Interior area, the committee recommended that no changes or additions be made to the Preamble.

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background
2020 Conference Committee on AA Grapevine

ITEM F: Consider a request to develop an AA Grapevine pamphlet on how the AA Grapevine can be utilized to carry the A.A. message.

Background:

1. Letter from Area 39
2. AA Grapevine Today flyer
3. AA La Viña Hoy flyer
4. How the Magazines Carry the Message from p. 22 of *"Guide to the Grapevine Workbook"*
5. 2020 Carry the Message postcard (English)
6. 2020 Carry the Message postcard (Spanish)
7. 2020 Carry the Message Project instructions (English)
8. 2020 Carry the Message Project instructions (Spanish)

Request for Agenda Item

Grapevine / La Vina

I would like to request that the Grapevine Corporate Board in cooperation with the Grapevine Editorial Advisory Board develop a new pamphlet which would describe how the A.A. Grapevine can be utilized to carry A.A.s message of recovery to the still suffering alcoholic.

The new pamphlet might be titled something like:

"How to use the A.A. Grapevine to Carry the A.A. Message."

The new pamphlet should include the A.A. Grapevine Statement of purpose.

The new pamphlet could also include separate sections discussing how to use the A.A. Grapevine in specific areas of A.A. life, such as:

1. Meeting topics
2. Correctional Facilities
3. Probation and Parole
4. Treatment facilities
5. Loaners
6. Public Information (Displays, Barbershops, Dr's offices, etc)
7. Accessibilities
8. A.A. Anniversary gifts
9. Newcomer Packets
10. Sponsoring Newcomers
11. Military A.As stationed over seas
12. Vacation / Travel
13. Telling your own story (Including how to submit your story)
14. Art / Photographs (photo of your group)
15. A.A. Grapevine booklets/book
16. A.A. Grapevine website (archives as well as current articles)
17. Area, District and/or Group Grapevine Representative

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background

Each section might include a paragraph describing how to use the A.A. Grapevine in each specific area of A.A. life. Each paragraph would be followed by a short personal story from A.A. members who share their experience, strength and hope in relation to how the A.A. Grapevine has enhanced their sobriety in each specific section.

A final section would include how to subscribe to the online or paper copy of the A.A. Grapevine. Also included in this section would be a discussion of what advantages there are to having your own subscription to the A.A. grapevine.

The new pamphlet could also be translated into French and Spanish.

Respectfully Submitted in Service

Jimmy C.

Area 39 Literature Chair

Contact Information:

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background

AAGRAPEVINE TODAY

MAGAZINES AND MORE

Grapevine

International Journal of
Alcoholics Anonymous

PRINT MAGAZINE Estimated "Pass Along" readership is: 170,000 monthly.

GRAPEVINE ONLINE is an all-in-one subscription with online versions of our print magazines, plus recorded versions of every story. Includes the Grapevine Story Archive, featuring every article and joke published since 1944.

AUDIO DOWNLOADS Listen to your favorite titles in .Mp3 format

AAGRAPEVINE.ORG is a hub featuring stories, information, and an easy-to-use online store.

Editorial Content

- Contemporary stories of recovery by AA members.
- Serving as a tool of Twelve-Step work for over 75 years.
- The Twelve Traditions, AA Preamble and the Serenity Prayer were introduced in Grapevine.
- **GRAPEVINE QUOTE** Sign up for this inspiring daily email and/or find it on the website homepage.
- **GRAPEVINE AUDIO PROJECT** Share your experience as you would in a meeting (up to 7 minutes). Grapevine now accepts stories via digital recording. Visit AAGRAPEVINE.ORG/AUDIO-PORTAL for more info.

La Viña

Spanish-language
magazine produced by
AA Grapevine, Inc.

PRINT MAGAZINE Estimated "Pass Along" readership is: 25,000 monthly.

LA VIÑA ARCHIVES Sample a monthly story and download to your mobile device.

2020
CARRY THE
MESSAGE
PROJECT

Grapevine, La Viña, Books, eBooks & Products

28 English-language book titles / 26 eBooks
8 Spanish-language book titles / 5 eBooks
6 French-language book titles / 2 eBooks
11 English-language CDs
17 Audio Mp3 downloads / 11 Spanish-language CDs
10 Audio Mp3 downloads + Calendar & Pocket Planner in English, Spanish and French

Organization

- Grapevine magazine strives to be self-supporting.
- All staff making editorial decisions on content are AA members.

- The bilingual team is comprised of seasoned professionals from publishing, editorial, production, digital, and creative fields.

AA Grapevine and the General Service Conference

- AA Grapevine participates fully in the Conference with the Board of Directors, three voting staff members and a dedicated Grapevine Conference Committee.
- 1986 - A Conference Advisory Action recognized AA Grapevine as the International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous.
- La Viña Magazine is a service to the Fellowship that generates revenue through sales of magazine subscriptions and other related items and receives financial support from the General Service Fund.

Supporting AA Grapevine, Inc.

- AA Grapevine, Inc. belongs to the Fellowship.
- Submit stories and feedback for publication.
- Participate in the Grapevine Carry the message effort. Help reach alcoholics in detoxes, rehabs, jails—or in your homegroup. Please go to www.aagrapevine.org/ctm for more information.

VISIT US AT AAGRAPEVINE.ORG

Need help with customer service? Call 800 631-6025 (English), 800 640-8781 (Spanish), 818 487-2093 (French) or email: customerservice@aagrapevine.org

F-188

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CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background

AA LA VIÑA HOY

MUCHO MÁS QUE UNA REVISTA

La Viña

La revista internacional de Alcohólicos Anónimos

- La Viña celebra su 24º aniversario en el 2020
- La Viña lleva el mensaje de recuperación de AA, a través de las historias escritas por alcohólicos de habla hispana en los Estados Unidos, Canadá y el resto del mundo.
- Herramienta del Paso Doce desde 1996.
- Las Doce Tradiciones, El Preámbulo de AA y La Oración de la Serenidad fueron publicados por primera vez en el Grapevine.

LA REVISTA IMPRESA

Circulación de mano en mano estimada en 25,000 ejemplares mensuales.

ARCHIVOS DE LA VIÑA

Puedes acceder a nuestra colección completa en versión digital, visitando aalavina.org

DESCARGA DE AUDIOS

¡Seleccione sus temas favoritos!

LA VIÑA EN EL INTERNET:

AALAVINA.ORG

- Inspírese con las palabras de Bill W. Regístrese y reciba *La Cita con La Viña* en su email o léalas en la página Internet.
- Suscríbese a la revista y adquiera otros productos de La Viña.
- Envíe sus manuscritos y fotos de manera simple y rápida.

- Publique y vea sus eventos en el calendario.
- Acceda al formulario para registrar al RLV.
- Vea el índice de contenidos de cada nueva edición.
- Conozca los próximos temas de la revista.



Organización

- El personal de las oficinas incluye miembros de AA y personas no alcohólicas.
- Los empleados son profesionales bilingües, con amplia experiencia en el sector editorial, en las áreas de circulación y producción, digital y las artes creativas.

El AAGrapevine y la Conferencia de Servicios Generales

- El AAGrapevine, Inc., es parte de la Conferencia a través de la Junta Directiva, con tres votos del personal incluyendo a La Viña, además de la

dedicación del Comité del Grapevine.

- En 1986 la Conferencia, a través de una acción recomendable, reconoció al Grapevine y a La Viña como la revista internacional de Alcohólicos Anónimos.
- La Viña es un servicio a la comunidad que genera ingresos y cuyos gastos son en parte completados por el Fondo de Servicios Generales.

Libros y productos del Grapevine y La Viña

8 libros publicados en español
5 ebooks / 11 Discos compactos en español + Calendario y agenda de bolsillo en inglés, español, y francés
10 Descargas de Audio

Ayudando a La Viña

- La Viña pertenece a la comunidad de AA.
- Contribuya con sus historiales, fotografías e ilustraciones, así como su opinión.
- Participa en el Proyecto "Lleve el Mensaje" de Grapevine y La Viña – ayuda alcanzar a alcohólicos en centros de rehabilitación, cárceles, y hasta en tu grupo base. Visita aalavina.org/lleve-el-mensaje para más información.

**VISITE NUESTRA PÁGINA AALAVINA.ORG
RENUEVE SU SUSCRIPCIÓN**

¿Necesitas ayuda con tus suscripciones o pedidos? Llama al 1-800-640-8781 numero fuera de EEUU (español) 1-800-631-6025 (inglés), 1-818-487-2093 (francés) o envía un email a: preguntas@aagrapevine.org

Rev. 11/19

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background Chapter Four: How the Magazines Carry the Message

Our Primary Purpose

AAs have been using Grapevine to carry the message to active alcoholics, AA members, and the general public since 1944. Today, with La Viña, established in 1996, they can carry the message to Spanish-speaking alcoholics as well.

A Twelfth-Step Tool

The personal stories tell what it was like to help new and prospective members recognize their illness by harnessing all the power of one alcoholic talking with another. Stories of "what we are like now" in recovery often offer readers their first glimmer of hope, while articles on the Steps and Traditions keep readers grounded in the principles of AA. The magazines are a regular reminder of the help available, even when a subscriber slips; as one GVR put it, "Grapevine keeps coming, even when the alcoholic doesn't."

Many subscribers make a point of passing along each issue after they read it; others use subscriptions as gifts to sponsees or newcomers. Individuals and groups give subscriptions to hospitals and treatment centers, and current magazines can be found in the waiting rooms of those who work with alcoholics—doctors and lawyers, for example.

The magazines give new and prospective members a chance to get acquainted with AA in a low-key, no-pressure way, in private, and offer professionals a fuller understanding of the principles of the program and what meetings are like.

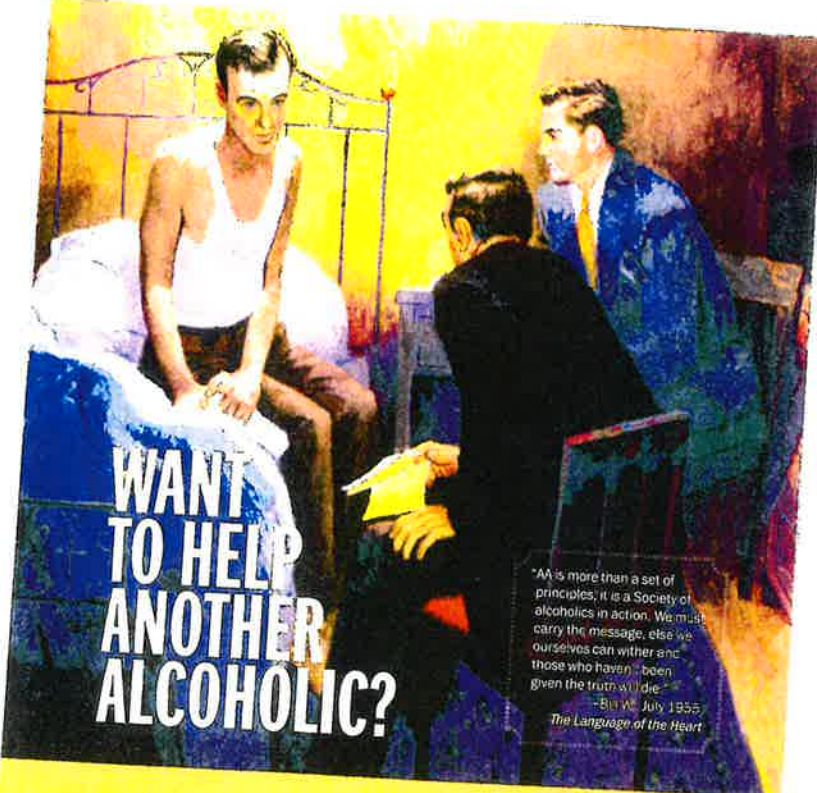
A Lifeline for Loners, Homers, Internationalists, and AAs on the Road

Grapevine and La Viña are vital links to AAs who cannot go to meetings and have little contact with their fellow AAs. Homebound AAs and those in nursing facilities, as well as AAs who live in remote settings or in places where there are no meetings in their language often rely on the magazines and the website (aagrapevine.org, aagrapevine.org/español) or use them along with the Loners and Internationals Meeting (LIM) newsletter published by AAWS.

AAs who attend meetings regularly find the magazines, books, eBooks, audio recordings and website useful on vacations, business or family trips, when they commute to work, when they are home caring for their families, or when they are ill.

An Aid to Emotional Sobriety and Spiritual Growth

Grapevine and La Viña have a great deal to offer old-timers, middle-timers, and others in recovery. The magazines can be an effective guard against complacency, reminding readers of what alcohol can do to alcoholics and of the importance of keeping it green. With their emphasis on the principles of AA, they can enrich a member's understanding of the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts and be powerful tools of spiritual and emotional growth as well.



**WANT
TO HELP
ANOTHER
ALCOHOLIC?**

"AA is more than a set of principles; it is a Society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth will die."
— Bill W., July 1955
The Language of the Heart

GRAPEVINE & LA VIÑA are Great Twelfth Step Tools!

Give a gift subscription to an alcoholic who needs it. Great for:

- Sponsees • Newcomers • Prisons • Detoxes • Doctor's Offices
- Group Celebrations • District and Area Events • Giveaways

Get your group, district, area or AA friends to join in.
Carry the Message, it's easy!

Go to aagrapevine.org/carry-the-message to get started

**2020
CARRY THE
MESSAGE
PROJECT**



¿DESEAS AYUDAR A OTRO ALCOHÓLICO?

"AA es más que un conjunto de principios; es una Sociedad de alcohólicos en acción. Tenemos que llevar el mensaje, pues, de no hacerlo, nosotros mismos podemos marchitarnos, y aquellos a quienes no se les ha comunicado la verdad pueden perecer"
- Bill W. julio 1955
El Lenguaje del Corazón

¡GRAPEVINE y LA VIÑA son excelentes herramientas para el Paso Doce!

Regala una suscripción a un alcohólico que lo necesita.
Es perfecta para:

- Ahijados • Nuevos • Prisiones • Oficinas de doctor
- Centros de desintoxicación y rehabilitación • Celebraciones de grupos • Eventos de área y distrito • Rifas

Para comenzar visita aalavina.org/lleve-el-mensaje

PROYECTO LLEVE EL MENSAJE 2020

F-316

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background
Want To Help Another Alcoholic?

Join Us In Our

2020 Carry The Message Project

Give Grapevine or La Viña To An Alcoholic In Need

2 EASY WAYS!

- 1. If you know the full name and the mailing address of the recipient:**

Give a Gift Subscription to a friend, a sponsee, doctor's offices or for giveaways at anniversaries or events at your homegroup, district, or area level.

Follow these steps:

- Go to store.aagrapevine.org.
- Click on the Gift Subscriptions box.
- Click on the Red Gift Bag icon for the type of gift subscription you want to give.
- Click on "Go to the products page."
- Click on the number of Gift subscriptions you want to purchase (1 gift or 2).
- Enter your information, the recipient's information and your payment information.
- Click on the Process Order button. You're done!

Note: The first renewal notices will be sent to you and if there is no response, the last ones will be sent to the recipient.

2. If you do not know full name and the mailing address of the recipient and want Grapevine to select an alcoholic in need from the requests we have received.

Give a Carry the Message Gift Certificate to someone you do not know (*such as an alcoholic in prison*).

Follow these steps:

- Go to store.aagrapevine.org.
- Click on the Gift Certificate box.
- Click the Buy button of the appropriate Carry the Message Gift Certificate option and you will be taken to a page showing our quantity discounts (*at the bottom*).
- Enter the number of gift certificates that you want and click the Buy button. (*For multiple gift certificates, the discount will automatically be applied*).
- Click Checkout and enter your order and payment information.
- When you click the Confirm button, you will get an order confirmation email and the gift certificate will be sent to you as an individual email.
- Forward the gift certificate to _____ and we will redeem it for someone who has requested a subscription but can't afford one. (*If you have purchased multiple gift certificates, select all of them and use the Forward as Attachment option, so you only have to send us one email*).

Note: Your information will not be connected to the subscription record and all renewal notices will be sent directly to the recipient.

*¿Quieres ayudar a otro alcohólico?
Únete a nuestra iniciativa del 2020 para el programa*

"LLEVE EL MENSAJE"

*Dale una revista de Grapevine o La Viña
a un alcohólico que lo necesita.*

¡DOS MANERAS MUY FÁCILES!

1. Si sabes el nombre completo y la dirección postal del receptor.

Regala una suscripción a personas conocidas, oficinas médicas, o como rifa para aniversarios o eventos en su grupo base, distrito o área.

Sigue estos pasos:

- Ve a la página lvtienda.aagrapevine.org.
- Haga clic en la opción de "Regala una suscripción".
- Haga clic en el tipo de suscripción que desees comprar para regalar.
- Haga clic en "Ir a la página de productos".
- Selecciona la opción en rojo que dice "Ordene".
- Elija el tiempo de suscripción que quieres comprar para regalar (1 ó 2 años).
- Pon tu información, la información del receptor y su información de pago.
- Haga clic en "Procesar Orden". ¡Terminaste!

Nota: Las primeras notificaciones para la renovación de la suscripción serán enviadas a usted, si no hay respuesta, las consiguientes se le enviarán al receptor de la suscripción.

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background

2. Si no sabes el nombre completo y la dirección postal del receptor, y quieres que La Viña seleccione a un alcoholístico de las solicitudes que nos llegan.

Regala un Certificado de "Lleve el Mensaje" a alguien que no conoces (*como un alcoholístico en prisión*).

Sigue estos pasos:

- Vaya a lvtienda.aagrapevine.org.
- Haga clic en el cuadro "Certificado de Regalo".
- Haga clic en el botón "Comprar" de la opción correspondiente para el certificado de regalo para "Llevar el Mensaje" y se le redirigirá a una página que muestra nuestros descuentos por cantidad (*en la parte inferior*).
- Ingrese la cantidad de certificados de regalo que desea y haga clic en el botón "Comprar". (*Para certificados de regalo múltiples, el descuento se aplicará automáticamente*).
- Haga clic en "Proceder al Pago" e ingrese sus datos de la cuenta o presione "Regístrese" y cree una, es muy fácil.
- Verá la información de pago, presione nuevamente "Proceder al Pago".
- Introduzca los datos de facturación y presione "Siguiendo".
- Seleccione el método de pago y presione "Siguiendo".
- Llene los datos para pagar y presione "Siguiendo".
- Verifique la información y presione "Siguiendo".
- Haga clic en el botón "Confirmar", recibirá un correo electrónico de confirmación del pedido y se le enviará el Certificado de Regalo como un correo electrónico individual.
- Envíe el certificado de regalo a _____ y lo asignaremos a alguien que haya solicitado una suscripción, pero no pueda pagarla. (*Si ha comprado varios certificados de regalo, selecciónelos todos y use la opción Reenviar como archivo adjunto para que solo tenga que enviarnos un correo electrónico*).

Nota: Su información no se conectará al registro de suscripción y todos los avisos de renovación se enviarán directamente al destinatario.

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background
2020 Conference Committee on AA Grapevine

ITEM G: Consider a request to change the name of the General Service Conference Committee on Grapevine to the Conference Committee on Grapevine and La Viña.

Background:

1. Letter from Area 13
2. Grapevine and La Viña: Our Meetings in Print and Other Media pamphlet (P-52)
(mailed to committee members only; online at aa.org)

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background



Washington Area General Service Assembly (WAGSA) – Area 13
I Friendship Station I Washington, D.C. 20016

December 15, 2019

Patrick C:
Conference Coordinator
General Service Office
475 Riverside Drive, 11th Floor
New York, NY 10115

Dear Patrick,

It is with great pleasure that I write to submit the following. On Monday, December 9, 2019, Area 13 (Washington, DC) approved with substantial unanimity to support this agenda item proposal for consideration at the 70th General Service Conference:

That the General Service Conference Grapevine Committee be renamed to the Grapevine and La Viña Committee.

There has been much positive growth in uniformity by the General Service Conference with regard to the relationship between The Grapevine magazine for the English speaking community and La Viña for the Spanish speaking community. By expanding upon the name of this committee it will enhance the relationship between our "international journals" and provide a positive display of unity.

We hope this suggestion will be considered by the A.A. Grapevine Board and General Service Conference in order to further affirm the spiritual interconnection between these two entities. Thank you for your time. Feel free to contact me if you have any further questions regarding this request.

Respectfully yours in service,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "mgy".

Michelle G:
Area 13 Delegate, Panel 69
Chair, Public Information Conference Committee

cc: Alaina H., Area 13 Grapevine Chair

1 of 1

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CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background
2020 Conference Committee on AA Grapevine

AGENDA ITEM H: Consider a request for AA Grapevine, Inc. to establish an Instagram account in line with the Twelve Traditions.

Background notes:

From 2018 Additional Considerations:

The committee reviewed the 2018 Grapevine social media report regarding Instagram, Facebook, and Google for Nonprofits and suggests that A.A. Grapevine, Inc. continue to explore social media strategy in their forthcoming strategic plan, taking into account issues regarding anonymity, security, affiliation, outside contributions and privacy and promotion.

From 2017 Additional Considerations:

The committee discussed AA Grapevine, Inc.'s continued exploration of an Instagram account and requested AA Grapevine, Inc. continue exploration and develop a plan to bring back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Grapevine for consideration.

Background:

1. Proposed Instagram Implementation Plan
2. AA Grapevine, Inc. Social Media Strategies Report to the 68th GSC
3. Proposal: An Evaluation of the Usefulness of Social Media (mailed to committee members only)

Proposed Instagram Implementation Plan

Strategy: Use Instagram as an extension of Grapevine's graphics, videos, and audio content.

Objective: Expose more people to Alcoholics Anonymous and A.A. Grapevine by sharing out inspirational content, information, and resources to support recovery from alcoholism.

INTRODUCTION

In 2017 at the 67th General Service Conference, the Grapevine Conference committee discussed Agenda Items D and F and Grapevine's continued exploration of Instagram and Facebook and that resulted in the following in an additional consideration.

2017 Additional Consideration

"The committee discussed A.A. Grapevine Inc.'s continued exploration of an Instagram account and requested Grapevine, Inc. continue exploration and develop a plan to bring back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Grapevine for consideration."

In response, at the 68th General Service Conference in 2018, the Grapevine Office continued the conversation with a report from Sticky Media about the potential benefits of a variety of social media platforms for nonprofits. That year, the discussions of the Grapevine Conference committee lead to the following additional consideration.

Below is the 2018 Additional Consideration:

"The committee reviewed the 2018 Grapevine social media report regarding Instagram, Facebook, and Google for Nonprofits and suggests that A.A. Grapevine, Inc. continue to explore social media strategy in their forthcoming strategic plan, taking into account issues regarding anonymity, security, affiliation, outside contributions, privacy and promotion."

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background

In our recent Strategic Planning efforts, the Grapevine Board prioritized *"creating a stronger digital presence to serve the AA Community wherever they may be, on whatever computer or mobile device."* In carrying out this goal we have:

- undertaken a large-scale website upgrade and redesign
- built out a variety of new content for our YouTube page
- integrated an updated store
- developed more robust monthly digital reports
- begun to explore new options for a digital magazine experience
- begun the process of applying for Legit Script certification

As we continue to grow our content library and opportunities for digital growth, we looked back through the history of options and ultimately feel that Instagram is the next avenue we would recommend adding to the tools in our toolbox.

The following are some excerpts from the report Stikky Media compiled. The complete report is attached as background.

Why Use Instagram?

More than the images that it is so well known for, Instagram makes imagery engaging, evoking primal emotions – such as humor, concern, awe, or intrigue.

Instagram is another platform with which to work with non-profits. With most users being of a younger demographic, Instagram will very likely reach many subscribers and members that AA Grapevine, Inc. currently does not reach. More than 500 million people have an Instagram account and 59 percent of online adults ages 18-29 use the network. More than 300 million of them use it daily.

What makes Instagram different from social media networks such as Facebook or Twitter is the way people use it. Instagrammers frequently check the site, often several times a day, and engage with posts at a much higher rate than with other social networks. In short, people who use Instagram LOVE Instagram.

To succeed with Instagram, it helps to have a clearly defined strategy, a noticeable visual style, a commitment to regular posts, and an in-depth knowledge of your target audience (subscribers and members).

On average, non-profits post to Instagram 1.5 times per day. If AAGV, Inc. is creating and sharing great content designed with followers in mind, you will be well received. When used thoughtfully, Instagram is a great way to reach and engage younger volunteers, and advocates.

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background
STRATEGY

Our goal with Instagram would initially just include the use of existing content that we already make for the magazine, website and YouTube page. At our current staffing we have limited resources to manage a slew of original content for Instagram. We would build posts and content monthly based on the imagery and stories in each magazine as well as selections from the YouTube page and possibly announcements for Grapevine, or on behalf of A.A. World Services such as announcements related to the international convention.

Over time, as we become more adept, we could start to solicit new content, or create original content that is Instagram specific. We could create stories and post from events like regional forums or Area assemblies with anonymous photos, text and video.

In keeping with our mission, our posts would be primarily directed at alcoholics, "inside and outside our rooms." At the same time, as with our other work, we would want to communicate with the caring professionals who have been instrumental in helping us to reach alcoholics.

As with all our work, all of the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts will surely guide our Instagram communications. In order to be an active, dynamic participant in this space we initially stay focused on the content that is published in the magazine. This material is prepared long before it is published and will give us time to review content in a pre-existing editorial process. It will ensure that we have enough content to post in a given month without having to rush.

APPENDIX A – Sample Posts

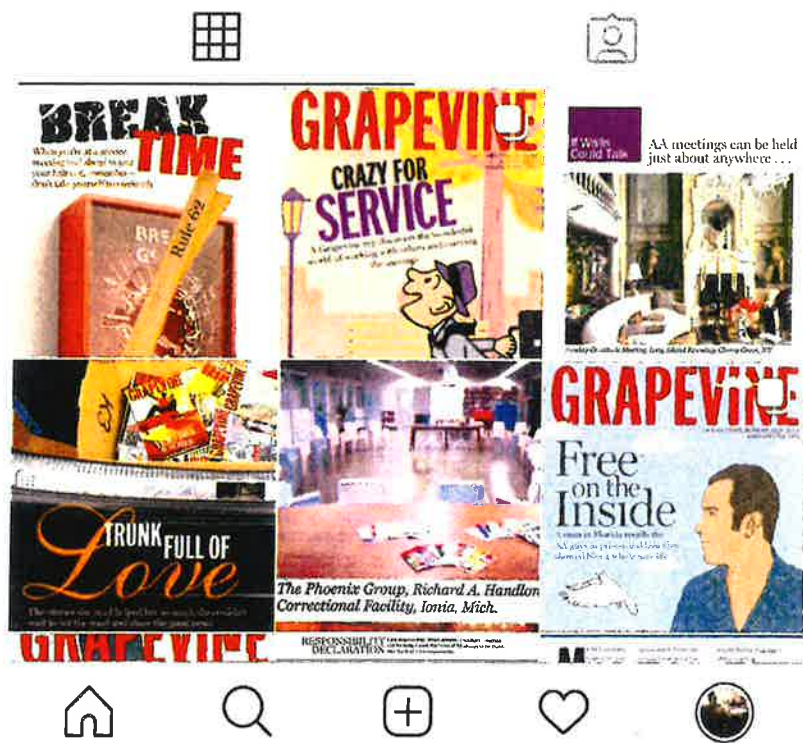
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25
Following

Grapevine is the multimedia publication of Alcoholics Anonymous. Made by and for members of A.A. And those interested in AA.
aagrapevine.org/

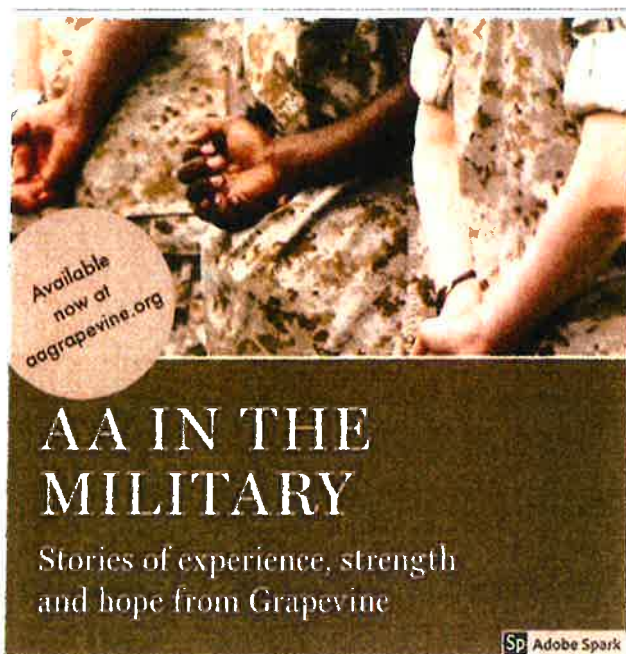
Edit Profile



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AT&T LTE

3:53 PM



Liked by out.of.hiding and 4 others

This volume has amazing experiences from men and women staying sober in the armed services from WWII to today.

View 1 comment

May 31, 2018



AT&T LTE

3:53 PM



Posts



"On Cultivating Tolerance"

AA CO-FOUNDER, DR. BOB, JULY 1944

"Those who follow the AA program with the greatest earnestness and zeal not only maintain sobriety but often acquire finer characteristics and attitudes as well. One of these is tolerance."



Liked by and 5 others

#sober #alcoholism

June 5, 2018



AT&T LTE

3:53 PM



Posts



MY AA friend Ma-hesh and I just had a hilarious back and forth text conversation about baseball. This is normal, despite the fact that he lives in Auckland, New Zealand. We met in my home state of New York. I gave him a tour of Queens, which he still fondly recalls. We met again in Atlanta, Georgia, for the International Convention. We shall meet again, somewhere.

appreciate it. Doris, who provided one of the few meetings I had via phone while living in Colombia,

around Beijing on a Visa after a meeting, where I'm feeling nostalgic. I can still smell the ancient stonework and see the massive marble columns beneath the historic church in Paris, where I attended my first AA meeting in a foreign land. *Dieu Merci*—they spoke English! I also recall the endless announcements of events at Ohio meetings, the bizarrely enormous venues found in Southern California meetings, and the humble confines of alcoholics helping each other

**AA
EVERYWHERE**

1/2

16

June 2018



Liked by

and 4 others

June 5, 2018



AT&T LTE

3:54 PM



Posts



*The Phoenix Group, Richard A. Handlon
Correctional Facility, Ionia, Mich.*



8 likes

... When anyone, anywhere, reaches out, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that, I am responsible.

June 20, 2018



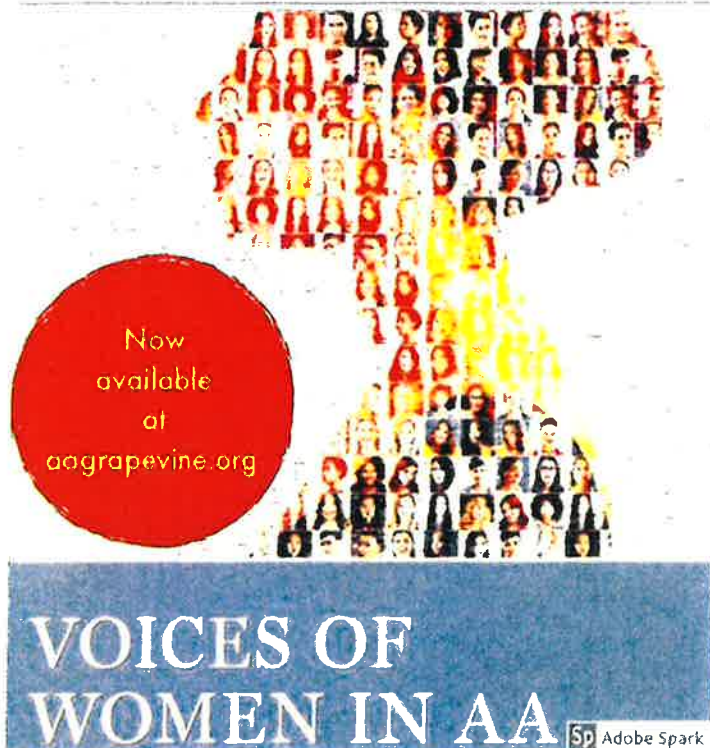
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AT&T LTE

3:54 PM



Posts



1 like

A collection of stories from women in A.A. from the last 7 decades including stories from some founding females in Alcoholics Anonymous. #sober #soberlife #womeninrecovery

June 5, 2018



AT&T LTE

4:04 PM



Posts



6 likes

June 19, 2018



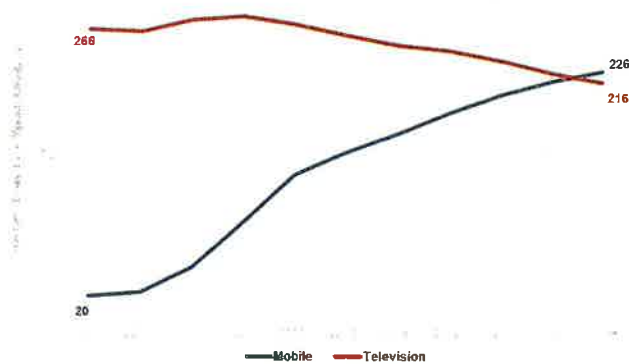
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APPENDIX B – Some interesting data on digital.

In 2018 mobile has surpassed Television in time spent for individuals 18+.

Device Time =
Mobile > TV

Television & Mobile Daily Time Spent (Non-Deduped), USA



Instagram is gaining more share of active users online along side YouTube

Online Platform Time =
YouTube + Instagram Gaining Most

% Internet Users Using Select Platforms > 1x per Day, Global*

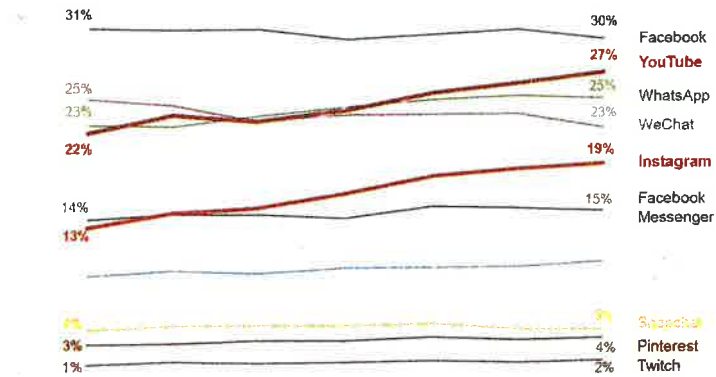


Image creation and sharing online continue to skyrocket.

Image Sharing =
Foundations Continue to Ramp

Image Creation

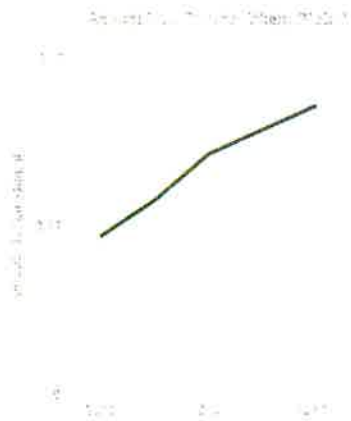
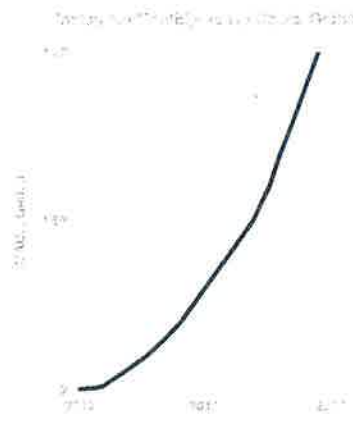


Image Sharing



AA Grapevine, Inc.
Social Media Strategies Report
to the
68th General Service Conference

- AA Grapevine, Inc. is committed to creating a viable plan to develop, design, and implement a social media strategy to increase engagement and sales of its magazine subscriptions, online app, and related books and products.
- The Grapevine Board and staff are currently working on a comprehensive three to five-year strategic plan. A pragmatic approach on the use of additional social media relative to the resources that would be needed to implement and maintain such platforms will be included in the strategic plan.