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A PDF version of this issue to distribute to your rooms, or to print out for easier reading, will be available after 8/31/13.

**Thoughts From The Trustees - Current and Past**

The subjects listed below are themes that have been submitted by other Trustees. You may respond to any of them, or start an entirely new subject

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**Orlando Conference Update**

8/1/13 - 12:01 AM

Hello All,

I want to take this time to thank everyone who has already registered with the conference and the Hotel for The 2013 International Fall Conference, to be held in Orlando Fl

We are now less than 80 days away from gathering in Orlando and I would like to create some urgency with anyone coming to please make your registration with the Conference Committee and the Hotel as soon as possible.

We are working diligently to make your stay a pleasurable and comfortable one.

And we would like to be prepared for all of your needs. So please do not put off what can be done today. Thanks.

Also, up on the Trustee Website, under the Orlando Conference Information heading are the flyers, or forms for your:

1. Transportation needs...super shuttle to and from the airport
2. Golf Outing.... Wed afternoon at 2 pm
3. Scenic Boat Tour of Winter Park...Thurs, and Friday...as an alternative to All the activities Orlando has to offer
4. I.S.O Walk-a-Thon to be held Sat am 10/19/2013 {coming soon}
5. Conference Registration Form
6. Hotel Registration Link and information

Please contact me with any questions or special needs you might have.....dietary needs,, etc

Looking forward to seeing everyone soon.

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<b>GA Approved Literature And Carrying The Message</b>
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8/1/13 - 12:01 AM

We will have our second vote on this in Orlando ---

Proposed version: All Gamblers Anonymous literature, books, and service pins must be purchased from Gamblers Anonymous through the International Service Office (I.S.O.) except when otherwise approved by the Board of Trustees.

Gamblers Anonymous approved literature cannot be copied for use, display and distribution by any Regional Service Office, Intergroup, group or member.

Local area or regional websites are not allowed to make any Gamblers Anonymous approved literature available for downloading for any reason. In Orlando , the above is up for the 2nd vote....

I've been surfing the web and noticed many regional GA websites display the literature on their website, such as the 20 questions, (FAQ) questions from combo book (or white pamphlet), the Recovery and Unity steps, our History, abbreviated paragraphs of the recovery and unity steps etc.

How will this guidance code affect websites if passed ?

Will these websites need to withdraw the messages they are carrying to the suffering gambler, if this should pass ?

OR if you are putting on a workshop or working with a sponsee on lets say Step 6 and you want to use some of the GA literature , the entire pamphlet(s) would need to be purchased and given out since the guidelines prevents any copying of a few pages related to the topic.

Are we stopping the message from getting received, if we can not copy, display or distribute approved literature, unless its purchased from I.S.O ?

Susan W. - Area 2, Northern California

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8/1/13 - 9:16 PM

Susan,

As the author of the agenda item, I thought I would try to address the concerns you raise in your submission. There are numerous areas the item covers but as it relates to your specific questions:

*How will this guidance code affect websites if passed ?*

*Will these websites need to withdraw the messages they are carrying to the suffering gambler, if this should pass ?*

Websites will still be able to continue to carry the message without withdrawing the literature. The key parts of the agenda item related to this are: Gamblers Anonymous approved literature cannot be copied for use, display and distribution by any Regional Service Office, Intergroup, group or member. Additionally, Local area or regional websites are not allowed to make any Gamblers Anonymous approved literature **available for downloading** for any reason.

*Are we stopping the message from getting received, if we can not copy, display or distribute approved literature, unless its purchased from I.S.O ?*

Having the ISO and its designated distributors as sole distributors is critical to preserve the integrity of the literature not only in substance but in form. The Trustees go through painstaking processes to make even the smallest changes and the only way to insure the integrity of the literature is controlling the distribution channels. Secondly, the sale of literature remains the ISOs primary source of revenue and given its current financial state, you can only imagine the financial troubles we would have as less and less literature got sold. If the inability to copy literature (instead of buying it) is a true hurdle in our getting the word out, this fellowship has some truly significant issues.

I hope to meet you if you're going to Orlando.

Steve T. - Area 14-Long Island, NY

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8/3/13 - 12:04 AM

Here we go again – more laws and regulations that have no merit being on the agenda. Susan T is 100% correct - lets not sugar coat this item. We are leading down a road of no return if this goes through.

Instead of killing the messenger – lets kill our sole purpose. We have forgotten why we are here to help the compulsive gambler that is still suffering. This agenda item will kill both the messenger and our sole purpose.

In my homeroom, Rutgers in NJ, we say – “if you don’t have the money to pay for the literature. It is more important that you have the literature than for us to have the money”. Our recovery is not based on money and we will find other ways to get the money. That simple suggestion helps us get more money by others that can afford to donate more. We are never short for money and practically give away all of our literature. I am positive that Rutgers is not unique and many other rooms that do the same feels it benefits every meeting.

What will happen if a member or room is caught copying combo book or a pressure relief form? Where are we going? What are we doing? Should we add this agenda item into Step 12? Does anyone remember Superman’s Bizarro world?

All trustee’s decisions are suppose to be based on the recovery and unity steps. This does not even come close to any steps that I know.

This is an honesty program and putting laws in place that have no penalty should be a suggestion. The BOT keep adding laws – when they should be looking at other positive ways to raise money. I do not agree that any literature should be copied. Does it happen? Of course it does. What is going to be the penalty to our fellowship? Disunity and one more reason and justifications why members call the trustees - the GA POLICE. The true meaning of a trustee in a fellowship is to promote unity and reasons to support its cause. We keep going further from that meaning with agenda items like this.

I understand that the ISO is hurting and has been hurting for over 10 years. We would be hurting much more without the wisdom of the BOR. They do an outstanding professional job at watching how we spend every dollar. The recent move of our ISO office and monitoring the cost that the BOT approves is just a few ways that have helped save us.

There have been some very good ideas to raise money to help ISO. The INTERNATIONAL WALK A THON and September being GA MONTH is just a couple ideas and has been a good source that raised 10s of thousands of dollars and unity over it years. Why can’t the trustees get their areas to support these ideas more? Or create others like it.

Over the year’s, agenda item for the trustees to be mandatory life liners has been voted down every time. There was never any amount added to the agenda – just that a trustee must commit. The main reason it failed was how would the BOT be accountable to monitor themselves and what to do if a trustee did not do it? Bizarro world....

The new hotline system is supposed to be saving money for the areas. How many rooms stepped up and sent in extra donations in the name of that savings on a monthly base? I know that NJIG has cut back on our monthly contribution.

Look at every month’s ISO bulletin and see how many rooms do not contribute to ISO at all. Even worse how many intergroups do not contribute?

Instead of creating this agenda item – lets put in item up suggesting that all rooms and intergroups donate just \$10 per month to ISO. A rough guess of 4,000 total rooms and intergroups – that would be \$40,000 per month or \$480,000 per year.

Now that is something to ponder - \$480,000 WOULD HELP CARRY THE MESSAGE.

Gary S. - Area 12, New Jersey

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8/3/13 - 7:32 PM

If anyone is interested in why the Trustee Line goes off into these emotional divergences of opinions, this is one very solid example. I don’t know why it

happens that Gary and I are seemingly on opposite sides of so many issues, but it is what it is. He, along with anyone else, is entitled to his opinion, and although I might disagree, I will be the first to defend his right to post 'appropriate' items. Fortunately, appropriateness is not the issue this time, but this last posting is completely incredulous and does more to incite others to something that doesn't even need to be discussed. The problem is the misstatement of what the issues really are, in a manner to try and paint the Board of Trustees as a body hell bent on destroying the framework of this Fellowship. For someone who was himself a Trustee for I believe 3 terms and seemingly so dedicated to its purpose, I cannot fathom how and/or why his opinion has changed by 180 degrees, now that he is no longer a current Trustee. Maybe smarter people than I may help me understand that, but I felt his submission needs a highly focused response.

Although I was a comic book kid growing up, I never got into the Bizzaro World series. Since that was referenced in the posting, I chose to look it up in Wikipedia, to make sure I understood what that series is about. Under the History section, it cites that in the Bizzaro World of Htrae (Earth spelled backwards), society is ruled by the Bizarro Code, which states "Us do opposite of all Earthly thing! Us hate beauty! Us love ugliness! Is big crime to make anything perfect on Bizarro World!" To that end, I ask...Really? Is that the quick summary of what the BOT does? I'm always one who like issues with illustrations, but it this really the one that just sums it up perfectly? Hardly.

Let me first cite the exact item from the agenda to which Susan and Gary refer in this thread. This involves item #17 on the Rolling Agenda for Orlando, under the 2nd vote section.

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17. - Guidance Code - Change to 3 articles that are identical in wording:

Article VII - Section 5, Article X - Section 4, and Article XI – Section 6

Add 2 sentences to the end of the sections:

Gamblers Anonymous approved literature cannot be copied for use, display and distribution by any Regional Service Office, Intergroup, group or member. Local area or regional websites are not allowed to make any Gamblers Anonymous approved literature available for downloading for any reason.

Current version: All Gamblers Anonymous literature, books, and service pins should be purchased from Gamblers Anonymous through the International Service Office (I.S.O.) except when otherwise approved by the Board of Trustees.

Proposed version: All Gamblers Anonymous literature, books, and service pins must be purchased from Gamblers Anonymous through the International Service Office (I.S.O.) except when otherwise approved by the Board of Trustees.

Gamblers Anonymous approved literature cannot be copied for use, display and distribution by any Regional Service Office, Intergroup, group or member. Local area or regional websites are not allowed to make any Gamblers Anonymous approved literature available for downloading for any reason.

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This item passed with a margin of 86 to 17. That's an 80% approval rate, and thanks to Gary's posting, it now seems that more clarity will be afforded this item before the Orlando vote, and in the process propelling it to an even higher approval margin on the second vote.

The posting about members not having money to pay for material and that the room has plenty of money, so the room just give the material to them, is wonderful. My homeroom, and I would think most if not all of the NJ rooms, has the same method of distributing literature. We only charge for those who wish to purchase the Day At A Time book, because that is just a wee bit too much to be given out for free. Okay, now what? That paragraph in Gary's posting has absolutely NOTHING to do with the agenda item, nor does the majority of the posting. So what's the point of his statement? I can't think of anything other than it is a diversionary tactic to get off topic. Possibly to create a crack in the door to talk about what a poor job the BOT is doing, which dominates much of the posting. Who knows. Paraphrasing what Alex Karas said in Blazing Saddles playing Mongo...David, just pawn in game of life.

It is good that Gary introduces the question of what happens if a member or room is caught copying approved material? Well, shouldn't we be asking why it is happening to begin with? Yes, what indeed are we doing? The answer is simple. We are stealing from ISO. What – too harsh? Let me say again.

Copying approved GA material is stealing from ISO, the very entity that is the subject of 'let's all give \$10 more a month to help raise \$480,000 for ISO'. It is these kinds of statements in the Trustee Line that drive me nuts. If rooms don't copy material, like the Step Booklets, Pressure Relief Booklets, and many other things, the orders for more literature would greatly expand, and maybe by more than \$10 a month. Even better, we wouldn't have to put so much pressure on every single member to give more at almost every opportunity that presents itself. Self-supporting yes, but how much pressure do we have to put on the members in the rooms. Afterall, didn't I see that our primary purpose was supposed to be carrying the message, or was it about raising money for ISO? I'm not sure with this last posting, but something tells me one of them is incorporated into one of those things...I think they are called Unity Steps. Yeah, that must be it.

Just as a reminder, in case anyone doesn't already know, ISO's main profit stream is through the sale of literature. Contributions, although critical, are a side issue as far as this posting is concerned. So if we care so much about ISO, then why do the rooms and their trusted servants have such a flip attitude about copying approved literature? Where are the bleeding hearts who say, among other things, 'Who is it hurting if we copy approved literature?' 'So we copy things, what are you going to do, call the GA Police?' And the list of rationalizations just keeps on flowing.

So what does it say about the members or especially the rooms that steal from ISO by denying ISO proper payment for approved literature? Isn't this a program of honesty? Do people just take back their will in defiance of Recovery Step 3 because they don't want to pay for new literature? What is it that makes it okay for people and rooms to do this, when members speak about having this burning desire to do all they can for the Fellowship that saved their lives? Hypocrisy, that's what. Do as I say, not as I do. Remember the old western movies where the Indians used to say...White man speak with forked tongue.

Let's also take into consideration that copying any approved material is a copyright infringement of intellectual property. That's not a GA 'law', as was the reference in the prior posting, that's a US federal law. Being a group of Gamblers Anonymous does not give it the right to copy anything with out express permission of the Corporation of Gamblers Anonymous. If you ask for such permission, it will be denied by the Board of Regents through the ISO. In fact, The triangular logo of GA is also not something that can be appropriated by any group, intergroup or RSO – without exception. Oh, by the way, Gary was not at the Vancouver Trustee meeting to hear Karen H. from the ISO speak to everyone that copying is illegal and stealing from ISO. I hate to hang an argument's merits on the words of one person, but when it comes to the business of GA, Karen is not the one you want to challenge. In fact, I would like to see those people who feel justified in copying approved literature to call Karen and tell her that they are doing this. Nobody will, because whomever it is that is doing this knows they are wrong.

Contrary to what Gary's assertions are about the Board of Trustees and their attempts to create disunity in the Fellowship, the fact is that the BOT, has to act to protect the Fellowship from people who would impose their own wills to do what they feel or want to do. For the past 10+ years, the BOT has been working diligently to plug the holes and ambiguities in the Guidance Code and many other areas. The BOT is trying to close all the crevices from the very people in this program who complain about the GA Police every time they are called out for violating the Guidance Code or the decisions of the BOT. Why is it that the members and groups who follow the Guidance Code, never have such experiences with the Trustees? Why is it that those same members defer to the Trustees for the good things that the BOT does? Maybe we need to think about that contrast a bit more.

Now, for a bit more focus on the money issue that was raised. The Fellowship of Gamblers Anonymous is supporting the Corporation of Gamblers Anonymous. That corporation is run by the Board of Regents. Where is all this 'wisdom' that Gary espouses from the BOR, the very entity that he seeks to protect without exception at every possible opportunity? He makes it sound like GA would be lost without their guidance. Nobody is looking to get rid of them, so how did this excursion become part of the topic being discussed? By the way, the statement of BOR doing 'an outstanding professional job at watching how we spend every dollar', comes with LOTS of examples of how 'unprofessional' that job has been in the past. But as they say on the talk shows, that's a different show.

I would also think it less advisable to single out individual agenda items that have failed as a means of mocking the BOT. Gary makes it seem like every agenda item has to be directed to raising money for GA. That is a cruel statement, in that he sits in judgment of anyone's right to post anything to the Trustee agendas. Every agenda item is considered, and if they just don't make sense, then they are defeated. The BOT represent the members of this Fellowship and ridiculing something that was placed on the agenda in the manner in which Gary has, is not appreciated by those who aren't just thinking about raising money for GA, but for the rights of others who have an idea that they think might just be beneficial to some aspect of this Fellowship. Anyone can certainly go back through the minutes of all the agendas and see the items that Gary has submitted, along with the results. That might be more enlightening than many might think, regarding their outcomes and the margins of defeat. So let's back off the holier than thou attitude, because the Group Conscience is the ultimate authority. Bad agenda items get rejected, hopefully on the merits of the items, or lack thereof and not personalities.

I'm also sorry that the 800-pound gorilla in the room was brought up regarding the new hotline. Will the sniping on this subject ever end? Erlang was exposed as a financial parasite on the Fellowship at the corporate, area and Intergroup levels, irrespective of how well it worked. I seem to remember similar discussions regarding the Erlang system in the Boston '06 Trustee meeting where the cost savings to the areas would allow for greater contributions to ISO. Do we need to also compare the ISO financials from that period to see that contributions did not increase commensurately with any savings? Again, another statement taken out of the clear blue. What may actually be happening is that the savings with this new hotline system of anywhere from 50- 90% over the Erlang system, are being used to defray the costs of each Intergroup's current financial struggles. To say that NJ Intergroup has cut back on its monthly contribution to ISO, and infer that this is due to anything with the new hotline, is disingenuous and once again, a deflection of attention away from the real problems that exist regarding a shrinkage in contributions from all access points.

In closing, current and past Trustees can write to the Trustee Line about any issues pertaining to the Trustees. That is an unrestricted situation, but it would give the Trustee Line a lot more credibility if those submissions dealt with opinions on factual situations, not fabrications and unrelated diatribes that make others ask... 'What the \*&^\$ is the point of this posting, because it has nothing to do with the item that is the underlying reason for this thread?'

David M. – Area 12, New Jersey

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8/3/13 - 10:26 PM

I am one of the 86 Trustees who voted in favor of this agenda item in Vancouver.

17. - Guidance Code - Change to 3 articles that are identical in wording: Article VII - Section 5, Article X - Section 4, and Article XI – Section 6  
Add 2 sentences to the end of the sections:

Gamblers Anonymous approved literature cannot be copied for use, display and distribution by any Regional Service Office, Intergroup, group or member. Local area or regional websites are not allowed to make any Gamblers Anonymous approved literature available for downloading for any reason.

And in Orlando I will still vote in the affirmative on the 2nd vote.

Let's not make this item more than it is. It is an addition to the Guidance Code. It is the right thing to do for the Fellowship. Period.

Our literature is OURS.

We write it.

We approve it.

We publish it.

We distribute it.

We copyright it.

We own it.

And we also sell it.

Rooms, members, Inter-groups, have the right to give it to anyone who request it, as long as they PURCHASE it from the ISO.

The ISO sends out starter kits EVERY month to new groups. This is complimentary. We do not charge them for it. So to add this section to the Guidance Code lets them know that copying anything in that kit is wrong! I certainly hope they read it!

But now that Gary has opened the door again insinuating that the Trustee decisions are NOT based on Recovery and/or Unity is insulting. Stating that we keep adding Laws, and continue to create dis-Unity, and call the body the GA Police is downright hurtful to me. And I would hope to ALL other Trustees Past and Present.

Gary also opened the door, again about the Hotline system..past and present. He states, and I quote " The new hotline system is supposed to be saving money for the areas. " Again an inaccurate statement ."supposed to be saving" NO ! It is saving money. Tons of money for local areas. To be specific , thousands of dollars per year! Savings to Intergroups, members and ISO. Area 6 is saving approximately \$150.00 per month. Allowing us to purchase more literature, contribute to ISO monthly and to donate for the additional minutes used. And to keep our treasury healthy.

Read the minute of the BOR from 2006 to 2010.

Read the Hotline committee reports, regarding the Erlang system, Read the contract that Erlang sent us for NOT owning the number, and the amount Erlang wanted from ISO to transfer the number. Read the monthly financials that the BOR approved for the Erlang System that Gamblers Anonymous honored.

\$1600.00 a month for 2 years to Erlang for set-up. And NOT owning the number .

Ring Central had NO set up fees.

No bogus charges.

Lower monthly charges.

And Ring Central gave GA the new number. FACT.

And they were operational before Erlang and they are operational NOW.

It was the Trustee Hotline Committee that did their due diligence to search and compare Hotlines.

It was the BOT that voted to switch.

It was the BOT that implemented the new system..Not the BOR. Please do not get confused.

Gary's opinions are his and he has every right to express them.

But these opinions wound, hurt, injure, bruise, and are dis-respectful to any Trustee doing service for the Fellowship, to the best of their ability.

Richie S. - Area 6, South Florida

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8/4/13 - 3:16 PM

Once upon a time I crossed an invisible line into an addiction I didn't know existed. Had someone warned me. it may not have made a difference. For over twenty years I deceived myself it was okay. Sound familiar ?

There is a line now with disastrous consequences we, as members of the BOT dare not cross. We have an obligation and duty not to cross that line. Here is my opinion and experience of what is across this line, hope it helps.

First up I thought my eyes deceived me on reading Gary's post a few posts back All this in the same post didn't make sense to me, quotes...This is an honesty program....The BOT keep putting in laws when they should be looking at other ways of making money.....I do not agree that literature should be copied.....Does it happen, of course it does... what is going to be the penalty to our fellowship ? Disunity and one more reason and justifications why members call the trustees The GA POLICE etc. etc. end quotes.

For crying out loud, is this a suggestion that the BOT should promote unity by turning a blind-eye to theft just because someone says someone else says its okay. Are you saying theft is okay, Gary? Who are these trustees that support theft and do so by calling other trustees THE GA POLICE? Please name just one. What's next, fraud and misrepresentation? Is that supported as well? Who are these trustees? Please name even one.

Its fairly clear that the BOT demonstrated that such behavior is not supported

when it sorted out the mess with phone service providers which undoubtedly cost this fellowship countless thousands. C'mon Gary, do you really think this BOT will allow that kind of behavior, which was clearly assisted from within in the past, to re-occur. Never in a month of Sundays. Yes, downloading does happen, only a fool would think otherwise, but to suggest it would be a part of our program to openly endorse theft, etc. Really ?

This is not an invisible line, there is quite a significant degree of chalk dust showing where it is on this issue. To cross that line is to smother in the dust.

I support the majority of trustees who support closing these loopholes. I support this item fully.

Odie B. - Area 36, S/E Ireland

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8/6/13 - 2:21 PM

Wow , I did not think my posting would get so twisted and slammed from all directions ... I like to thank Steve T (the original author ) for his reply , though I am still unclear how using the pages of questions from the Combo book ( or white booklet ) or any GA literature and posting it on a website is not some form of copying or displaying since it is "copyrighted" material ? none of the sites that I visited across the U.S. indicated they had permission from GA to use the literature. . One site from Canada stated that all material is the property of their site( I omitted the location) or International Service Office of Gamblers Anonymous. Maybe this statement should be considered for other sites to be using or does this need to be brought as a separate agenda item...

A few sites , provided the complete booklet like the" toward 90 days " or pamphlet for viewing with the link to buy it directly from the ISO online store (perfect). I found a site that I could download the entire combo book ( version 2008-2009 ), and this site probably broke some other Unity steps even though indicated it didn't endorse nor responsible for the links, the site provided various links of statistics, problem gambler 800 number, various states programs. ... I am a fact finder , I am not looking up the sites to do anything except to find out the details and I'm curious what is out there...I don't want this to sound like the GA Police or be associated with that term. Before my time, some resentments have been passed on for years towards someone enforcing the rules when all they were doing was their responsibilities as a trusted servant for the program. Maybe the delivery system of a group or individual breaking the rules needs to be looked at... but that's for another topic.

I too was present when Karen spoke in favor of the item. Though, do we know if rooms, individuals or sponsors are copying literature ? has the sales gone down or is it the times that we are in , donations have gone down in our area and many cases paying space/room rent comes first before literature... Some of the rooms that I have attend don't provide any literature even for the newcomers ( I remind these rooms about literature , but each room has their own autonomy)...

And my next comment I don't want to stir any more commotion but .... Recalling from my first year , there was working the steps, and Step study handbook, I wanted to see a universal recovery and unity steps workbook... where it was written , approved, published by us. And then used by us, compulsive gamblers. My first sponsor had not worked the GA steps, but had worked 2 other programs, he did not want to use the other programs literature, instead we used the GA steps as much as we could. They worked , though when we got to some of the steps I answered the questions, but he gave me additional work to relate to the step . The Writing the steps booklet came out afterwards. I've also worked with sponsor who did not use GA literature except for the headlines of the our approved steps. The current working the steps pamphlet (and Red book) is good ,however the questions I believe needs improvement and relate more to the step ( mmm maybe I can tackle revising the questions - a light bulb went off , as I don't think I could tackle re-writing the steps as workbook, possibly maybe the questions for group step studies )... back to my point, a few years ago when Step 1 – Foundation came out and then followed by "Writing the steps " pamphlet was approved , this is all a good beginning ... I for one do not have the writing ability to write a workbook , I am sure there is someone that can write and has time and "sales experience" as it may be rejected the first time... what a wonderful tool the steps, are , if practiced ...and provide another tool and piece of literature that is written, approved, owned, used, worked and practiced by us, ....this probably would new topic to bring up...trying to do some good here and be openminded...



thinking of ways we can improve GA and keep with the spirit of our purpose of the fellowship...

ADAAT in recovery  
Susan W. - Trustee Area 2, Northern California

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8/11/13 - 10:47 PM  
Susan,

I hope you're not discouraged from writing on the trustee line through perceiving a twisting of your points. I thought it was courageous to challenge an item that was so well supported and it is comforting to know we have trustees who will do that, an important part of the process. I don't believe anyone set out to attack you or your proposition and I think it's been a good topic. I can see the banter for what it is and I treat the trustee line like all things in recovery, I take what I need and leave the rest behind, hopefully contributing something along the way. The issue of what message websites give and whether, left to their own devices it remains the message of gamblers anonymous is a big issue so thank you for being a part of highlighting that. If you ever reconsider writing a workbook I'll be top of the queue to check it out.

Odie B. - Area 36, S/E Ireland

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<b>Definition of Gambling Trustee Poll Item</b>
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8/2/13 - 10:07 PM

For the Trustees who were in San Diego, you will remember that I presented a discussion item relating to the McDonald's Monopoly Game. I did that as I really did not have time to tackle the entire definition of gambling which was more my mission and from the discussion something many people agreed needs updating. I just put an item on the Trustee Poll as it relates to this.

My concern is modifying the definition to include gambling or "action" where no physical bet is actually placed. There are many instances where people can get the "high" of gambling in ways that appear innocent but are part of the insidiousness of the compulsive gambling illness: Looking at Bottle Caps, competing in a variety of contests including Answering Trivia Questions and such (for potential prizes), Longest Drive and Closest to the Pin challenges, Scratch offs of any sort (even at department stores), spinning a wheel for drink discounts at bars, just to name a very few.

My intent was to accomplish this without making wholesale changes and think this modification would be a large step forward towards a definition that would be much easier for a new person to understand while covering more of the pitfalls members can fall into.

One major thing to consider is many people reading this have many, many years in recovery and know "right from wrong". As many meetings read the definition as a group during the reading is a testimony to the importance we place on the definition of gambling and the need for it to be as clear as possible.

I welcome any and all modification suggestions.

Steve T. - Area 14, Long Island

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8/13/13 - 1:21 PM

I wonder how many members with clean time would lose it or be in denial, if the word participation was added? Here's the proposed definition – "Gambling for the compulsive gambler is defined as follows: Any betting, wagering or participation in a gambling related activity, for self or others, whether for money or not, no matter how slight or insignificant, where the outcome is uncertain or depends upon chance or skill constitutes gambling."

I am wondering if adding the word participation, may bring up more questions of what is a gambling activity and still be unclear here are many examples which could be argued, using your business card to get a free dinner at a local diner, the monopoly game, trivial as it may sound - redeeming rewards from your purchases from Visa or points were awarded while gambling due to cash advances (do you purchase more on your card to get free catalog gifts), taking your kids or grandchildren to the carnival and watch/cheering them pitching

quarters to win a fishbowl or prizes, drawings from your work for free sporting events, coaching or giving someone advice on how to place a bet on horses, sports , or playing a hand, playing the free play slots either at a casino or on the internet, donations to an silent auction, joining a Bowling league, golf tournaments or cribbage league ( you pay to play and win cash/awards ), you are at a sporting game and are awarded an upgrade or prize for your seat number – do you accept the upgrade , you are the “lucky” winner for being the 1,000 person in line, the list goes on – some would consider all these items as just "triggers" ,gambling , while others would disagree.

Another case – my workplace just changed how it recognizes staff for a job well done. As a “welcome to the program” they asked employees to log in to the new site , if you logged in , you were automatically entered into a drawing for prizes. I didn’t log in . The other aspect of this program you receive points by level of the position of whom recognizes you, such as your peers, managers , or AVP. You are awarded points by different categories or if you recognize another employee . These points then can be redeemed for cash or gifts from a catalog... I have no control over someone submitting that I did an excellent job. The only choice I have is not to redeem any points , as for me this is crossing the line for my recovery.

A few months back , I was considering submitting a discussion about removing the definition , from the combo book and any other booklet the definition is located in GA, then the thought passed, as I believe that this idea might get unanimously or nearly shot down. Before I ever entered GA , I knew I was addicted to gambling and that my life was unmanageable. No-one told me what the definition of gambling was , I knew I couldn’t stop and life was getting worse for me. Knowing or not knowing the definition of gambling hasn’t deterred me . I am sick and want to get better , the next bet will lead to another and another and just one more until I’m insane, in prison or dead.

After I stopped gambling I want to do something to fill the void, and asked if I could join Cribbage league... first my sponsor said read the definition of gambling... that didn’t help me, than was asked to read “what is compulsive gambling?” on page 8 , that helped a little .... Almost all cribbage all tournaments are held in casinos... Will then how can I follow the suggestions on page 17 - do not go in or near gambling establishments – one of my defects is “bad girl syndrome” testing and temptations .... Page 17 suggestions and guidelines has help me much more than the definition.

I’ve asked a few members around my area about the word participation and no one wants it added.

Membership is for those who have a desire to stop gambling , with our without a definition , if it feels, looks , sounds like gambling, for me , that’s the bet ( activity ) I need to stay away from. Gambling itself was not the problem, it was progression of the disease of compulsive gambling - - the uncontrollable urge to keep gambling even after it has destroyed our lives.

Susan W. - Area 2, Northern California

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### **Telephone Conference Call Committee Guidelines**

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8/9/13 - 8:46 PM

In Orlando there will be an item on the agenda to approve guidelines for telephone conference call meetings. At this time, I would ask all Trustees for any input that they may have on the proposed guidelines. I feel that this is too important for the Fellowship to wait until the next BOT meeting to approve this. I ask that the Trustees go to the Telephone Conference Call Committee page on the Trustee Website to review these procedures and to get back to me with any issues or concerns. Feel free to post any objections here as a response to this thread or to contact me personally. My contact information can be found in the Confidential Trustee Listing. I look forward to hearing any and all suggestions that may be helpful. Thank you in advance.

Use this link on the Trustee website to access the [Guidelines](#)

Pete K. - Telephone Conference Call Committee Chair  
Area 13B, South Jersey

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## The Promises Of Gamblers Anonymous

8/14/13 - 9:50 PM

Fellow Trustees,

In an effort to provide more definition as to where the passages from this piece of literature originally entitled "The Promises" ( which has passed a merit vote in Vancouver) came from, I offer the following:

The original piece that passed the Merit Vote in Vancouver has had two modifications made after the period that trustees could comment on any changes.

The first is the Title which has changed from "The Promises" to "The Promises of Gamblers Anonymous".

The second modification, changes the only passage taken from the Sharing in Recovery Blue Book page 70. The version in the Sharing and Recovery Blue Book page 70 reads "Members continue to let go of the old ways and allow God of their understanding to guide them towards peace and serenity." The modified version of that passage submitted for the Merit Vote was "You continue to let go of the old ways and allow God to guide towards peace and serenity." That passage has been modified to now read "You continue to let go of the old ways and allow your Higher Power to guide you towards peace and serenity".

Attached below are all the other passages that were all taken from the New Beginning Red Book, pages 38-48.

Items That Passed the New Literature Merit Vote

Other Literature

I. - "The Promises" which came from a mini conference workshop. (authors are Area 2 members). Piece to stand alone and be printed on a 5 x 7 piece of card stock.

See attachment

Steve R. for Chris C. - Area 2B  
Passed Merit Vote in Vancouver

THE PROMISES OF GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS

NB = New Beginning (Red Book)

SR = Sharing Recovery Through Gamblers Anonymous (Blue Book)

As the door to the past life closes, the door to a new life opens.  
There was no faith or hope and now there is. (NB pg 38)

Money falls into its proper place.  
No longer are material objects the only aim and ambition. (NB pg 39)

A Higher Power and you walking side by side  
can work together each day so that you can  
become better than you have ever been. (NB pg 39)

No longer will you be lonely.  
No longer do you make the decisions.  
Life has a balance which it has lacked.  
In a crowd or by yourself, you are no longer alone. (NB pg 39)

You will see yourself more clearly.  
This insight will remain.  
Self-knowledge has no bounds.  
Your newfound serenity will enable you  
to calmly listen and learn.  
Your awareness will really accelerate. (NB pg 41)

What the program teaches comes true. (NB pg 42)

You continue to let go of the old ways and  
allow your Higher Power to guide you towards peace and serenity. ( modified  
SR pg 70)

All fear will dissipate.  
You will be free to talk and move about as a normal person.

You will be able to resume a beneficial role in society.  
Self-respect, so long absent, starts to return. (NB pg's 46-47)

The ability to cope is perhaps  
the most valuable reward which you will receive.  
One no longer has to avoid a problem  
by ignoring or side-stepping the issue. (NB pg 48)

One day at a time becomes a lifetime. (NB pg 48)

Steve R. - Area 2B, Sacramento, CA

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new version