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Trustee Line for September 2013

A PDF version of this issue to distribute to your rooms, or to print out for easier reading, will be available after 9/30/13.

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

Item	Subject	Last Entry	Entries
1.	Violate I Unity Step? Why not a few more?	9/25/13 7:07 PM	3
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Violate I Unity Step? Why not a few more?

9/1/13 - 11:57 PM

Let me start this thread with some text from the Red Book on the Unity Program, page 53.

“The Gamblers Anonymous Unity Program is a framework for the well being of individual groups and the Fellowship as a whole. The Unity Program is outlined in Twelve Steps and is meant to insure the continuity and perpetuity of Gamblers Anonymous.

In order to maintain the Fellowship for present and future members, both individual and groups follow the proven concepts upon which the Unity Program is based. The essence of this program is in the preservation of common welfare, members understand that what is best for the group is best for each individual.

The Unity Program serves to protect the Fellowship from disruption. Members work together under the principles of unity in order to preserve and perpetuate the opportunity for themselves and other compulsive gamblers to recover and grow with the Fellowship.”

If these 3 paragraphs are read openly in any Gamblers Anonymous room, would there be any member of Gamblers Anonymous in that room who would stand up and say that they didn't believe that? I know I am a horrible handicapper, but I would say that few if any would stand up. After all, we are one big happy family recovering from this illness of Compulsive Gambling. We would do anything to protect the very thing that saved our lives, right?

So with all that said, how is it possible for members of GA to violate Unity Step 6, 10 & 12, and then stand by the decision with rationalization that the ends justify the means. More specifically, I'm talking about rooms and Intergroups taking up collections for members who die and carving out payments to outside entities.

There is nothing wrong with taking up a collection for the express purpose of using it for the Fellowship, such as contributions to an Intergroup or ISO. Most

do this for ISO with attribution in the ISO Lifeline in memory of the deceased member. Where it becomes a problem is when we take up collections locally and follow the instructions of the family and contribute to outside entities. Don't be so surprised by such a situation, because it happens more than you might think. We cannot do that. It is a black and white issue, with no room for any gray areas where people rationalize their emotional decisions to pay homage to one of our fallen brothers or sisters.

Unity Step 6 - Gamblers Anonymous ought never endorse, finance or lend the Gamblers Anonymous name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

So money from these kinds of donations from members goes to outside entities, so they can then list Gamblers Anonymous as a contributor to their company? Wrong.

Unity Step 10 - Gamblers Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the Gamblers Anonymous name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

So now we, as Gamblers Anonymous, are picking out which charities or outside entities we like or don't like? Wrong.

Unity Step 12 - Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of the Gamblers Anonymous program, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Yes, the local area members do care about these departed members. I get that, but the donations should go to either Intergroups or ISO. Now we are carrying out the member's last wishes, as it relates to division of money? Wrong. That is for the family to do. What's worse is that members justify their actions because of their emotional attachment to these members. This is when personalities take over, instead of principles.

So we are back to that age-old question that members ask in response to violating the Unity Steps, the Guidance Code or decisions of the Board of Trustees... 'Who is it hurting?' How about the Fellowship as a whole.

C'mon all you Unity first fans. Let's hear your perspective.

David M. – Area 12, New Jersey

9/4/13 - 10:08 PM

David,

I can't thank you enough for bringing forth another critical situation by way of this fantastic tool, The Trustee Line. It astounds me how often you report items and we hear the expression here come the GA police or similar. Why is peoples' anger directed at "The Messenger" instead of confronting and correcting the matter at hand? The reality is that as Trustees, 2 of our most significant duties are listed and numbered in our official responsibilities as follows:

2. Be a living example of the precepts of Gamblers Anonymous and personally work the Steps of Recovery and Unity.
3. Uphold the Guidance Code, and all decisions made by the Board of Trustees (not fulfilling this affects G.A. as a whole).

When I gambled, I would do or say almost anything to stay in action. I will not live that life anymore and will do everything in my power to make sure the principles of GA (not Steve T's wishes) are upheld.

We cannot continue to turn our heads to these matters or GA will continue to risk dilution to the very principals the program was built on. It is our collective duty as Trustees to resolve these situations even if they go against our personal feelings.

Resolution means not just bringing attention to the items but educating everyone as to the proper way of handling things so everyone can benefit. Let's continue to transition the dialogue on the Trustee Line to all matters important to GA with more people sharing their experience, strength, and hope and not just the small core of regular contributors.

Respectfully,
Steve T. - Area 14, Long Island

9/25/13 - 7:00 PM

Hi David and all who lurk around on these pages....long time reader, first time poster.

"Don't be so surprised by such a situation, because it happens more than you might think." I've been in over thirty years and have never seen a collection taken before the serenity prayer for anything to do with a dead member or their family. Maybe my departed brothers and sisters had gotten recovery and their financial houses were in order, I don't know.

I've been tapped after the meeting for several different reasons, but have not, to my knowledge lent my good will in the name of my fellowship. Any and all meetings could and should take care of their own, but it's a no-brainer that it's AFTER the closing prayer. Be well.

David W. - Trustee, Area I, Los Angeles

Proxies, The Vote You Can't Count On

9/2/13 - 10:47 PM

In Vancouver the B.O.T. made it known how they felt about proxy votes by changing the Guidance Code over two consecutive Trustee Meetings by a 2/3 or better margins.

This is the result of those changes:

43. Guidance Code, Article VIII, Section 6, 1st sentence

Change quorum amount and clean up ambiguous language. 2nd sentence - Delete the words 'and proxies' after the words Absentee ballots.

Current Version: Two-thirds (2/3) or more members of the Board of Trustees present at any meeting shall constitute a quorum. Absentee Ballots and Proxies shall be counted to determine the number present at any meeting for the purpose of a quorum.

Proposed Version: 50% plus 1 of the elected Trustees of the Board of Trustees, must be present at any meeting to constitute a quorum. Absentee Ballots shall be included to determine the number present at any meeting for the purpose of a quorum.

Passed 2nd Vote

44. Guidance Code, Article VIII, Sections 13C and 13D

Delete both sections.

Section 13C:

No Trustee can cast more than one proxy vote on any one agenda item.

Section 13D:

Proxies will only be valid if assigned to a specific Trustee by the Trustee giving the proxy.

Passed 2nd Vote

45. Guidance Code, Article VIII, Section 21, 3rd sentence.

Delete the words 'and proxies' after the words 'Absentee ballots'.

Current version: Any Trustee that misses (2) consecutive Board meetings is automatically removed from the Board of Trustees, and the area in which he or she serves shall be duly notified to hold an election for that vacant Trustee position. A quick response meeting will count for attendance at the Board of Trustees meeting. Absentee ballots and proxies from Board of Trustees members from areas outside of the U.S.A. and Canada will count as attendance at the Board of Trustees physical meetings.

Proposed version: Any Trustee that misses (2) consecutive Board meetings is automatically removed from the Board of Trustees, and the area in which he or she serves shall be duly notified to hold an election for that vacant Trustee position. A quick response meeting will count for attendance at the Board of Trustees meeting. Absentee ballots from Board of Trustees members from areas outside of the U.S.A. and Canada will count as attendance at the Board of Trustees physical meetings.

Passed 2nd Vote

There are 2 agenda items under Rules and Procedures, in Orlando, addressing

Proxies that could, if passed, eliminate any proxies that are sent forth to be used at the Orlando B.O.T. Meeting. These items are #'s 2 & 3 of the Orlando Agenda.

Under Rules and Procedures it states any item passed by a simple majority will take effect immediately and will become part of the Rules and Procedures Manual.

If a Trustee in your area is not planning on attending the B.O.T. Meeting in Orlando, you may want to encourage him/her to take the time and fill out an Absentee Ballot to ensure their votes will be counted on any eligible agenda item up for a vote.

Looking forward to seeing all of you in Orlando.

Yours in Recovery,
Andy R. - 1st Co-Chair, B.O.T.
Area 13B - South Jersey

Telephone Conference Call Committee Request For Information
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9/2/13 - 10:47 PM

As most of you know, tremendous progress was made in Vancouver regarding an International platform of Telephone Conference Call Meetings. The committee will be presenting its final material for BOT approval in Orlando. Members who had questions or observations about the presentation material were few in number since Vancouver, and that is being taken as a sign of overwhelming support for this platform. Hopefully, the platform will be approved and the committee can get started with the task of deploying this new system after Orlando.

In the mean time, it would be appreciated if the committee could get the help of all the current and past Trustees and be made aware of anyone whom they know is currently running any kind of an independent telephone conference call meeting. The committee would like to compile this information for the presentation in Orlando.

Please use the committee contact email address of:
committee.telephone.conference@trusteewebsite.com
Or call me directly from the Confidential Trustee Listing.

There are only 30 days until the committee reports must be submitted and we would like as much information as is available for a more complete presentation.

Thank you for your help.

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

Thoughts of a Former Trustee

9/17/13 - 7:11 PM

To the Chairman, executive board and members of the B. O. T., the I.E.S. the B. O.R. and indeed all who are on the C.T.L. and indeed also any member to whom it is of interest or consequence.

I recently became a former Trustee by my own choice. My absence from the B. O. T. may be temporary or longer / permanent, time and powers greater than me will have a far greater say in that than I will.

The three main purposes of this post are

1 To convey my thanks, respect and full support to all involved in the service, dedication and commitment that is involved and actively demonstrated by the Board of Trustees and all of the above.

2 To state unequivocally that my decision to resign under the circumstances which prevailed at the time bears absolutely no reflection on the Board of Trustees or any of the above, who retain my full support and respect.

3 To mention that, as a former trustee (I hope my use of that title does not disrespect the many former trustees who completed one or more full terms before becoming former trustees) I do not keep a copy of the CTL and I also consider myself obliged to remain true (to the best of my ability) to the implied and permanent responsibilities of having been honored to serve on the B.O. T.

With respect and gratitude,
Odie B. - Former trustee, Area 36,Ireland S / East

new version