

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
REVISED Sharing Session Questions
March 2016 Pre-Conference Assembly

Thank you for taking the time to review these new Sharing Session Questions and for sharing them with your Groups.

Many of you have already discussed the previous set of questions with your groups. I encourage and welcome you to bring these responses to the Assembly and give them to our Alternate Delegate who will prepare a report and submit it for inclusion in the Assembly minutes.

In November 14, the General Service Board approved a motion that: *“The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous undertake a comprehensive feasibility study of the current business models, corporate structures and long term sustainability of the GSB and both operating corporations (AAWS and Grapevine), keeping in mind the spiritual basis of Alcoholics Anonymous.”*

The Feasibility Study showed that the implications of current trends and financial projections are negative and cause of concern to the Fellowship. Some of these areas of concern are:

- Self-support contributions have plateaued
- Volume of literature sales has plateaued and has even begun to decline
- Introduction of e-books is not expected to make up the shortfall in print literature sales
- Operating expenses are continuing to move upward regardless of efforts to change procedures and processes
- Budget projections indicate losses for 2016 and subsequent years. Current AAWS annual operating expenses are approximately \$18 million. Based on a 2% increase in operating costs per year (\$350,000) we will need either a 5% increase in Seventh Tradition contributions per year or an increase in literature prices of 10% every third year to meet this increase in costs.
- Downward decline in Grapevine subscriptions. Grapevine has already eliminated \$500,00 in expenses and is still projecting a loss in 2016
- To break even, La Vina needs to grow subscriptions from current 10,500 subscriptions to nearly 30,000.
- Proliferation of self-help organizations and professional addiction treatment centres may be causing the AA message of recovery to be lost or diluted when the still suffering alcoholic is seeking help

At the 66th General Service Conference in April 2016, brainstorming discussions will be conducted to explore the issues and develop constructive solutions to the areas of concern so that the future of AA remains positive. **The Sharing Session Questions that follow will help to better prepare the Delegate as he enters in to these brainstorming sessions.**

Thank you for your service to Alcoholics Anonymous.

Larry

Larry Mumby, Panel 66 Area 78 Delegate

REVISED SHARING SESSION QUESTIONS
MARCH 2016 PRE-CONFERENCE ASSEMBLY

1. Reflecting on the Seventh Tradition of self-support as it currently exists today, what specific changes or enhancements could be made to both increase the dollars contributed and the participation and involvement by groups and individuals (Birthday Envelopes, Individual Contributions directly to GSO)?
2. Reflecting on the AA literature being sold today, both in terms of variety of items being sold and their price, are there specific changes that could be made regarding publishing and distribution of AA literature?
3. What changes could be made to the Grapevine to enhance its desirability so that the Fellowship would be enticed to increase their subscriptions and purchase of Grapevine materials?