

October 18, 2025

## District 4 Inventory Results Debrief with Facilitator

BB makes clear that you can't fix something until you know what the problem is. We as individuals don't like to admit we are doing anything wrong. Same with groups and districts and areas. You can only control what you can control; you cannot make others engage and participate in the steps, in a home group, or in service.

Unless we decide to participate, it doesn't matter. We focus a lot on those who don't/didn't participate. Be considerate of them. We are here; kudos for being here.

He's addressing results as promised months ago at a HIGH LEVEL – looking for

Causes and conditions

Patterns, and a

Roadmap for the Future.

Things he observed:

1. Question that came up, we lots of people who have had higher than 60 percent of the respondents with experience in service in other districts.

This doesn't happen in other places in the US/CN. Reasons Florida has higher than other areas: a lot of retirees, people with 2<sup>nd</sup> homes, and those who have relocated.

!! Because of this, we have a room full of other ideas (EXP)  
Embrace it!!

Not better or worse ideas, just different.

2. Get rid of some of the easy items to address –

Subsection: Communication; 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition info is being communicated in an effective way. Nothing hidden, transparent– getting communication flowing/regular/constant is good, but making sure that people understand the information, especially those new to general service, is also needed. (Reflected in a few other questions responses, too.)

Are we taking the time to ensure people understand the information we give them, especially new people? Do we help them understand how the schedule for the service event goes?

We are a weird organization. We take no outside contributions. We take members from prisons and psychiatric institutions?

Do we take time to share our experience; what a donation is versus a contribution, and why this distinction is important; what area, district, intergroup, and central office are and why they have different expenses and budgets.

The term “Workshop” appeared a lot in many responses.

(Time is so centered on information flow – we don’t take time to help new people understand our service structure.)

Are there other times...

The facilitator compared it to recovery – his example was expecting a person with 3 days sober to act like someone who has 3 years. He can’t expect someone with 3 days to behave like someone with lots of sobriety. Nor can he expect newer folks to service to act like someone with years in service.

He asked us to think about how much time we spend on helping a person new to general service “understand” the information given to them.

3. Sub districts - area structure – It’s clear from some answers that many members don’t understand the difference between the entities. The *A.A. Service Manual* is great but has limitations and challenges for new people or members in general. It is not descriptive and not a policy document; it has a general overview of service structures. It does not educate you on how our local structure operates. It generally describes what happens most of the time in most places. No where does the Service Manual fall further short than at the District level; primarily because Districts and Areas are organized in different ways across the US /CN. Some list county DCM - County, some zones (neither of these are even in the Service Manual!), some have a million districts.

Help has to be given so the new person understands how it works in our district and area.

Subdistricts – Some people responded that subdistricts don’t work well, some responded that there are too many.

New people are showing up all the time. How do we educate the new people on the structure. We’ll never get all the DCMs and GSRs to start at the same time at the beginning of a panel. Is a service sponsor the only way to get someone educated on the structure? Or can workshops be done to help educate members?

All those who come to serve only have a limited amount of time to give. Are there things a district can do to help people learn about the structure? If the 60% who have done service in other areas are the ones service sponsoring then those sponsees may not be getting information about area 15 structure. It takes a decent amount of time to become familiar with how area 15 does business, how the district does business, how subdistricts work, what DCMs do, what the district chair does. Maybe the district can

really be more effective in giving workshops on THIS service structure.

Difference between District and Central office is unclear to many people. Intergroups already existed when our structure was created, and we wanted to be respectful. Within our districts there are descriptions of each entity's responsibilities. But those descriptions are now decades old. They need to describe what is happening NOW. Are there duplicate services?

Responses indicate people are unclear where to send money and for what purpose.

There is only so much 7th tradition contribution to go around. Need to make sure there are not duplicate services that are costing money that could be used more judiciously.

4. Current Practice/Group Conscience: We have to actively keep fresh our group conscience and how we are doing business. And usually it happens slowly that practices change and people don't notice. Are there things in current practice that we should be doing but are not? If we're not doing current practice, we need to look at whether that is something we need to do or is the current thing we're doing more effective?
5. Accessibility/Diversity: Accessibility and diversity and getting people involved in service. The original area map was created by area code because of long distance calling. Used to be that phone calls and mailing expenses were a huge line item in budgets. Currently, how many people got into service because they saw a Box 459 on a coffee table? Or a Behind the Walls newsletter and got involved in Corrections? Or the Archives newsletter? Even a meeting that has a great literature rack, the information has gotten better *except* the information on service.

With e-mail, we now expect somebody to print something out if they want to leave it behind for others to read. With no paper

documents what happens to the people who are not yet in service? They aren't getting email. That may be fine for those of us already in service but not for those not yet doing service.

If we use technology to share information, we have to make sure all the people who are **and may be** interested in service are included.

Electing a GSR in a group is often the last thing to be thought about. If we think the GSR is the most important position in the group, maybe we need to do a much better job at getting those elected GSRs to come to a district meeting, to come to their first area meeting. And then get them to come back.

Are we welcoming?

6. Change: Change comes hard in A.A. We can honor change agents but you have to work within the structure of the district. New GSRs who come to a district meeting – not all of them will get a service sponsor. But does the district have a responsibility to teach them the structure of the district and how we do business? Of course.

Rule 63 This is the way we've always done it.

The bottom line is always how to help the suffering alcoholic. But how we do that is very unique in each area and district.

7. Inappropriate comments or apparel related to national elections. Solid members with a foundation won't leave AA because of that. Not so much, though, for the new person in that meeting. That person might walk into the parking lot after the meeting and think, wow, AA is not for me. I don't think the way that person thinks. I didn't know AA was about politics. And they don't come back.

For the new person involved in service, letting them know what we do and how we do it, AND that we need them, should be our number one concern. Maybe a person leaving a district meeting leaves with a resentment because they didn't get what they needed. They didn't understand.

8. Personality Conflicts: In Districts, Areas, GSB, local committees, etc. there are personality conflicts. They happen. Sometimes personality conflicts get worse and sometimes they start to affect the service you're supposed to provide. "In service, we don't have the same kind of tolerance for a newcomer that we have in our home group." In our home group, a person who just got their 90 days gets a celebration. We have been rooting for you from the start, from your first day. But in service we don't know the pain and tragedies we have each been through. Maybe have a person tell a 10-minute recovery story before the service meeting starts. It breaks the mind set of not liking that person because now you know them even just a little. We are more respectful of one another in service if we know each other's recovery story.
9. Making a decision in AA at a service meeting. You can be one of two things - past what is my business and what is not my business - you have to make a decision on what you are going to be in that meeting. Area you going to be a thermostat or are you going to be a heater?

## Questions

Jen's question – Roberts Rules

“How the Conference Operates” One Sheet.

“How the District Operates” – what is motion, tabling, ROR

Inventory is NOT a group conscience.