
Motion 1: Review of Edits to the Service Handbook

Proposed Motion to the General Service Conference of AA in Ireland

MOTION

That the General Service Conference direct the General Service Board to commission a comprehensive review of all amendments made to A Service Handbook for Ireland since the year 2000, with the objective of identifying any edits that cannot be directly attributed to a motion originating from a specific group and formally advanced through the service structure — from Group Conscience, through Area Committee, through Provincial Intergroup, and to Conference — and that the findings of this review be reported to Conference and communicated to all groups.

BACKGROUND

A Service Handbook for Ireland is the principal description of AA's service structure on the island of Ireland. It is consulted by groups, officers, and delegates as an authoritative guide to how the Fellowship operates at every level.

The Service Handbook makes clear that Conference begins with the Group Conscience and leads back to the Group, which retains final responsibility for carrying out Conference decisions. This places the groups at the origin of all legitimate changes to how the Fellowship is structured and described.

Concerns have been raised by members active in service that certain amendments to the Handbook over recent decades may not have followed this path — that is, they may not have originated as motions from groups and been carried upward through the structure in the manner the Traditions require.

RATIONALE

Tradition Two affirms that the sole ultimate authority in AA is a loving God as expressed through Group Conscience, and that leaders are trusted servants who do not govern. Where changes to foundational service documents cannot be traced to the Group Conscience, the legitimacy of those changes is open to question.

This motion does not presuppose that any particular edit was improperly made. It asks that the matter be examined transparently, so that the Fellowship may have confidence in the integrity of its own service literature.

Where the review identifies amendments that cannot be attributed to the required process, Conference will be in a position to either ratify them through proper Group Conscience — should the Fellowship wish to retain them — or to reconsider them. Either outcome strengthens rather than undermines the service structure.

Concept XII (Warranty Four) holds that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and wherever possible, by substantial unanimity. A review of this kind is consistent with that principle of transparent, collective governance.

RELEVANT TRADITIONS AND CONCEPTS

Tradition Two: 'For our Group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our Group Conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.'

Tradition Nine: 'AA, as such, ought never be organised; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.'

Concept XII, Warranty Four: 'That all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and, wherever possible, by substantial unanimity.'

Service Handbook (Introduction): 'The General Service Conference, therefore, begins with the Group Conscience. It also leads back to the Group, since the Group has the final responsibility for carrying out decisions made by Conference.'

Motion 1 of 3 — Service Handbook Review

This document has been prepared for consideration by AA groups, areas, and intergroups in Ireland. It is not an official publication of Alcoholics Anonymous.