

The Group Conscience ~ A Spiritual Construct

Submitted By Joe B. (D.J.), via Sponsorship
New Orleans, Louisiana

The concept of a group conscience has been a part of the function of AA from its earliest days. Bill W. no doubt drew heavily on the Oxford Group's reliance upon "a Conscience of the Group." INTERESTINGLY, Carl Jung's theory of personality speaks of a collective subconscious which is universal in mankind and gives man his basic knowledge of right and wrong. Bill recounts the story of the first New York group's negating his chance to accept a job as lay counselor at Towns Hospital. In spite of his dire need of employment, the group thought his acceptance would compromise the principles of the movement, and Bill ultimately heeded the conscience of the group.

Then concept was formally defined with the publication in 1946 of 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." This tradition is used as the principle basis as well for the development and justification of the Twelve Concepts of World Service.

Furthermore, the group conscience is relied upon at all levels of service - the group, district, area and general service conference and also committee levels within each service level. What two principle criteria must a decision meet to qualify it as a group conscience? First, it must be made only after complete knowledge and thorough debate of the question at hand. Second, any decision made must meet the requirement of substantial unanimity. The conference defines unanimity as a two-thirds majority vote. In practice, the total is usually much greater.

What matters demand a group conscience are dictated by the gravity of the question before the group? Generally speaking, any matter of policy of financial considerations meet the requirements of a group conscience. Simple house-keeping matters such as time of meeting or that most important question concerning the brand of coffee used, would require only a simple majority vote. Obviously, any matter affecting CA as a whole, or any other group in particular, would require a formal group consideration.

It is my concern that we in service have not made it clear to all in the fellowship and the newcomer in particular the exact nature or importance of the procedure. I have often heard members refer to a simple business meeting as a group conscience meeting, or a vote on a mundane, rather simple housekeeping problem, as a group conscience. Such a disregard for the basic nature of the concept only serves to cheapen its intent. After all, this is one of the principles which sets our fellowship quite apart from other movements. This spiritual principle which allows us to formally define the will of God as we understand Him. That is a great leap of faith that we addicts accept with a sense of duty and gratitude. When one looks at it in this way, the need to be completely informed takes on new meaning. I'm sure that when we reexamine the second tradition with its admonition that we are asked to assess the will of our ultimate authority the task takes on a sense of awe and urgency. The wonderful thing is, it works! Not only does it work, but it affects all I have witnessed in service.

(continued on page 4)

Cultivating Love and Tolerance

By Randall O'B.

During my seven years in C.A., I have observed that those who follow the CA program with the greater earnestness and zeal not only maintain sobriety but often acquire fine characteristics and attitudes as well. One of these is tolerance which expresses itself in a variety of ways. One of which is kindness and consideration toward the man or woman who is just beginning to walk the path along spiritual ways. In the understanding of those who perhaps have been less fortunate in educational advantages, and in sympathy toward those whose religious ideas may be a great variance with our own.

I am reminded about the picture of a hub with its radiating spokes. We all start at the outer circumference and approach our destination by one of many routes. To say that one spoke is much better than the other spokes are true in the sense of its being best suited to you as an individual. Human nature is such that without some degree of tolerance, each of us might be inclined to believe that we have found the best or perhaps the shortest spoke. Without some tolerance, we might tend to become a bit smug or superior - which, of course, is not obnoxious to others. No one of us wishes to do anything that might act as a deterrent to the advancement of another, and a patronizing attitude can readily slow this process.

Tolerance furnishes, as a by-product, a greater freedom from the tendency to cling to preconceived ideas and stubbornly adhered-to opinions. In other words, it often promotes an open-mindedness that is vastly important - is, in fact, a prerequisite to the successful end of any line of search, whether it is scientific or spiritual.

These, then are a few of the reasons why an attempt to acquire tolerance should be made by each of us.



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A Note from the WSO

Summertime thoughts (besides the beach, vacation...):

Conventions: Those of us who were able to attend the WSO convention in Denver had a great time. Thanks, Denver, for all the hard work that you put in. The CAWS '98 Committee is working diligently on the convention next year. Be sure to check out the new logo on page 6.

Web Site: Our web site continues to attract many hits and email each day. Many contain requests for information regarding C.A. as well as what they might be able to do for a suffering addict. Every request is answered with either a Starter Kit or pamphlets related to the request. This PI tool is reaching many people all over the world.

Answering Service: We are now using a voice mail system to answer requests from our national hot line for local numbers. Be sure to update any changes or additions with the office so that this system will always be up to date.

Service: Check out the new, although not approved until the upcoming conference, pamphlet, *Being of Service*. There are plenty of items for your Public Information needs available at the office. Call or write us about them.

Have a serene summer and fall.

In love and service,

The WSO

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The NewsGram presents experiences and opinions of Cocaine Anonymous members. The opinions expressed herein are those of the individual contributors and are not to be attributed to nor taken as an endorsement by either Cocaine Anonymous or the NewsGram.

The NewsGram is always looking for submissions! If you have ideas, cartoons, poems, stories or any other recovery or service related material that you would like considered for publication in future issues of the NewsGram, please fill out the form below and forward with your original work to: NewsGram Editor, c/o CAWSO, Inc., 3740 Overland Avenue - Suite C, Los Angeles, CA 90034.

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Calendar of Events

July 31, August 1, 2, & 3, 1997

1st Annual New Mexico State Convention, With God, Ourselves & Many Others.

Rio Grande Inn, Albuquerque, New Mexico

For information call Donald at (505) 298-2515 or David I. (505) 856-0628

August 8, 9 & 10, 1997

Sortir De Lombre (Into the Light)

11th Annual Bilingual Quebec Regional Convention

Hotel du Parc, 3625 ave. Du Parc, Montreal, Quebec

Canada H2X 3P8 (800) 363-0735

For more information contact Darlene at (514) 521-8987

**New Dates!*

August 15, 16 & 7, 1997

"Laissez le bon Temps Rouler" (Let the Good Times Roll)"

Recovery on the River

New Orleans District Convention

Best Western Landmark Hotel, Metairie, Louisiana (800) 277-7575

For more information, write CANOLA; P.O. Box 6391,

Metairie, LA 70009-6391

August 21, 22, 23 & 24, 1997

"Steps Toward Unity"

Los Angeles Area's 13th Annual Convention

Riviera Resort; 1600 N. Indian Canyon Dr., Palm Springs,

CA (619) 327-8311.

For more information call the CALA office: (310) 216-4444.

August 22, 23 & 24, 1997

"Show Me Recovery"

Greater Missouri Area of Cocaine Anonymous

Holiday Inn Convention Center, St. Louis, Missouri

For information contact: Pearl B. (816) 333-1984 Jeannette

W. (314) 972-0406

August 27, 28, 29, 30 & 31, 1997

Cocaine Anonymous World Service Conference

C.A. Fellowship's Annual Business Meeting

Radisson Plaza Hotel - LAX, Manhattan Beach, CA For

reservations: (310) 546-7511

For more information contact the World Service Office: (310) 559-5833

August 29, 30, 31 & September 1, 1997

Serenity in the South. Alabama Area Convention

Kings Arrow Ranch, Lumberton, Mississippi

For information, call the Alabama Area Help Line at

(205) 888-3558 or Email: Vance N. at: vancen@zebra.net

August 27, 1997

Los Angeles Area Annual Carousel Antics Carnival

Santa Monica Pier

For information, contact Carla (818) 781-1887 or Mark (310) 305-7912.

September 26, 27 & 28, 1997

From Courage Comes Freedom

West Tennessee Chapter Cocaine Anonymous 6th Annual Convention

Executive Inn, 3223 Airways Blvd., Memphis, Tennessee (901) 332-3800

For more information contact Ricky J. (901) 948-0572 or Walter B.

(901) 773-7398 (Pager) or the WTCCA Office at (901) 725-5010

September 26, 27 & 28, 1997

Surrender: Sky's the Limit. Flint District Service Convention

Radisson River Front Hotel, Flint, Michigan

For information call William W. (810) 234-6049 or Ellen S.

(810) 232-1522 or Anthony J. (810) 767-7119

October 9, 10, 11, & 12, 1997

"Recovery in the Rockies VIII"

Utah Service Area's annual convention

Hotel Olympia Park, Park City, Utah (800) 234-9003

For convention information call: Scott J. (801) 363-3963 or

Ruby L. (801) 731-3798 or Email: BiggTerry@aol.com

October 17, 18 & 19, 1997

Southwest Regional Convention, Join us in the Sunlight of the Spirit.

Travelodge Hotel, 112 S. Martin Luther King Blvd.,

Oklahoma City, OK

For information call: Danny F., (405) 424-0838, Barry H.

(405) 636-1751 or Terry W. (405) 946-1792. Or Email: George

J. at: georgej@ionet.net or Pauline L. at:

XPCTMIRAKL@aol.com

October 24, 25 & 26, 1997

"The Courage To Change"

1997 Midwest Regional Convention

Holiday Inn at Old Mill, Omaha, Nebraska

For information contact Barb L. (402) 558-9275

October 25, 1997

Toronto Area One Day Convention (starts at 8:30a.m.)

Christ Church, Younge and Heath Sts., Toronto, Ontario, Canada

For more information call the Toronto CA help line at (416) 927-7858

November 14, 15, & 16, 1997

Odysee des Jeunes

Montreal/Quebec District 1 First Annual Congress.

4600, Cyrille Delage Street, Auteuil, Laval, Quebec

For more information call Nathalie R., 514-622-3117

March 20, 21 & 22, 1998

Indiana Area Cocaine Anonymous hosts the

8th Annual Tri-State Convention

Best Western Waterfront Plaza Hotel, 2930 Waterfront

Parkway West, Indianapolis, Indiana

For more information contact: Harrison J. (317) 290-7080,

Delores C. (317) 926-9575 or Myra B. (317) 635-5365

If you are having a Regional, Area or District Cocaine Anonymous Event, please let us know! We can list your event in the NewsGram. Submissions should be made in writing, as soon as you know the date and location. Deadline for submission is 30 days prior to the publication of each NewsGram. Publications dates are: February 1, May 1, August 1 and November 1. We will publish up to a year in advance, and continue the listing until the event. Submissions will be published at the discretion of the editor and/or the World Service Office Board of Directors. Submissions should be made to:

ATTN: The NewsGram

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“Let Go”

To “Let Go” does not mean to stop caring. It means I can’t do it for someone else.

To “Let Go” does not cut myself off. It means that I can’t control another person.

To “Let Go” is not to fix, but to be supportive. It is not to judge, but to allow another to be human.

To “Let Go” is not to be in the middle, trying to arrange the outcome, but to allow others to affect their own destinies.

To “Let Go” is not to nag, scold or argue, but to search out my own short comings and correct them.

To “Let Go” is not to adjust everything to my desires, but to take each day as it comes and cherish myself in it.

To “Let Go” is to not regret the past, but to grow and live for the future.

To “Let Go” is to fear less and to love more.

-Author unknown.

Just for Today

Linda W.

Washington Pennsylvania

When I picked up, many years ago, I never dreamed where it would take me. The long years of suffering and pain would have been eliminated if I were in a program.

After a few years clean, now I believe God allows the right time and circumstances to happen before you are ready to accept ~ accept a Power greater than yourself, accept you have no power, accept life on life’s terms. All of which makes you very humble.

As the newcomers come in, I see all the pain in their faces. I watch them as they fight not to accept, to keep control of a life that went by the wayside along time ago. Some get the obsession for men or women, work, food, anything to keep that control. All attaining a quick fix, that doesn’t work. They find they still are miserable and wonder why?

Some do manage to stay clean. The longer they stay clean, the easier it gets. This being one of my true rewards to watch the newcomer grow.

I personally have made peace with my addiction. I asked God to take away that obsession for just one. My life is still a little crazy. Unfortunately not everyone got clean when I did. By the grace of God, C.A. and one day at a time, I am clean. Just for Today.



Dead at Eighteen

By Gwen E.

South Central Los Angeles, California

Dead at eighteen,
life’s gone by.
Finally ascended,
to my greatest high.

Filled my body
with spasmodic
behavior.

Many drugs I’ve seen,
in this short life.
Used a glass pipe,
to ease every strife

Raved in pain til,
my thoughts turned
sour.
Writhed and twisted,
in my final hour.

But, that last hit
I took was mean.
Dealer didn’t tell me,
the crack wasn’t clean.

With my own pathetic
cries,
echoing in my skull.
This woeful life ended,

Laced with death,
that pure white savior.

exploited, void and
null.

Soul Search

By Beau R.

Addiction is a way of not dealing with what’s around life’s circle; usually falling prey into the realm of the unholy darkness which embeds an addict’s soul...

Although there is light at the end of the tunnel, sharing our strength, hope and desire with another addict will finally help us realize that we are special children in God’s vast kingdom of love. One day at a time.



Group Conscience (continued from page 1)

Finally, can we be too hasty in our decisions or make a mistake? Of course! The mistakes we have made in the past have been quickly rectified either through trial and error or the right of minority appeal. We are so fortunate to be a part of a fellowship that is free of dogma and despotic leadership. We have prospered with the principles of the three legacies where other fellowships might have surely failed. It has been my experience that this can only occur in a movement that is secure enough to allow each of its members to define his own God; and focused enough to not try to be all things to all people, but to rely instead on the single purpose of carrying the message to the addict who still suffers.



Our Most Precious Asset

By Chris P., Trustee at Large

In Cocaine Anonymous, our only asset and therefore our most precious one is our name and its related logo. I say this as I depart a Celebrate Around the World function, where I again experienced that special feeling as those around me shared their Hope, Faith & Courage. It's our name, that some of those before me chose, that allows us both individually and collectively to "find freedom from Cocaine and all other mind altering substances." It's this name that gave rise to our fellowship that ought to protect today and tomorrow as we would our individual homes. Cocaine Anonymous is the place where together we found relief in meeting others who decorated with tinfoil, smoked white specks from the floor, or required knee pads and peep holes to party in paranoid bliss. The protection of our asset and the Fellowship built around it comes from our traditions and those responsible for following through with Discipline in Spirit thought and actions, are each of our groups, districts and areas. My hope is that in this article we can all perhaps find where and how we can protect ourselves from neglecting our most precious asset.

First, we must recognize that any violation of the spirit of our traditions can create harm for us all by excluding as few as one addict; therefore, we'll look initially at some types of violations that may endanger us and our name:

- A. Affiliation by outsiders (treatment centers, churches, therapists, etc.)
- B. Affiliation by endorsement of the fellowship of outsiders, spiritual or religious opinions (verbal, written or in artwork with our name or logo)
- C. Involvement of our name in any activity involving an outside issue (politics, drugs, policies, etc.)

Any of the above incidents, and others, threaten our fellowships legal and spiritual integrity and our unity. When another group, individual or entity directly uses our name, after a time, they may attempt to lay claim to it and in a worse case scenario insist that we no longer use it at all. When affiliation is inferred or implied, we run the risk of excluding a person or group of people. Yes, we through our recklessness may promote fear and resentment rather than our fellowship's Hope Faith & Courage.

It was because of these risks to our fellowship's legal and spiritual survival, the World Service Conference made a unanimous decision. Any individual group, club or district, ought to get approval for use of the C.A. name or logo and its intended form of use, from the appropriate service group ahead of time: A person, group or club goes to the district if available. If not, the area acts as the district would.

It was in this unanimous decision that our collective conscience chose to return the responsibility to our local membership. This was to protect us from disappearing because of either reckless or well intended, however misguided use of our name and its logo. It is during this process that we are asked both individually and as a fellowship to remember that "the good is many times the evil of the best." Therefore, insuring that what is ours remains ours, always a sign of unconditional love and acceptance contained in our hope, faith and courage. Beginning each day when: We admitted we were powerless over cocaine and all other mind altering substances; that our lives are unmanageable.

Thank you for this Day of Hope.

The World Service Office has literature available in Spanish and French! Contact the WSO for more information.

(310) 559-5833

"Action is the key"

-Anonymous

**A Song Is Not a Song...
Until You Sing It.**

**A Bell Is Not a Bell...
Until You Ring It.**

**And Love Was Not Put in the
Hearts of Men to Stay;**

**Love Is Not Love...
Until You Give it Away!**

**Just printed:
*Being of Service***

**Pending for World Service
Conference approval**

**This literature is a free piece subject
to the same limitations as our other
free literature.**





1998 CAWS Convention Southern California

May 22, 23, 24, 25, 1998 • Location: Irvine Marriott

Join Us in Sunny Southern California
for a Great World Service Convention!

- The Irvine Marriott in Irvine is 15 minutes to Newport Beach or Laguna Beach locations (Pacific Ocean). 3,000 miles from the Atlantic Ocean!
- Located just 5 minutes from the John Wayne Airport.
- Experience the thrills of major Southern California attractions (consult your local travel agent).
- Great shopping minutes away.
- Fabulous dining, dancing and harbor attractions. Incredible golf courses, diving, and surfing nearby for all you sports enthusiasts.

We are looking for people to be on committees!
You can currently volunteer to be of service, just call!

Memorabilia - Tim - 619-481-4942

Fundraising - Jay - 714-216-6234

Spending - Lenny - 818-360-6539

Hospitality & Decorations - Carla S. 818-781-1887

Outreach - Chris S. - 909-592-8586

Marathons - Sean- 310-204-2564



Bring Your Sunscreen

For Today

By Ronald A.
South Central L.A.

For today, I realize, I now have a choice
For yesterday, I was confused with a
negative voice

For today, I take one day at a time
For yesterday, insanity played tricks
with my mind

For today, I see clearly as I enjoy life
For yesterday, I was unclear due to the
forties, the chronic, rocks and pipes

For today, I no longer wake up in a
prison cell
For yesterday, my actions made life a
living hell

For today, I communicate with my pa-
role officer
For yesterday, I ran whenever I
thought I saw her

For today, I have no insecurities, I
know I am a man

For yesterday, I was ignorant and stu-
pid following my own plans

For today, I thank God every morning
I awake
For yesterday, I made many mistakes

For today, I deal with feelings and re-
ality
For yesterday, I didn't even care, nor
did I know me

For today, I still suffer but in a com-
fortable way
For yesterday, I fought hard for an
early grave

For today, I'm surrounded by friends
with unconditional love
For yesterday, my friends and enemies
consisted of both Crips and Bloods

For today, I thank God for letting me
be a man
For yesterday, I just did not under-
stand

For today, I am blessed and living all
right

For yesterday, I felt as though I didn't
have a life

For today, it's a blessing to be drug
and alcohol free
For yesterday, it was me who created
my own misery

For today, I am grateful that I don't
gang bang
For yesterday, I was totally insane

For today, I love God, life, others, and
of course myself
For yesterday, I was lonely and in
need of help

For today, I am not afraid to face reali-
ty
For today, I thank God, my new
friends and the Twelve Steps and
Twelve Traditions of recovery

Just for today, I now have a choice
For yesterday, I was confused with a
negative voice

Visit us in CyberSpace!

The Cocaine Anonymous World Service
Home Page is available at
<<http://www.ca.org>>

You can E-mail us at <cawso@ca.org>

Happy Surfing!

**The 1998 World Service Convention
Committee is looking for members! If
you live in the Southern California Area
and would like to help out in this mon-
umental event, please contact the WSO
at (310) 559-5833, or E-mail (at left).**

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7th Tradition Donations

May through July, 1997

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Decatur		Fort Wayne	
The Freedom Group	50.00	Fort Wayne District	50.00
Arkansas		Iowa	
Little Rock		Des Moines	
Arkansas Area	100.00	District	150.00
Arizona		Kansas	
Phoenix		Wichita	
Sun Valley Intergroup	1800.00	New-Found Life Group	30.00
Tucson		Wichita Dist/SW Regional Conf	1,000.00
Tucson District	134.36	Minnesota	
Coconuts Group	20.50	Minneapolis	
Colorado		Minnesota Area	58.00
Denver		Nebraska	
Startin' Over Group	30.00	Omaha	
Denver District	310.00	Friday New Creations Group	4.00
Colorado Springs		Monday Madness Group	12.00
Recovering Snowflakes	65.48	Thursday Scooters Group	7.50
California		Friday U-R-Not Alone Group	7.50
Fresno		Sunday Solid as a Rock Group	15.90
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South Bay Beach Cities District	144.00	K.I.S.S. Group	120.00
Westside/Hollywood District	20.00	Toledo District	130.00
Jeff S.	15.80	North Royalton	
I need another meeting group	1.00	Southwest Thursday Group	100.00
Saturday Noon SNM Meeting	15.00	Oklahoma	
Malibu		Tulsa	
Bagels by the Beach	10.00	Freedom Group	10.08
North Hollywood		Pennsylvania	
SFV H&I Committee	27.40	PA/NJ/DE Area	50.00
Summerland		Tennessee	
Central California Area	309.00	Nashville	
Solana Beach		Nashville group	50.00
Clubhouse Group	28.85	Memphis	
Santa Cruz		Cokebusters Group	50.03
Santa Cruz District	50.00	Texas	
Georgia		Houston	
Norcross		Texas Area	200.00
End of the Line Group	82.39	Austin	
Over the Hump w/o a Bump Group	10.00	All Saints Group	50.00
Columbus		Washington	
Ain't no Shame Group	25.00	Bellingham	
Idaho		Freedom Fighters Group	84.07
Boise		Wisconsin	
One Liners Group	25.00	Milwaukee	
Illinois		Lawrence Center Group	60.00
Bloomington		Wisconsin Area/Convention Donation	961.09
Faith, Hope & Courage Group	30.00	West Allis	
Chicago		Let's Stay Together Group	24.00
Illinois Area	100.00		
Straight & Grateful Group	17.50		
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Peoria			
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