

PRAASA 2011

Honolulu, Hawaii

## General Warranties of the General Service Conference

Hello/Aloha - my name is Greg, I'm alcoholic – my home group is the “Language of the Heart Group” in Half Moon Bay, CA. I found sobriety on February 14, 1978 on the Island of Maui, Hawaii

My topic is the “General Warranties of the General Service Conference. One can find the six warranties in several places within A.A. Literature:

- The Bylaws of the General Service Board
- Conference Charter (original & current)
- Twelve Concepts for World Services by Bill. W
- Twelve Concepts for World Services by Bill W. (Illustrated)
- A Resolution – adopted by the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention of A.A. in St. Louis, Missouri, July 3, 1955

The first time I listen to the Six Warranties read I was moved beyond belief. I was sober approximate 4 years and had been very active in my recovery. Attending AA meetings almost every day; I had a home group and was involved in Intergroup and General Service. From all appearances one would assume that I was an active member of A.A., but I had a secret. I was ashamed of being alcoholic. I was only “acting as if” and yet it worked. I was sober, happily sober. I assumed that because I stated I was alcoholic that I was a member of Alcoholics Anonymous.

As I listen to the reading of the “Resolution” my heart became filled with a vision for my future. I understood in that instant the “why’s and the how’s” of my new life. I felt the power in knowing that I was powerless in all material things and accepted the responsibilities offered to us by our Co-Founders. It was in this moment that I believe that truly became of member of Alcoholics Anonymous.

I've asked my new friend John C., Alternate General Service Representation for his home group in Area 06, California Northern Coastal Area, to read for us – A Resolution.....

Thank you, John!

I have found the topic assigned to me by the PRASSA Committee a bit daunting. First, the Warranties, as spiritual principles speak eloquently for themselves. Second, the essays following each warranty are illuminated quite artfully by Bill W. So.....I will not attempt to enlarge upon nor summarize each warranty – I'll leave that pleasure to you!

I have read, with great amusement, various articles expressing opinions that the warranties were crafted as a “sales-tool” by Bill in efforts to counter the “nay-slayers” who were fearful of the proposed General Service Conference Plan. I have no idea if there is substance to this assertion – I do know that the attitudes and practices contained in these warranties have remained as written for over 55 years.

I have discovered and attempted to apply to my life several of tenants illuminated within these warranties;

- Self-sacrifice
- Prudence
- Responsibility
- Trusted Servant Leadership
- Mutual Love and Respect
- Trust
- Freedom to Serve & Freedom to Live

At this point I would like to read an excerpt from a piece I wrote a several years ago that may be germane to the subject we are discussing today.

I have been honored and felt blessed to have attended sixteen General Services Conferences; two as a Delegate from Area 17 Hawaii; four as Pacific Regional Trustee and ten as General Manager, General Service Office. I share this only to say that I have participated in and experienced the Conference process from different perspectives.

“.....I have witnessed, time and time again, dedicated conference members discussing with loving passion their thoughts and beliefs concerning issues of importance to our Fellowship, pressing their points of view, skillfully using knowledgeable resource information and well-defined experience supported by group conscience directions. Rebuttals, submitted with equal elegance and passion, sweeping the searchlight of prudence for the right solutions under God's guidance. This is the process by which we come to rely on one another, to trust one another, to help each other with our frailties and sensitivities, to help each other express our creative God Consciousness. It is the process by which we search out and find God's will for us, and we pray for Alcoholics Anonymous.

It has been my impression that, over the past several years, the love and mutual respect we afford each other as A.A. member and trusted servants has been on the decline. The Second Tradition discipline has been set aside in favor of the easier path of fear and mistrust. The leadership discretion afforded each A.A. servant in Concept Three has been put aside in our effort to control and direct each other. Some of this mistrust may have been generated from our rapid growth and/or our inability to find a

simple, forthright form of communication. A.A. members and groups may have been making decisions outside their delegated authority. Some feel that the committee system, with its utter dependency on the principles of faith, trust and delegated responsibility, cannot possibly work in these changing times of rapid communications; and that the continual desire of Conference members to more fully participate in each and every committee diverts their focus from their assigned committee.

I believe we must relearn to trust each other and to know in our heart of heart that our love for A.A. – individually and collectively is pure in spirit. We must know that each element of the Conference Plan is designed to facilitate an equal interaction between members, delegates, boards and staff. All conference members are equal and the Conference process favors no one member over another. We must spend the proper time in studying our past and availing ourselves to the tried and proven principles and relationships outlined in our Steps, Traditions, Charters, Concepts and Warranties. We must avail ourselves of the collective wisdom, because in each of these documents is the Spirit that we are urgently seeking and needing.”

Today we find ourselves at the threshold of a new era - a resurgence of mutual love and respect for one another - let us recommit to a renewal of each of our individual spirits, setting aside our personal agenda and focusing on what is the highest good, the very best for Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole. As we move forward towards the 61<sup>st</sup> General Service Conference let us remember to be sensitive to each-other's viewpoints; listening carefully to each other, sensing the spiritual essence of each talk; willing to question and review our own thoughts and ideas, always at the ready to set aside our view points for a better vision. May we always remember to pause and ask “What would the Master do?”

May God bless you and keep you!

Greg M