

What does a GSR Do?

Scream? Holler? Cry? Quit? Most GSRs (General Service Representatives) want to do all these at some point in their two-year term. But most of the time a GSR tries to learn, listen, share and lead.

There are basically three places where a GSR acts as a trusted servant. The first is in the Group Conscience of your Home Group. This is most important, because it is here where every member of Alcoholics Anonymous has a voice in the affairs of our Fellowship. It is the GSR's responsibility to bring to the Group current information on activities at the other levels of the service structure. And it is the GSR's responsibility to take the conscience of the Group to the District and the Area. The GSR is the "link" between the Group and the rest of AA.

A Group belongs to a District which usually holds monthly meetings. The primary purpose of the District is to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous within its geographical limits. The GSRs represent their Groups at these meetings and collectively decide how this can best be done. A GSR is endowed with the "Right of Decision" by Concept III and can act on behalf of his/her Group.

The third place where a GSR participates is at the Area Assembly. District 52 is part of the Eastern Area of Missouri (EAMO). The GSRs from the eastern half of our state assemble four times a year with the same primary purpose: how to best carry the message within the Eastern Area. (Each Area has a Delegate who then carries the conscience of the Area to the annual General Service Conference.)

You may be thinking, "What an order! I can't go through with it!" Being your Group's GSR *is* a tall order. But you learn as you go. From my own experience, here are a few suggestions to ease the way. First, ask a lot of questions! There are many people with service experience who are more than willing to share it with you. "What are you talking about?" is not a dumb question.

The second way to learn your job is to read, read, read. There is a lot of printed material around—make use of it. We have many pamphlets on AA Service topics. Try to read the *AA Service Manual* (a little bit at a time). Attend service workshops. Become acquainted with the *Twelve Concepts for World Service*. And most importantly, learn the Twelve Traditions (at least read them in the *12 & 12*). Last, but not least, frequently ask for the guidance of your Higher Power, who has the ultimate authority in AA.

No one expects a new GSR to know all there is to know by the first District meeting. You learn gradually with experience. Just when most people in service positions think they've got the hang of it, it's time to rotate out. If you are patient and open-minded, you will serve your Group and AA well. You will learn a lot about AA and you will acquire more tolerance than you thought possible. Good luck and have fun!!

Kathy N., Past GSR