

THE GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

The General Service Representative (GSR) is the first in the line of communication between the group and N.A. as a whole. He or She is the link that binds the groups together in the performance of our primary purpose. It is his responsibility to keep the group informed and to express the group conscience. In all matters, all matters affecting N.A. as a whole or other groups he is infact, the voice of his group. Electing GSR's who will take an active part in the business of N.A. is probably the most important thing we can do to improve the unity of the fellowship. Active representation, more than any other thing, can strengthen the ties that bind us together and promote our common welfare.

The GSR speaks for his group at Area Committee meetings. He takes part in the planning and implementation of the N.A. functions which affect the members of his group. As a result of his participation he can keep his group informed about what is happening in N.A.

A group member should always be able to go to his representative and find out about activities, other groups, how the service structure of N.A. works, the traditions, and how they can become more involved.

A group's General Service Representative (GSR) normally serves for a period of two years. The first year is spent as a GSR alternate working closely with the existing GSR, learning the duties of office and taking over in case the GSR is ill, or cannot, for any reason, continue to serve. Also, if the GSR cannot attend one of the monthly area committee meetings, the alternate is given the power to vote in his absence. The second year he becomes the group's GSR, taking over the full responsibilities and functions of the office, and in turn is helped by a newly elected alternate. This "apprentice" system serves two purposes: First of all, it helps to provide a continuity of service which never leaves a group unrepresented; and secondly, the year spent as an alternate provides the training necessary for a good GSR. .

As you can see, the role of the GSR in N.A. service is not a simple one, or one to be taken lightly. The election of good GSR's and alternates is probably the most important thing that you, as an individual, can do for the unity of N.A. In choosing your representative, remember that he or she is your voice and your ears in N.A. If you wish to be well represented and well informed, it is your responsibility to elect the best possible nominee. For this reason we suggest that candidates for GSR should have:

1. The willingness or desire to serve.
2. A history of sobriety (we suggest a minimum of one year of continuous freedom from drugs including alcohol).
3. An active participation in the groups they are to serve.
4. A good working knowledge of the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions.
5. An understanding of the service structure of N.A. and the nature of the GSR.

The requirements for the office of GSR alternate are the same as those for GSR except that there is a minimum of 6 months of continuous freedom from drugs including alcohol.

These qualifications are not, of course, hard fast rules, they are however, some of the things you should consider in the selection of your representative. The General Service Representative (GSR), as we have described him, is your link to the rest of N.A. He is also the tie that binds the personal service you and your group perform to the next type of service which is offered by N.A. - General Service.

- * It is suggested that when holding elections for group officers, the description of each officers job and the suggested qualifications for nominees be read from this booklet in order that the nominees and the group as a whole fully appreciate the responsibilities and ramifications of each office.