

Appendix VI

The 1962 General Service Conference unanimously approved *The Twelve Concepts for World Service*, incorporated them in the By-Laws of AA's General Service Board, Inc., and approved their small AAWS booklet printing the same year. The *Twelve Concepts* were added to the *AA Service Manual* in 1981, and are included as the final Appendix in the Fourth Edition of the Big Book *Alcoholics Anonymous*. An identical verbiage of the six Warranties of Concept XII completed the original 1955 Conference Charter. The Twelve Concepts short form is read at the start of NIA Assemblies and Committee Meetings, where its principles remain as our significant guiding spirit to AA general service.

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The Twelve Concepts (Short Form)

AA's Twelve Steps are principles for personal *recovery*. The Twelve Traditions ensure the *unity* of the Fellowship. Written by co-founder Bill W. in 1962, the *Twelve Concepts for World Service* provide a group of related principles to help ensure that various elements of AA's service structure remain responsive and responsible to those they serve.

The "short form" of the Concepts, which follows, was prepared by the 1974 General Service Conference.

- I. Final responsibility and ultimate authority for AA world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

- II. The General Service Conference of AA has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in its world affairs.
- III. To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of AA—the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional “Right of Decision.”
- IV. At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional “Right of Participation” allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.
- V. Throughout our structure, a traditional “Right of Appeal” ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful concern.
- VI. The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.
- VII. The Charter and By-Laws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the AA purse for final effectiveness.
- VIII. The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services,

exercising this through their ability to elect all directors of these entities.

- IX. Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.
- X. Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.
- XI. The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.
- XII. The Conference shall observe the spirit of AA tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unequalled authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.