

Area 53 GSR School

General Service Representative



May be the most important job in A.A.

"The strength of our whole A.A. service structure starts with the group and with the general service representative (G.S.R.) the group elects. I cannot emphasize too strongly the G.S.R.'s importance."

-Bill W. on General Service and the GSR.

QUESTIONS:

My group elected me as their new GSR ...what does that mean to me? What is on your mind about being a GSR? What do you want to learn at GSR School?

What is an Intergroup Office? How does an Intergroup function? What is the difference between the Area and Central Office? How do they cooperate?

Where do I find a copy of the Group Change form? What happens if I mail this form to GSO in New York? What information is listed in the "Directory?"

How do I request a copy of my Group Information Sheet? Who should be the Primary Contact for my group? Who should be the secondary contact?

Is there a difference between a meeting and a group? What is the "principle of rotation" and why is it important?

Which suggestions might be important to my home group? Which suggestions are important at district meetings? Which are important at assemblies? Why?

What does "informed group conscience" mean? Why are "minority opinions" important? What is "substantial unanimity?" What does "conference-approved" mean?

At what meetings do we use parliamentary procedures? What is the difference between a majority vote and a "2/3" vote?

Serenity Prayer

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.

The GSR Preamble

We are the General Service Representatives.

We are the link in the chain of communication for our groups with the General Service Conference and the world of AA. We realize the ultimate authority in AA is a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. As trusted servants, our job is to bring information to our groups in order that they may reach an informed group conscience. In passing along this group conscience, we are helping to maintain the unity and strength so vital to our fellowship.

Let us, therefore, have the patience and tolerance to listen to others share, the courage to speak up when we have something to share, and the wisdom to do what is right for our groups as a whole.

By choosing its most qualified man or woman as GSR, a group helps secure its own future... and the future of A.A. as a whole.

Purpose of Area 53 GSR School

- ❖ become comfortable and effective in service to your home group
- ❖ share with others who have service experience and suggestions
- ❖ have fun and learn how to ...
 - ☐ keep your group information up to date
 - ☐ give reports at your home group and area assemblies
 - ☐ participate at district meetings and area assemblies
 - ☐ who to contact for answers to any service question
 - ☐ use our literature as an effective tool
 - ☐ share suggestions and concerns at your home group & service meetings

Materials used in Area 53 GSR School

- ❖ Area 53 GSR School Workbook
- ❖ A.A. General Service Conference-approved literature
 - ☐ G.S.R. – General Service Representative (**P-19**)
 - ☐ The A.A. Group – Where it all Begins (**P-16**)
 - ☐ The A.A. Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service (**BM-31**)

Group Record Keeping

General Service Rep (GSR)

Provides Group Information to
Area 53 Registrar for GSO

Intergroup Rep (IGR)

Provides Group and Meeting
Information to COGF and/or other
Intergroups

Group Record

Group Name _____

GSO Service # _____

COGF Group # _____

Meeting Times, Location and Format

Group Secretary, GSR and alternate GSR

Date Registered with GSO

Number of Home Group Members

**The AA
Group****“New York”**

AA General Service Office (GSO)
and Area 53

- ❖ Your Area Registrar maintains your GSO registered group information record.
- ❖ Publishes group information (meetings and contact full name/phone number) in the bi-annual Eastern US AA Directory.
- ❖ Mails information to your group GSR or Primary Contact.
- ❖ The Area holds quarterly assemblies, which are open to all. Your GSR is the person that attends this meeting.

The GSO online database is called “Fellowship New Vision” (FNV). It is accessed by the Area Registrar using a secure Internet connection. Information about record keeping is available at the Area website (www.area53aa.org).

“Central Office”

Central Ohio Group Fellowship
(COGF) OR other Intergroup

- ❖ Maintains a group membership record.
- ❖ Publishes the semi-annual COGF Meeting Directory that lists meeting times and locations by day of the week.
- ❖ COGF mails monthly Conscious Contact newsletter and flyers to your group secretary.
- ❖ Holds quarterly membership meetings, which are open to all. Your group Intergroup Representative (IGR) is the person that attends this meeting.

You can submit meeting change information at the COGF website (www.aacentralohio.org). You can also search for meetings in Area 53 and get directions at this website.

U.S. and Canada ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS GROUP INFORMATION CHANGE FORM
GROUP SERVICE No. _____ **DATE:** _____

DELEGATE AREA No. _____ **DISTRICT No.** _____ **No. OF MEMBERS:** _____

OLD INFORMATION
GROUP NAME: _____
 Group Meeting Location: _____
 Street: _____
 City/Town: _____
 State/Province: _____
 Zip Code: _____ Telephone: _____

MEETING DAY

 MON ☐ | TUES ☐ | WED ☐ | THUR ☐ | FRI ☐ | SAT ☐ | SUN ☐
MEETING TIMES

_____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____

GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE (G.S.R.)

 Name: _____
 Street: _____
 City/Town: _____
 State/Province: _____
 Zip Code: _____ Telephone: _____
 E-mail: _____

ALTERNATE G.S.R. ☐ **or MAIL CONTACT** ☐ (Please check one ✓)

 Name: _____
 Street: _____
 City/Town: _____
 State/Province: _____
 Zip Code: _____ Telephone: _____
 E-mail: _____

NEW INFORMATION
GROUP NAME: _____
 Group Meeting Location: _____
 Street: _____
 City/Town: _____
 State/Province: _____
 Zip Code: _____ Telephone: _____

MEETING DAY

 MON ☐ | TUES ☐ | WED ☐ | THUR ☐ | FRI ☐ | SAT ☐ | SUN ☐
MEETING TIMES

_____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____

GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE (G.S.R.)

 Name: _____
 Street: _____
 City/Town: _____
 State/Province: _____
 Zip Code: _____ Telephone: _____
 E-mail: _____

ALTERNATE G.S.R. ☐ **or MAIL CONTACT** ☐ (Please check one ✓)

 Name: _____
 Street: _____
 City/Town: _____
 State/Province: _____
 Zip Code: _____ Telephone: _____
 E-mail: _____

If the Group is to be listed in the Directory, please provide a telephone number and mailing address for the G.S.R., Alternate G.S.R., or Group contact. Listing in the Directory is for Twelfth Step referral and/or for meeting information. The G.S.R.'s (or other contact) name and telephone number will be included in the Directory with the group's name and service number.

 OK TO LIST IN THE DIRECTORY? ☐ Yes ☐ No

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

"Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. Membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group they have no other affiliation." — Tradition Three (the long form)

"Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose — that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers." — Tradition Five (the long form)

"Unless there is approximate conformity to A.A.'s Twelve Traditions, the group... can deteriorate and die." — Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, page 174.

MAIL TO: Area 53 Registrar, P.O. Box 2131, Columbus Ohio 43216 – EMAIL TO: registrar@area53aa.or

Group Information Sheet

Area: _____ District: _____

Service #	_____	History Date	_____
Name	_____	Language	_____
City	_____	Member Count	_____
Status/Type	_____	Last Changed	_____
Phone Contact	Name: _____ Phone: _____		
	Primary Contact (usually the GSR)	Secondary Contact (can be Alt. GSR)	
Name	_____	_____	
Address	_____	_____	
Phone	_____	_____	
List in Dir.	_____	_____	
Is GSR	_____	_____	
Is Alt-GSR	_____	_____	
Language	_____	_____	
E-Mail	_____	_____	
Meeting Place	_____		
Address	_____		
City State Zip	_____		
Mon			
Tue			
Wed			
Thu			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

What is My Area? Where is my District

Most general service Areas follow the geographical division of a state or province. Due to the size or population, some states are divided into two or more Areas.

A general service area is subdivided into districts. A District is usually a small geographic part of the area composed of 6 to 20 groups. All Districts have a number.

Ohio General Service Areas

Area _____ is
Central and
Southeast Ohio.

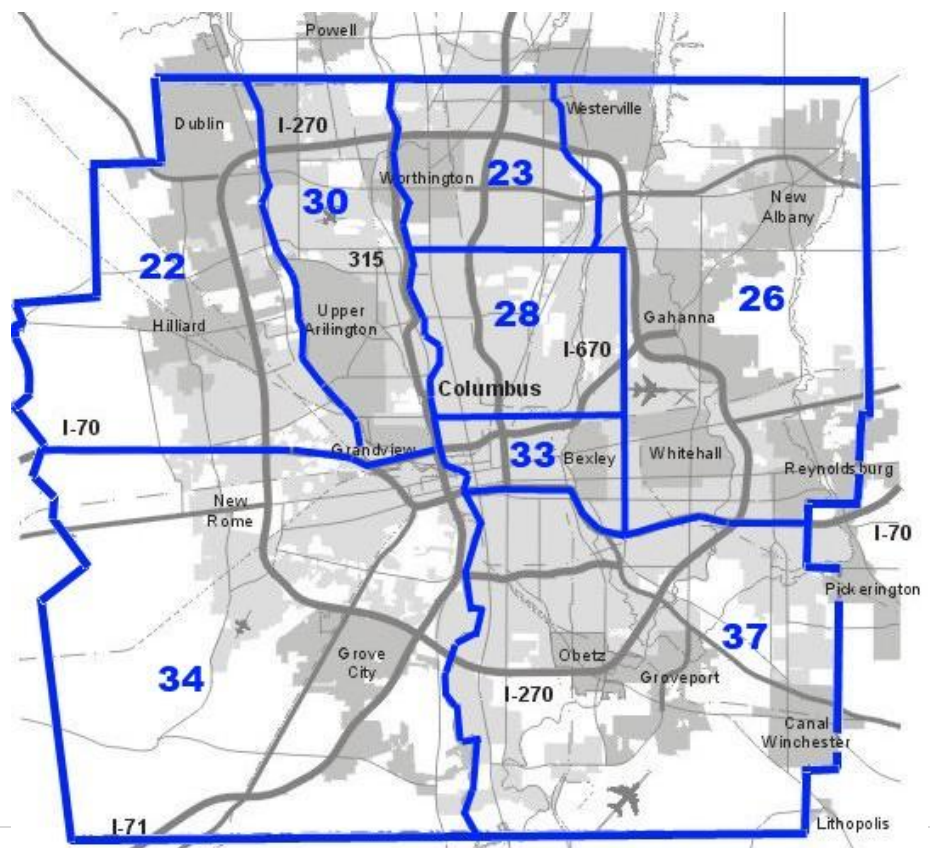
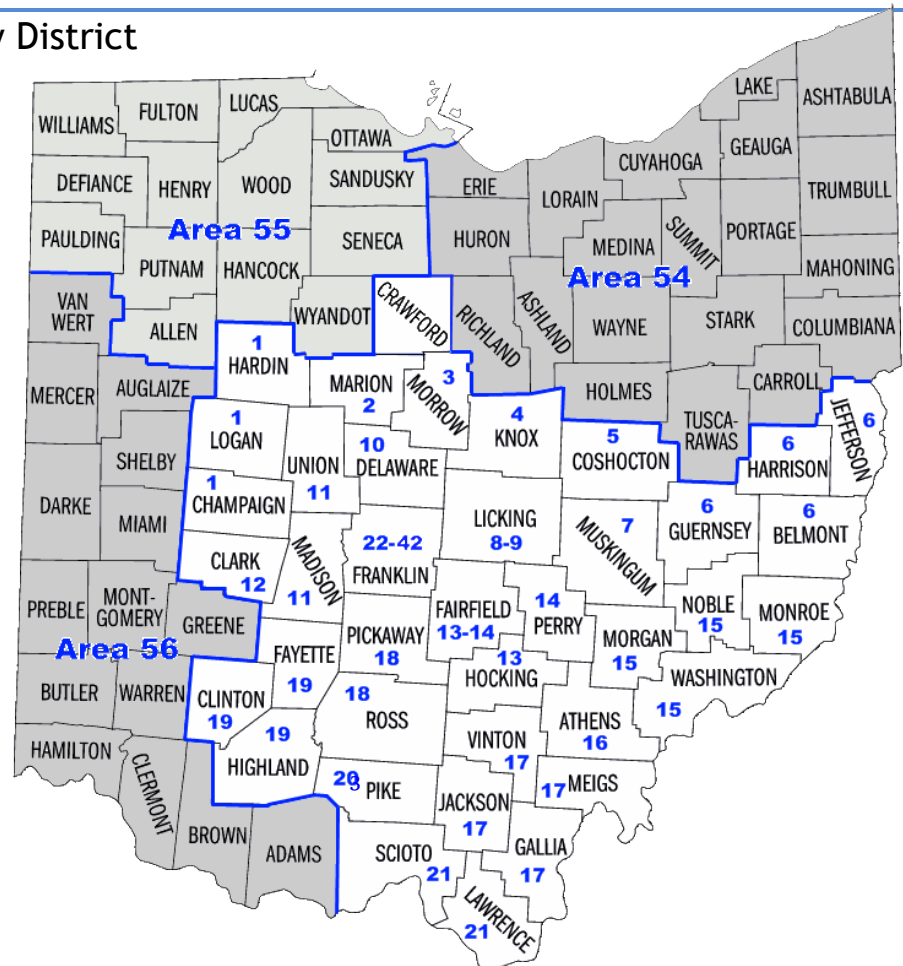
Area _____ is
Northeast Ohio.

Area _____ is
Northwest Ohio
and Southeast
Michigan.

Area _____ is
Southwest Ohio.

My Area has _____
districts.

Franklin County
includes _____
Districts.



The AA Group ... Where it all Begins

Tradition ____: *"Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole."*

Concept ____: *"The final responsibility and the ultimate authority for AA world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship."*

What Trusted Servants (Officers) Do We Need?

It takes member participation to ensure that group service work is done. Most of us agree that AA ought never to be "organized." Actually, the "long form of the tradition states, "least possible organization," which is different than "no organization" or "chaos." Without endangering our commitment to preserve our spiritual and democratic Fellowship, we can "create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."

(Tradition ____)

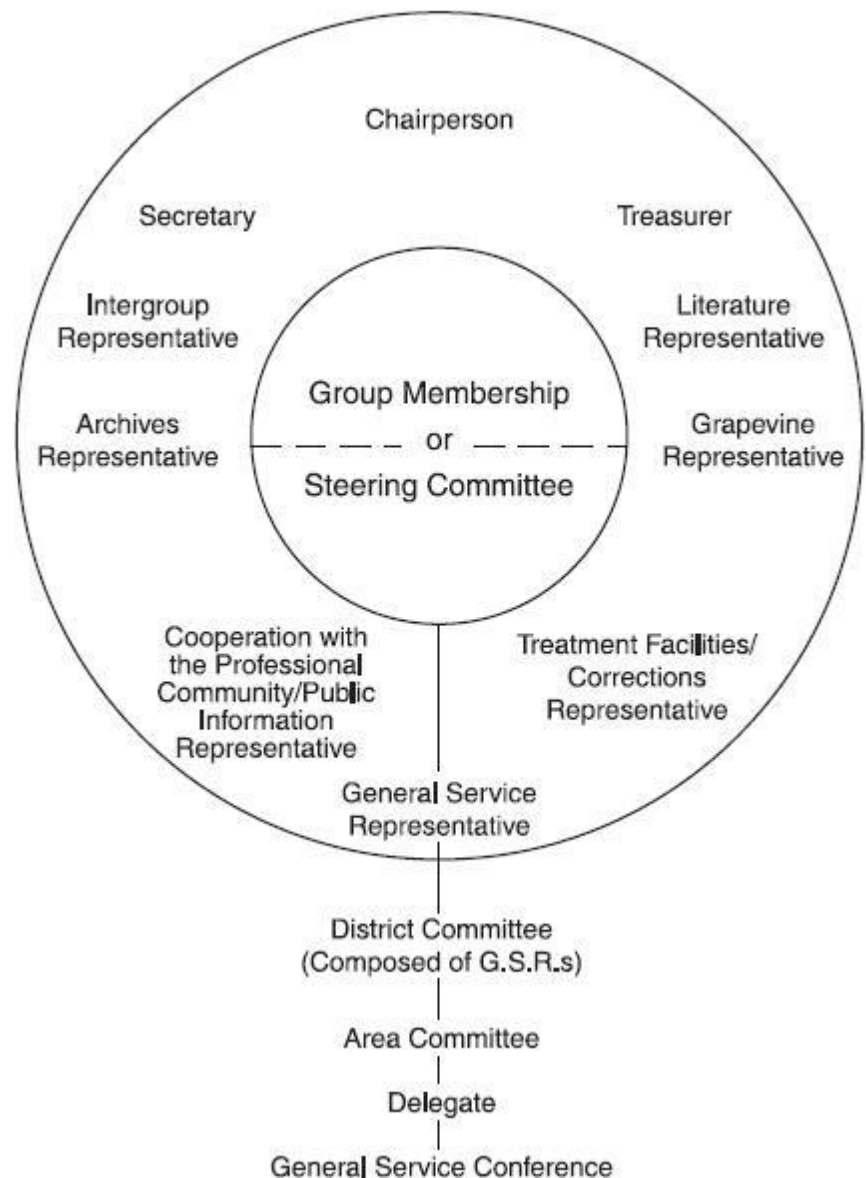
In AA groups, these trusted servants are sometimes called "officers" and usually are chosen by the group for a limited term or service. "Our leaders are trusted servants, they do not govern."

(Tradition ____)

My Home Group Trusted Servants

What additional trusted servants does my home group need?

Service Structure Inside the A.A. Group



Suggestions for GSR at Home Group Meeting

- ☐ Guardian of the Traditions – know where to find answers.
- ☐ Give regular reports to the group regarding the district, the area and GSO.
- ☐ Share information from GSO, such as Box 459, literature price lists, etc.
- ☐ Explain issues to be voted on, and find out how the group wants you to vote on matters of importance to all AA
- ☐ Be the group contact for the area committee and GSO for AA directories, etc.
- ☐ Insure your group is offering all the sobriety tools available, including conference-approved pamphlets and books.
- ☐ Seventh Tradition – work with your group treasurer to develop contribution plans.
- ☐ Be familiar with The AA Service Manual, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, Circles of Love and Service, The AA Home Group pamphlet.
- ☐ Supply the DCM with up to date group information.
- ☐ Write down questions and comments from group members and bring to district meetings and area assembly meetings.

Suggestions for GSR at District Meeting

- Bring up for discussion issues or concerns from your group
- Give group contributions to district treasurer and get a receipt
- Participate in planning district meetings.
- Host district meetings
- Take information back to your group – nobody else will
- Bring a notebook and a planning calendar
- Bring Group Change form
- Know your DCM responsibilities
- Call DCM to put items on agenda for district meetings

Suggestions for GSR at Area Assemblies

- Area assemblies are held the quarterly: Second Sunday in March, First Sunday in June, Second Sunday in September and Second Sunday in December
- Give a GSR report. Blank report forms are available at the GSR Help Desk at assemblies
- Vote on issues affecting A.A.
- Elect area officers
- Bring notebook and calendar so that correct information and dates of future events get back to your group.
- Bring group conscience to assemblies
- Understand right of decision

Giving a Report at the Area Assembly

GSR REPORT for AREA 53 ASSEMBLY

Date: _____

GSR Name: _____

Group Name: _____ District Number _____

Number of Home Group Members: _____ Average Meeting Attendance _____

Meeting Times / Format: _____

Meeting Place: _____ Average Attendance _____

The information below includes some suggestions that you might consider reporting on your group at the Area Assembly. There may be other things you want to share, which can be noted at the bottom of this page. When you give your report at the microphone, you only have to mention things you consider to be interesting or important. **After you give your report, give this copy to the Area Recording Secretary.**

Group Conscience (how often, issues being discussed, decisions made):

Group Contributions (how often, which entities contributed to, percentages):

Service Positions filled within the Group:

Upcoming Group Events:

OTHER INFORMATION:

**PLEASE PRINT NEATLY SO IT IS EASY FOR THE AREA RECORDING SECRETARY TO
PREPARE THE ASSEMBLY MINUTES. THANKS!**

What is an Informed Group Conscience?

Tradition ____: *“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.”*

There are two ways: The **competitive way** permits the person with the loudest voice to push his ideas across, take a vote and come up with a ‘majority’ decision. This is not an informed group conscience. In the **cooperative way**, group members come together in mutual trust to arrive at a group decision, not one individual’s personal triumph.”

The group conscience is the collective conscience of the group membership and thus represents substantial unanimity on an issue before definitive action is taken. This implies that pertinent information has been studied and all views have been heard before the group votes.

This reminds us that Concept One states *“The final responsibility for AA World Services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole fellowship.”* No one person or group should make our decisions for us, no matter how persuasive they may be.

Suggested Steps to Achieving an Informed Group Conscience

GATHER KNOWLEDGE: The GSR or other chairperson of the group informs himself/herself about the topic to be discussed. Then:

- ❖ PRESENT TOPIC/ISSUE: Present the information on the topic to the home group, giving enough background material so all participants are informed on both sides of the topic. The chairperson should be as unbiased as possible on the topic.
- ❖ SHARING: Ask each member to share in turn, being sure to allow all to share once before anyone shares a second time. Remember, this is not a general discussion meeting. It is a method of arriving at unanimity on a specific subject. Remember to carefully listen to any **minority opinions**.
- ❖ CONSENSUS: Continue the process until **substantial group unanimity** is achieved. This is usually considered 2/3 of the participants. More than one sharing session may be needed. Remember, you are striving for a group conscience, not a “popular vote.” Be patient and practice AA principles as the process continues.
- ❖ RECAP: Once a group conscience is achieved, present a summary of their conscience to the group as a whole including minority opinion. Pass the group conscience and any minority opinion on to the appropriate person(s), be it the Delegate, Area Committee, or District.

“Not always understood, group conscience as expressed in Tradition Two is a powerful spiritual concept that makes it possible for people of diverse backgrounds and temperament to rise above personal ambition and unite in a common purpose; to stay sober and extend the hand of AA to the alcoholic who still suffers.”

“Box 459” – Vol. 35, No. 1 February/March 1989

Brief Parliamentary Guide

When recognized by the Area Chairperson:

- ☐ Stand; state your name, your service title and the name of the group you represent.
- ☐ Speak as clearly and as briefly as possible. Your remarks must be pertinent to the business at hand or items you wish to bring to the floor.
- ☐ **The chairperson is not required to recognize a frivolous motion.**

You want to:	You say:	Second Required?	Debatable?	Vote
Adjourn	I move we adjourn	Yes	No	Majority
Table a matter	I move we table this matter	Yes	No	Majority
Have further study of a matter	I move we refer this to a committee	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend a motion	I move this motion be amended to read...	Yes	Yes	Majority
Introduce a matter of business	I move that ...	Yes	Yes	Majority
Take up a matter previously tabled	I move we take from the table ...	Yes	No	Majority
Reconsider an item already disposed of (Maker must have been on the prevailing side on the original motion)	I move we reconsider the vote on our action relative to ...	Yes	Yes, if original motion was debatable	Majority
Delay action indefinitely	I move to postpone indefinitely	Yes	Yes	Majority
Consider an item out of its scheduled order	I move we suspend the rules and consider ...	Yes	No	2/3
End discussion or debate of a matter	I move the previous question ...	Yes	No	2/3
Register a complaint, Object to procedure	Point of privilege, Point of order	No	No	No Vote – Chair Decides
Request information	Point of information	No	No	No Vote

The Minority Opinion: In Alcoholics Anonymous, once a vote has been taken on a motion, the minority parties ALWAYS have the opportunity to speak from the floor. If someone in the majority (the winning side) would like to change their vote after the minority has spoken, it becomes a motion to reconsider which needs to have a second. It is then open to further discussion (if the original motion was open to discussion) before a new vote on the original motion is taken. It is not amendable and requires the same type of vote (majority or 2/3s) as the original motion.

When are My Meetings?

INSTRUCTIONS: Mark the following:

1. *Days your Home Group meets*
2. *When your Home Group has a regular group conscience meeting*
3. *Day of the month for your District meeting*
4. *Day of the month when the Area assembly occurs*
5. *Day of the month for Area standing committee meetings*

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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My Plan of Actions

As you grow in your GSR responsibility, your scope of the Fellowship will broaden, you will make many friends, and your sense of Gratitude will deepen. While all this might be new and confusing, stay with us and give us the opportunity to help you understand. You might be surprised to find, that you will enjoy general service and feel that you are truly a part of the whole. It is an important and different kind of Twelfth-Step work.

Things I want to get my hands on:

GSR Kit from GSO
The AA Service Manual
Area Guidelines from the Area website

People I want to meet as soon as possible:

My Area Delegate
My Area Chairperson
My Area Registrar

Meetings I will attend in the next 3 months:

District meeting
Area assembly
A service committee meeting

Websites I want to visit:

Area 53 website (www.area53aa.org)
COGF website (www.aacentralohio.org)
AA website (www.aa.org)

Questions I want to get answered:**What I will share at my next Home Group meeting:**

Declaration of Unity

This we owe to A.A.'s future; to place our common welfare first; to keep our fellowship united. For on A.A. unity depend our lives, and the lives of those to come.

Responsibility Statement

I am responsible . . . When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that, I am responsible.

