

WARRANTIES Concept XII

This quote started my journey in researching the warranties.

“Our Traditions are set down on paper. But they were written first in our hearts. For each of us knows, instinctively I think, that AA is not ours to do with as we please. We are but caretakers to preserve the spiritual quality of our Fellowship; keep it whole for those who will come after us and have need of what has so generously been given to us.” This writing is from Bill W. Nov. 1950 “AA is not big business” in the Language of the heart. This was the Quote of the day from the Grapevine June 27th.

General Warranties of the Conference: Article 12 of the Conference Charter

The General Warranties, The Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions can only be changed by written consent of three quarters of all AA groups in the world!

The Warranties indicate the qualities of prudence and spirituality which the conference should always possess, the Warranties also express spiritual principles which apply to all other AA entities.

Warranty One: The Conf. shall never become the seat of perilous wealth or power. Perilous means risky or dangerous. Tradition 7 protects us against collecting too much money/wealth and Tradition 2 brings a loving God/higher power into the power aspect of the statement as well as rotation which protects against too much power. In this Warranty we are reminded that there is a human component and we should come from a place of humility, unselfishness and dedication.

Warranty Two: Sufficient operation funds, plus an ample Reserve, should be its prudent financial principle. In about half of the last twenty years AA group contributions have failed to meet our world services. The reserve is constantly renewed by book sales which has met the deficits and save money. As a fellowship here in Area 6 we are looking into our finances with the feasibility report our delegate brought to our attention. Costs going up and contributions flat we are not in great danger now but these things need looking into. For me talking more about adjusting book sales, online literature, faith or lack of where money is concerned and what services we would cut is and would be a good thing. That way the fellowship as a whole would be more comfortable talking about finances.

Warranty Three: “None of the Conference members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others”. In the early days AA headquarters was run on authoritarian and institutional lines. The result was often troubled and misunderstandings, because of that the principle of “Participation” was put into place. Because there are no superiors, no inferiors and no advisers, no group, trustee,

director, individual or staff have authority over one another. This was so important they made it warranty three to protect our conference structure. I'm reminded the ultimate authority is a loving god.

Warranty Four: That all important decisions should be reached by discussion, vote, and wherever possible, by substantial unanimity. This warranty is to safeguard against rash decision making and to consider the minority opinion no matter how small. Sometimes there is an urgency that something needs to be done and in those cases we cannot allow a minority however well intended to block action for the best interests of AA. At this time we have a motion in our Area that this warranty address and my take on this warranty is in the statement "wherever possible substantial unanimity" for major changes.

Warranty Five: That no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy. AA does not find it necessary to punish individual members for violations of laws, principles or beliefs. When we fail to follow sound spiritual principles alcohol cuts us down. No humanly administered system of penalties is needed. As we can't afford resentments and conflicts which could come from the temptation to punish in anger. This also applies to public controversy. Nothing could be more damaging to our unity and to the worldwide goodwill which AA enjoys than public contention. Though the warranty does state that sometimes we can speak up in private. Our own members may use the AA name for their private purposes and even in this area, this warranty suggests we can inform Tradition violators that they are out of order, Privately. Seems to me at GSO and conf. level doing nothing is the way they have suggested we handle violations and public controversy. I think this is where our collective spirituality steps in and where the Traditions are used. The warranty also states GSO is not a police operation. They only offer AA's experiences as a matter of information.

Warranty Six: That though the Conference may act for the service of Alcoholic Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of AA which it serves, the conference itself will always remain democratic in thought and action. AA membership always to be the choice of the individual; each AA group to conduct its and finally that any group of alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an AA group provided that as a group, they have no other purpose or internal affairs as it wishes-it being merely requested to abstain from acts that might injure AA as a whole the affiliation.

We of AA believe that our freedom to serve is truly the freedom by which we live.

Not only did this information come from the service manual but also from the Illustrated Twelve Concepts for World Service pamphlet. I have learned a lot and I'm grateful to be of service.