

"There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all arguments and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance –That principle is contempt prior to investigation."

-HERBERT SPENCER Big Book pg#568

THE A.A. 12 CONCEPTS and THE WARRANTIES OF WORLD SERVICE

(from the A.A. Service Manual, Introduction Pg. 3) "The "Twelve Concepts for World Service" to be described in this manual are an interpretation of A.A.'s world service structure. They reveal the evolution by which it has arrived in its present form, and they detail the experience and reasoning on which our operation stands today... (pg4) The Concepts try to design a structure in which all may labor to good effect, with a minimum of friction. This is accomplished by so relating our servants to their work and to each other that the chances of personal conflict will be minimized.... Well knowing our own propensities for power driving, it is natural and even imperative that our service concepts be based on the system of "checks and balances"... (pg3) For example: the "right of Decision" gives our service leaders a proper discretion and latitude; the "Right of Participation" gives each world servant a voting status commensurate with his (or her) responsibility, and "Participation" further guarantees that each service board or committee will always possess the several elements and talents that will insure effective functioning. The "Right of Appeal" protects and encourages minority opinion; and the "Right of Petition" makes certain that grievances can be heard, and properly acted upon."

If the 12 Concepts can keep together multiple groups of dysfunctional people, who would normally not mix, from killing one another and self-destructing the whole system then...

Why can't the Concepts help keep a couple or family group together, showing them "How can they best function?"

The Twelve Concepts for the family structure (© David J. Fredrickson) - Modified from the Twelve Concepts found in the A.A. Service

Manual 1990-91 Edition and added to with my own relationship/family experiences. The reference to 1988 in Concept two is the year my wife and I were married, hence, it is the date our family was formed. If you choose to use these Concepts for your family structure, insert the date of your union into Concept two....

- 1. The final responsibility and ultimate authority for our family should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole family.**
- 2. When, in 1988, this family was formed, they thereby delegated complete authority for the active maintenance of the family to all of its "Trusted Servants" – excepting for any change in the Twelve Traditions or to the family structure due to a change in the number its members – the family members make up the actual voice and effective conscience for the whole family.**
- 3. As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the family members and the "Trusted Servants" and thus insuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of the family with a traditional "Right of Decision."**
- 4. Throughout the family structure we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional "Right of Participation", taking care that each classification or group of "Trusted Servants" shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.**
- 5. Throughout the family structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.**
- 6. On behalf of the family, the "Trusted Servants" have the principal responsibility for the maintenance of the family, and the collective voice of all the family members traditionally has the final decision respecting large matters of general policy and finance. But the family also recognizes that the chief initiative and the active responsibility in most of these matters should be exercised primarily by the "Parental Trustees" when they act among themselves as the "Parental Service Board" for the family.**
- 7. The family recognizes that the vows exchanged by the "Parental Trustees" created a legal entity and thereby fully empowered the "Parental Service Board" to manage and conduct all of the family affairs. It is further understood that the Concepts are Spiritual, not legal instruments, and that the family itself is a spiritual body: that it relies instead upon God, as He may express Himself in the group conscience, the principal vows to Love, Honor and Cherish each other, the force of tradition, self- sacrifice, selflessness, cooperation and as a last resort, the power of the parental purse for its final effectiveness.**
- 8. The "Parental Trustees" which make up the "Parental Service Board" act in two primary capacities: (a) With respect to the larger matters of over-all policy and finance, they are the principal planners and administrators. They and their primary committees directly manage these affairs. (b) But with respect to the constantly active service committees, the**

relation of the “Parental Service Board” is mainly that of custodial oversight which they exercise through their ability to elect all directors of the family service committees.

9. Good service leaders, together with sound methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary family leadership must necessarily be assumed by the “Parental Trustees” who make up the “Parental Service Board”.
10. Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority – the scope of such authority to be always well defined whether by tradition, by resolution, or by specific job description.
11. While the “Parental Trustees” hold final responsibility for the family administration, they should always have the assistance of the best possible standing committees, staffs and consultants. Therefore, the composition of these underlying committees, the personal qualifications of their members, the manner of their introduction into service, the systems of their rotation, the way in which they are related to each other, their special rights and duties, together with a proper basis for the financial compensation of these special workers, will always be matters for serious care and concern.
12. General Warranties of the family: In all its proceedings, the family shall observe the spirit of the AA Tradition, taking great care that the “Trusted Servants” and committees never become the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that none of the family members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no family action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the “Trusted Servants” may act for the service of the family, they shall never perform acts of government; and that like the family itself which they serve, the “Trusted Servants” will always remain democratic in thought and action.