

1/11/2020 General Services Call

Meeting opened with Serenity Prayer.

Attending:

Rockerzee

Aarkey

Geoff (Portland)

Sherrie

Nikki (Atlanta)

Shayla (New York City)

Mags

Clay (Los Angeles)

- Reading of the minutes from 2/16/2019 General Services Call by Mags.

Motion to accept from Aarkey. 2nd from Sherrie.

Minutes from 2/16/2019 accepted unanimously.

After reading of the minutes: Geoff from Portland group ask for clarification of the RitL Prudent Reserve. Is it a floor of funds we use to “keep the lights on” or is it a ceiling of funds we don’t go over in order to not have a great deal of excess money? And Shayla of the NYC group asked, “When we do go over the Prudent Reserve where does that money go?” It was clarified that it is a floor of funds to cover the bills each year for RitL General Services. Up until current time we have not had an excess of funds over the prudent reserve to disseminate and that we will be looking to how that money will be spent as a plan of action when we reach that point. Currently we still have financial action items in the hopper that had to be tabled in the past due to lack of funds such as: RitL specific chips, more patches, etc.

- Treasurer’s Report given by Zee.

Beginning 2019 balance: \$736.41

Incoming Donations for 2019: \$378.30.

Outgoing Expenses for 2019: \$126.99.

Beginning 2020 balance: \$987.72.

Motion to accept from Sherrie. 2nd from Aarkey.

Treasurer’s Report accepted unanimously.

Old Business

- We are now a 501c3 non-profit officially. We are working to get documentation that we need from the 501c3 to open our bank account and we are researching the best options for a bank for RitL. Currently we are looking at having Zee the RitL General Services Treasurer, Mags the General Services Chair and Nikki one of our Steering Committee members to be the signers on the bank account once opened.
- Concept document for the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) is in process and should hopefully have it completed and up on the website by the April 2020 Steering Committee meeting. Frequently asked questions can include but not limited to:
 - I need a sponsor. I am afraid my non-kink sponsor will judge me. How do I go about finding a sponsor in RitL?
 - How should I dress when coming to a RitL meeting? Is fetish wear allowed?
 - How do we deal with people who are combative in meetings or disruptive?
 - How do I maintain my anonymity in online interactions in places such as Fetlife?
 - How do members interact with RitL on FL to get information but still retain anonymity? Is there a way for them to do this?
 - Can I date other people in my RitL meeting?

Mags asked the different group representatives to please email questions and solutions that the groups have come up with for our FAQ document to the Steering Committee email at: GS@ritl.org so that we can add that to our listing. Clay clarified that Aarkey is the point person for the FAQ document and was told that is correct.

Regarding anonymity Shayla brought up the idea of possibly of an opt-in newsletter that would go out from RitL General Services once or twice a year with information that would be beneficial to members. Such as links to Discord for the weekly online meetings, a link to our website, links to the FB groups, etc.

There was a recommendation to reference the guidelines put out by AAWS in our search of answers regarding anonymity online. https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/mg-18_internet.pdf

- The concept document for the writing guidelines for the 12 and 12 is also still in process. We have had some bumps in the road with folks needing more clarification on what/how to write them. Mags read out the current guidelines description that we have:

"We suggest aiming to be between 1,000 and 2,000 words. We encourage striving for a methodology similar to what is used in the AA 12 & 12 in respective fellowships. The first part of the entry being used to explain the concept of the step or tradition and the later portion of the writing to share an example or two of how it manifests in recovery life. When you can, please remember to focus on some of the things we have in RitL that are unique such as we do not use "God" in the steps but use "Higher Power" instead. Also, a reminder that we do not use He/She/Him/Her to refer to Higher Power. When applicable if you can reference how RitL is unique with regards to the given step or tradition that emphasizing that is appreciated."

Aarkey suggested to add a piece regarding that we also do not use gender pronouns when referencing our members or the fellowship, as a whole, and in our literature etc.

Motion brought by Aarkey to accept the Guidelines as written but with the addendum regarding not using gender pronouns. Floor open for discussion.

Geoff brought up the question about what is unique to RitL and what is just recovery in general. Also, Geoff referenced referring people to the long forms of the step or tradition that they are writing on in order to give them a deeper look into that particular step or tradition. How can we get submissions that speak to the unique qualities of RitL and not just like we are reinventing the wheel with our 12 & 12? He brought up for example how the long form of the 3rd Tradition in AA speaks to non-conformity and how that might be a great way to talk about membership in RitL. How do we kinky weirdos use the traditions?

Clay wanted to clarify the status of some of the business with an eye to be able to help out and volunteer. He asked the questions:

General Services happens yearly and there are other meetings that happen through the year? Yes, GS happens once a year and Steering Committee meets quarterly throughout the year handling administrative tasks.

Is the Google Drive and the compilation of documents we are working on accessible to all to be viewed or only certain people? The Google drive is currently only accessible to Steering Committee for administrative tasks currently. If we need to share a particular document, we can do that going forward on the RitL.org website.

Zee spoke about looking at why RitL and our meetings are important to us. She spoke about how our "singleness of purpose" in RitL is focused on our recovery itself and not the substances or behaviors we used while in active addiction.

Mags brought up that it might be a worthwhile exercise to write in general about what makes RitL unique in our eyes.

Geoff pointed out that we need to be aware of the steps of the process as we work on this project of developing the literature and keep them in their own arenas. Such as making sure we aren't trying to lump in how the book is going to go together when we are still trying to just get submissions etc. Also, it might behoove us to focus on things in such a way for example: focusing on getting submissions this year, compiling the submissions the following year and then editing and publishing the next. So, we are not trying to "eat the whole elephant at once".

Geoff asked about the Personal Stories section in RitL site regarding asking for submissions of stories and was that going to be a part of the 12 & 12? He suggested that we may be able to use those story submissions to help with the writing on the 12 & 12 as was done in AA. It was realized that requests for stories had been there from before General Services was created. Aarkey advised in all that time we have had only one story submitted back in 2013.

Clay suggested that we add something regarding non-conformity into the writing guidelines.

Clay made a motion that we go forward approving with the addendums in general and that we will work out the specific wording via email chain so that we need not wait for next year's General Services to keep moving forward and give the Steering Committee what it needs to keep moving forward in the background regarding submissions. Aarkey seconded the motion. The motion was accepted unanimously.

Mags will add in the portion for non-conformity and not referring to gender in the guidelines and will then email out to all for review. Potentially something along the lines of: "We also do not use gender pronouns when referencing our fellowship in our literature etc. " and "As a guideline consider looking at the long form of the traditions in your respective fellowships for a richer discussion of some of the topics. For example, the 3rd tradition deals with conformity, the 7th tradition deals with....etc." And how these things apply to kinksters in a way that may be different from our "vanilla" brethren in other fellowships. Putting the RitL lenses on their study materials in their respective fellowships and how that might make it shine a different light on the step or tradition.

Once the guidelines are worked out, we will post them on the website and also post in our Fetlife groups as well.

New Business

- Facebook Groups – There are two Facebook groups that the Steering Committee has become aware of are not run by RitL General Services but appear to be. The Steering Committee is looking into who they are being run by and speaking with them regarding making it clear that they are not run by RitL General Services.

Zee asked if these groups be just like any meeting and be autonomous?

Aarkey advised that yes that could be so but that the groups on Facebook are not presented in a way that they are autonomous.

Clay wanted to be clear that he is against using Facebook for General Services. Mags advised that we would not be doing any RitL business on Facebook. That what we are only investigating potential use of Facebook for informational purposes only; much like on Fetlife.

Geoff brought up as an example that AA does have a public Facebook group

[<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2204624657/>], but it is clearly stated on that group that:

"{{ PLEASE READ BEFORE POSTING }}"

This is not an official AA group. This is a Facebook group discussing AA, Alcoholism, and Recovery. The group is open for anyone to join, and anyone can see that you are a member. If you are posting things here that could get you fired or divorced, it's on you; you have been informed. Alcoholism is a sickness, an illness, a malady. There is no known cure, but it can be arrested – it can be stopped in its tracks. This is a place for people to talk realistically & honestly about AA's solution, as well as their own experience with implementing AA in their daily life."

Geoff suggested that we have a very clear disclaimer and that groups using the RitL name would use.

Clay brought up the idea that we have a disclaimer on the RitL site that says something along the lines of: "This is the age of the internet and people have the ability to make groups, pages etc. and the fact that someone is using the RitL name in a group etc. does not necessarily imply endorsement."

Geoff added in the idea of "This website is the only place where you will find RitL sanctioned information."

Geoff will write up a disclaimer statement for RitL to bring to the Steering Committee for them to

consider and put on the RitL website. He will email it to: gs@ritl.org once he has completed it and the Steering Committee will review it and move forward from there.

- Sherrie thanked everyone in attendance for their input and clarity.
- Zee made a motion to adjourn.
Seconded by Clay.
Motion was carried unanimously to close the 2020 General Services call.
- Closed meeting with the "We" version of the Serenity Prayer.

Task List

Aarkey: Complete the concept document for the FAQ section of the website for committee review via email. Questions can include but are not limited to:

- I need a sponsor. I am afraid my non-kink sponsor will judge me. How do I go about finding a sponsor in RitL?
- How should I dress when coming to a RitL meeting? Is fetish wear allowed?
- How do we deal with people who are combative in meetings or disruptive?
- How do I maintain my anonymity in online interactions in places such as Fetlife?
- How do members interact with RitL on FL to get information but still retain anonymity? Is there a way for them to do this?
- Can I date other people in my RitL meeting?

Geoff: Write up a disclaimer statement for RitL to bring to the Steering Committee for them to consider and put on the RitL website. He will email it to: gs@ritl.org and the Steering Committee will review it and move forward from there.

Mags: Add in the portion for non-conformity and not referring to gender in the guidelines and will then email out to all for review. "As a guideline consider looking at the long form of the traditions in your respective fellowships for a richer discussion of some of the topics. For example, the 3rd tradition deals with conformity, the 7th tradition deals with....etc." And how these things apply to kinksters in a way that may be different from our "vanilla" brethren in other fellowships. Putting the RitL lenses on their study materials in their respective fellowships and how that might make it shine a different light on the step or tradition. ["suffering and love are too disciplinarian" (Ask Sherrie about this and which tradition it is.)] You may like to consider.... or For example.....

Zee: Update meeting map to 2020 version on the newcomer brochure