

Archives Committee Attachment 2

General Principles for Oral History Trifold

Panel 1

General Principles for Oral History¹

The mission of this oral history is to collect and maintain detailed historical GreySheeters Anonymous information in order to satisfy intellectual curiosity and to provide a basis for greater understanding of the origins and history of GSA practices.

A qualification is not technically an oral history, but an oral history may contain a qualification.

Permit sufficient time for an in-depth interview.

All rights of ownership and use of the interview must be granted to GSA and GSA Archives by the interviewee through a signed release available on downloaded from greysheet.org.

The interviewee will also provide their verbal agreement to the form of the release at the beginning of the recording.

The interviewee may choose to not answer a question and to speak in his or her own style.

Though the interviewer may have knowledge of the events, in order to maintain intellectual honesty, they do not ask leading questions so as to fulfill the interviewer's perspective of events.

According to Tradition 11: "We maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and film." The GSA Archives is web based so just first names and last initials are appropriate.

Oral history interviews will be accessible to future researchers and GreySheeters.

Possible Topics: Creating the GreySheet Food Plan, experience with the early GreySheet food plan, separating from other food programs, World Conferences, developing literature and Intergroup service.

Anyone with at least 90 days of GreySheet abstinence may be an interviewer, but the interviewee may be an outsider; for example, the GreySheet was developed in 1972, and these designers may have insight - be they GreySheet abstinent or not. Also, the Board of Trustees may have non-GreySheet members.

¹ Principles and Best Practices. *Oral History Association* oralhistory.org, Oct. 2009. 27 July 2016.

To become an interviewer or to be interviewed contact the Archives Committee by emailing webservant@greysheet.org with archives as the subject. State proposed interviewees, the topic and possible questions. You may request multiple interviews.

Panel 2

Best Practices of Oral History

Pre-Interview

Don't underestimate the importance of this step.

1. Familiarize oneself with the process of interviewing an oral history. Join an Oral History
2. Association.
3. Arrange a pre-interview session. The interviewee may create the questions and focus.
4. Decide on a signal from the interviewee that the interview is moving in a new direction and now is a good time to ask follow-up or clarifying questions.
5. Determine a timeline for the interview – one session or several.
6. Prepare an outline of questions and prompts and give the interviewee a copy.
7. Before the interview, practice with the equipment.
8. The interviewee signs the release form and verbally agrees at the beginning of the recording.
9. Download a copy of the release from: Greysheet.org

The Interview

10. Choose a quiet location with minimal distractions. Stay away from windows, air conditioners and fans. Turn phones off.
11. The interviewer introduces each session with his or her first name and the interviewee's first name. State the date, location and topic of the recording. If the interviewee prefers to remain anonymous, introduce him or her as a GreySheetter, and refer to him or her as Grey. Assigning Grey, as a name, will help the conversation flow naturally, and avoid awkward silences.
12. Remember the interview is for posterity. Even though both the interviewee and the interviewer may be familiar with the topic, ask follow-up and clarifying questions with the future GreySheetter in mind.
13. Unlike most oral history projects, these interviews have a tighter focus, and the interviewer may be aware of the flow of the information that little questioning or prompting is needed.
14. The interviewer may play a much smaller role. The interviewee has the right to refuse to answer a question.

Post Interview

15. Contact GSA Archives in an email to webservant@greysheet.org and write Archives in the subject for direction to unload the interview and accompanying information.
16. Remember to place principles before personalities.

Panel 3**Equipment**

Use a smartphone and download an app that uses WAV (Waveform Audio File Format). This is uncompressed audio in the LPCM (linear pulse code modulation) format and is appropriate for archiving.

Three Possible Avenues for Questioning**The Early Days of the GreySheet or GreySheeters Anonymous**

1. How did you learn about the GreySheet?
2. Did you experience the GreySheet in the rooms of another program? If so, describe your experience in that program.
3. Were you aware of the GreySheet in the 1970s? Please explain.
4. How did you work the GreySheet in its early days?
5. What brought you to GreySheeters Anonymous?
6. Where you involved in an early group in GSA? Explain.
7. What were the difficulties in an early group of GSA?
8. What format was used? What literature was used?
9. Were there conflicts with other programs re: use of the GreySheet?
10. Are you aware of individuals or groups that don't speak English? How did they adjust? What literature did they use?
11. Are you in an outpost (there are too few GreySheeters to form a meeting)? How do you keep the message alive?
12. Have you participated in an outreach effort? If so, explain.
13. Have the GreySheet and GSA changed through the years? Explain.

Panel 4**Service**

14. What does sponsorship mean to you?
15. How did you sponsor guide you?

16. Do give the same guidance as a sponsor, if not explain?
17. How did you give service at local meetings?
18. How did you participate in Intergroup?
19. Did you serve on committees in Intergroup? Explain.
20. Have you attended the World Service Conference? Which ones? What was the most difficult part? What was rewarding? Could you have been better prepared? How?
21. What conflicts arose at the World Service Conference? If they were, how were they resolved?
22. What World Service Conference committees did you serve on? Explain your role and experience.
23. Have you had to face fear or anger when giving service? How did you manage
24. In your opinion, what is the most difficult part of giving service? What are the most common conflicts? Did you experience resentment? Explain. Did you ever feel there was a target on your back? Explain.
25. In your opinion, why do so many not give service?
26. Have you attended retreats? If so which ones? Have you given service at retreats? Explain.

Panel 5

The questions can be sent in advance as fuel for thought. Sometimes it's best just to let the interviewee talk with just a few clarifying questions when appropriate.

ORAL HISTORY

This guide is for the GreySheet interviewer who is recording the growth and development of the GreySheeters Anonymous program.

A GreySheeters Anonymous (GSA) Oral History is a collection of individual GreySheeter's journeys in service. It is a story told documenting recollections of past service work to create a permanent record for posterity. These stories will be available on www.greysheet.org for all GreySheeters to hear and to appreciate our journey as an organization.

www.greysheet.org
or write
GSA World Services, Inc.
Cherokee Station
PO Box 20098
New York, NY 10021-0061

