

Summer 2016

KENTUCKIANA NEWS

The Voice of Area 26

Summer Fun in the Sun; What's it Mean to You?

Old Ideas to New Ones!



In This Issue

On Point:

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The goal of Kentuckiana News is to inspire recovering alcoholics through articles on AA topics that share the experience, strength and hope of AA members.

The topic for our Fall Issue is: My Group... My Responsibility. Traditions 10, 11, 12.

Please submit your articles for the Fall Issue to Kentuckiana@area26.net by August 19th.

On Topic: **“Can I still have fun”?**

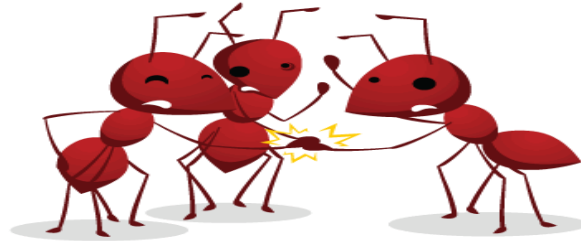
I thought my life and anything fun would be over if I stopped drinking and got sober. It was awkward to say the least when experiencing all the “firsts” in recovery, but I made it through each event and even the so called little things without the drink by my side and felt quite a feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction at being able to be a part of it all and still have a great time sober. I'll never forget going to an AA prom with a friend and seeing everyone dancing, eating, talking, and having a great time all dressed up in their Prom attire while not a drop of alcohol was involved! A little over 3 years into this new way of life; I'm amazed at how my idea of a good time has changed and for the better.

Summer time as well as any other time has most always meant for me being well prepared with booze and the like. The neat part is that most folks in AA still want to have fun and don't need much of a reason to party and/ or gather together for festivities or a good time.

I am delighted to let you know that swimming, shopping, hiking, camping, barbecues, picnics, singing karaoke and even more can be done very nicely without alcohol in our systems. I can thoroughly enjoy myself and see my fellows do the same all summer long and actually remember what happens and where I was as a sober person practicing the AA way of life still while having fun in the sun.

> Lila D

TRADITIONS 7, 8, and 9



TRADITION 7

When the traditions were written, it was to help AA survive their amazing growth. Communication, in the early years was difficult, at best; which led the groups to try all kinds of different things, which ultimately failed, yet served as valuable lessons for all.

In reading about Tradition Seven in the Twelve-n-Twelve I am struck by several lines. The very first line in Tradition 7 still holds true for today, “Self-supporting alcoholics?” Bill, in a stroke of genius, hit the nail right on the head! This tradition teaches us to stand on our own ‘financial’ feet. Not just as an individual but as a group too. Further on in the reading is another significant line, “...they had a terrific aversion to dropping money into a meeting-place hat for group

purposes.” Also a truth that holds weight in today’s AA’s. Many of us still only put \$1.00 in the basket. In today’s economy, that is not being self-supporting. This is not 1936. Whereas \$1.00 was a great deal of money in 1936, today it’s equivalent to putting a nickel or a penny in the basket.

As we read the Seventh Tradition, we see over and over that AA stayed poor. At first, because of the Depression, almost everyone was poor. Yet, those who could gave their dollar. As others recovered and regained their ability to contribute, not only to their families and communities, but to AA as well, they too gave their \$1.00.

Through AA’s growing pains in the beginning we learned that too

much money is as detrimental to our program as is too little. Because of the trials of too much money, the collective decided none was better than any. As Tradition Seven states “...we are an all or nothing people”. However, we must remember, in recovery we are learning and striving to be dependable, reliable, and responsible. The Seventh Tradition also states “...we had to recognize the fact that AA has to function”. AA has expenses, from those required by the groups, the district, the area, all the way to New York which supports the world.

For AA to stand on its own financial feet, a dollar in the basket will not do it anymore. Do we want to be the generation that sees AA die because we were not responsible

enough to more than a dollar in the basket? Where would all of us be if AA weren't here? There is a statement that is read and hung on many meeting rooms across the world ***“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”.***

Take a moment to remember what it was like before the hand of AA reached you. Take another moment to think of the other suffering alcoholics who AA hasn't reached yet. Let's continue to being the hand of AA.

Susie G.
Thump This Big Book
Louisville, KY



TRADITION 8

It is common knowledge that our 12th step work is to be done for free. Catch phrases like “Give it away to keep it” and “Give away what has been so freely given to us” have engrained this idea in us, even when we don't know the exact source. These things we “give away” are the things that we were given by a sponsor or spiritual guide; these are the essentials of recovery, the principles and action behind the

12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. These are the things that are transmitted when “one drunk sits across from another drunk.”

So, when the 8th Tradition says that “AA is to remain forever non-professional”, this is what it means. We, as a society, are never to turn the spiritual connection between two alcoholics into a money-making venture. To do so compromise our singleness of purpose, to help the alcoholic who still suffers. The altruistic nature of AA crumbles when our interests in sobriety become motivated by profit.

When our service centers, like Intergroup and Central Offices, hire special workers, they are hiring office managers, clerical workers, janitors, phone attendant, and the like. These people do the work that is necessary to keep the business side of AA running. They are not professional 12th steppers.

You might ask yourself, “Why should we pay people to do the jobs other AA members may do for free? After all, aren’t we in a perpetual budget crisis?” Maybe, but let’s look at some facts.

Some of these jobs require full-time dedication to complete. It may not be fair to ask volunteers to assume that burden. And remember, we get what we pay for, and when we pay nothing for the work, it may not be up to the standards necessary to carry AA into the future. Volunteers do not have the same motivation to show up for and complete tasks as those who are bound by contract and wages. A good rule to follow is that if the position would be a paid position anywhere else in a business setting, then it should be a paid position within Alcoholics Anonymous. After all, the saying does not go “When one AA sits across from another AA and hands him a paperclip.”

Alice D. DCM District 28



TRADITION 9

A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

When I first arrived in AA in 1983, I was a vice president at a local company. When some old timers in my Home Group ganged up on me and elected me GSR, I assumed that position held some authority. I quickly learned it did not, but I enjoyed the service work and eagerly accepted the position of Intergroup Chair a few years later. That is when I really learned how little authority positions in AA carry. As with the positions I held outside of AA, I thought that the further up the ladder you went the more authority you had. Not in AA! You go down the ladder, not up.

I was elected just as planning for the Intergroup’s annual Christmas party was underway and I had some great ideas on how to change it for the better. At the first meeting I chaired, I shared my ideas in the certain knowledge that the group would be happy to have my input. After I finished, a nice older woman who had been in the group for some time politely explained; “That’s not the way we do it.” And that wasn’t the way we did it! I did learn what the duties of the Chair were, and they didn’t include making recommendations.

Over the years I have had friends and relatives ask, “Who is in charge of AA?” When I explain that basically everyone is, it baffles those with no experience in our unique organization. I usually paraphrase what it says in the 12 and 12: that we have no membership

rules -- you are a member if you say you are; there is no structure or authority (except, of course, "a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience") that allows for the discipline of members; And there are no dues or fees. I have had irate members come to me and tell me they were going to call GSO over some issue that upset them, certain that GSO would punish the group accordingly. I give them the phone number knowing they will get a lesson in how the traditions work. GSO also has no power to do anything but make recommendations to a group.

It truly is a wonder that AA exists in the form it does and I marvel at how people from every walk of life can get together and accomplish all we do with a minimum of rancor and dissension. I have learned how to deal with difficult situations in my personal life with the lessons that Tradition Nine has taught me. It starts when we assume we are all on the same level of the organization chart and that everyone has a voice.

Paul G., DCM District 33

A MESSAGE FROM THE NEWSLETTER CHAIR

Summer vacation plans, kids at basketball camp, kids at any camp. Sometimes it's a stressful time the good times as well as the bad. we didn't get sober because one day we woke up and we were just having a bad day this is a life-saving program for the chosen who really wanted it not the ones that need it. When I first got sober at 18 years old I would ask the old-timers; how do you breathe sober? How do you dance and have fun. Am I going to have to go to meetings for the rest of my life? I want to have fun. I'm going to be that boring person? That did not seem very appealing. My friends told me that sometimes its 15 minutes at a time, sometimes a day at a time.

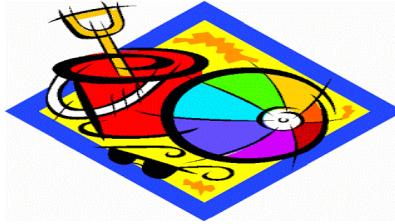
We get involved with our home groups, our districts our areas and we come until we want to and it becomes our happy joyous and free sober life. So when I get overwhelmed with life with all the hustle bustle and high class problems at my Home group. I have to think back to those early years when the only thing that I wanted to do was to be able to breath and not feel the way I was feeling anymore.

One of the things I do with the girls I sponsor is a text thread that is continuous. Meaning, all of our numbers are put into a text and we communicate day to day with each other. When we have a question, we are sick, our kids are driving us crazy or doing something cute we can share that and know that there are people that care about our day to day lives.

Angie S.

Take care of each other and when the still suffering alcoholics reach out...Grab them!

MEET THE OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS



Alternate Delegate

Hello everyone, my name is Roger and I am a grateful alcoholic. I usually introduce myself that way. I am grateful to be a member of Alcoholics Anonymous and I try to express that gratitude every day. My sponsor taught me that gratitude is an action word and is an expression of thankfulness. I don't know if the dictionary supports that but it has worked for me so far so I am going to stick with it. My sobriety date is August 15, 1983. I got sober in Cincinnati, Ohio and have had the wonderful experience of Alcoholics Anonymous around the world since I joined the Army a few years later. The military, like A.A. believes in the spirit of rotation so I have had many home groups. My home group today is Traditions Group in Elizabethtown. My service experience has been rich in diversity including young people conference committees, general service in multiple countries, intergroup, and of course it all started in my home group setting up, making coffee, greeting people, and cleaning ash trays. I am extremely grateful to serve as your Alternate Delegate. I love to A.A. members from everywhere and hear your story so I look forward to meeting you all as we trudge the road of happy destiny together.

Yours in Service, Roger W.



Treatment

My sobriety date is September 14 2004. My home group is the TGIF group that meets at Broadway Christian church Friday night at 8pm. My first service position was IGR for my home group after a term of that I was elected as GSR after 2 years I took the position of treatment chair for district 28, when time to roll out of that position I was elected alt. DCM spending about 5 or 6 months there my higher power saw fit to make me DCM for district 28. I had always attended the treatment meetings at the area meetings because that's where my heart is, I am currently serving this fellowship as treatment chair for area26. I have also served on the host committee for the state convention in Lexington, it is my honor and privilege to serve this fellowship in whatever capacity my higher power sees fit. if I can be of service to you or your group please contact me at Treatment@area26.net

Yours in service, James M.



Website My name is Joseph and my experience of getting into service started with my sponsor. Before I had even completed working all the 12 steps, my sponsor was already suggesting to me that I should start getting involved in service. At the time, I was getting involved in my home group by helping stack chairs and put them away, but never had I considered being in any service beyond that.

As I continued to work the steps and attend meetings, an opportunity presented its self to me to be of service. The opportunity came in the form of an announcement at my home group. The announcement made during the meeting, was that our home group was in need of someone to attend the area meeting in Ashland, KY because our current serving GSR was unable to.

At my home group's next group conscience meeting, they mentioned that our current serving GSR was able to continue serving as GSR. They asked if anyone was interested in being GSR. I mentioned that Ashland, KY is close to where my folks live, so I could visit them and attend the area meeting while I'm back home visiting my parents. The chair of the group conscience then said "All in favor of Joseph being our new GSR?" Followed by members of my home group saying "I". Before I knew it, I had just be elected GSR of my home group.

My service at the district level for District 15 went the same way. At my first district meeting, it was announced that they would like to have a website and asked if anyone had any

experience building websites. I mentioned that for a living, I was a web developer. Shortly after I said that, the DCM said "All in favor of Joseph being our PI chair?". Which was quickly followed by everyone present saying "I".

During my time as PI chair for the district, I spoke at two non AA meetings and built District 15's website. During that time, I also attended almost all the area meetings and followed my DCM around.

During those years, our district didn't have anyone step up and take the alternate DCM position for District 15. This caused some concern for our DCM, who wanted to make sure our district had a DCM when it came time for him to roll out.

While I was attending a funeral back home with my family, it came to me that day that I needed to offer myself to be of service to my current serving DCM. So I called him up that day and offered him my standard service offering. "Well, if you can't find anyone else to take the position, I'll stand for DCM."

Sure enough when elections came around, everyone was completely silent when the position of DCM was offered, except for one. A young gentlemen at the meeting said "Can I nominate someone?" The DCM replied "Sure!" The young gentlemen then proceed to say "I nominate Joseph", and well you know the rest. That comment was shortly followed by everyone saying "I".

Today I currently serve as the Website Committee Chair for Area 26. I wasn't sure if I would be nominated, and was hesitant to take the position due to another member on the committee whom I felt was a better

candidate. Unfortunately, due to personal commitments the other member of the committee was unable to serve.

Today I am very thankful to get to serve as Area 26's website chair. I'm enjoying it way more than I ever thought I would have, and that seems to be the theme of my experience in service. I've grown to love my time in service today so much, that I am forever thankful for the day my home group elected me GSR and I said "Yes" to service.

All of this wouldn't have been possible, if it weren't for my sponsor, my service sponsor, and God. I am forever thankful for finding a power greater than myself, who helps me say yes when my selfish pride and ego is saying no.

Grateful to be of service,
Joseph G.
Area 26 Website Chair



Secretary

Hi, my name is Jennifer S., alcoholic and currently serving you as your Area 26 Secretary. My sobriety date is August 27th, 2005 and my Home Group is the St. Matthew's Group of Alcoholics Anonymous. We meet each Tuesday at 8PM (C, D), Friday at 6:30PM (NC, O) and Friday at 8PM (O, S). Our Home Group Business Meetings occur on the last Tuesday of each month.

My role in Service started at my Home Group when I volunteered to be the "cake lady". This meant that on the last Friday of every month I was to get a cake to help celebrate the Home Group Member's Birthdays. There were explicit written directions on where to purchase the cake, how big, the type of frosting, etc. This taught me so much! It basically taught me how to get out of my self and how to follow simple directions. Today, if I say I am going to do something, I do it to the best of my ability and on time.

I became the Alternate GSR for my Home Group at about a year of sobriety. My Dad was currently the Alternate Chairperson for Area 26. At about three months of sobriety I was approximately \$30,000 in debt and basically thought my life had come to an end so when asked by my Dad if I would like to do some traveling in Kentucky and attend an Area 26 Meeting and I said "yes". I hopped in his back pocket and when I didn't understand something, I asked. After about a year, the GSR of my Home Group resigned and I became the GSR.

Lynda R. was serving as the DCM for District 24 when I rotated into GSR. I'll never forget her coming up to me at an Area Meeting and inviting me to sit at the District 24 table. She said I believe your Home Group is in District 24 and District 24 sits over there. She pulled me out of my Dad's back pocket that weekend and I left that Area Meeting as the Secretary for District 24.

I was to go on and become the Alternate DCM for District 24 and eventually the DCM. While serving in these General Service positions I was attending the Literature Committee Meeting at every Area 26 Meeting/Assembly. It was here that I found the passion for our literature and

for maintaining the integrity of our A.A. message to help the still suffering alcoholic.

My reasoning for my involvement in General Service changed during that time. You see, I was that still suffering alcoholic at the 53rd General Service Conference. My Dad was serving as Delegate at that time and he invited me to go to New York a week prior to the GSC starting to vacation. I made it without drinking up until the night before I was supposed to leave. There was a balcony overlooking the bar at the Crown Plaza Hotel in NYC. I was at the bar and Dad was on the balcony. After I sobered up, Dad later told me this story and told me why he got involved in General Service. The following excerpt from the A.A. Service Manual concludes why I do what I do today. *"The late Bernard S., nonalcoholic, then chairperson of the board of trustees, and one of the architects of the Conference structure, answered that question superbly in his opening talk at the 1954 meeting: We may not need a General Service Conference to ensure our own recovery. We do need it to ensure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to ensure the recovery of a child being born tonight, destined for alcoholism. We need*

it to provide, in keeping with our Twelfth Step, a permanent haven for all alcoholics who, in the ages ahead, can find in A.A. that rebirth that brought us back to life.

We need it because we, more than all others, are conscious of the devastating effect of the human urge for power and prestige which we must ensure can never invade A.A. We need it to ensure A.A. against government, while insulating it against anarchy; we need it to protect A.A. against disintegration while preventing over integration. We need it so that Alcoholics Anonymous, and Alcoholics Anonymous alone, is the ultimate repository of its Twelve Steps, its Twelve Traditions, and all of its services. We need it to ensure that changes within A.A. come only as a response to the needs and the wants of all A.A., and not of any few. We need it to ensure that the doors of the halls of A.A. never have locks on them, so that all people for all time who have an alcoholic problem may enter these halls unasked and feel welcome. We need it to ensure that Alcoholics Anonymous never asks of anyone who needs us what his or her race is, what his or her creed is, what his or her social position is." *A.A. Service Manual, pg. S20*

Jennifer S., Area 26 Secretary

Concepts I, III, V, and VII



CONCEPT I

Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. World Services should always reside with the collective conscience of the whole fellowship.

The Twelve Concepts for World Service might seem complicated, but really when we understand it, they are yet another incredible gift of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is a part of this deal that you should not pass up. I encourage you not to dismiss the Concepts. Learning about the unique and spiritual service structure of A.A. is something you must not miss. Read, ask others, seek out a service sponsor, but don't cheat yourself out of this remarkable part of your sobriety.

The development of spiritual principles that are the foundation of our service structure is a miraculous part of our history. I hope that you will find the passion and time to learn about it. I will attempt to share a bit on Concept I as a foundation. It is my hope that it sparks a desire to study our literature deeper and learn about all Twelve Concepts.

The A.A. groups hold the ultimate responsibility and final authority for world services. They assumed this role in 1955. In the early days of A.A. the founders started developing a world service structure and created a trusteeship for A.A. as a whole called "The Alcoholic Foundation".

We all know that the rubber meets the road in the A.A. group where the newcomer first encounters help. That is where the majority of our efforts must be focused. The trusteeship was created to provide services A.A. groups and communities could not do well by themselves. Examples of these services include writing uniform literature, developing a sound public relations policy, facilitating the response to a large number of pleas for help, aiding new groups, collecting and sharing experiences with existing groups, and producing a monthly magazine.

Growth in early A.A. was remarkably fast. A.A. grew from two hopeless alcoholics to nearly 100,000 members between 1935 and 1950. The program was so successful some thought that our

future was guaranteed. However, it was during this growth that the mistakes of groups everywhere served as the catalyst for the Twelve Traditions. Also consider that the average member, preoccupied with his group life and his own 12th stepping knew almost nothing of A.A. world services. Few had any idea who our Trustees were or what they did. Those who knew of them saw them as a bunch of non-alcoholic big shots in New York. Actually these talented friends of A.A. knew how to run a board very well, but they had no idea what was important to the groups and local members.

While Bill was trying to get the Trustees to support a conference of delegates representing the groups, it was discovered that Dr. Bob suffered from cancer and would soon pass. The Trustees, who relied heavily on Bill and Bob as the link between the groups and themselves, realized that they could not rely on the co-founders to guide A.A. forever. The need to link this board of trustees in New York with the thousands of A.A. groups all over became imperative. The General Service Conference became the necessary link to connect the Board with the Fellowship. So the groups exercise their responsibility through electing delegates to represent them at the annual Conference where they have the authority to direct the actions of the trustees.

The principle of Concept I where the whole fellowship has all the responsibility and authority to guide our actions was also under development at the group level as explained in Tradition 2. At the group we decided that a loving God expressed through an informed group conscience could guide us. We decided to rely on all the voices of group members to decide on our activities locally. Concept I, in a way, takes that same principle and applies it to all of our world services. We rely on “the collective conscience of the whole fellowship” through the labor of our chosen delegates at our big group conscience business meeting each year called the General Service Conference. In order to do that effectively, we have to communicate and stay informed throughout the rest of the annual process on topics of concern to all of us. That means the groups have to accept ultimate responsibility and final authority as it has been freely given to them through Concept I. Failure to participate in the process is to abstain from the collective group conscience of our society.

Roger W., Alt. Delegate

CONCEPT III

The long form of Concept III states: “As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the groups, the Conference, the A.A. General Service Board and its several service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives, and of thus ensuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of world service with a traditional “Right of Decision.”

“Within the framework of their general responsibilities, whether these be defined by charter, by resolution, or by custom, it should be the traditional right of all world service boards, committees, and executives to decide which problems they will dispose of themselves and upon which matters they will report, consult, or ask specific directions. We ought to trust our world

servants with these discretions, because otherwise no effective leadership can be possible.” *The A.A. Service Manual combined with The Twelve Concepts for World Service*, pg. 11

If you are wondering how Concept III applies, I will share some personal experience. While serving as the Area 26 Literature Chair, a motion was developed by the Literature Committee considering to change the cover of the "Do You Think You're Different" pamphlet (P-13) to list in words, the diverse backgrounds represented within. Basically taking the list from the table of contents and placing it on the cover. After presenting the motion to the Area 26 floor I heard a few ideas that were not in support of the motion and it totally changed my views. I ended up voting against the motion.

“Bill warns against using “The Right of Decision” as an excuse for failure to make the proper reports for actions taken; or for exceeding clearly defined authority; or for failing to consult the proper people before making an important decision.” But he concluded: “Our entire A.A. program rests squarely upon the principle of mutual trust. We trust God, we trust A.A., and we trust each other.” *The Twelve Concepts for World Service Illustrated*

If you would like to witness more of Concept III in action, attend your Home Group Business Meetings, District Meetings and Area 26 Meetings/Assemblies. If you would like to learn more about the Concepts themselves, get a copy of The A.A. Service Manual combined with The Twelve Concepts for World Service. “It is one of the best kept secrets in A.A.”

Jennifer S., Area 26 Secretary

CONCEPT V

Throughout our world service 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.

In Bill’s writings on Concept I, he states, “In the A.A. services we have always had to choose between the authoritarian setup, whereby one group or one person is set in unqualified authority over another, and the democratic concept which calls for ‘checks and balances’ that would prevent unqualified authority from running unrestrained.” In his writings on Concept V, Bill goes on to state that “... a democracy operates on the will of the majority, no matter how slim that majority may be.” *A.A. Service Manual and Concepts for World Service 2015-2016 Edition*

Our fellowship has chosen to operate as a democracy; and in making decisions, we have come to rely upon the group conscience. However, we can rely upon that group conscience only if it is well informed. Thus, we allow all who participate an equal opportunity to express his or her opinion. Sometimes this seems like we’re moving slowly and taking too much time to thoroughly review all sides of an issue; but we are less likely to have to go back and correct mistakes when we take our time. Through Concept V, we take this democratic process one step

further by ensuring that the minority voice, no matter how small, has an opportunity to be heard one last time before finalizing any decision. It allows us an opportunity to reconsider all that we've heard and be as certain as we can be when making our decisions.

However, there are still times when those in the minority believe we've made an error which could harm Alcoholics Anonymous. Concept V also provides a mechanism for hearing those appeals. The commentary on the Concept deals mostly with grievances at the Board level, but the principle works at all levels of service. For instance, if I believe there is a problem in my group, I can take my grievance to my home group's business meeting for resolution; but if it isn't resolved, there's no place else to take it, because I've reached the top of the Triangle. However, if I'm dismayed by something done by the District, I would first take my concern to the District; but if it's not resolved by the District, I can appeal to the Groups within the District. Likewise, if there's a grievance with the Area and it's not resolved by the Area, I could appeal to the Districts and the ultimately to the Groups. In this process, the appeal is always made to the next level up the Triangle, not down, keeping in mind that the Groups have the final authority.

Concept V is a very important part of the process we've come to trust. It ensures our rights as a democratic society. However, those rights come with responsibilities – the responsibility of becoming part of the informed group conscience by speaking up, the responsibility of listening respectfully to those who have opinions that differ from my own, and the responsibility of making decisions based upon principle, not personality or frothy emotional appeal.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynda R.

CONCEPT VII

LONG FORM: The Conference recognizes that the Charter and the Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments: that the Trustees are thereby fully empowered to manage and conduct all the world affairs of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is further understood that the Conference Charter itself is not a legal document: that it relies instead upon the force of tradition and the power of the A.A. purse for its final effectiveness.

SHORT FORM: The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purse for final effectiveness.

Much like most elements of AA, Concept 7 is much deeper and broader than I could hope to communicate. Simply put, Concept 7 describes the relationship between trusted servants and the body to which they are accountable. In order to prevent the educated idiot (me) from overthinking it, we will examine Concept 7 as relates to 3 areas – World Services, my service in AA, and my personal life. It should be mentioned this is just my interpretation of Concept 7 based in the literature, my teachers in AA, and my own experience.

Beginning with World Services, Concept 7 empowers the Trustees with the legal and spiritual authority to “manage and conduct all of the world service affairs of AA.” If they are to do their jobs effectively, the trustees need the ability to execute their responsibilities without approving each and every minute detail with the Conference. They have the right and the authority to manage the affairs of AA as they see fit, and have the unenviable challenge of satisfying both the legal mandates of the Charter/Bylaws and conforming to the group conscience of the Conference as a whole. In effect, we as the Conference endow them with their “Right of Decision” to conduct the legal business of AA on our behalf. On the other hand, as trusted servants, the Trustees are accountable to the Conference to serve its interests and adhere to the wishes of AA as expressed through the delegates. Despite the legal rights granted to the Trustees, the balance of power will always lie with Conference given its numerical advantage, the power of the purse, and the legacy of AA tradition.

In my own service work, Concept 7 helps me to understand my rights and responsibilities to any group that I am serving. As a GSR, am empowered to represent my group at the District/Area meetings, acting on their behalf without having to call a home group conscience every time I want a cup of coffee. I am, however, responsible to my group for keeping them informed and for carrying our voice (not mine), and if there were ever a real conflict, my home group could easily remove me from the position or enforce their will. As a DCM/Committee Chair, I have the autonomy to conduct the business of the district or committee as I see fit, but I must always remember that I have been granted that authority by the district/committee and I work for them. Lastly, as a sponsor, I am empowered by AA **and by the sponsee** to guide another alcoholic through the 12 steps, but I am accountable to them and to AA to stick to my experience strength and hope, stay grounded in the steps/traditions/concepts, and to lead by example and humility, rather than by ego and judgment.

In my personal life, Concept 7 teaches me to identify the group that I am serving and examine my own conduct in that area. At work, I am empowered to handle my work the way I see fit, but I am accountable to my boss and peers if I am not communicating effectively or meeting the required standards. In my marriage, my wife and I each manage our own interests, activities, and passions, but we are accountable to each other, such as when I come home from the grocery store with exclusively bacon and ice cream. Lastly, as a result of the 12 steps, I have been empowered by my higher power to carry the message and serve other alcoholics to the best of my ability, but I will surely be held responsible if I do not continue to practice spiritual principles, both inside and outside the rooms.

In short, Concept 7 really explains the idea of trusted servants in action. The Trustees and the Boards of the Grapevine and GSB are trusted by the fellowship to handle our business, but they are our servants and accountable to us, and both pieces must remain in balance if harmony will be achieved. Studying concept 7 and applying it to my life will continue to help me grow in my own practice of service.

Andy C, DCM District 12

Funny Jokes or Not?

Why does an alcoholic like mushrooms?

Because he's a Fungi...

What has 8 arms and drinks Budlight?

2 dudes watching football...

Why did the Egyptian Crocodile family have to go to therapy?

They were in deNile...

How many al-anons does it take to screw in a lightbulb?

None, they sit back and watch it screw itself...

EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS

- **2016 SOUTHEAST REGIONAL FORUM EN ESPANOL**
DECEMBER 2-4, 2016
LAKE MARY, FL
- **LOUISVILLE INTERGROUP QUARTERLY**
AUGUST 20, 2016 7:30PM
SAFFIN CENTER 3926 POPLAR LEVEL ROAD
LOUISVILLE, KY 40213
- **DISTRICT 22 PICNIC**
AUGUST 13TH, 2016 12:00-3:00PM
JACOBS CHAPEL CHURCH OUTDOOR SHELTER
4725 CHARLESTOWN RD.
NEW ALBANY, IN 47150

