

Summer 2017

Three Sides of the Triangle

Recently I returned from the 67th General Service Conference in Rye Brook, New York. As many may already know, this was my second year and last time there, as least as a Delegate. The tenor of the conference this year was much more spiritual than last year. It was mentioned many times though-out the conference. The saying that “we can agree to disagree” was very prevalent. Another saying was, “everything needs to be said but not everyone needs to say it.”

In one of the morning A.A. meetings a member was sharing about “how is your triangle?” That also happens to be one of the presentation/ discussion topics for next year: “Participation in All of A.A. – Is My Triangle Balanced?” The three sides of the A.A. triangle are, recovery, unity and service, but at the conference it was mentioned many times in reverse. Recovery, The twelfth step tells us to practice these principals in all our affairs, which means we should practice all twelve steps. I felt and heard the spiritual presence of a higher power. I was privileged to

be able to help and be available for my conference buddy and two regional buddies, enabling me to practice working with others, an important part of the twelfth step.

Even though I was there to represent my area and A.A. as a whole, at times I needed to get out of myself and think of others that might need help with the mechanics of the conference. To keep my triangle equal I needed to have some of the experience, strength and hope we share at meetings. Being the chair, I attended the Serenity meeting Monday through Friday morning at 7:30 a.m. This year we got a bigger room than provided last year. The attendance last year seemed to run between 25-30, and this year it was between 45-50 members. This helped me to keep that part of my triangle equal to the other two sides.

Unity, The other side of the triangle was extremely evident at this year’s conference. The 1995 Quarterly Report from G.S.O., “The General Sharing Session” had this quote: “At the Conference level we are asked to bring not our wisdom, but our conscience. Our responsibility is to

Concepts is published quarterly by the Northern Illinois Area of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is intended as a service letter to keep Northern IL Area, districts, and GSRs informed of service opportunities, events, and experience relevant to carrying the AA message. Subscription is free but generally limited to A.A. members within the NIA geographical area.

All publication costs are paid by A.A. members through their contributions to NIA. Opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the thinking of Alcoholics Anonymous, NIA or the Editor.

Comments, suggestions and subscription requests plus shares of experience, strength and hope, should be directed to the editor:

Concepts@aa-nia.org

All A.A. members are encouraged to see Concepts on-line at:
<http://www.aa-nia.org>

The current address for the NIA Treasurer is
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From the editor

Hello Ladies and Gentlemen.

Richie Healless wrote an article on leadership in AA. Elections are coming up in the fall. Time flies by. Seemed like we just elected the current servants. Appointed committee rotation takes place in opposing years to the Area elections. So in a bit less than two years I would like to pass this position on. The editor is the liaison with the printer. So it is important that the person understand the co-editor position. The co-editor sends the mailing list to the printer and so has interaction with the printer. But it is the editor's job to handle any problems with the printer. The upshot of this explanation is the person intending to be editor needs to take over the co-editor position next year. Like January 2018, so he or she has a year as co-editor. I like this job. But I believe in the spirit of rotation and my first issue was winter of 2014. I was supposed to start Spring of 2015 but the past editor moved in the winter of 2014. Being able to write is not a qualification as most content is cut and pasted from someplace else. You do need to be familiar with some of the more technical aspects of Word, like text boxing or columns. So call me or drop me an email if you are interested. Heather S. 815 468 7890 or shannon891@att.net

Submissions for the next issue

will be due Aug 19, 2017.

Thank you for your submissions.

Heather S. Concepts Editor

deliver what we have to share not to convince.” Winning and losing are not part of the vocabulary of the group conscience.” Tradition one is, “Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity”. Then there is Tradition two; “For our group purpose that is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.” There was equal sharing at the microphone on agenda items, not just all second year delegates or Trustees. When a member wanted to amend a motion, there was always a second so as to hear the discussion of the amendment. Some passed and some failed.

Service, is the remaining side and hopefully equal to the other two.

Concept 1 says, “The final responsibility and the ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole fellowship.” The main reason the Area Delegate goes to the General Service conference is, to voice the opinions of the fellowship in their Areas. I heard a few delegates that practiced Concept three, “Right of Decision.”

Concept four, “Right of Participation,” was the most used. Concept five, “The Right of Appeal,”

was used and the process even changed a few of the original votes or the majority. I was glad that I did not witness warranty five in Concept twelve, which says “That no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy,” from the microphone or around the tables. The Area uses these Concepts as well at Area assemblies and committee meetings.

As long as I am able to practice all three sides of the A.A. triangle (36 principals), my program should be balanced. It is like the saying, “a three legged stool will not stand missing one leg.”

Thank you for allowing me to represent you and NIA 20 at the General Service Conference.

Kelly L.
Delegate, P66
Grapevine Committee



2017 East Central Regional Forum

November 17-19, 2017

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Att: Regional Forums

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Rule 62

Q: What are the first five words an alcoholic in a three piece tailored suit hears?

A: "Will the defendant please rise."



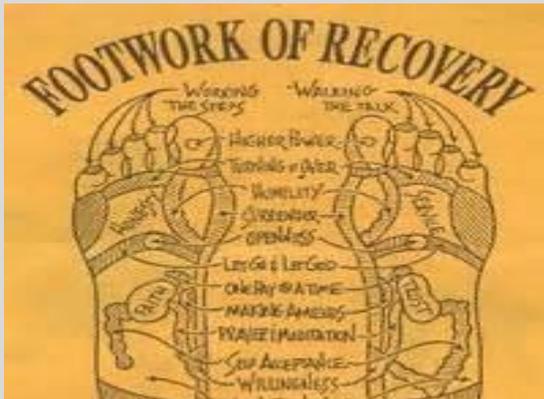
Rehab Humor

"Alcoholics Anonymous does not work in theory --
It only works in practice!"

Confidence is the feeling you sometimes have before you fully understand the situation.

Alcoholics are very opinionated and often wrong, but never in doubt.

"If you are in the wrong place --
the right place is empty."



"The way to become an Old-Timer --
Don't drink and don't die!"



The tipsy captain of an old freighter saw what looked like the light of another ship on collision course with his. He signaled, "Change course ten degrees to the east." The reply came back directing him to turn ten degrees to the west. He sent a stronger message, "I'm a Navy captain. Change your course!" The message came back, "I'm a seaman second class but you'd better turn your ship." Infuriated the captain answered, "I'm a battleship. Get out of my way!" The final message came, "I'm a lighthouse. Do as you please."

A Rabbit walked into a bar p.12

CHOOSING OUR BEST POSSIBLE
LEADERS
EVEN IF IT'S YOU!!!

This is a topic that has had special meaning to me for a long time, and have decided that now is an important time to put it to written words.

On Saturday September 16, at the Lord of Life Church, in La Fox Illinois, we will have our Fall Election Assembly. As an Area in Alcoholics Anonymous, this is the most important work we do. And the key to this is participation. The two most important things we can do is show up and make yourselves available for these important positions in Alcoholics Anonymous. This is mostly why I am writing this today, to give you some time to think about this. To consider how much you care about the future of Alcoholics Anonymous. Or to talk to people you know, that it may be time for them to participate in the future of Alcoholics Anonymous. And secondly to make sure that your Group is represented and elect the best possible individuals for these positions. Not your friends, not the person you like most, not the person you feel is in line for that position. The best possible person for that position. This is very important to consider when you get there. Remember none of this is about what is good for you, or what is good for that person. It is about what is best for the Group, Area 20. Tradition One. EVEN IF IT'S YOU.

I forget what the position was, but there was a midterm election to fill a vacant position. It was decided that we were to vote by a show of hands. One of the individuals standing was a friend of mine, and the other person was maybe possibly not liked so much by some that I know. I voted for the person that was not my friend, and I got challenged on it by some that I know that were there voting. I told them that I voted for what I believed was the best possible person for that position.

PRINCIPLES BEFORE

PERSONALITIES. I was told by a friend, "there will come a time in your life, that because of what you know, because of what you have seen, because of what you have heard, you are going to have to do something that is not the popular thing to do. Do you have what it takes to do that?" There have been many times in Alcoholics Anonymous I have found myself in that position. And there were times I had to look at fears at the same time. But I have never regretted doing what I thought to be best for Alcoholics Anonymous. In September 2007, I stood for the position of Area 20 Corrections Chairperson. I had no desires for any other positions, or thought that I would stay after that. I did so because of what I believed and knew about myself, my love for Corrections work, and my love for the people doing that work. Partly because of that position, I met a guy that was

the Correction Chair from another State, another Area, another Region. Thinking outside of the box and leaving my comfort zone I entered a journey with this guy that changed my life. Looking at a life that consisted of all three of our Legacies of RECOVERY, UNITY & SERVICE. About a year later he called me to tell me that his Area had selected him to be there Panel 59 Delegate. I was happy for him, but not thoroughly impressed. For some reason Delegates and Past Delegates did not impress me, but the work this man was doing to show others how to recover from alcoholism very much impressed me. I started to follow him on this journey, and started to see some things different than what I thought I knew, thus thinking outside of the box.

On his way home from his first General Service Conference, he called me on a layover from the Atlanta Airport and basically gave to me his first Delegate's Report. I was becoming a believer in something new to me. When we got together afterwards, he was aware our Area elections were coming up that September. He asked if I knew what I was going to do after my term of Corrections Chair. I told him I knew exactly what I was going to do, I was going to be the Alternate GSR of my Home Group. He said "Richie, that is a very honorable position, but you have learned some things along the way. You know a hell of a lot more than you realize, and you owe Alcoholics Anonymous a lot more

than that." Followed by some words including responsibility, honor, transparency, and integrity. And concluding with, "If not you, then who? And if not now, then when?" I went into a period of deep consideration, and at the same time, following this guy around on this journey. And began to realize that there was a lot to learn by leaving behind everything that I think that I know. And realizing everything that I think that I know is not what it should be.

In September 2009, I decided I wanted to be our Delegate and stood for that position. I did not get elected as Delegate but stood unopposed as our Alternate Delegate. In September 2011, I was elected as your Panel 62 Delegate, and I entered into a journey with Alcoholics Anonymous that I can only describe as unbelievable. That a guy from a small town that could not stay sober. That didn't really like people that were not of use to me. Was full of dishonesty and fear. Could recover from alcoholism, and serve Alcoholics Anonymous in the many ways that I have. Through all that I must say that I will never look at Alcoholics Anonymous, or myself the same ever again.

I must tell you Delegates and Past Delegates still don't impress me. Those that do impress me are people that have recovered from alcoholism, and are deeply involved in all three of our Legacies of Recovery, Unity,

Leadership cont. p. 8

and Service. Those that work, live and teach the Twelve Steps, that have a Primary Purpose of helping others to recover from alcoholism. Those that have a role in their Home Group, a group that has a Primary Purpose of helping others to recover from alcoholism. And those that are willing to give their time and experience to the future of Alcoholics Anonymous. Forever guaranteeing that we have a Primary Purpose of helping others to recover from alcoholism. And I strongly believe that those are the people that should be standing for our Area Positions in September. So, I'd like to ask all of you that have read this to the end, between now and September to consider standing for a position at our Area 20 elections. And to make sure that your Group is represented in selecting the best possible people for these positions.

And as you are considering standing or who you would like to see in these positions to THINK OUTSIDE OF THE BOX and ask yourself, IF NOT YOU, THEN WHO? AND IF NOT NOW, THEN WHEN?

Rich

Panel 62 Area 20 Past Delegate



The Ninth Concept; Bill W.'s Twelve Concepts for World Service

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Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership once exercised by the founders of AA must necessarily be assumed by the Trustees of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

NO MATTER how carefully we design our service structure of principles and relationships, no matter how well we apportion authority and responsibility, the operating results of our structure can be no better than the personal performance of those who must man it and make it work. Good leadership cannot function well in a poorly designed structure. Weak leadership can hardly function at all, even in the best of structures. But once we have created a basically sound structure, that job is finished, except, for occasional refinements.

With leadership we shall have a continuous problem. Good leadership can be here today and gone tomorrow. Furnishing our service structure with able and willing workers has to be a continuous activity. It is therefore a problem that in its very nature cannot be permanently solved. We must continuously find the right people for our many service tasks. Since our future effectiveness must thus depend upon ever-new generations of leaders, it seems desirable that we now proceed to define what a good service leader should be; that we carefully indicate in each level of service, especially in our Board of Trustees, what special skills will always be required; and that we review our present methods of finding and choosing that leadership.

Concept 9 cont. p. 9

First, let's remember that the base for our service structure rests on the dedication and ability of several thousand General Service Representatives (GSRs), several hundred area Committee Members, and nearly a hundred Delegates. These are the direct agents of the AA groups; these are the indispensable linkage between our Fellowship and its world service; these are the primary representatives of AA's group conscience. Without their support and activity, we could not operate permanently at all.

When making their choices of GSRs, the AA groups should therefore have such facts well in mind. It ought to be remembered that it is only the GSRs who, in Area Assembly meetings (or in caucus), can name Committee Members and finally name the Delegates. Hence, great care needs to be taken by the groups as they choose these Representatives. Hit-or-miss methods should be avoided. Groups who name no GSRs should be encouraged to do so. In this area, a degree of weakness tends to persist. The needed improvement seems to be a matter of increased care, responsibility, and education.

As the GSRs meet in their Assemblies to name Delegates, an even greater degree of care and dedication will be required. Personal ambitions will have to be cast aside, feuds and controversy forgotten. "Who are the best qualified people that we can name?" This should be the thought of all.

Thus far, our Third Legacy method of naming Delegates by a two-thirds vote or by lot has proved highly satisfactory. This system of choosing has greatly reduced political friction; it has made each Delegate feel that he or she is truly a world servant rather than just the winner of a contest. In Committee Members and Delegates alike, our Third Legacy methods have generally produced people of a high level of dedication and competence. In this area of service, we are in good shape. Our Area Assemblies need only to

continue to act with care and in selfless good spirit.

It should be reported that some members still doubt whether choice by lot is ever a good idea. They say that the best man does not always win. In answer, it must be pointed out that each time we have abandoned the "two-thirds vote or lot" in naming Delegates, there has been a sense of defeat and disturbance in the minority camp which is nowhere nearly offset by the advantage of naming the supposedly best man. Indeed, the second-best man can often be as good a Delegate as the Assembly's first choice; he may even be a better Delegate.

We now come to the principal theme of this particular Concept: How can we best strengthen the composition and the leadership of the future Board of Trustees, the Board which in years to come will have to exercise AA's primary leadership in world service administration, the trusteeship which will in fact have to assume most of my former duties and responsibilities in connection with AA's world services?

As previously noted, the actual transference of authority and responsibility from me to the Trustees has been going on for a long time. I am still around and still serving as an adviser, and I have also been finishing a few remaining chores (for example, the development of these Concepts) which were left over from the 1955 St. Louis Convention. But the time approaches when I shall have to withdraw from nearly all world service activity. This is why I feel a great interest now in doing everything possible to strengthen the administrative composition and AA leadership of our General Service Board, so that future Trustees may be better able to cope with the problems and dangers which time will no doubt bring.

My admiration for what AA's alcoholic and nonalcoholic Trustees have done for us all is boundless. During the time of our infancy and adolescence, nothing could have been structurally better than the setup we have had. Looking at this record, many AAs naturally feel that what was good for the past will surely be good for the future; that any change in the induction methods, in the Trustee ratio of alcoholics to non-alcoholics, or in the present composition of our Board will prove dangerous rather than beneficial. But change has been pressing upon us right along, and it is still doing so. For example, our Board operated in all the years between 1938 and 1951 without the support of a Conference. But it was finally and reluctantly realized that this relatively unseen and unknown Board could not continue without a permanent linkage to AA, something that Doctor Bob and I could not give it forever. We did not like to face this change, but we had to. The trusteeship had to be securely anchored to AA or it eventually would have collapsed. The Conference simply had to come into being.

This change profoundly altered the position of the Trustees. Their former authority was modified; they were firmly linked to AA and were thus made directly accountable to our Fellowship. Nobody today questions the wisdom of that momentous change, because everybody can now see that it has provided an essential protection for the service effectiveness and security of AA's future. Experience has refuted the idea that changes which are needed to meet altered conditions are necessarily unwise.

We now stand on the edge of still another great change. Though we have already solved the problem of the Trustees' authority, their responsibility, and their linkage to AA, we have by no means solved, in my belief, the question of the Board's future role in service leadership. Hence, it is my deep conviction that the

administrative and AA-leadership strength of the Board should be considerably increased; that these and other improvements can place it in a much better position, practically and psychologically; that such changes are truly necessary to meet the conditions which will be certain to follow when my own world service leadership has been terminated.

Students of history recognize that the transference of the original leadership of a society to its successors in leadership is always a critical turning point. This difficult question of leadership, this problem of transference, must now be faced.

In the book *Twelve Concepts for World Service*, this chapter concludes with Bill's Grapevine article "Leadership in AA: Ever a Vital Need," published in the April 1959 issue and reprinted in September 1968. From the July 1972 magazine. First printed in January 1962. Copywrite © (Jan, 1962) AA Grapevine, Inc. Reprinted with permission

The difference between a boss and a leader is the boss says "Go!"

The leader says "Let's go!"

E.M. Kelly



Great leaders don't set out to be leaders. They set out to make a difference.

Announcements

Alcoholics Anonymous: www.aa.org **NIA 20:** www.aa-nia.org

Summer Assembly/Post-GSC Report **Jun 10** @ 9:00 am – 3:00 pm @
Lord Of Life Lutheran Church 40w605 II Route 38 La Fox, IL 60119

General Service Fair **Jun 17** @ 10:00 am – 2:00 pm @ Lake Villa Township West
Campus. 37850 Rt. 59 Lake Villa, IL

History Funshop **Jun 24** @ 10:00 am – 12:00 pm @ Christ Church of Oak Brook 501 oak
brook road, oak brook, IL 60523 corner of York road and 31st Street, Lower Level mosaic
room, refreshments will be served, Closed AA workshop

East Central Regional Conference & Indiana State Convention **Jul 14 – Jul 16** Grand
Wayne Convention Center 120 W. Jefferson Blvd, Fort Wayne, IN 46802 For more
information contact (219) 809-2519 For registration questions, contact (765) 450-9392

Summer Committee Meeting **Aug 5** @ 9:00 am – 3:00 pm @ Lord of Life Lutheran Church
40w605 II Route 38, La Fox, IL 60119

Illinois State Conference **Aug 11 – Aug 13** @ Crowne Plaza Chicago O'Hare Hotel &
Conference Center 5440 N River Rd Rosemont IL 60018 contact information:
2014ISCinChicago@gmail.com, Laura S. 312-719-3399 Paul G. 773-459-1139

Wolf River-Nicolet AA Camping Trip **Aug 11 – Aug 13** @ Bear Paw Outdoor Adventure
Resort & Campground N3494 Hwy 55, White Lake, WI 54491 For more info contact
Justine B. 847.445.6195 or email at sobercamp30@gmail.com

59th ICYPAA **Aug 17 – Aug 20** @ Hilton Chicago 720 S. Michigan Ave Chicago

Marshall-Putnam King's House AA group 50th anniversary party on **Aug. 26th**, 2017. At
noon at the Putnam County Conservation District Shelter, 4526 E. 1000th St, Hennepin, IL.
Contact Gregg C. at 815-488-8719

Fall Assembly **Sep 16** @ 9:00 am – 3:00 pm @ Lord Of Life Lutheran Church 40w605 II
Route 38, La Fox, IL 60119

Fall Committee Meeting **Oct 14** @ 9:00 am – 3:00 pm @ Lord Of Life Lutheran Church
40w605 II Route 38, La Fox, IL 60119

NIA Big Book Conference **Nov 4** @ First United Methodist Church 801 N Sycamore St
Hinckley, IL 60520

