



I fell down down down  
no one to help me get up -  
no one but my self...  
I turned to the light -  
a moment of clarity:  
get that stuff off the shelf.

I heard a voice from above,  
heard it spoken with love -  
and followed its command...  
And now i can say  
that taking that step  
helped make life grand.

It's a simple concept,  
one that requires action,  
but the results are true:  
and I guarantee that  
it worked for me, and  
it will work for you.

That voice from above  
was from a Higher Power -  
One that now is my guide...  
Wherever I go and  
whatever I do, my  
Higher Power is at my side.

Life isn't always easy -  
and certainly not fair  
but with help and Power there  
I walk more easily,  
life's more enjoyable  
and much easier to bear.

I accept what is  
both the bad and the good:  
I help where I can,  
I endeavor to change,  
to help myself, and  
to help every man.

Even life's imperfections  
which are a miracle too  
lessen fears when I'm blue  
and give me great gratitude:  
This is a gift whose message  
I lovingly share with you.

And when I stumble now  
I dust myself off  
and trudge on again,  
knowing that I have help  
and a path to follow  
to reach the end.

That end my friend  
for both you and me  
is the Road of Happy Destiny.  
Come join me and others  
and walk where we trudge:  
THAT destiny is our eternity.

Judy W

# Fellowship of the Lake

LAKE COUNTY INTERGROUP SPRING 2011

## Learning about Concept IX,

## “Good Service Leaders...”

I was asked to report on one of the twelve Concepts at the February Lake County General Service business meeting. After more than six and a half years in AA, I could honestly say I knew almost nothing about “The Twelve Concepts for World Service” written by, you guessed it, Bill W. in 1962. The illustrated booklet by that name says the Concepts explain the “why” of the AA structure dealing with both spiritual principles and the relationships between the various AA service entities.

Well that didn't help me understand any better, but with the help of my sponsor, I forged ahead and chose to report on Concept IX, which addresses the importance of good service leaders and their value at all levels to the future functioning and integrity of AA. In order for me to put Concept IX in context, I needed to go back to the beginning:

Back in 1938, there were a bunch of AA groups that were autonomous. These groups needed help with things they could not do for themselves such as maintaining uniform literature and public information about AA. So the General Service Board and the General Service Office were created to perform these services. But who would make decisions on behalf of the fellowship? This became the responsibility of the General Service Conference. Bill wanted the ultimate authority for AA to lie with the groups. The elected leaders throughout the AA service structure were to be given the authority to convey the collective opinions of the members of AA to the decision-makers at the Conference. It was critically important to find the right service leaders for the many service tasks. These leaders include, from the top of the upside-down pyramid to the bottom:

**General Service Representatives (GSRs)**, the individual group leader or spokesperson who communicates the group's conscience, ideas, and opinions, and brings back information to the group.

The next level downward is the **District** (Lake County is District 13 in the California Northern Coastal Area) whose officers along with the GSRs from each group elect a leader called the DCMC. The DCMC conveys information from the District to Area business meetings and brings back Area information to the District.

At the **Area** level, a leader called the **Delegate**, is elected by GSRs and Area officers to chair the Area Meetings and to attend the **GS Conference in New York** each April to express the collective opinions of the groups in his or her area, and to bring back the conference decisions and proceedings to the Area.

And finally, at the bottom of the upside-down pyramid is the **GS Board of Trustees**, the custodians of AA who are concerned with everything inside and outside of AA that may affect the health and growth of the fellowship. They take their direction from the GS Conference, and therefore the Conference is their link to AA.

So electing the right leaders is a “vital need”, and the following are highlights from Concept IX:

We endeavor to neither focus only on principles, trying to please everyone and making no judgments, nor be perfect in judgment, morals, and inspirations, but to be somewhere in between these two extremes.

Good leaders are dedicated, stable, visionary, skilled, originate plans, policies, ideas for improvement, consult before making decisions, **know that good ideas can come from anybody**, discard their own ideas for others that are better, recognize that large majorities can be wrong. But even when the leader is part of a small minority the leader can “stand against the storm using their ability of authority and persuasion to effect a change”.

Good leaders do not oppose for opposition sake, always have sound reasons for their positions, know that even prideful, angry people can be dead right, can compromise to move an issue forward, know when to hold their ground, can take criticism, both good and destructive, can listen carefully and weigh the information, make sound decisions, then act on those decisions.

Good leaders have vision, which is: the ability to make good estimates for the near term and for the distant future, God-given capacity for foresight, weighing information, trying it out, re-evaluating, and thinking months and years ahead.

In summary, good leaders have tolerance, take responsibility, are flexible, have vision, don't boss, lead by example.

Whew!! After reading that it made me want to run for cover, hide out, be invisible!! Then, I had a few thoughts: first, if only some of our world leaders could read Concept IX, perhaps world peace would be nearer, and; second, if I ever find myself in a position to lead, at least I will know what is expected of me and my higher power will be at my side to guide my way. The Concept did soften the message by saying, “Maybe it seems like an attempt to stake out a specially privileged and superior type of AA member. ...Not so. We simply are recognizing that our talents vary greatly.”

# Pacific Regional Forum, August 27-29, 2010; Torrance, CA.

The last weekend of August, I had the privilege of attending the Pacific Regional Forum in Torrance CA. It was hosted by the General Service Board in conjunction with a local (geographical) host. The purpose of forums is to improve communication within the Fellowship. Members of the board, Trustees and GSO staff members were present including the current General Service Board Chairman, Class A Trustee, the Very Reverend Ward Ewing.

The experience was wonderful. I came away feeling better prepared to be of service to AA. It's kind of an immersion program in AA's structure and love of service. Attendees were encouraged during many Sharing Sessions/Ask-It-Baskets to pose questions. Each was answered by either a Board member or staff person. The answers were very thorough and if your answer was not available at that moment, they made

arrangements to get back to you. The intent was to familiarize attendees with what goes on in New York, what their jobs entail and what is available to us and our groups.

The result of these interactions left me with a sense that 'New York' whole heartedly belongs to drunks and their groups. Our questions and concerns were met with a genuine interest. There were no dumb questions and no concern too small. Additionally, all the Trustees - A & B - past and present - and the staff persons were personally available during breaks and workshops.

The last of the presentations was sharing from Past Trustees (A & B). Many of these people have been active in General Service for decades. Their knowledge and insight is important and necessary to our Fellowship (we have elders).

They expressed concern about rigidity in our personal and group messages, concern about religiosity in our groups, and our understanding of anonymity. Concern for 'vulnerable' persons in AA was also discussed - noting that 'thirteenth stepers' are considered perpetrators. Without exception, they spoke with intense humor and with deep love and tolerance. Their concerns were **always** rooted in AA's ability to reach the still suffering alcoholic.

I left with gratitude in my heart and the knowing that in Alcoholic's Anonymous we remain true to our preamble; flexible and resilient with capable and loving leadership at the helm. I left knowing that AA sobriety is **available** to all who suffer from alcoholism. I left recommitted to the continuation of that legacy and full of gratitude to you for allowing me to serve.

Linda O. (Outgoing District 13 DCMC)

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## H&I

Volunteers are needed!!

An evening orientation is being scheduled this summer (2011).

Contact Denise for more information.

(707) 695 - 8582

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## My DCM Experience

My first experience in General Service was being the GSR for the Kelseyville Saturday night meeting where my home group of about 50 local members asked me/appointed me to attend District 13 where I picked up a Service sponsor, Ron A, and I became the coffee maker for District-my AA world got a little bigger as I met folks from the other side of the lake, as a GSR I attended the four Assemblies where all of our area CNCA gathered to discuss AA- wow, my AA world in membership grew to about 300 new friends- after my 2 years as a GSR I became the DCM for the north side of the lake in our district- This new position had me looking for new GSR for north lake - which some have stayed in General Service and I am so happy for them- The DCM position gave me the opportunity to attend Area once a month where DCM'S

get together to share best practices in AA wow again- As a DCM i attended all Assemblies plus PRASSA where the western states got together in Oakland for workshops speaker meetings and much more! my AA world increased to include 2000 plus AA friends- I just got back from San Antonio where my AA world became the world I was with many thousand AA's celebrating sobriety- There I found my core values that got me sober being practices in the opening meeting I felt so close to my higher power- It was such a level of good!! We have so many friends in AA - locally and now throughout the world-

My wish for you is to get into General Service to experience the love and dedication to keep AA alive at group level and in the world!

love John o

## Popular MisQuotes of AA Literature

Recently some friends and I were discussing some popular mis-quotes of AA literature that we have heard at meetings. While some are just humorous others often open up a whole new meaning.

Rarely have we seen a person who has thoroughly followed our path.

Made a list of all persons we had **CHARMED** and became willing to make amends to them all.

An **anomaly** is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions. That feeling of **usefulness** and self pity will disappear.

We are **now** saints.

Our common welfare should come first personal **inventory** depends upon AA unity.

Sought through Prayer and **medication-moderation-mediation** to improve our conscience contact with god as we understood him...

AA has no opinion **or** outside issues.

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were **wronged** promptly admitted it.

Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A **has a hole**

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group **consequences**.

Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

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

## Soberfest 2012

JUNE 3, 4 & 5

U-Wanna Camp, Lakeport, Ca

RV Space is limited (first registered, first served)

Special Guest Speaker Friday Night: Father Tom

Tri Tip BBQ Dinner Saturday Night

Fun Activities, AA & Al Anon Meetings

CONTACT LEAH 413.9236 FOR MORE INFO &/OR FLYERS

OUT SOON... CHECK WWW.LAKECOUNTYAA.ORG