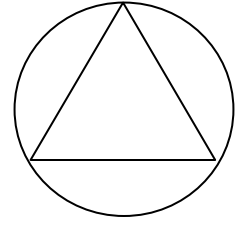


AREA 76 NEWSLETTER

QUARTER 2, 2012

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Step Four...I would like to talk a little about resentments...This is still an important consideration and meditation for me and, I think, a lot of recovering alcoholics. It is something that keeps coming up in my life and in meetings I attend. One of the biggest problems I have with resentments is the idea that sometimes, in certain situations, it is ok to have and foster a resentment towards a person and their actions. I still know that it is dangerous for me to do so but sometimes I try to convince myself that maybe in this particular case, I can find an excuse to hold on to that anger. At times like that, I need to remember page 90 of the 12x12, "What about 'justifiable anger'? If somebody cheats us, aren't we entitled to be mad? Can we be properly angry with self-righteous folk? For us of AA, these are dangerous exceptions. We have found that justified anger ought to be left to those better qualified to handle it." I am convinced that I am not qualified - how about you? GP

TRIVIA QUESTION - What's the name of the hotel where Bill contemplated alcohol or finding another alcoholic to work with?

Who wrote Chapter 8 of the Big Book, "To Wives"?...Bill W. was the author of the 'To Wives' chapter. It is commonly thought that Lois wrote it. But, as Pass It On describes (page 200), Lois said, "Bill wrote it and I was mad." She added, "I wasn't so much mad as hurt. I still don't know why Bill wrote it. I've never really gotten into it - why he insisted upon writing it. I said to him, 'Well, do you want me to write it?' And he said no, he thought it should be in the same style as the rest of the book."

Upcoming Area 76 Events

Albany County Fairgrounds, Laramie, WY

2012 June Jamboree, June 15-17

Mills Community Hall, Mills, WY

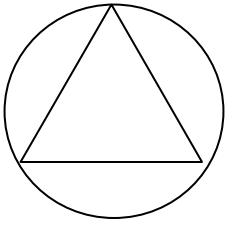
2012 Summer Business Assembly,

August 24-26

VFW Hall, Torrington, WY

2012 Fall Convention, October 26-28

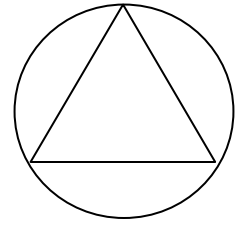
Best Western, Sheridan, WY



AREA 76 NEWSLETTER

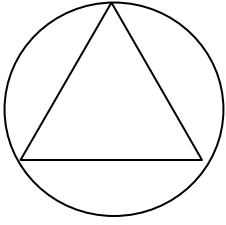
QUARTER 2, 2012

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Step Five...One of the lines that stuck to me like glue very early in sobriety, in fact, I believe I can remember it from a meeting I attended in the fine treatment center that introduced me to AA in the first place, was the line from "Into Action" chapter that reads, "The alcoholic is like a tornado roaring his way through the lives of others. Hearts are broken. Sweet relationships are dead. Affections have been uprooted. Selfish and inconsiderate habits have kept his home in turmoil. We feel a man is unthinking when he says that sobriety is enough. He is like the farmer who came up out of his cyclone cellar to find his home ruined. To his wife, he remarked, 'Don't see anything the matter here Ma. Ain't it grand the wind stopped blowin'?" That line about the old farmer, grinning as I saw him, amid the devastation after a mid-western tornado indicating all was well just appealed to me...for all the wrong reasons at the time. I say wrong because I saw the farmer's attitude as one of optimism that all was going well, when really it was a sign of self-centered arrogance that could not comprehend the hurt and fear other family members may have felt about all of the ruination that surrounded them. I found out too, looking back with that 20/20 hindsight that we are all so well endowed with, that the "wind" didn't just stop "blowin" with my completion of five weeks of treatment and entry into the Halls of AA. I did not "get it" at first. It took a while. Three months in my case, of AA meetings each and every day before I started to see what that paragraph in the Big Book really was talking about and I became aware of the long road of reconstruction ahead for me with my family and other folks close to me. Then I began the slog, which continues today, of reconstruction. Most things, in fact I can say most everything was rebuilt better than before and for me, the promises did come true in ways I could not have even imagined at the time I quit drinking. The past I took to get there was pretty simple: kept my side of the street clean, and whenever I found myself acting out in a counterproductive way, I did my best to identify that (sometimes with the help of someone else close to me) and make amends quickly.
Jon B.

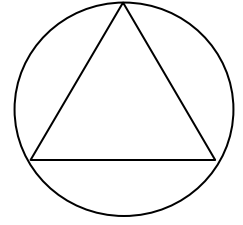
More on Step Five... When I first got into AA and learned about Step Five, I was rather horrified. I had spent many years making up elaborate lies so no one would know my whole story. Now you expected me to share it ALL with ONE person. How could I possibly give that much power to someone else? Surely they would use it against me! And wasn't it enough to just come clean with God? He already knew it all anyway! I learned that that is exactly why Step Five is Step Five, and not Step One! By the time I got there, with the help of a very loving, tolerant, patient kind sponsor, I was finally ready to do it. I don't think any other step has come close to having as profound of an impact on my program of recovery. But those results are only in the doing. They have to be felt! BJ



AREA 76 NEWSLETTER

QUARTER 2, 2012

THE TRIBUTARY

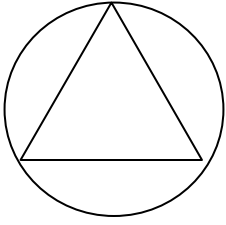


Step 6... "Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character." Once I started getting into these steps (with the help of a loving sponsor of course), and after ALL the work of Steps 1-5, it really bothered me that Step 6 in the Big Book was only one paragraph long. It just seemed strange to me. I understood finding a quiet place for an hour, contemplating the first five steps and if we have been thorough. It just seemed that there was no way I was going to be "entirely ready" in an hour! So I was grateful, again, for a sponsor and the 12x12 which did a wonderful job of explaining it a little more in detail. "this is the step that separates the men from the boys." I learned that is "the difference between striving for a self-determined objective and for the perfect objective which is of God." I learned that this step talks a LOT about ego, and the need for a humbling admission and a sweeping decision and that means SURRENDER! My being entirely ready didn't mean my character defects would all be gone forever. Step one is the ONLY step we can accomplish 100%. When speaking of entirely ready, they mean aiming toward perfection but recognizing we'll never get there. Once again, if we did, why would we need God? My sponsor did something a

More on Step 6... little different with me on Step 6 and Step 7. She had me go back to my fourth step and write down on little pieces of paper each of my character defects and put them in a little God Box. Each day I was to pull out a defect in the morning and pray that God show me through the day all the ways this defect has negatively affected me and others. At the end of the day, if I was ready, I was to get back on my knees and ask for God to remove that defect. If I was still kind of wishy-washy about it or had forgotten to think about it at all, it went back into the box until the next time I drew it out. This made me much more aware of those defects, gave me time to ponder each one a little more, and just seemed more complete in doing those two steps. It took awhile, but it held more meaning for me.
Anonymous

Trivia Question:

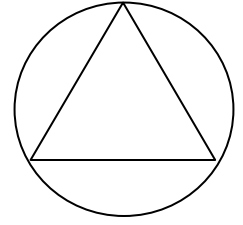
Where were the first three AA Groups formed?



AREA 76 NEWSLETTER

QUARTER 2, 2012

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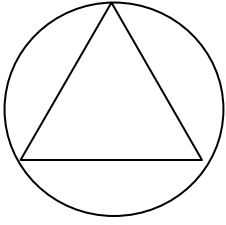
Tradition Four... The long form says, "With respect to its own affairs, each AA group should be responsible to no other authority than its own conscience. But when its plans concern the welfare of neighboring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted. And no group, regional committee, or individual should ever take any action that might greatly affect AA as a whole without conferring with the Trustees of the General Service Board. On such issues our common welfare is paramount." There are perhaps more questions than we can discuss. The last sentence is a reference, of course to Tradition One. I'm also intrigued by direction given to the individual in this Tradition.

Hmm... Aren't the Traditions for the groups? Unfortunately, I see groups use Tradition Four over and over and over as their "reason" to ignore whatever Traditions make them uncomfortable. They seem unable to see how ignoring a few select Traditions affects AA as a whole. I used to think Traditions Four meant the group could do whatever it wanted. Some still believe that way, perhaps more than don't. The second paragraph of Tradition Four in the 12x12 talks about "every conceivable deviation," and makes it sound as though we've been through our trials and errors and know better now, (I won't quote it here - feel free to look it up). My experience and observation suggests that we DON'T know

better now, and that, if anything, we are worse off than we have ever been. I've been going to a new meeting every week in an attempt to find a fourth regular meeting to attend. I've been chagrined and appalled at what I've seen. What does one do? These groups aren't dying, like the reading in the 12x12 suggests will happen. They aren't thriving, but they aren't dying. Alcoholics are, however. Why can't groups see that?

Lori G.

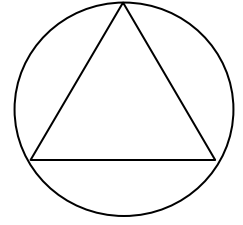
Trivia Question: What is the principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all arguments and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance?



AREA 76 NEWSLETTER

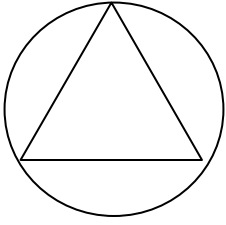
QUARTER 2, 2012

THE TRIBUTARY



More on Tradition Four...At a recent Regional Forum, a Delegate's presentation addressed self-sacrifice that is embedded in each of our Traditions. Having heard that presentation, I have been reflecting on what sacrifice am I called to make and how will I know that AA will be OK without "doing it my way". The long form of Tradition Four states, "With respect to its own affairs, each AA group should be responsible to no other authority than its own conscience..." This Tradition clearly states that I am not in charge of the affairs of my home group. My group is able to function (and function well) with my not being in charge. The first sentence of this Tradition goes on to point directly to how the group will be guided, our own group conscience. Tradition Two tells me that wisdom is derived from a Higher Power expressed in the group conscience. I need not worry if my loving Creator is guiding my home group during an informed group conscience process. The rest of Tradition Four instructs me when I need to engage other AA entities regarding decisions that may arise from my home group. My home group needs to consult when its plans may affect neighboring groups or greatly affect AA as a whole. This encourages the growth of humility as I must continue to think of others when I want to change a meeting time or format that may conflict or affect other groups. So, back to self-sacrifice. What is it that is suggested I surrender? Without a doubt, that is control. Sometimes this is very hard. I am ever so grateful that it was suggested to me to view myself as being accountable "to" and not accountable "for" those whom I serve. It is easy to accept those kind words "Thank you for all you do" and feed my ego. It is easy to accept the loving invitation to share my story and believe that I have to be more than me. Self-sacrifice for the common welfare does not diminish who I am, but places me correctly in position with my fellow man, home group, AA as a whole, and God. For that, I am grateful that we have Tradition Four to shepherd me to right and balanced relations. EN

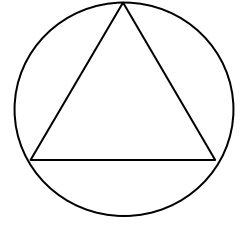
Recipients of the milestone printing copies of the Big Book: The one millionth copy - Pres. Richard Nixon. The two millionth copy - Joseph Califano, Sect. of Health & Welfare. The five millionth copy - Ruth Hock, who typed draft after draft of the original manuscript. The ten millionth copy - Nell Wing, Bill's non-alcoholic Sect..The fifteen millionth copy - Ellie Norris, widow of former Trustee John Norris. The twenty millionth copy - Al-Anon Family Groups. The twenty-fifth million copy - Jill Brown, Warden of San Quentin Prison.



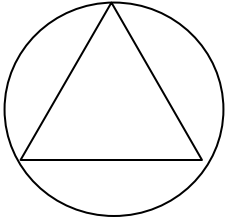
AREA 76 NEWSLETTER

QUARTER 2, 2012

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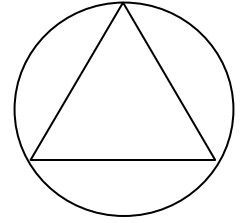
Tradition Five... "Each group has but one primary purpose-to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers." In discussing primary purpose, or singleness of purpose, there are two different things I'd like to touch on. First, I like the way Bill W. says in the 12x12, "better to do one thing supremely well than many badly." This speaks, I think, to our common unity as alcoholics. I was definitely an alcoholic who came into the rooms with "outside" issues, and initially I was confused when people would stress the importance of confining our discussions to problems as they relate to alcohol. Now I understand that AA cannot be all things to all people lest we muddy the waters and divert our attention from what this program is all about. As an individual, these can mean many different things to me; however, as a member of the group, the only thing that counts is that I am "an alcoholic who has found the key to sobriety." We can have no other agenda if we are to be effective. Furthermore, there is something incredibly profound about the connection in our experiences as alcoholics that make us so useful to one another. Chapter 7 says, "You can help when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when others fail." For me, this was one hundred percent the case. Two different people can come to me with the very same solution, however, I am much more likely to listen and heed the advice of the person who has been in my shoes before. The second thing I wanted to mention is that "primary purpose" also speaks to the principle of being of service. The way this program works is that we are continually giving back what we ourselves were at some point freely given. I know that I consider my sobriety to be an enormous gift, but with that gift comes great responsibility. If I am to maintain what I have and continue to grow spiritually, I must concern myself with passing along the tools of this program to other alcoholics who are still suffering and are looking for a way out. Cindy F.



AREA 76 NEWSLETTER

QUARTER 2, 2012

THE TRIBUTARY

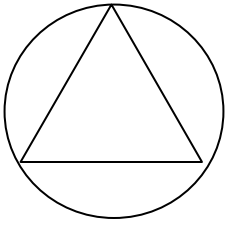


Tradition Six...The long form of Tradition Six states, "Problems off money, property , and authority may easily divert us from our primary spiritual aim ..." Those are three things that crop up in my personal life and when they do, my primary purpose of being of maximum service to God and my fellows flies out the window. I am still so easily distracted by the material. My self-will kicks in when it comes to finances and it takes a conscious effort to surrender control of that to God. The same seems to be true of AA. If you want to have an active, well attended group conscience meeting - have something to do with money on the agenda. I hate to think where AA would be, without this Tradition. As it is, we struggle with our singleness of purpose and of late, the finances of AAWS and the Grapevine seem to be the main focus of our attention. I recently attended a Regional Forum where what I heard was a plea for money from both our corporate Boards. Very little time was devoted to what we could do to better carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic. There is a delicate balance between matters spiritual and material in AA and this Tradition is the reminder I/we need to return to focusing on the spiritual, rather than the material, and to remember who's

More on Tradition Six...There is an interesting chapter in the 12x12 regarding this Tradition. It is interesting because of the various activities and projects early AA thought of getting into to help spread the word of this AA program. Hospitals, 'quarantined confinement' and cooperation with the liquor industry for educational purposes. As this Tradition developed, all of these projects were rejected because there slowly arose "...a deep-rooted conviction that in no circumstances could we endorse any related enterprise, no matter how good. We of Alcoholics Anonymous could not be all things to all men, nor should we try." In the final analysis, it was thought that we could not lend the AA name to any other cause than our own. I'm grateful that this was the conclusion. George P.

Trivia Question:

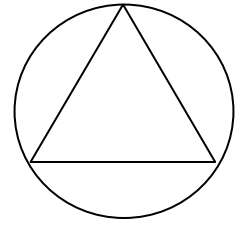
Where were the first three AA Groups formed?



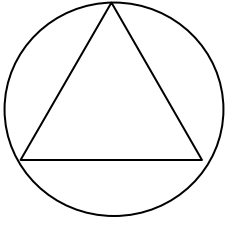
AREA 76 NEWSLETTER

QUARTER 2, 2012

THE TRIBUTARY



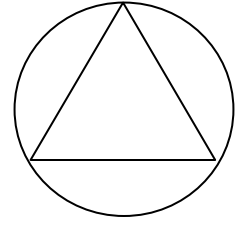
On Concept IV...When first requested to write an article on Concept IV, I right away determined that it would be necessary to read it and then begin a process to understand it. One of the things that is almost unique to our fellowship is that we take great care to make sure that all members have a voice that is heard no matter what the issue may be or the level in our organization that an issue is being debated or considered. Concept IV explains the “Right of Participation” through our fellowship. This Concept points out the importance of making sure that all who wish to, can participate without restriction. We never want to exclude any members from participation for any reason. One practical demonstration of this Concept is at the AA World Service and the AA Grapevine Corporations level where the paid office staff members are afforded full rights of participation, which includes being voting members of these groups. This guarantees that no one person or group of persons has absolute authority over anyone else. Concept IV points out that there will be a time where a new generation of Delegates will have a small number of their group questions or try to take away the right of participation from groups noted above, and even the Trustees right to vote at the Conference. Each of you reading this article should get a service manual and read Concept IV, at least to the point where in the early days of our fellowship when Bill W.’s Assistant had issued paychecks early so the “gals in the back office could buy Easter bonnets,” when this was a job of Works Publishing Trustee Treasurer, a friend of Bills. He had made out the paychecks, which was his job, only to have to tear them up in anger. This incident set in motion a discussion on the subject of just how much absolute authority any one drunk should have over money and people. To this point, this article has been an opportunity for me to research and understand this Concept better. Still, the “Right of Participation” has application at the Group, District and Area levels. I was drinking coffee the other day with a friend in the program and he said to me that one of the reasons he was able to hang on and stay sober this time was that he was made to feel a part of our group. He indicated to me that he valued and needed the “fellowship” that he got from meetings and other opportunities to hang out with sober drunks. One of the old timers in our group says that he never gives up on a drunk until he’s covered up. This is another way of saying that no one of us is any better or more deserving than any other. When a man or woman walks into a meeting, and says their name and that they are an alcoholic, they are guaranteed the “Right of Participation.” At District 8 meetings, which are very informal, it is easy to overlook or not consider the opinions of others when the “strong personalities” in the room tend to dominate the conversation. Great care needs to be taken to make sure that all are included. My practical experience in AA doesn’t allow me to readily identify with the GSC, World Services, etc... but since I’ve been attending Area 76 Business Assemblies, this notion of “Right of Participation” is graphically demonstrated each time a controversial discussion takes place. There are some limitations placed on this participation that are in the interest of time and redundancy,



AREA 76 NEWSLETTER

QUARTER 2, 2012

THE TRIBUTARY



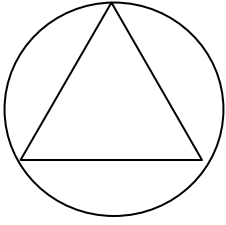
Concept IV Continued....nevertheless, anyone who needs to, gets to express their feelings and opinions. I participated in a side discussion at the last Area Assembly in which another member and I discussed the need for so many committees and in the interest of saving money maybe we should consider combining some of these committees. I have since consulted with a respected old timer on this subject and he told me that AA is and was never about saving money and whenever possible and practical, opportunities need to be created and maintained to allow drunks to participate. Finally, the best example of the "Right of Participation" is the very basic functions in any home group that allows a struggling newcomer an opportunity to participate. These newcomers sometimes believe that assigning them a job that they supposedly volunteered for is some kind of conspiracy. It probably is, and just might keep them sober because they don't want to screw up and miss their "Right to Participate". Mel W.

Q: I've heard it said that Bill always wished he could change the beginning of "How It Works" to read NEVER have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path." , rather than RARELY. Is this true?

A: No. A rumor that has persisted for years that Bill wished he could have changed 'rarely' to 'never'. But we know, through Bill's own words, that that is not the case. In a letter to Les V., dated 5/25/61, Bill stated: "Concerning your comment about the use of the word 'rarely' in Chapter Five of the Big Book. My recollection is that we did give a considerable thought at the time of writing. I think the main reason for the use of rarely was to avoid anything that would look like a claim of 100% result. Assuming, of course, that an alcoholic is willing enough and sane enough, there can be a perfect score on such character. But since willingness and sanity are such illusive and fluctuating values, we simply didn't like to be too positive. The medical profession could jump right down our throats...I do remember thinking about it a lot

Answer to previous Trivia questions:

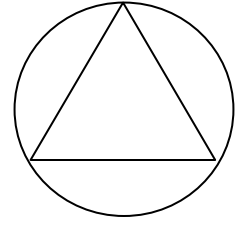
1. How many words in the 12 Steps? 200
2. What is Rule 62? Don't take yourself so damn serious.
3. Bill's Token of appreciation from his men? Good question! If you find the answer, let me know! I haven't found it yet!



AREA 76 NEWSLETTER

QUARTER 2, 2012

THE TRIBUTARY



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."

If you're anything like me, you've been to your home group business meeting or an Area Assembly and gotten incredibly frustrated over what seems like endless and unnecessary bickering over nothing. Many A.A. members tell me that the reason they don't go to business meetings is that they can't stand the hours of arguing over toilet paper. While I haven't actually attended that particular meeting, I do understand what they are talking about. As I've learned more about our A.A. principles, I've learned a deep respect and appreciation of our process – even if it comes to the toilet paper.

A.A. gives and cherishes individual liberty well beyond any other gathering of people I know of. I am of the opinion that our Fellowship is structured as the greatest democracy known to mankind. Consider that you are a member when you say you are a member. At that point, we hand you a voice, a vote, and a cup of coffee. Even if you are shaking so badly that you're spilling your coffee all over, we are confident enough of our Fellowship to entrust all Three Legacies into your shaky grasp. After the meeting, we'll even re-fill your coffee cup and welcome you to come to our business meeting. Let's say that business meeting was my home group's May meeting.

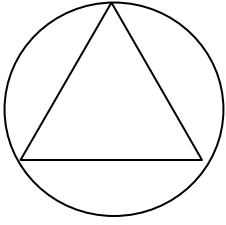
One of the items that came up under new business was a small change to the meeting format. This was, in essence, a petition for a redress of personal grievance. (Read that as, "a request to correct a problem.") The grievance was that, in the format, the meeting chairperson asks if anyone wants a phone list. What some people don't know is that our phone list is written on the back of the meeting schedule. If a newcomer or visitor attends our meeting, they don't know this, so they miss the opportunity to get a meeting schedule. A motion was made to change the words, "phone list" to "meeting schedule." Discussion followed, then a vote was taken. The vote was about split in half.

In most democracies, a simple majority (half plus one) is enough to carry a motion. But the commentary on Concept V tells us that a substantial unanimity (2/3 plus one) should guide our decisions (although if it is really important, we might even want to consider 3/4 plus one). After the split vote in my home group, the minority (those on the "losing" side of the vote) were asked to share. They believed that if the words were changed, people would get a meeting schedule, but newcomers wouldn't know that they could get a phone list. The discussion was re-opened, and it was realized that the motion wasn't the best answer. A new motion was made to have the wording changed from, "phone list" to "phone list/meeting schedule." Discussion was held on how this addressed both the newcomer, the visitor, and the member, and the motion passed with more than substantial unanimity.

The above example must have taken about half an hour. And while it may not have been the easiest or fastest way to do business, it makes clear that a "petition for the redress of personal grievances" is simply someone bringing up a problem they believe needs to be corrected. The "thorough-going debate" gives us all an opportunity to understand what the problem may be, offers potential solutions, then makes sure that solution is the best one we can come up with. This sometimes tedious and time consuming process protects A.A. from alcoholics like me (arrogant, self-centered, bulldozers who are usually in a hurry) in that every voice and every vote is equal in importance. And, just in case, we give the minority one more chance to better inform us. In other words, it forces me to be open-minded in spite of myself. That shaky guy in the corner has a voice and vote that is just as important as mine. No wonder we don't like business meetings!

Once we understand the tremendous spiritual significance of this process, we can see how it works at the level of our world services. If I think there is a problem, I have every right and every responsibility to petition the General Service Board. The "Right of Appeal" means that, if the Board does not agree with either my understanding of the problem or the solution, I can take my petition to the next level up. Because our service structure is based on committees responsible "to those they serve," I can appeal to the General Service Conference, the next level up in our upside-down structure. If the Conference also takes no action, I can appeal to the next level up, eventually taking my petition to the Groups themselves.

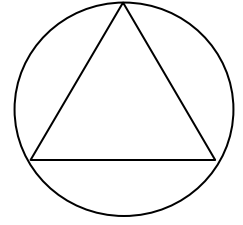
This ability to bring forward petitions, to appeal decisions to the next level, always with special attention paid to the minority opinion, is our "chief protection against an uninformed, misinformed, hasty or angry majority." Respecting the Rights of Petition and Appeal and listening closely to the minority is one way we can be sure that a loving God may express himself in our group conscience. It helps us remember that the highest you can get in Alcoholics Anonymous is sober. Brooke C.



AREA 76 NEWSLETTER

QUARTER 2, 2012

THE TRIBUTARY



On Concept VI...

Greetings! My name is David and I'm an alcoholic. I'm the current chairperson of the Area 76 Cooperating with the Professional Community (CPC) and Public Information (PI) committee. I wasn't an expert on our Concept VI for World Service before I agreed to write a little about it and in honesty, I'm no expert still but I did become at least a little more familiar since our last business assembly. The short form of Concept VI reads, "The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most service matters should be exercised by the Trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board." There is a long form of the Concept and several pages of explanation authored by Bill W. in our General Service Manual which is publicly available on the internet at http://www.aa.org/pdf/products/en_bm-31.pdf. I thought the best service I could provide by writing this piece for the Tributary was to draw more attention to our Concepts in general and I decided to do that by posting a few quotes from Bill W. These are all from the Service Manual. I suspect some of these quotes catch your eye - they sure did mine.

Page 24: "...AA groups find themselves unable to act decisively respecting world service affairs..." "We shall need to define clearly the several kinds of professional and financial skills that will always be required..."

Page 25: "...the future may reveal flaws that we do not yet envision..." "Why should the Trustees be given this very wide latitude of judgment and action?...They are the active guardians of our Twelve Traditions..." "Of course our objective is always a spiritual one, but this service aim can only be achieved by means of an effective business operation."

Page 26: "We have deliberately chosen the corporate form...because it is well known that the corporation is a far superior vehicle when it comes to the administration of policy and business..." "From top to bottom, our whole service structure indeed resembles that of a large corporation..." "...our Trustees must be given large powers if they are to effectively manage the principle affairs of AA."

If you are thinking that these thoughts of Bill's sound different when taken in context, I would agree. I don't have the experience to paint that context here, but I am working to learn more about the service structure after writing this. I found another publication from us that gave me some direction. It is also publicly available at http://aa.org/en_pdfs/smf-91_en.pdf and it reminds me of an inventory some of my home groups used to see how the Traditions were working at the group level. There is a lot for me to learn. I hope this information is useful to you and thanks for letting me serve! David B.