

**Presentations from the 2019 Western
Regional Alcoholics Anonymous
Service Assembly**

“Our Big Book – 80 Years and 71 Languages”

February 22nd-24th 2019

The Coast Capri Hotel

Kelowna B.C.

**Please be advised that this document is intended for AA
members only, Thank you.**

Western Canada Region Delegates:
“Our Big Book – 80 Years, 71 Languages”

Presenters:

Ray M. Area 91, Panel 69 Delegate

Noni M. Area 80, Panel 68 Delegate

Becky P. Area 78, Panel 68 Delegate

Gail P. Area 79, Panel 69 Delegate

“Our Big Book- 80 Years, 71 Languages”

Hello, my name is Ray M., Alcoholic, currently serving as Area 91 Delegate Panel 69. Greetings from Saskatchewan. Wow 80 years and 71 languages, Although the exact date on which the first Saskatchewan resident to find AA remains uncertain, it would appear that “the program” first arrived in our province in 1946. I am forever grateful that it was there when I needed it.

I was reading an article which said that the Navajo language Big Book was to be available on 14 CDs on June 1, 2018. It's only available as an audio recording because Navajo is a spoken Language. This edition was many years in the making. Being a First Nations person this caught my interest and I've checked into my own first language to see if there was ever an attempt made to translate The Big Book into Cree. A couple. Bill and Katie G. translated the Big Book into Cree and it was recorded on cassette. Past Delegates tell me these cassettes are in Area Archives somewhere, as a past Area 91 Archives Chair I was unable to find them, but I've sparked interest in our new Archives Chair. These Cassettes were passed around for people to listen to and an issue arose. The Cree language has many dialects and so the cassettes were shelved. I am still searching into this as I was part of the 60s scoop, I was told I spoke Cree as a youngster but lost the use of the language. I was raised in foster homes and had a few chips on my shoulders when I entered adulthood because of some bad experiences and alcohol became my friend, the 70s were a blur, sobriety came and I finally found the courage to search my past. Many blessings came as a result of this fantastic fellowship, You loved me till I could love myself as a result I have found I have siblings and had a family reunion 20 years ago, my wife Judy another blessing was amazed by how our characteristics and mannerisms which were so similar even though we had never met before. The Creator has blessed me beyond my wildest dreams thanks to this awesome fellowship we have in the Big Book.

I was impressed to see that all your committees have displays set up here, Our Area is just starting its 2nd term of the committee system, I have lots of

info to bring back to our committee system. Thank you for my sobriety and allowing me to be a part of your great fellowship here at WRAASA and Area 79. God Bless You all as we trudge the road to happy destiny.

Ray M.

Area 91 Delegate Panel 69

Hi everyone, my name is Noni and I'm an alcoholic. I am currently serving as the Panel 68 Area 80 Delegate for Manitoba. Thank you to the WRAASA Committee for all your hard work in making this weekend possible and for asking me to share on the topic The Big Book 80 Years and 71 languages.

I thought I might take this opportunity to share some of my personal experiences with a book that most surely saved my life.

I was told to buy a Big Book at my first meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. Having come to the conclusion that I could not quit drinking on my own, and having been told that if I kept on drinking I would be dead in two years, I was as willing as one could be when I walked into my first meeting. At the end of that meeting, a Women's meeting at the Winnipeg group, I was told to get a sponsor to help me with the steps, buy and read the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, and go to meetings. They also told me to read pages 86, 87 and 88 every day, in the morning and at night.

And that, my friends, was the beginning of my journey with the Big book, with my sponsor, and with my group. The beginning of my complete psychic change. So I took that book home and started reading those pages every morning and every night. It was a positive and oh so helpful way to start and end my day. In the morning, I asked the universe, as I did not yet have a God of my understanding, to direct my thinking. To keep me from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives. At night, I reviewed my day and identified areas where I could do better. Then I went to sleep going through a list of things I was grateful for, starting with my sobriety. A short while later, I added the suggestion to pause, when

agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. And finally, after hearing a speaker say "God is in your heart", I started praying and saying to myself throughout the day 'thy will be done'. As the Big Book says on page 88 "We alcoholics are undisciplined. So we let God discipline us". Let go and let God, my sponsor would say. Which leads me to the part of my story where I uncovered the God of my understanding.

My sponsor encouraged me to attend a Winter Conference in Winnipeg when I was less than a month sober. I remember sitting in the front row and feeling really uncomfortable. It was when the speaker said "God is in your heart", that my goosebumps started. I realized in that moment that God is what I needed to fill my heart. I'd felt for many years that I had a void in my heart and looking back now I realize I had been trying to fill that void with men and with alcohol. Of course this was only the beginning of a God consciousness that continued to grow as I read the Big Book and applied the steps in my life. As the book says on page 45 "Lack of power, that was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a Power greater than ourselves". It says that "deep down in every man, woman, and child, is the fundamental idea of God". It goes on to say "faith in some kind of God was a part of our make-up, just as much as the feeling we have for a friend. Sometimes we had to search fearlessly, but He was there. He was as much a fact as we were. We found the Great Reality deep down within us" or as Joe put it that night "God is in your heart".

This was confirmed to me at every meeting I attended when someone read from How it Works, "(a) That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives (b) That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism, and (c) That God could and would if He were sought. This Book helped me to find the God of my understanding and relief from my alcoholism".

I started to attend meetings daily. One of the first readings from the Big Book that I heard at a meeting that still resonates with me is the "Acceptance" reading from page 417. "Acceptance is the answer to all my problems today. When I am disturbed, it is because I find some person, place, thing, or situation – some fact of my life – unacceptable to me, and I

can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing, or situation as being exactly the way it is supposed to be at this moment. Nothing, absolutely nothing, happens in God's world by mistake. Until I could accept my alcoholism, I could not stay sober; unless I accept life completely on life's terms, I cannot be happy. I need to concentrate not so much on what needs to be changed in the world as on what needs to be changed in me and in my attitudes."

I had hit my bottom when my husband kicked me to the curb and I had to leave my family home of 23 years and go find an apartment. He told me I had sucked the life out of him. I was to see my nineteen year old son once a week for dinner. I now had a divorce to contend with and a new and lonely life to accept. I had to accept life on life's terms and move on with changing what needed to be changed in me and in my attitudes. And that's what I did.

I read the Big Book, attended daily meetings, and met with Cate once a week. slowly but surely moving through the steps. As the Big Book states "Highly competent psychiatrists who have dealt with us have found it sometimes impossible to persuade an alcoholic to discuss his situation without reserve". Well, I had been to a psychiatrist and as you might guess, I could not be honest. In fact, I lied about how much I was drinking.

As the Big Book goes on to say, "But the ex-problem drinker who has found this solution, who is properly armed with facts about himself, can generally win the entire confidence of another alcoholic in a few hours. My sponsor shared her story with me at our first meeting and one alcoholic sharing with another, she secured my confidence where others had failed.

She told me that we are only as sick as our secrets, encouraging me to open up to her as she helped me through the steps. I did my Step 5 with my sponsor sitting on a Lake Winnipeg beach half way between our two cabins, which coincidentally were a short walk apart.

While reading "The Doctor's Opinion" I remember thinking to myself, why isn't this information given to us when we are in school. Knowing that an alcoholic could not have a drink without developing the phenomenon of craving, might have given me a clue as to why I couldn't drink like others. The book nailed it when it states "They are restless, irritable, and

discontented, unless they can again experience the sense of ease and comfort which comes at once by taking a few drinks—drinks which they see others taking with impunity. After they have succumbed to the desire again, as so many do, and the phenomenon of craving develops, they pass through the well-known stages of a spree, emerging remorseful, with a firm resolution not to drink again. My sprees, my remorsefulness and attempts to not drink again, had sucked the life out of my husband and landed me in these rooms.

But, as the Big Book tells us on page 83 in the Promises. “we are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. More than anything I wanted serenity and peace and so on I went, never looking back.

A card with the Promises on it was given to me by a woman I met on a sober cruise when I was about eight months sober. I hung on to that card with hope, never knowing that all of these promises would come to be. I was able to thank Joe, the man who changed my life by saying that “God is in your heart”, as he was doing the Joe and Charlie Big Book Study workshop on this cruise. His wife gave me a list of prayers from the Big Book, which I treasure to this day. So many helpful people in Alcoholics Anonymous, so much love and support.

On the one year anniversary of being kicked to the curb, I woke up with a sudden desire for a drink. I went to a meeting and shared about it being the anniversary of my marriage breakdown and that I wasn't sure if I was happy or sad about it, but I just felt like having a drink on that day. I think you know where this is going. I toughed it out until later in the evening and without stopping to think it through, I got up and went to the nearest bar. I thought “I'll just drink for this one evening and then I'll quit again”. Hah! A ten day spree ensued. Ten days of always succumbing to the sickening hangovers by starting yet another night of drinking. When I cancelled my dinner with my son, he knew something was wrong and came downtown to my apartment under the guise of bringing my mail. I was on the couch shaking and sick and told him to take a good look. I said “you don't ever want to be like this” as he looked at me helplessly.

The next day I dragged myself to the Keystone Conference, a Conference held in Winnipeg every fall. I just wanted to be immersed in Alcoholics Anonymous. I sat at the back of the room because I was still sick. When the sobriety countdown started I knew I needed to be honest and admit, mostly to myself, that I was ready to get sober. So when it got to 24 hours I stood up not thinking that I'd be called to the front of the room to accept a book. Coincidentally the book was presented by my sponsor, the chair of the conference that year. She was well aware of my spree. A few days later, once I detoxed at home, not something I'd recommend by the way, I returned to my group and offered to give the book back. They said, no that book was meant for you. Hang onto it and don't drink. I haven't had a drink since that day, November 7th 2006. I have it here with me, with all the encouraging words from the attendees of that conference. I am sure they did not look at me that night and think, hey here's delegate material.

The reading from the Big Book the night of my first meeting back was from page 85. "It is easy to let up on the spiritual program of action and rest on our laurels. We are headed for trouble if we do, for alcohol is a subtle foe. We are not cured of alcoholism. What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition". Bingo. It was as if the reading was meant for me. Or as my sponsor would say "Is that odd or is that God". That reading spoke to me that night and reminded me that I must maintain my spiritual condition to earn my daily reprieve. I will always remember that reading, and I will always remember that last disgusting hangover, because I never want to go back.

So I got back on track, went through the steps again and when I got to Step 12 I knew I must give back to this program that had saved my life. So I started sponsoring women and reading the Big Book with them each time we met, sharing my experience strength and hope. I began to notice that every time I read the book there was something that I needed to hear that day. I had asked God to give me the words that would help the other person, but I always got something as well. And when my sponsees thanked me after our visit, I would always say "No, thank you" just as my sponsor had done with me. As the Big Book says in

“Working with Others”, “Life will take on new meaning. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends—this is an experience you must not miss”. To see the tears turn to smiles is an experience you don’t want to miss.

If you are still struggling, the solution is in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. It has been saving lives in 71 languages for 80 years. It saved my life. Please, let it save yours.

Our Big Book - 80 Years, 71 Languages

Hi, I’m a recovering alcoholic and my name is Becky P. Thank you so much for inviting me to your WRAASA. My talk is divided into 3 parts: Our big book, 80 Years, and 71 languages. Our Big Book has become so dear to me....I owe so much of my peace of mind and happiness to the words on these pages. Let me share with you a few of my favorites: Pages 38, 417, 129, 83, 552, 568. These pages are from the 4th Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

When I first came into AA meetings, I remember one fellow who was constantly quoting pages. He would talk briefly, then always end with prescribing that I “**read page such-n-such**”. I would go home and read that page...he got my curiosity up. I later learned that he just pulled a number from out of his head for no particular reason: it got people reading the Big Book! I had to laugh at myself...because it worked.

- The very first time I read anything that got my attention was the story about the jaywalker. That “*foolish chap having queer ideas about fun*” actually described my insane desire to continue to drink, despite the progressively horrific consequences. That’s on page 38
- Again, my first reading of page 417 (p.449 in 3rd ed.) about acceptance has been the most meaningful paragraph of my sobriety. I quote it more

often than any other. It explains the best way I know of achieving any kind of peace of mind and contentment. By staying focused on 'the log in my eye and not the splinter in yours' as one friend described it.

"Acceptance is the answer to all my problems today.....Nothing, absolutely nothing happens in God's world by mistake" This also helps me to let go

- Then there is the true essence of *how* Alcoholics Anonymous works for me, described on page 129, by that old goldminer. He suddenly realizes that his pick has struck an endless supply of gold but it's only available to him if he *"mines it for the rest of his life and insists on giving away the entire product."* I can't give away what I don't have. That's another way of saying that I can't stay still in AA, I must keep moving forward or pay the price of not moving
- Another favorite passage is the Promises on pages 83-86. I've heard sponsors tell sponsees to read those 3 pages every single day, to good effect. Reading all the way to page 88 – end of chapter - is also recommended
- ***Freedom From Bondage* (pages 550-553)** worked wonders for me on a trip with my husband a few years back. I'd heard that someone read that chapter every week of his sobriety; that impressed me. During our 12 hour drive across Canada something happened to create such irritability in my mind, by the time we reached the hotel I was furious. I recalled that chapter, so I locked myself in the bathroom to read ***Freedom From Bondage***. By the time I opened the door, I couldn't remember why I was so angry. It was miraculous
- And finally, I am so fond of Herbert Spencer's quote on page 568. I encourage you all to *"read page 568"* and see what you think. This helps me to overcome fear

Eighty years: We've 'come a long way baby' from those days back in 1935, when Dr. Bob and Bill sat to talk about their common affliction in Akron, Ohio. Our growth came as a result of a lot of hard work by many people.

And by a whole bunch of us agreeing that ‘our common welfare *should* come first’that our primary *purpose is* to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic.....and that our *ultimate authority* is a loving God.

To quote Bill about the sudden growth spurt, from pg.152 in *Language of the Heart*:

“The expansion of Alcoholics Anonymous soon became nothing less than staggering. Reaching out into Canada, the U.S. possessions, and numbers of foreign lands, we got under full swing. This foreign development brought us a whole new set of dilemmas to solve. Each new beachhead had to go through its flying blind and its pioneering period just as we had done in the United States. We ran into language barriers, so more and more of our literature was translated into other tongues....Serving the foreign groups has therefore become a major activity, though we’ve scarcely scratched the total problem so far. If A.A’s Headquarters had never done anything else, this effort alone is worth many times its cost.”

We were – and are, so very blessed to have Bill and Bob at the helm, making mistakes and learning from them. They had the sense to ask for help from others (like Bernard Smith) to create a structure able to expand... from Akron to New York,... from the ‘States to Canada,...and beyond! With digital technology in full bloom, we continue to expand further north and further south... more than we ever could have imagined back when AA was first getting started.

I recall an afternoon 30-some years ago, in early sobriety when I first heard that our Big Book had been translated into Russian. Three thoughts came to mind: First, that we *can pass on the message of recovery* to still suffering alcoholics that far away. Secondly, that politics have no place in AA, and *third, this is where my 7th contribution dollars go....to actually carry the message all over the world!*

In the 2018 Final Conference Report (p.9) Mary C., who sits (and works) at the International Desk of our General Service Office reported that.....there

is AA activity in over 180 different countries. And.....there are independent General Service Offices in over 60 countries around the world. This map of *A.A. Around the World* shows only a few of those countries where AA has become active.

Mary goes on to say *"It has been a wonderful experience to see how AA thrives in different languages and cultures, and to experience the universality of AA principles. At some point during almost every trip our hosts tell us how much our visit means to the fellowship in their country to have this tangible presence, to truly realize 'we are not alone.'"*

Our Alcoholics Anonymous book has recently been translated into Navajo. We are reaching out to our First Nations communities. At the 68th General Service Conference, the Remote Communities Committee was *finally* accepted into our structure, as part of the Treatment and Accessibilities Committee. It's a beginning.

71 Languages. So this is where I tell you - I have knowledge of many languages, but I am master of none. I know zero French [bonjour], I flunked out of German in college, and have lots of trouble with Spanish.... I can discuss the English language.

If I were to call myself a master of something, it would be in Metalinguistics. That's a long word that explains the communication *beyond* words. It's how we communicate: our tone of voice, inflection, rate of speech, volume and body language that goes with the message. Metalinguistics is present in *all* languages.

I learned about Metalinguistics as a Speech Language Pathologist; it was the favorite part of my job. I worked with children who don't understand non-verbal cues, body language, timing, volume or inflection. It was amazing to me that some people don't get this. There's a sign in a school that says: *"Thirty years from now, no one will recall what kind of car you drove, or remember what kind of house you lived in, but everyone will remember how you made them feel"* – that's what metalinguistics is about.

All the communication that happens *around* the words....that got me to thinking:

When I open my mouth to speak, listeners are already getting a lot of information based on – *what my body is doing... and what my face looks like.* *How am I moving my body – am I relaxed or tense, moving quickly or slowly, it all conveys a message.*

Do I have an approachable posture or am I standing with my arms crossed, bracing for something. Do I slouch in my chair in meetings, acting bored when speakers share? Is my body conveying *compassion or contempt*?

Am I giving someone those non-verbal negative vibes by coughing, fidgeting, rolling my eyes or looking at the ceiling when a speaker is long-winded, or off topic? It wasn't too long ago when *I was that person:* talking too long, relishing the spotlight, getting derailed by the wanderings of my newly sober brain....and yet fellow members were patient with me. They loved me until I could recognize these flaws

Is my hand outstretched to greet the newcomer, before any words come out? And when I do reach out, *am I in a hurry, quick to get it over with, or am I moving with intention to convey a sincere welcome?*

And my face – *is it showing the love, courtesy and welcome that I was given* when I first walked into a meeting? My friend often said to me: “Are you happy, Becky? Yes? Then tell your face!” Smiling helps a lot. I try to remember to smile before I walk into a room, especially if I don't feel like it.

Being the first to say 'hi' has always impressed me...so I try to do that, with every person I see. And especially in meetings....whether I'm the first to sit down, or the last one to arrive.

When I do use my words, *is my tone of voice one of authority... or kindness.* How is my volume – am I loud enough...too loud, or do I mumble? Do I *talk at* people or do I *share with* people?

In closing, I will read my Reconstructed Responsibility Pledge: *“I am responsible....when anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the A.A. outstretched hand and face of kindness always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.”*

Thank you for your time, and thank you all for my sobriety. Becky P, Area 78 Delegate, Panel 68, Alberta, NT, W.Nunavut

Hi everyone – my name is Gail and I am an alcoholic. I am also honoured to serve Area 79 as your Panel 69 Delegate. It is wonderful to see so many familiar faces here tonight and welcome to District 71, Area 79 for this 2019 WRAASA and thank you Cate, our Western Canada Regional Trustee. Also a big thank you to Tommi, the local chairperson for this WRAASA committee and all of her hardworking volunteers. A warm welcome to our visitors and guests from all over the western region. I am sure we are in for a great weekend.

When I think about the topic for tonight’s session and our 69th General Service Conference: “Our Big Book – 80 Years, 71 Languages” I am reminded of how enduring our Big Book really is. A quote from the little booklet “*A Brief History of the Big Book.....*” “So, this somewhat shaky, often fearful group of men and women somehow brought to publication, on April 10, 1939, the book *Alcoholics Anonymous.*” The rest..... as they say is history. Over 38 million copies of our Big Book (in English) have been distributed.

Also, from the same booklet: “The first reference to the Spanish translation was in a memo regarding A.A. literature outside the United States dated January 17, 1952.”

Bill cited the Frank M. Spanish translation in A.A. Comes of Age, published in 1957. It was reported in 1955 that the Spanish translation of the Big Book, formerly available from Puerto Rico had been reprinted by A.A.

Publishing, Inc. and for sale for \$3.20 per copy. For a number of years several Spanish translations of the Big Book were in circulation. When the General Service Office hired the first Spanish Services coordinator, he reviewed the existing translations. After some collaboration, a version that was faithful to the English version was circulated to the member countries of CIATAL, the Civil Ibero-american Commission on Translation and Adaptation of A.A. Literature, for comment. After feedback from the reviewers, A.A. World Services, Inc. decided in 1986 to publish the existing translation of the Spanish Big Book exclusively.

The history of the French translation of our Big Book comes from the French-speaking province of Quebec, Canada when an A.A. member from Quebec named Jacques received permission to prepare the translation.

Since then, of course, we now have a whopping 71 translations. The latest of which is the oral translation of our Big Book to Navajo (which is primarily an oral language) and available as a 14 CD compilation. For those of you who haven't read it, there's a wonderful article intitled "*One Who Cannot Stop Drinking*" in the summer 2018 Box 459. It's well worth the read.

Our Area 79 past delegate Jade when she was our literature committee chairperson, created with the help of her committee in Panel 65, a banner with photos of all of the translations. In Panel 67 we added three more on a separate poster and hopefully in Panel 69 we can update it again to include photos of all of the translations. This banner and poster are usually on the wall at our quarterlies and assemblies near the literature table. It is wonderful to see them laid out like that and I remember talking to a young man a while back and he was looking at it and asked if we had the Korean translation. As soon as I could, I contacted Vancouver Intergroup and they did indeed have two copies. He eventually went in and bought them both to take to some members of his family in Korea. Another of my favorite memories about foreign language big books was last panel when I was the Area 79 literature committee chairperson, I was asked by a volunteer at William Head penitentiary in Victoria if I would be able to get him a copy

of the book in Polish. I ordered it and gave it to the volunteer. He related to me later that the fellow who received it had tears in his eyes when he it was given to him.

Now for some of my history with this book. I was given a Big Book by someone in Al-Anon in the summer of 1983. I read this book from cover to cover a few times in the ensuing 2 years. I saw most people I knew – family, friends, boyfriends, etc. but it took me the whole two years of reading this book, crying, spilling wine on it to finally see that it was about me. My alcoholism, this book was for me, no one else! So very shaky and very fearful, I made the call to our Central office in Victoria and asked for help. I started to read my book with new eyes and continue to read and study it. I know we've all heard ourselves or someone else say "I've read this book a thousand times and never noticed (and whatever it is we notice for the first time). I still see things and I am sure I have not seen before. I think that is the way it's meant to be. I pray that I never get tired of reading it.

I realize that I know so very little compared to all there is to know about Alcoholics Anonymous, and I find that I learn more every day that I am trudging this road. I learn a little something from everyone I come in contact with. I believe it has been this way since day one of sobriety, but the real lessons (or as my service sponsor likes to tell me – character building), have come with my involvement in General service. I first became a GSR in 2007 and have been in the middle of the herd ever since. I came into the program in 1985. I did all the usual homegroup and intergroup stuff and loved being sober and in AA. In early 2000, I decided that I needed a change and walked out of my homegroup one morning with the thought that I would find a new homegroup. I didn't. It took me two and a half years and the final realization that I was crazier and my life was more unmanageable than when I was drinking. I was angry, selfish, self-centered and depressed. When this realization struck me, I made the decision to go back to AA that night. During that whole time away, I didn't read, didn't pray, didn't give back, didn't have a sponsor and didn't contribute a dime to our 7th Tradition. I had thought for the most part that

I really didn't need Alcoholics Anonymous any more. I don't know why I didn't drink - but I didn't. I was likely pretty close though and I made the commitment to service right then and there. That was March 2003. I don't ever want it to be easy for me to walk out of this program again. I have a home group, service commitments, a sponsor (who is also my service sponsor) and I sponsor a few women. My first sponsor used to say "you can't keep it unless you give it away, you can't give it away unless you've got it and you can't get it unless you are in AA." I'm staying!!

So, back to the Big Book which is what I am supposed to be talking about. It amazes me how this book has stayed the same (at least the first 164 pages) and been a beacon of hope for the still suffering alcoholic and how it remains our "text" for the members of our fellowship. I was talking with my brother a while ago and he was talking about how he was thinking about talking to someone who might need our program. I asked him what he was going to do and he said, very simply: "read The Doctor's Opinion". So, guess what I did..... I went and read The Doctor's Opinion too.

I have a couple of copies of the Big Book and try to keep my original Third Edition, given to me in 1983, in a safe place. When I look through it, I am reminded of those first few years and find highlighting and notes to remind me of where I came from.

When I pause to think about the true miracle of our program and our Big Book, I am so very humbled to think that two men, mere mortals, did this, firstly for themselves and ultimately for millions of us around the world. My gratitude is immeasurable. I know, beyond a doubt that I would not be alive today were it not for my journey to Alcoholics Anonymous and my commitment thereafter to stay sober one day at a time. I know that I can give back only a tiny bit of what has been so freely and longingly given to me.

I was looking for inspiration for this talk this evening and found this introduction to a Grapevine Booklet entitled "The Co-Founders of AA Dr. Bob and Bill W." Dr. Bob passed away on November 16, 1950 and Bill W.

died on January 24, 1971. "Beyond the sorrow of the moment, Bill and Dr. Bob remain for us what they were in the years when AA came into being through their leadership: symbols of firmness of purpose and serenity. We have all partaken in some measure of the sobriety they achieved and the message they carried until their final moments among us.

Full comprehension of their achievements is difficult to set down in black and white. Both men filled the vacuums of their own souls with their "language of the heart" to find sobriety, and then passed on what they had found to hundreds of thousands (perhaps millions by now) of other alcoholics. Each of us, in the lonely universe of individual consciousness, must reckon what he or she has taken of the gift that the Higher Power gave to Bill and Dr. Bob, the gift that they shared with us. The measure of our debt is, of course, drawn somewhere near the limits of gratitude itself, in the infinity of love."

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to be of some small service this weekend.

With love in service, Gail P. – Area 79, Panel 69 Delegate

**Western Canada District Committee
Members:**

“Yesterday’s World - Our Legacies Begin”

Presenters:

Barton F. DCM Area 78

Krysten P. DCM Area 79

Lorelei L. DCM Area 91

Diane O. DCM Area 79

YESTERDAY'S WORLD OUR LEGACY BEGINS

My name is Lorelei, I am an alcoholic. I'm from Nanaimo BC, District 7 which includes Ladysmith, Gabriola, Cedar and Nanaimo south.

What a privilege to share with you all tonight.

Thinking and writing on this topic is an exercise in going within to find my passion for Alcoholics Anonymous. Not only did the program save my life....twice, it gave me my soul back.

My Husband and Partner passed when I was 7 years sober. I faded away from my life and AA and became what is known as a dry drunk.

When I finally made it back to the program after many attempts, I joined a home group and got a Sponsor.

Without me knowing, my Sponsor put me exactly in the middle of Service. She encouraged me to say yes when opportunity came and I've been in the middle of AA ever since

I'm overwhelmed at times in my new service position as DCM. What fuels my passion is the continual learning of the Legacy handed to us in 1955 in St. Louis.

"Go to the literature " has taken on new meaning for me as I've had to grow in my recovery in order to fulfill the responsibilities described in the service manual. I am extremely glad I stuck around long enough to see the deeper meaning behind our Traditions and Concepts.

Bob and Bill in my opinion were truly plugged in from a Spiritual point of view. I continually feel blown away at what these two guys created.

After wading through the concepts and reading Bill designed a Spiritual program with a business model, I see it as a never ending loop, fully self sustaining, including the ability to adapt.

Only we could screw it up. Faith without works still stands today.

I listened to a Sister AA break down in tears the other day, no one coming out to help for an AA event.

She got her volunteers that night. She was so uplifted, big smile ear to ear. She told me later she had prayed like mad that morning for help.

That story came to mind as I was writing this piece.....did Bill and Bob have to fight that hard for help?

They had so few while we have so many. Has our societal norms of entitlement filtered into the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous, having gratitude take a back seat?

Maybe our large numbers provide a different kind of anonymity where we pass the buck; someone else will do it.

One thing that hasn't changed is that we are still in the business of saving drunks. Our passion about that I think, is our attraction.

A lot gets put on Sponsorship to guide folks to their gratitude in action.

How inspired are the Sponsors?

As you can tell by now I think way too much.

So I will leave you with this

Look what just two guys created.

My name is Diane and I'm an alcoholic. It is an honour and a privileged to serve as DCM for BC Yukon Area 79 in District 70. I'd like to thank the WRASSA Committee for inviting me to participate in this panel today. I'm truly grateful to have this opportunity to share on our three legacies and their beginnings.

I love Alcoholics Anonymous. AA changes people, and it has since its beginning in 1935 when a New York Stock Broker met a Physician in Akron Ohio on Mother's Day.

When I think of our first Legacy recovery, our 12 steps, I think of the ideas and principles that were passed to Bill or experienced by our earliest members. I also think of the impact our non-alcoholic friends had in the formation of our program of recovery in this fellowship to which we all belong.

On Dec 15, 1934, Ebby T gave Bill a copy of William James book, "The Varieties of Religious Experience" This book deeply inspired Bill by revealing to him 3 key points to recovery. The first was complete defeat in a

vital area of life. The second was admission of that defeat. And the third, an appeal to a higher power for help.

These were also the same key points impressed upon Rowland Hazard in his second visit to Carl Jung, which Bill writes about in our Big Book on page 27 when Dr. Jung tells Roland that he has never seen one single case recover where the state of the alcoholic mind existed to the extent that it does in Roland. “Is there no exception?” Roland asks.....

The doctor says “Yes, here and there, once in a while, alcoholics have what are called vital spiritual experiences. To me, these occurrences are phenomena. They appear to be in the nature of huge emotional displacements and rearrangements. Ideas, emotions, and attitudes which were once the guiding forces of the lives of these men are suddenly cast to one side, and a completely new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them.....

Now that’s a 12th step promise! And I say that with a huge amount of gratitude for Carl Jung and William James for their knowledge and idea that we must have the necessary psychic change in order to recover from alcoholism.

The Oxford groups also played a role in the formation of our steps. Many of our early AA members were also from the Oxford groups of that time. Ebby had sobered up with the help of Rowland Hazard and it was impressed upon him to carry the message to another suffering alcoholic. He made his visit to Bill in late 1934 and Bill finally sobered on Dec 11 1934.

In the beginning, the recovery program consisted of only 6 steps, which were passed to new members by word of mouth. Bill increased these to our current 12 steps of recovery with the intention of adding clarity and closing loopholes that the alcoholics were wiggling through. In Dec 1938 the first version of our 12 steps was written at Clinton Street.

Since our first publishing of our Book 80 years ago, our Legacy of recovery has helped millions of alcoholics recover from alcoholism worldwide and continues to do so.

Standing here today, I can tell you that I've been emotionally re-arranged by our 12 steps, they continue to help me grow and change. The woman I am sharing with you today is in a different place spiritually than I was one year ago today, ... And next month, I'll change some more.... If.... I continue self-examination, surrender of defects, prayer, mediation and carrying this message of recovery to the still suffering alcoholic. A lot of my life is self-correcting through our steps. Often I do the wrong thing first, in order to learn to do the right thing.

That is also the experience of our earliest members in finding what works for our groups, relations with the general public and AA as a whole. Our fellowship had its learning curve and made many errors as well. Thankfully, we are self-correcting and our legacy of Unity, Our 12 traditions allows us to correct ourselves. These 12 traditions keep us spiritually united.

I was listening to a speaker one time talk on the Traditions, it was Sandy B. who is one of my favorites. He was acting out a skit, like he was having a conversation about AA with a non-alcoholic that understands large corporations and non-profits. The man asks him: So how do raise money for AA? Oh, we don't do take outside money, we are self-supporting through the voluntary contributions of our own members. Well, what about your membership requirements?? We don't have any.... The only requirement is a desire to stop drinking. So who's in charge, who governs AA?? God, as he expresses himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are servants. Nobody governs. Well you must do a lot of promotion? No, we rely on attraction. We don't do any promotion.... Well what does AA think about.....? We have no opinion on outside issues. We don't want to engage in any controversy. I laughed when I heard Sandy B give this talk because to a non AA it sounds backward to how our world operates... but it works for us...

I'm thankful for the errors we made and the lesson we learned.

Bill talks about our strenuous trial and error in this Grapevine article from October 1947:

He says: Two years ago, my old friends urged that I try to sum up our experience of living and working together: that I try to state those definite principles of group conduct which had then quite clearly emerged from a decade of strenuous trial and error. In the spirit of our original Twelve Steps, and strictly within the ample proofs of our experience, I made the following tentative attempt: Twelve Points to Assure Our Future, an Alcoholics Anonymous Tradition of Relations:

He goes on to say...Our AA experience has taught us.... And he writes the 12 traditions

Which it has... experience has taught us! We share our experience not just in our steps, but in our traditions as well. At the end of the article, Bill goes on to say, "To sum up, for thousands of alcoholics yet to come, AA does have an answer. But there is one condition. We must, at all costs, preserve our essential unity, it must be unbreakably secure. Without permanent unity there can be little lasting recovery for anyone. Hence our future absolutely depends upon the creation and observance of a sound group tradition. First things will always need to be first: humility before success, and unity before fame".

I want to talk about our 3rd Legacy of service and Bill's delivery of that 3rd Legacy to our fellowship in 1950.

In December 1950, Bill wrote: Being someday perishable, Dr. Bob and I now wish to deliver to the members of AA their third Legacy. Since 1938 we and our friends have been holding it in trust. This legacy is the general headquarters services of Alcoholics Anonymous – The Alcoholic Foundation, the AA Book and the Grapevine, and the AA General Office. These are the principal services which have enabled our society to function and grow. Acting on behalf of all, Dr. Bob and I ask that you- the members of AA- now assume guidance of these services and guard them well. The future growth, indeed the very survival of Alcoholics Anonymous may one day depend on how prudently these arms of service are administered in years to come. "

And I'd say they've been administered well... look at this room!!

I want to talk about a non-alcoholic friend and Class A trustee Bernard Smith. I have a soft spot in my heart for him, and what he did for our AA Service structure. He had a love for AA like we members do. He understood the spiritual basis of our recovery program and believed in it as well. Bill relied on him for many years for his wise counsel and ran many questions and ideas by him. Bernard Smith was a man that did all he could to preserve the unity of our fellowship. He also did much to assure our very survival and he was one of the principal architects of our General Service Conference. What he has done for AA speaks loudly. One of my favorite readings in our Service Manual from page S20- Why do we need a Conference? (Read page S20)

In closing, I think it's miraculous how our 3 Legacies came to be... divinely inspired one would think...for all those people to cross paths with Bill....

But I want to share with you what the world thinks of AA. I have this book written by Time magazine and it is titled: 80 Days That Changed The World. It was written at the beginning of this century by a group of writers that were looking for the 80 most important days in the prior 100 years. From 1901 to 2001. So if you take 365 days and times it by 100 years, that's a lot of years. And if you turn to page 25 in the book there is a story about an alcoholic stock broker from New York who meets an Akron physician. The broker, on a business trip to Akron and you guys know the story....

But for the beginning of Alcoholics Anonymous to be included in this publication as that day being one of the eighty most important days in the world in the last 100 years! That's incredible. That's what the world thinks of AA!!

Well, I think AA is incredible. I love Alcoholics Anonymous and our 3 Legacies of Unity, Recovery and Service..

It's been a privilege to come up here and share with you today. I want to thank you.

Western Canada Area Chairs:

*“Today’s World – Demonstrating Integrity,
Anonymity and Service”*

Presenters:

Mike M. Chair Area 78

Scott G. Chair Area 91

Don M. Chair Area 80

Rio D. Chair Area 79

“Today's World”

Integrity, Anonymity, Service

Mike M. : Chair Area 78

What a privilege and a pleasure to be here sharing this weekend with you. When I hear the words "today's world" I immediately ask myself is today's world, as we know it in AA, really any different essentially from many years ago? My thinking leans towards how things have changed today. But really many of today's problems were present back then. They had other addictions, misconceptions about God, race, color and creed issues. Maybe we have more shades of those distractions, with the internet and social media. But the basic concept, in our fellowship, of one alcoholic sharing with another, remains the same.

The “magic” I call it, in the comfort one alcoholic can find from sharing their feelings with another alcoholic. I believe that common thread and the traditions have kept Alcoholics Anonymous alive and well for over the past 80 years.

This must cause us to be more vigilant with following our Traditions, to ensure that the future of AA remains intact.

Integrity:

When I looked up the definition of integrity. It brought up words such as righteousness, or right thinking. Of high moral character or having high moral consideration for others. Maybe even “responsible treatment of our fellow man.” I describe it as “that combination of love, compassion and understanding towards others. I am slowly learning to live and act with more integrity, as a result of practicing the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous”, in my life.

In today's world I must strive to learn more, to use new methods in how to serve my fellows and Alcoholics Anonymous.

Anonymity: In pondering today's topics, what concerns me most is anonymity. Yes, regarding today's world, but more so, the basic spiritual principle of anonymity. Not the anonymity in giving one's name.

I believe that our spiritual foundation of anonymity is the binding force, so to speak, that creates the growth or maturity towards a mindset of integrity. Therefore, anonymity is the catalyst which starts our metamorphosis towards righteous behaviors, or “right thinking”.

Towards functioning with integrity. **As Bill put it** in AA Comes of Age; “Self-sacrifice is the price of admission towards living true anonymity in my new AA way of living.” “Sacrifices for others and sacrifices for the common welfare. Our ambitions had to be put in Check for the common good.” **He said;** “Powered by alcohol and self-justification many of us have pursued the phantoms of self-importance and money. Then came AA. We faced about and found ourselves on a new road where direction signs said never a word about power, fame, or wealth. The new signs read; “This way to sanity and serenity”. **Bill went on** “that the spiritual substance of anonymity is sacrifice.”

I struggle with that thought. Today in my humanness. My basic instinct is for self-preservation, which in my disease has led me in the wrong direction. That of self-seeking and self-serving. But now, with the not so gentle prodding of a sponsor, a knowledge from working the steps, and the fellowship of alcoholics anonymous, I am learning about sacrifice. I am learning how to build that strong spiritual foundation. My existence today, well the future of AA depends on my spiritual foundation... My spiritual condition.

If I can do anything to help the newcomer find hope, or to find comfort, I must help him build a strong spiritual foundation. Yes, that begins with that surrender moment, I call it, where I admitted finally that I was not God. The beginning of my new spiritual being, where I became teachable. Now with all these age of technology distractions, we actually have more tools to practice integrity. More ways that we can guide the still suffering alcoholic. From online meetings to remote communities, to e-books and Public Service Announcements, we can reach out more effectively than ever before. Yet these will test our knowledge and ability to follow the traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Understanding anonymity and practicing self-sacrifice will strengthen this new foundation on which mine and the newcomer’s sobriety depends. As

members of this fellowship, it is said that we are like tiny grains of sand on a beach. We are each unique and very different, when looked at closely. Yet together we form this firm footing. Like the moist part of the beach, closer to the water. When I think about this, I imagine the water as the presence of God in my life. The farther away from that presence, the looser the sand gets. Or my "Spiritual Condition", until if I stray too far, the wind can even pick up the sand or erode my spiritual condition.

I must continue to put others before myself. To practice little moments of sacrifice, or shall I say, anonymity. So, what can I do each day, as a member of AA to practice self-sacrifice or anonymity? By joining a group, I have already become just a small part of something greater than I. When I attend meetings, I am but one small part in that collection of faces that exhibit the spirit of anonymity. When I join another member on a twelve-step call, we put aside our own agenda to focus on providing some hope for the still suffering alcoholic. When at a group conscience or area committee meeting, I can put aside my illegitimate pride for the benefit of the group, I do so in the spirit of anonymity. Our groups too practice anonymity when their group conscience is guided by the common concern for preserving the future of the group and thus the future of AA, through the traditions. Maybe the many different distractions of today are but a test of my ability to ensure the survival of AA. **Bill said** that "just as sacrifice meant survival for the individual, so did sacrifice mean unity and survival for the group, AND for AA's entire fellowship". He said that the Twelve Traditions are little less than a list of sacrifices that our experience has taught us, that we **MUST** make Individually and collectively, if AA itself is to stay alive and healthy."

My past experiences are actually the tools that I can use to build upon my spiritual foundation.

My anonymity is the mortar that binds and strengthens this foundation. I am but part of a greater entity, with one common purpose.

Service:

My passion in AA is in Service, that 3rd Legacy that is the vital part of our sobriety.

The most rewarding part of my sobriety has been my service experience. I prefer to describe it as the “gift of service”. When I reflect back to page 164 of the big book, I am reminded of my thoughts after I had studied it, not just read it. So, what happens next, I thought? So where do we go from here? I know that if it had not been for a small seed of “willingness” within me that I would most likely not be here today. That willingness is all we need to nurture the faith that will give us strength too trust in AA. To be willing to let the arms of alcoholics anonymous carry us to so many more unforeseen gifts in sobriety.

Gifts that are beyond what I could ever imagine from searching in the big book. Yes, the promises remind us, but service in AA has been the doorway to help me live many of the promises. Certainly, I believe that faith in a higher power, and thus faith in a service sponsor, has been the catalyst which has helped me to grow in so many ways. My growth need not ever stop as long as I nurture that faith in AA. That desire to serve others.

Once again AA has put my spiritual foundation to the test. No matter what the call is from AA,

I must trust the people who offer to guide me, I must trust the literature that is everywhere to educate me, and my faith in a higher power to carry me into the unknown. Or what I thought was the unknown. Whether it was how to make coffee (and what if I screw it up) or setting up my home group room. (what if someone doesn't like how I did it). I slowly realized that there was always someone from AA there to help me, to reassure me that it really didn't matter.

The important thing was that I was willing to do something for others. The effect was immediate. I felt useful. I felt that someone appreciated what I had done. It didn't matter if they had a face or name. **I had a purpose! I was finally of some use to my fellow man.**

With more encouragement from my first service sponsor, I read the service manual. Well in his words it was like this.” Do you have a service manual?” Yes, I do. “Well after you have read it, then come to me with any questions but not until you have actually read it!”

I recall when I first joined the CPC committee in Area 78, we had an old CPC workbook, some sample letters of introduction to AA, and the

pamphlets that came in the CPC kit. How that has changed today. We are very busy in our local CPC committee. With many speaker requests from the U of A nurses, from doctors, local hospitals, first responders and support groups. Technology has allowed us to develop a live speaker volunteer list for these engagements. We also have a live forum for feedback on what worked and what didn't at events. With a growing choice of customized power point presentations, we are armed to be effective in carrying the AA message to the professionals and thus the still suffering alcoholic.

Our Area table officers have set up Zoom meetings, to keep on top of the agenda workload in between assemblies, or quarterlies as they are referred to. This will give us more time to catch up on reviewing guidelines and being better prepared for assemblies. Our area committee meetings and assembly agendas are posted in advance on the Area 78 website. As well as all the District committee members generic emails, the different Committee descriptions, and an Area Calendar of events.

All the various AA Websites have opened the door of communication for the membership,

and more importantly for the still suffering alcoholic. They can go to the "Find a Meeting" app.

and pretty much find a meeting anywhere in North America.

This growth in technology continues in Alcoholics Anonymous as the General service office moves into the next generation with their new ERP system. The release of the AA YouTube channel and of course the availability of Box 459 and the grapevine online.

So where do I fit in this age of technology? Well it has caused me to grow in some skills that

definitely need more work. But I have a purpose now, and that pushes me forward to seek more knowledge in AA and in the skills needed to do a better job of carrying the message.

Now I must also make sure that the next person following me in any service position, is left with

the tools and guidelines to continue to be effective. I like to remind my service sponsees, that in the second year of their rotation to make a

succession plan for the next person. Or at the area level we have been mentioning a transition checklist, to pass on at the post-election transition meeting.

And so we continue to grow – For we must.

I do want to thank the Area 79 WRASAA committee and the District 71 volunteers, for all the work that you have done in making this service assembly such a success.

I remain yours in willing love and service,

Mike M.

Area 78 Chair, Panel 68

Morning everyone, my name is Scott G. and I am an Alcoholic. I am grateful to be here today, although I may not have felt like it when I was asked to share. There is a saying that God only gives a person what they can handle. I think the person who wrote that had a bunch of extra time on their hands. But I was taught that when asked... do.

My topic today is Today's World – Demonstrating Integrity, Anonymity and Service. I can only share my experiences on this, what I have learned since I have sobered and what I understand today. This topic strung a cord with me because I never demonstrated any of these when I suffered in my disease. I had no integrity, I always made sure you knew who I was, and for the most part service meant “what’s in it for me”.

It wasn't until; I entered the rooms of AA that I truly learned the meaning of integrity. The program laid out for me a path to become a person with stronger moral principles. The first thing you taught me was to get honest. I know today that without honesty, I have no chance at living a sober life. Working the steps allowed me to start life over. After my Step 5, I no longer felt dirty. I could hold my head up and understand that my past no longer dictated my future.

Moving forward, life with integrity meant treating those around those around me the same way that I should be treating myself. My character defects are still real, but the gift of awareness has given me the gift of being able to make an amend, which for me is the gift of integrity.

Anonymity is a subject that I hear discussed many times. Last night the toastmaster guy shared how members of a group attending an out of town meeting, didn't even know they lived in the same community. When is anonymity too much? Bill W. wrote in the Language of the Heart (pg 15) that "It should be the privilege of each individual AA member to cloak himself with as much personal anonymity as he deserves. His fellow AA should respect his wishes and help guard whatever status he wants to assume. It is thus up to each individual to describe how anonymous he wishes to be at any level below that of public level. Giving your last name in an AA meeting is not breaking the tradition of anonymity". Dr. Bob goes on to state in Dr. Bob and the Old Timers (pg 264-265) that "the AA member who hides his identity from his fellow AA by using only a given name violates the tradition just as much as the AA who permits his name to appear in the press in connection with matters pertaining to AA. The former is maintaining his anonymity above press, radio and film. The latter is maintaining his anonymity below the level of press, radio and film. Whereas the tradition states that we should maintain our anonymity at the level of press, radio and film. Just the opinion of 2 guys that I believe is still true.

This is not only an issue inside the rooms, but also outside the rooms especially with my son. He was 6 years old when we drove past our post office, unfortunately with his window down. He saw my sponsor in a crowd of people, walking up the steps and recognized who he was. All of a sudden he yelled, "hey dad, there's your alcoholic friend!" Although I'm not sure if anyone heard him, he unknowingly broke his anonymity. I tried to explain to him what anonymity was. When told him that we don't call each other alcoholic in public he replied "why, are you ashamed?"

In our home, my AA and my wife's Al-Anon programs are kept to ourselves, although we do share with others when someone needs a contact.

If I am too anonymous, especially in my own community, who does the suffering alcoholic know who to turn to for help?

One of the 3 Legacies of AA along with Unity, and Recovery is Service. Look around you today and see what service is, what service does, how it affects you, but mostly how it pulls us together. AA service allowed me to step out of my comfort zone, the bubble I had created when I first sobered up. I had lost all confidence in myself. I did not want to be around anyone especially new people outside the rooms of AA where I felt safe. If not for service, I'm not sure where my path of sobriety would have led me. Service opened the door to a new chapter in my life. From getting a key to my home group, to cleaning coffee cups, GSR and so much more. From that moment, I have made many new relationships, new challenges and have learned to live again with a renewed purpose.

One Alcoholic working with another, the basis of the program that is the most special part of service to me. No matter what I am doing, the opportunity to share always presents itself.

My service sponsor shared with me about balance within my triangle. He reminds me that if my sobriety is solely based on service, then instead of a triangle all I have is a stick waving in the wind, not connected to a base, not grounded. Balance is not easy to achieve but it is necessary especially in today's busy world.

Service also has another definition which is to perform maintenance. If I work the steps, with my fellow AA, then I will have balance.

If you were to ask me about today's world, I'd tell you, "Maybe it needs a little AA."

Thank You for my Sobriety.

Today's World – Demonstrating Integrity, Anonymity and Service

Good morning everyone my name is Rio and I am an alcoholic. I'm torn to say thank you for being here for the first presentation of the day. Secretly I was hoping no one would show up or at least that the crowd would be few so I would not be too nervous by the numbers or intimidated by the amazing new and old trusted servants here this weekend.

I want to thank the wonderful WRAASA committee for this invitation and for their efforts to organize and put on this service assembly. We have a great commitment and enthusiasm for service in BC/Yukon Area 79 and your hospitality and efforts have been greatly appreciated. So, thank you!

My very small home group is called Hope in Hixon and if you ever find yourself on Highway 97 north between Quesnel and Prince George on a Tuesday night please come and join us. I have been incredibly blessed to attend two other WRAASA's and when I was headed to my very first I had to ask the question. "What happens at a WRAASA?" A past trusted servant explained to me that just like our Quarterlies or Assemblies fuel the enthusiasm for service in our fellowships a WRAASA charges the batteries of those of us that are already in the middle of the boat of general service by bringing current and past trusted servants together to recharge their service batteries. So you are in for a treat this weekend because some of the finest examples of service are here from all four of our most westerly areas.

When I started this presentation, I did feel like I knew very little about this topic of "Today's World – Demonstrating Integrity, Anonymity and Service". But the more I wrote the more this turned into a sort of self-exploration. I had to truthfully ask what do I know about this topic?

It is true that today's world is different from the past and will be different in the future. Some of these indications are very clear for example. When I sobered up in 2001 my first big book was the 3rd Edition, people still smoked in the rooms, myself included and no one talked about social media in my district. Today we are reading the 4th edition, there is no more

smoking, myself included and social media is commonly discussed, so is safety in AA, inclusivity, accessibility and the internet.

In today's world most of us Google things we want to know more about so when I sought out definitions for today's topic this is what I got online.

I started by looking up demonstrating: a) give a practical exhibition and explanation of (how a machine, skill, or craft works or is performed) b) clearly show the existence or truth of (something) by giving proof or evidence.

Integrity: the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles; moral uprightness.

anonymity: the condition of being anonymous. The noun anonymity comes from a Greek word meaning "without a name." If you have anonymity, you have namelessness, and people will not know who you are.

And lastly, service: the action of helping or doing work for someone else.

The place I've been instructed to and now love to look for definitions, explanations and examples is in our literature and here is just a glimpse of what I was able to find with ease in some of our most treasured pieces...

This particular piece is an excellent example of demonstrating / or explaining the topic of leadership and it's one I'm sure you are all familiar with it comes from pg.553 of our Alcoholics Anonymous Service Manual.

Leadership in A.A.: Ever a Vital Need

"Somewhere in our literature there is a statement to this effect:

"Our leaders

do not drive by mandate: they lead by example."

In effect, we are saying to them, "Act for us, but don't boss us."

Therefore, a leader in A.A. service is a man (or woman) who can personally put principles, plans, and policies into such dedicated and effective action that the rest of us want to back him up and help him with

his job. When a leader power-drives us badly, we rebel; but when he too meekly becomes an order-taker and he exercises no judgment of his own

—

well, he really isn't a leader at all....

Good leadership originates plans, policies, and ideas for the improvement of our Fellowship and its service. But in new and important matters, it will nevertheless consult widely before taking decisions and actions. Good leadership will also remember that a fine plan or idea can come from anybody, anywhere. Consequently, good leadership will often discard its own cherished plans for others that are better, and it will give credit to the source...."

I don't have to read this piece in its entirety for you and I both to understand that this is a great explanation of what good leadership can do and look like. It is not only something to strive for it is also attainable when we practice these principles in all of our affairs as best as we can. I have to say though that I've learned more from the examples in my sober life than I have from an explanatory description. I also have to say that I don't only appreciate what a good example demonstrates. I also have learned a lot from the bad example demonstration too. I say this coming from a personal place. Because there was a time when I was a bad example. New in recovery I was disrespectful, swore, wanted to fight and stormed in and out of meetings. The best lesson I've learned from being and seeing a bad example demonstrated is that it's shown me where I definitely don't want to be and how much I enjoy being part of a solution rather than problem. I learned to watch others and do what those that had what I wanted did. I first learned in the rooms of AA by watching then later I was able to read and understand better what I was seeing. Thankfully, I saw and still see more good than bad being demonstrated in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Integrity: I found in one of my all-time favourite pieces of our literature is Language of the Heart

and pg. 671 says this...

“Just how and when we tell the truth- or keep silent- can often review the difference between genuine integrity and none at all.”

then pg. 672, gives us more understanding saying this...

“But damaging gossip is quite something else. Of course, this kind of scuttlebutt can be well grounded in fact. But no such abuse of the facts could ever be twisted into anything resembling integrity.”

The following I could not source other than it came to me from another service enthusiast...so if any of you have heard it or know where it comes from please share that with me. I really like it and think you will too.

“The good news about integrity is that we’re not born with it—or without it—which means that it’s a behavior-based virtue we can cultivate over time. We can set a goal to show more integrity in everyday life and we can reach that goal by practicing the behaviors above, as well as countless others which too often go unnoticed.”

anonymity: I found in another great read is Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age and on pg. 132 you will find this paragraph

“The Spiritual substance of anonymity is sacrifice. Because A.A.’s Twelve Traditions repeatedly ask us to give up personal desires for the common good, we realize that the sacrificial spirit, well symbolized by anonymity, is the foundation of all these Traditions.”

Personally, I had to keep it simple and anonymity as I have learned it in general service equals humility. And there is no better description of humility than the beautifully written plaque known from Dr. Bob’s desk...

Humility is perpetual quietness of heart. It is to have no trouble. It is never to be fretted or vexed, irritable or sore; to wonder at nothing that is done to me, to feel nothing done against me. It is to be at rest when nobody praises me, and when I am blamed or despised, it is to have a blessed home in myself where I can go in and shut the door and kneel to my Father in secret

and be at peace, as in a deep sea of calmness, when all around and about is seeming trouble.

I don't know if you've heard this before but I remember the first time I did and it was at in a Public Information workshop about anonymity. It really opened my mind and my heart to the spiritual principle of anonymity.

In my experience there is no better place to find examples of integrity and anonymity than in general service. I have met, chatted with, admired and been blown away by those so incredibly important GSR's, the dedicated Committee Chairs, District Committee Members and hundreds of volunteers. I've been so blessed to see service in action from something small like a home group business meeting, to a district inventory, to an Area Quarterly or Assembly and been completely amazed by the dedication of those at GSO when they come and present forums in our Western Canadian Regions.

Service is that golden thread between so many of the principles we learn, relearn, aspire to and hopefully continue to progress toward. Nowhere in any of these terms or definitions is there a hint of perfection. It's more about the doing, not having to do it perfectly. It's just easier one day at a time, working together for others that is really the magic. The principles are timeless so when they were practiced in the past, when we practice them now and when they are continued in the future, they will still be the same principles. It may just be the demonstration that is different because we will have more areas to practice them in. Today, now or tomorrow integrity, anonymity and service the AA way will continue because of people like you and service events like these. Because practicing the principle by ourselves is one thing but practicing them together is so much more powerful.

If I was to think of my experience with these terms I would have to define demonstrating as the power of example, integrity would be practicing these principles in all of my affairs; anonymity would be walking with humility. Which is hopefully what we do when carrying the message of recovery to the alcoholic who still suffers in or out of our rooms.

Here is my truth today...and it's very hard to say but here goes. Service allows me to demonstrate integrity and to practice humility because of your belief in me I am a trusted servant. I've been given the opportunity to learn how to be honest, open and willing in the recovery part of this program. I've learned to love myself and others unconditionally in the unity of this program. But today I get demonstrate my gratitude for service, my wiliness to be in general service and my love for all of you who are part of our service structure. I have been allowed to grow in my own integrity and my understanding of anonymity and humility through service. It's also given me a general service family that extends beyond way beyond the limits of my once isolating disease.

Lastly service and I want to close with this reading from pg. S23 of our service manual. I've read it many times and I encourage you give it a read and share it with as many in our fellowship as you can.

STIMULATING INTEREST IN GENERAL SERVICE

“Most A.A. members are primarily interested in their groups, in their own sobriety, and in helping other drunks one-on-one. And that is as it should be. While the work of general service has precisely the same objective — carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers — the connection is not always direct or obvious. Some stimulators are usually needed to get the attention of A.A. members — to show them that service can add a rich dimension to their sober lives and Twelfth Step work, and that their participation is vital to the future of A.A.”

I often get the chance to stir up some enthusiasm for service by telling newcomers to recovery and to service that they have now found and are

part of the best kept secret in Alcoholics Anonymous and that secret is called General Service.

Thank you for this gift to serve, learn, grow and love in the safety and comfort of Alcoholics Anonymous. But more importantly Thank you for being the examples that have shaped my life into the miracle it is today.

With much appreciation and gratitude,

Rio D., Area 79, Panel 69 Area Chair

Western Canada Alternate Delegates:
*“Tomorrow’s World – Courage to be
Vigilant”*

Presenters:

Lesley W.	Alt. Delegate Area 91
Richard M.	Alt. Delegate Area 80
Brad F.	Alt. Delegate Area 78
Bob K.	Alt. Delegate Area 79

Tomorrow's World – Courage to be Vigilant
Western Regional Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly
Saturday, February 23, 2019

Good afternoon, my name is Lesley W. and I am an alcoholic, currently serving as Alternate Delegate, Panel 69 for Area 91 Saskatchewan. Thank you very much for the WRAASA committee for the amazing opportunity to share with you on the topic of "Tomorrow's World – Courage to be Vigilant".

When I walked into the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous in 1996, the digital era was at its primary age, it was in existence but still had a lot of growing up to do. One thing I am truly grateful for is that there were no smart phones and digital cameras were too expensive to obtain pictures of me in the prime of my drinking – any pictures were either on Polaroid film or in print and once I destroyed the print and film... it was all gone. Cell phones were those big block machines that had a flip out mic that usually broke off. I couldn't afford one because I invested my money in more adventurous trips that for some reason I can't remember and destroyed the film.

My introduction into Alcoholics Anonymous was a bit traumatic because at my first meeting an old man yelled about how young people never make it in this program.

When I was preparing this presentation, I had to think about the word Tomorrow; what an oxymoron, we live only one day at a time, one of our slogans is Think, Think, Think - Think little of yesterday, Think more of Today, and Think little of tomorrow. Tomorrow has so many other meanings, such as: an outlook, forecast, soon, future period of time. With this concept is it possible that we can be naïve to be so focused on today that one of the largest risks to Alcoholics Anonymous is growing, and growing fast?

My favourite message in AA is Bill W's last message from October 1970:

"My thoughts are much occupied these days with gratitude of our Fellowship and for the myriad of blessings bestowed upon us by God's Grace.

If I were asked which of these blessings I felt was most responsible for our growth as a fellowship and most vital to our continuity, I would say, the “Concept of Anonymity”. Anonymity has two attributes essential to our individual and collective survival; the spiritual and the practical.

On the spiritual level, anonymity demands the greatest discipline of which we are capable; on the practical level, anonymity has brought protection for the newcomer, respect and support of the world outside, and security from those of us who would use A.A. for sick and selfish purposes.

A.A. must and will continue to change with the passing years. We cannot, nor should we, turn back the clock. However, I deeply believe that the principle of anonymity must remain our primary and enduring safeguard. As long as we accept our sobriety in our traditional spirit of anonymity we will continue to receive God’s Grace.”

Carrying the Message

In service, we grow to understand the importance of carrying the message. Try to think about the message you are trying to carry, is it?

- Recovery
- Not being Alone
- Hope
- Living one day at a time.
- The Big Book
- Putting the plug in the jug
- Don’t Drink Don’t Think

What about Anonymity? I will admit there are times where I struggle with Anonymity, and it did take me some time to learn the importance of Anonymity. It wasn’t until I got involved in service at the Intergroup level did I learn the importance of anonymity. Walking into the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous, I remember looking at the word thinking... what does this mean? Then as I attempt try to say the word over and over again; the Muppets started to come into my head and then I am singing “Manana doo doo too doo doo” and the word leaves my brain.

In the last couple months, I have been watching members and groups about how the message of Anonymity is being carried. And not surprising that the subject is not highly used as a topic for discussion.

Scrolling on the Internet, and reading article after article where people who are in “recovery” and trying to change their life, you see the [AA] being subtly added by the reporter. Scrolling on social media, and watching some “friends” talk about their gratitude, about the fact they made it to their AA meeting – knowing full well that you spoke to this person about the concept of “blasting it all over Facebook”.

Courage – to act in accordance with one’s beliefs, especially in spite of criticism. Service has provided a great gift to my recovery - the ability to speak tactfully in defence. This takes courage – and a lot of it. I really didn’t know if I had it in me to be able to conceptualize the idea of standing up for myself. However, when it comes to standing up for Anonymity – do you ever get tired of people doing it over and over, and feeling like you are now the AA police. The Friends of food episode from the Flintstones comes in to mind where people are following Fred around Bedrock going Oink Oink Oink... don’t do that or don’t say that!

Carry the message and not the Alcoholic – is what my sponsor drilled in my head. Now, I attempt subtle ways to carry the message of Anonymity, that can have a bit of impact. When a member does a “shout out” to their recovery and AA on social media, I send a personal message that says as follows: “This is great that you have such gratitude and Love for AA to be “blasted” to a public audience, I personally will not like or comment on your post, in respect to our mutual friends in recovery and protect their anonymity in a public forum”. Does it have any impact – not sure because I usually don’t get a response.

With the revolution of technology growing rapidly in the 21st Century, it’s changing the way a message is sent – it now can be seen by hundreds and thousands of people in a single second; where as a news article from the 80s or 90s had to have a couple days or weeks before the same message was delivered.

The Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous has made some great strides with providing us tools on how to help us carry the message of Anonymity; however, there is the continual challenge of the ‘medium’ itself. Having the need to explain the importance of Anonymity, and not being able to use the sources that are creating the challenge. Just like being thrown out into

the ocean on a boat, but not given any oars to help out because the instructions are simple.

Vigilance keenly watchful to detect danger. When the 12 Traditions were created by the members of Alcoholics Anonymous, they were definitely guided by a Higher Power that kept “unity” in mind. When you read the long form of Tradition 11 it states:

“Our relations with the general public should be characterized by personal anonymity. We think A.A. ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our names and pictures as A.A. members ought not be broadcast, filmed, or publicly printed. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us.”

Which means that over the test of time and as the technology boom explodes, Tradition 11 remains vigilant with the concept of Anonymity. And just like my subtle way of carrying the message, it also uses the same method, but a bit more tactful – “attraction rather than promotion”.

As a member of Alcoholics Anonymous, I need to be as vigilant as Tradition 11 and have a responsibility in service to ensure that the principle of Anonymity remain as vital as it did from its inception with love and tolerance. Therefore, it is my responsibility to be observant and have the courage to make sure this message continues; as discussions in meetings, suggested for a workshop; and as trusted servant assist to help transform our effective tools into the digital age, and remain with the practice of attraction rather than to promote the beautiful fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous and life of recovery.

Coming into Alcoholics Anonymous at the tender young age 20 – the only concept of service I knew was what my mother participated in her service journey. it was some time for me to become engaged with service. Add more...

Once again, thank you very much for this opportunity.

In Love and Service, Lesley

Good afternoon, I'm Richard, alcoholic, Alt. Delegate for Area 80, Area 80 Grapevine chair, and a member of the 7 Oaks group.

I'd like to thank the WRAASA committee for allowing me the opportunity to present here today. I'd also like to thank District 71 and their volunteers for making me feel welcome here in Kelowna. My first time visiting your city. And I'd like to give a special thanks to Kelly, my host this weekend, for welcoming me into his home and giving me a tour of your city. At one point, Kelly and I were telling each other the origins and stories of our home groups. As a past chair for our archives committee, I love to hear about our group histories. Our groups have a story much like we have our stories.

My home group is the 7 Oaks group. It's located off north Main in Winnipeg. The group was founded in 1976 in a little church. They met a few times a week at that time. Over time, the group grew. As it grew, it changed locations.

About 15 years ago, the group faced challenges. It was quite serious. Literature was stolen. Locks glued. One member's sponsee tried to toss him out the window. Police were called on a number of occasions. As a result, several members left the group, and the group nearly folded. The group moved to a smaller cheaper location. With the efforts of a couple core members, they kept the group going.

I joined the group about 10 years ago. The group was doing ok. Meetings were about 10 to 15 members. Business meetings had about 6 to 10 participating. After a couple years the group grew in membership. But just as we were growing, the church informed us that we were to move. Hearing this the group came together. We came together and found a new home in a month. The move was very good for us. We thrived for the next few years there.

The last year we've struggled a bit. Attendance is down. 7th tradition is down. Service commitments are down. Two months ago, the church informed us that they wanted to double our rent, as the church is struggling financially. It was immediately apparent we will have to move

again, in a time the group is having struggles. Once again, the group came together.

In preparing for this presentation, I did what I often will do. I went to Language of the Heart.

“...what is our responsibility for today and tomorrow?

Clearly our first duty to AA’s future is to maintain in full strength what we now have. Only the most vigilant caretaking can assure this. Never should we be lulled into complacent self-satisfaction by the wide acclaim and success that is everywhere ours. This is the subtle temptation which could stagnate us today, perchance disintegrate us tomorrow. We have always rallied to meet and transcend failure and crisis. Problems have been our stimulants. How well though, shall we be able to meet the problems of success?

We will continue to search out the ever present flaws and gaps in our communications? With enough imagination, courage, and dedication, we will resolutely address ourselves to those many tasks of repair and improvement which even now the future is calling upon us to undertake? Still clearer vision and an ever mounting sense of responsibility can be the only answers to these questions.” Pg. 308.

When I met my first sponsor, he had about 33 years of sobriety, and a passion for the fellowship that saved his life. I would watch him in business meetings. There were those that perceived him as being a “bleeding deacon” or “old guard”. I never saw it that way. He wanted to preserve the AA message, and preserve the safety of the group. But I also know he was always studying AA history, and looking for ways our little group could improve. He did not fear change. When he retired from mining at 65, he went to school to learn computer skills. Not bad for a guy with a “6th grade education”, as he would say.

My first sponsor became active with a couple of online groups. I noticed we haven’t talked much about those groups this weekend. I don’t really hear much about them at all lately. But he enjoyed them. One group he participated in would post a topic on a Sunday, then members would post their responses throughout the week. The format was a discussion in that you can post multiple times throughout the week. Ron passed on about 10

years ago. But about twice a year, I will log onto the site and look up his posts. His username was Rarely, as in "Rarely have we seen a person fail..." I'm able to read his old posts. It allows me the opportunity to look back and reflect on those gifts of experience he shared with me so many years ago. What a blessing that is.

The topic of this presentation is "Tomorrow's World- The Courage to be Vigilant". In my home group, we have a sign that says "Constant Vigilance". We think of constant vigilance in relation the ongoing maintenance of our recovery, our spiritual growth, and as Bill often spoke about, our emotional sobriety. However, our groups and our fellowship must also be vigilant. Vigilance is being aware. Having an awareness of our defects and complacency, and being aware of where and how we may grow. Bill set an example for us as a fellowship. My first sponsor set an example for me.

Much of our discussion this weekend have been in regards to AA and technology, and how are we to move forward. Facebook, Instagram and Youtube have been discussed. We have formal and informal discussions. We see pros and cons. We weigh them. We have serious reservations about them, in particular in regards to anonymity. However, it comes down to not so much about if we do, or a yes or no, but about how. These are the times we live in. Social media and the internet are a part of our world. We have no control over that. We have members, not just newer members, that participate in various online groups and pages. How is Alcoholics Anonymous going to be a part of this world? In today's world, social media and the internet are a means for our fellowship to get the message out to the potential or current AA member. We can't simply rely on AA being physically accessible. For example, there are those in remote areas that AA is not readily accessible. Nor is it always accessible for those whose life or profession can make it difficult to access AA, such as LIMs. A person's mental health can also make accessing AA challenging. My first sponsor taught me that AA must be accessible to everyone, not just those privileged to live in areas where AA is established. Social media and the internet can be a means to bridge physical and mental health barriers. No need to be

fearful of them. I learned in my Fourth Step that my life was consumed by fear. I chose not to live that way anymore.

“Marking AA’s thirtieth year we shall, in this month of July 1965, hold our International convention at Toronto. It is most fitting that the chosen keynote for this gala be “AA’s Responsibility.” There we shall review the three decades of AA life that are now history. Stirred by gratitude beyond expression, we shall give thanks to God whose grace has made it possible for us to achieve the quality of responsibility, individual and collective, that has brought our fellowship into its present state of being and worldwide reach.”

“At our international gathering, we shall look into new faces. Many from afar will be heard to speak other tongues. We shall see that the sun never sets upon AA’s Fellowship, that 350,000 of us have now recovered from our malady; that we have everywhere begun to transcend those formidable barriers of race, creed, and nationality. This assurance that so many of us have been able to meet our responsibilities for sobriety and for growth and effectiveness in the troubled world we live, will surely fill us with the deepest joy and satisfaction. But as a people who have nearly always learned the hard way, we shall certainly not congratulate ourselves. We shall perceive these assets to be God’s gifts, which in part matched an increasing willingness on our part to find and do his will for us.”

Responsibility Is Our Theme. Language of the Heart, p. 328

Challenges are nothing new to our fellowship. Circumstances or situations may be somewhat different at times. But that’s where we as a fellowship grow. Just as with what I needed to learn for my sobriety, our fellowship has needed to accept change, then and now.

I do not know the answer to our ‘how’, but I have learned in Alcoholics Anonymous that I do not need to know. I do not have to provide the answer. In Alcoholics Anonymous, we discover the answers together. I have learned that what I believe may to be right, does not mean that you may believe is wrong. We can both be right. Just simply 2 different rights, if we have the same primary spiritual aim. We invite God into the room, then we discuss. Decisions are made by a informed group conscience. And, in the case of WRAASA and the General Service Conference for example, by

an informed conscience of the fellowship. We do this together. In doing that, I grow, and our fellowship grows.

Bill provided a framework for us to follow. It works, if we have the faith. I do not know how any of this will play out. But that's ok, I don't need to worry about that. I have faith in our fellowship and the process in place. Next week, my group will meet to discuss what our next steps will be. In speaking with our Area 80 Archivist about what my group is going through, she commented that the 7 Oaks group has been resilient with all it's moves. It's true. I also know that our fellowship is also resilient. With the guidance of a power greater than ourselves, and our primary spiritual aim as our guide post, we will discover the answers together.

Yours in service,

Richard M.

Area 80 Alt. Delegate

Hello, My name is Bob K and I am an Alcoholic and I serve BC Yukon Area79 as their Alternate Delegate/Literature Chair.

This topic "Tomorrow's World – Courage to be Vigilant" took me a while to wrap my head around, so I looked up the meaning of Courage and found some Attributes of Courage that seemed to

fit: following your heart, standing up for what is right,

expanding your horizons, and letting go of the familiar. I then looked up the definition of Vigilant and what I found was: always

being careful to notice things, to be watchful, and observant. So, I asked myself, how can we apply these meanings to Tomorrows World in AA, as we move into an ever-changing society?

For this alcoholic, I came into this program with the support of a very rigid alcoholic, bless her heart. She had me read the Big Book and the Twelve & Twelve with her and study the history of AA. I became just like her, very rigid and close minded. Everything I had learned was all I could see; there was no room for growth in my program.

Looking back at that time in my sobriety, I had not personally done the 12 steps and therefore, I was still living with just me, myself and I. I had not had a spiritual awakening. It wasn't until I was guided through the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous that I came to realize that this is a we program, and the very essence of this program is to gain access to a Power greater than, which will allow me to have a spiritual awakening. It is then, that I can help the still suffering alcoholic. It is my responsibility to give the newcomer the same opportunities I was given when I walked into the rooms, desperate with nowhere left to go.

Having had a spiritual experience as a result of the steps, we are now walking with an awakened spirit! Our light within, has begun to shine! It now our responsibility to do Gods work; to demonstrate the power of His grace in our lives daily.

This means, that we have gained access to a Power that has brought us to a state of consciousness. We of AA, now have the strength and courage to do the next right thing in AA and in our lives. It is our responsibility to attain sensitivity to the calamities that can seep into our precious program. It is with concentrated attention, that we must be aware of our future in AA. So now what? I suppose we could just sit back and observe the changes; to sit quietly and let AA move forward as it has at times in the past with lessons through trial and error.

Some may see this as becoming complacent, becoming too comfortable in our recovery. Obviously, we want to stay vigilant and fight complacency so that we can remain sober into tomorrow's world.

Having the courage to be vigilant in tomorrow's world and how we were vigilant in the past hasn't really changed much in my opinion. We still have the tools before us such as Sponsorship and in turn working with others. This will remind us of where we have been, it reminds us of the despair we experienced in the last days of our active alcoholism.

Working with others, allows us to be constantly reviewing our Program, the 12 steps. Working with newcomers can expose our own character defects. It is an opportunity to have the mirror held up for us. We try to help the newcomer by sharing our experience both in our drinking days and now in recovery, in hopes that they will be inspired to become willing

to make change in their own lives. As our text says, we cannot give away what we don't have, thus, we need to clean our own house as well. In this way, working with newcomers keeps us vigilant. Working with others also keeps us plugged into a social network of recovering alcoholics – it's easier to grow as a person if you are surrounded by likeminded people who are also trying to push themselves. Working with others and trying to push them to grow will have the effect of pushing back on ourselves. Recovering alcoholics can help each other to grow together.

What I have found that works well for this alcoholic is to make a commitment to step up and be of service, this can be as simple as signing up to chair a meeting or sponsoring a couple of newcomers and having regular sponsorship meetings with them (or getting together regularly with your own sponsor). Pushing yourself to work with others in recovery will pay great dividends for your own recover

I would like to read some experts from the pamphlet A.A. Tradition How it Developed by Bill W that refer to Vigilance. Quote

But A.A. unity cannot automatically preserve itself. Like personal recovery, we shall always have to work to maintain it. Here, too, we surely need honesty, humility, open-mindedness, unselfishness, and, above all—vigilance. So, we who are older in A.A. beg you who are newer to ponder carefully the experience we have already had of trying to work and live together. We would like each A.A. to become just as much aware of those disturbing tendencies which endanger us as a whole as he is conscious of those personal defects which threaten his own sobriety and peace of mind. For whole movements have, before now, gone on benders, too!

We can offer little lasting relief to those scores of thousands yet to join us in their quest for freedom. Nobody invented Alcoholics Anonymous. It grew. Trial and error have produced a rich experience. Little by little we have been adopting the lessons of that experience, first as policy and then as tradition. That process still goes on and we hope it never stops. Should we ever harden too much, the letter might crush that spirit. We could victimize ourselves by petty rules and prohibitions; we could imagine that we had said the last word. We might even be asking alcoholics to accept our rigid ideas or stay away. May we never stifle progress like that! End Quote.

I was once told that we learn patience and tolerance in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. I believe this is something we need to apply in the present as we move into tomorrow's world. We will always have our experience, strength and hope to share when the time presents itself. We can answer the calls for help when asked, to be elder statesmen.

In closing, there is a quote that says, "You can have courage, or you can have comfort, but you cannot have both". Resting on our laurels, will not get the job done in Alcoholics Anonymous! We must be vigilant in our own recoveries in order to be on top of tomorrows world.

Past Delegates:
*“Clarity of Purpose – Addressing the Needs
of Our Meetings”*

Presenters:

Lee W. Panel 58, California Northern Interior

Larry M. Panel 66, Area 78

Trish L. Panel 57, Area 79

“Clarity of Purpose - Addressing the Needs of our meetings.”

Lee W.

Past Delegate – Panel 58

California Northern Interior – Area 07

I find it difficult to talk about just a single Tradition - they're all so tied to each other - the sum of their whole benefits us exponentially.

In other words the First Tradition, which states that “Our common welfare comes first, personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity”, is, when practiced, the means whereby we can practice the remaining traditions.

Tradition 5: Each group has but one primary purpose -- to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

And this what I've been asked to talk about this afternoon.

In the FORWORD TO THE SECOND EDITION OF ALCOHOLICS

ANONYMOUS (pp xx and xxi), Bill makes several statements; 1. Alcoholics Anonymous is not a religious organization. 2. So far, upon the problem of several million actual and potential alcoholics in the world, we have made only a scratch. In all probability we shall never be able to touch more than a fair fraction of the alcohol problem in all its ramifications. Upon therapy for the alcoholic himself, we surely have no monopoly.

The main principles of our Second Legacy, Unity, first appeared in the Big Book in 1939, as a brief paragraph in the forward to the first edition. It stated “We are not an organization in the conventional sense of the word. There are no fees or dues whatsoever. The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking. We are not allied with any particular faith, sect or denomination, nor do we oppose anyone. We simply wish to be helpful to those who are afflicted”. It took another ten years of additional shared experience for us to arrive at the Twelve Traditions. These were first published in a series of articles in the A.A. Grapevine, written by Bill W. with the title 12 Points to Assure Our Future. Those points eventually became the Twelve Traditions, and in their original form are now published as the “Long Form”. The Short Form of the Twelve Traditions, familiar to most A.A. members today, were distilled from the

Long Form in 1947, at the suggestion of Earl T., the founder of A.A. in Chicago.

I believe that perhaps the most important tradition that came out of all that experience was the Third, in the original Long Form: "Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover". The way I think about it is that if an individual comes to us and is able to identify as an alcoholic and begin to apply our Program, no matter what other problems they might have, those other problems might simply disappear or they'll be in a position to get outside help for those problems. My experience is that many people come to A.A. and it takes some time for them to identify their own alcoholism. We need to be patient with them and allow them the time necessary for this to take place. And continuing the Third Tradition, "Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. Group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation." Just as soon as groups came into being, they started making up various rules, many the result of fear for their own sobriety. Our headquarters office (as the General Service Office was then called) received countless pleas for help in resolving problems related to all those rules. At one point Bill W. and some other early members gathered a sampling of the many group rules that had been written and concluded that if all those rules were followed none of us could become A.A. members. A rather stark example of that is a letter that was written to a member by the Vancouver "chapter" of A.A. back in 1945 (a copy of the letter, plus the membership rules of the Vancouver "chapter" are attached at the end of this document). Nevertheless, it was all those challenging experiences that led Bill to create the Traditions.

We should never forget that the Traditions apply not only to the group but also to us as individuals and in all the various ways we do Service. In the book *A.A. Comes of Age* Bill W. said "But the Twelve Traditions also point straight at many of our individual defects. By implication they ask each of us to lay aside pride and resentment. They ask for personal as well as group sacrifice. They ask us to never to use the A.A. name in any quest for

personal power or distinction or money. The Traditions guarantee the equality of all members and the independence of all groups. They show how we may best relate ourselves to each other and to the world outside. They indicate how we can best function in harmony as a great whole. For the sake of the welfare of our entire society, the Traditions ask that every individual and every group and every area in A.A. shall lay aside all desires, ambitions, and untoward actions that could bring serious division among us or lose for us the confidence of the world at large”.

“The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous symbolize the sacrificial character of our life together and they are the greatest force for unity that we know”.

It has been my experience that most Group problems can be resolved when we consider the Original, or “Long Form of the Traditions”, and apply the principles contained in them.

Over the years our Class A (non-alcoholic) trustees have been able to inform the public and professionals us to help understand why “Singleness of Purpose” is critical to our need to carry the message. The Fall/Winter 2002 edition of our Newsletter for Professionals – “About A.A.” included an article written by George e. Vaillant, M.D.(Class A trustee). He shared why “Singleness of Purpose” is essential to the effective treatment of alcoholism. “The reason for such exaggerated focus is to overcome denial. The denial associated with alcoholism is cunning, baffling and powerful and affects the patient, helper, and the community. Unless alcoholism is kept relentlessly in the foreground, other issues will usurp everybody’s attention.”

“Mental Health workers, however, have great difficulty with A.A.’s Fifth Tradition. Since these workers often admire the success and geographic availability of A.A., they understandably wish to broaden its membership to include other substance abusers. Two arguments address those concerns: First - The third Tradition of A.A. “The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking,” renders A.A. non-exclusionary. Each year A.A. welcomes many thousands of minorities, many thousands

of poor, many thousands of alcoholics with coexisting drug problems and tens of thousands of convicts into its membership. Nobody with a desire to stop drinking is excluded. Second – “Singleness of Purpose” is necessary to overcome denial, is even more compelling. Given a choice, nobody wants to talk about alcoholism. In contrast, drug addiction commands newspaper headlines, research funding and the attention of clinical audiences.”

Alcoholism is by far an infinitely greater problem: According to the World Health Organization estimates there are around **3.3 million** deaths due to harmful use of alcohol (2017). The United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime reports that some **450,000** people died in 2015 as a result of drug use. I got the idea for this comparison from Leonard Blumenthal, past Chair of the General Service Board, when he shared similar information (but with smaller numbers) at the General Service Conference in 2008. Unfortunately the numbers continue to grow.

The experimentally documented success of A.A. in the treatment of is in part because A.A. groups are the only place in the world where the focus is on Alcoholism and nothing but alcoholism. There simply is no other way to overcome the denial.

Thanks for the privilege of participating in WRAASA!

Lee W.

Clarity of Purpose: Addressing the Needs of Our Meetings

Greetings. My name is Larry and I am an Alcoholic. I am also the Panel 66 Past delegate for Area 78 Alberta/Northwest Territories. To address this topic, I decided to explore our Traditions and how they relate to AA’s purpose and then extend that into what groups might consider when addressing that purpose.

Tradition Five clearly states that: “Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers”. As Bill W. stated in

1955, "Our society, therefore, will prudently cleave to its single purpose: the carrying of the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Let us resist the proud assumption that since God has enabled us to do well in one area, we are destined to a channel of saving grace for everybody." **End quote.**

Keeping in mind what our primary focus is, who can become a member of Alcoholics Anonymous?

In the forward to the first edition of the book Alcoholics Anonymous there is a statement that reads: "The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking. We are not allied with any particular faith, sect or denomination, nor do we oppose anyone. We simply wish to be helpful to those who are afflicted. **End Quote.** The word "honest" remained until the Traditions were finalized and first published in the Grapevine in 1946. The short form of Tradition Three now reads: "The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking."

The basic working principle of Alcoholics Anonymous is that to solve our common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism we need to share our experience, strength and hope with other alcoholics. The most common way we do this is by attending meetings of fellow persons who have a desire to stop drinking.

The long form of Tradition Three also states the definition of an A.A. Group. The long form of Tradition Three reads: "Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence, we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought AA membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that as a group, they have no other affiliation.

Further clarification of an AA group is found in the Twelve Concepts of World Service, Concept twelve, Warranty Six:

- No penalties can be inflicted for nonconformity to AA principles
- No fees or dues can be levied – voluntary contributions only

- No member can be expelled from AA – membership is always the choice of the individual
- Each AA group conducts its internal affairs as it wishes but it is requested to abstain from acts that might injure AA as a whole
- Any group of alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an AA group provided that as a group, they have no other affiliation.

By Tradition Four every AA Group is autonomous which results in every group having its unique approach to carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic. Membership in a group is no different from membership in AA. Just as we are members of AA if we have a desire to stop drinking so too, we are members of a group if we say we are.

The uniqueness of the groups is great for the alcoholic because they hopefully find a group where they feel they belong and where they feel they have found a safe haven. To quote Bill W. from a July 1946 article to the Grapevine: “In the AA group we cling together with an intensity of purpose which the outside world seldom comprehends. The anarchy of the individual melts away. Self-love subsides and democracy becomes a reality. We begin to know to see freedom of the spirit. The awareness grows that all is well; that each of us may implicitly trust in him who our loving guide from within and from above.” **End quote.**

For many of us the Group has become our extended family. It is where we find our support system and our friends. It is where we learn to place principles before personalities.

There is another very important component of the AA meeting. It is here that the member realizes that they are just a small part of a greater whole. As Bill W. said “the member learns desires and ambitions within him must be silenced when it could damage the group. The group must survive, or the individual will not.” **End quote**

It is contingent upon any AA group and meeting to carry the AA message to anyone who has a desire to stop drinking. So, what are some of the things that are important in helping achieve our primary purpose.

- The alcoholic should feel safe, comfortable and welcomed in our meeting rooms. The General Service Conference has gone to great lengths to provide materials for Groups to use to promote safety in the meeting rooms of A.A. We now have a **yellow card** on safety and an accompanying service piece “**Safety in AA: Our Common Welfare**”. It is up to the group to decide how and if the card is used in meetings. I have heard of groups who read the card at the start of meetings; other groups just point out that it exists; others just post it.

The group might also consider having procedures in place to deal with the disruptive and/or antagonistic member and/or the member who is drunk and abusive. The meeting should also go to lengths to ensure that outside issues are dealt with outside the meeting and do not enter the discussions in in our recovery meetings. We must always place the principles of AA before any personal and outside issues. Recovery depends on AA unity. The individual is there to discuss recovery and should not be distracted by matters not speaking to recovery.

- It is important that our meetings use only Conference approved literature. Using non-Alcoholics Anonymous approved literature is in contradiction to Tradition 6 as it implies affiliation with an outside organization. I am not saying that non-conference approved literature is not a valuable resource, but I am saying it should not be used in our meetings and should not be sold at our meetings.
- Are our meetings doing enough to promote sponsorship and to promoting being a sponsor? I think there needs to be more discussion of this in our groups. There is an excellent pamphlet titled “**Questions and Answers on Sponsorship**”. This is a valuable resource for members and sponsors alike.

- Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of our program. Do we explain the importance of Traditions 11 and 12 to our members and do we practise these principles in all our affairs? Do we make the pamphlet “**Understanding Anonymity**” available to newcomers? Do we discuss the importance of protecting anonymity in social media platforms?
- Many of our newcomers are hesitate about coming to AA because they focus on the word God rather that the concept of spirituality. I believe it is another function of our meetings to help to carefully explain the concept of spirituality, so it becomes an invitation to want to explore more rather than something to shy away from. Along with the Big Book there are three pieces of AA literature that offer excellent perspectives on spirituality for members: “**The God Word: Agnostic and Atheist Members in AA**”; “**Many Paths to Spirituality**”; “**Came to Believe**”
- Our literature is a valuable resource for information on a variety of topics related to recovery. I believe we should be doing more to promote it at our meeting. I have witnessed so many displays at meetings that have outdated materials. Other than the Big Book, Twelve and Twelve and Daily Reflections I have rarely witnessed any other literature being referred to as a resource at our meetings. I do not believe the members are being made aware of these important tools for recovery.

Pamphlets have been published specific to certain focus groups. They contain a wealth of stories valuable to the AA member. These include pamphlets specific to:

- “**Access to AA: Members Share on Overcoming Barriers**”;
- “**Young People in AA**”;
- “**Newcomer Asks**”;
- “**Message to Teenagers**”;

- **“Women in AA”;**
 - **“AA for the Older Alcoholic – Never Too Late?”**
 - **“Memo to an Inmate”;**
 - **“LGBTQ Alcoholics in AA”;**
 - **“AA or the Native North American”;**
 - **“AA for Alcoholics Who May Have Mental Health Issues”;**
 - **“AA and the Armed Forces”;**
 - **“AA for the Black and African American Alcoholic.”**
- Our business meetings provide an opportunity for discussion on how we can better convey the message to the still suffering alcoholic in our meetings. We should familiarize ourselves with the pamphlet **“The AA Group”** and **“Self Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix”** as they may provide ideas that we have not considered before for the operation and functioning of our meetings. Decisions made should be the result of an effective and thorough Group Conscience process where all members have an equal opportunity to participate without fear of reprisal or harassment.
 - Our meetings should also be promoting that there is so much to AA than just our home group. Are we demonstrating to our members that we are just a part of the greater whole and that AA will cease to function if we do not do our part to make sure that AA exists for future generations? Are we spending anytime explaining and discussing our Traditions? We should be, since they too are important to our recovery and to the maintenance of our program and meetings.

Our meetings should also to provide our members with information on the service structure in AA. Service work is important to the operation of AA in our group, district, area, conference and world wide. Those with service experience should be the mentors to those

new in service. We must follow the principles of rotation in the positions in our meetings so others can be given the opportunity to experience the growth that being a part of service brings to recovery. I believe that those group members who will not rotate out are becoming more of a bleeding deacon than an elder statesman.

In closing, I have touched on just some of the things that our groups might consider in carrying out our primary purpose. Before I end, I wish to make a very personal comment. I have mentioned a great number of resources found in our Conference Approved literature. I did this intentionally. My first service position at the Area level was the Area 78 Literature Committee Chair. During that two-year rotation I made it my focus to read every piece of General Service Conference Approved literature. My eyes were opened to the wealth of information about our program that was available to me. Then as the Panel 66 Delegate for Area 78, I was blessed to be appointed to the Conference Committee for Literature. Again, a truly uplifting experience to be involved in the process of developing our literature to meet the growing needs of our Fellowship. I believe that my journey through our Three Legacies has been expanded and been more fulfilling through my exploration of our great library of recovery, unity and service literature. Sadly, I feel that the majority of our members have little experience in exploring this valuable resource. I have found that the guidance needed for the answers to many of our questions, concerns, and problems in AA can be found in our literature. My wish is that everyone would take the time to explore it more. To me, our meetings are failing to invite members to explore more of our literature. I would ask everyone here to consider making a commitment to yourself to read at least one pamphlet per week. You will be amazed before you are halfway through. Might I suggest "A Members Eye View of Alcoholics Anonymous" as a starter.

Thank you, In Loving Service

Larry M.- Past Delegate Panel 66, Alberta/Northwest Territories

WRAASA 2019 - "Clarity of Purpose – Addressing the Needs of Our Meetings"

Hello friends, my name is Trish L. and I am one very grateful alcoholic. Thank you so much to Tommi and the Committee for the privilege of participating with you today. I am truly so excited to be here, to see and hear the "new to WRAASA folks" in the room, and to take part in the unifying process that WRAASA is a vital part of. And many thanks to my fellow panelists. I served directly with Lee at the 2008 General Service Conference, and thanks to our Western Canada legacy of unity, have known Larry in service over the years.

I'm going to introduce myself to you in the manner that was taught to me by our late friend and Past Trustee Ric D., and also acknowledge Ric and the other past trusted servants whose lives and spirits are felt and honored at service gatherings like this one. So here you go.

I want to let you know that my home group is the Reflections Group of Alcoholics Anonymous. We meet on Thursday nights at 7:30 at Grandview Baptist Cavalry Church – but here's the sequence of events. My home group started as a resentment and coffee pot meeting at the Royal Canadian Legion near Renfrew and Hastings in Vancouver. When the Legion closed (because someone ran away with the Legion's money – it doesn't only happen in AA), we moved to the Glenhaven Memorial Funeral Home further east on Hastings Street. It was sometimes referred to as "the meeting that everyone's dying to go to". We were there for sixteen wonderful years until management policy changed, and we found a new home at a Grandview. So, there is a very logical alcoholic progression in our moves – from a Legion, to a funeral home, to a church prayer room. (OK Ric wouldn't have gone on as long as I did just now on that part of the introduction). I also want to let you know that my sobriety date is February 19, 1994, and I'll do the math for you because I'm still kind of in shock that this happened – what that means is that this past Tuesday I celebrated 25 years of sobriety. That is not due to me. That is due to Alcoholics Anonymous. I honestly did not think that I had a hope of sobriety past maybe a year. You gave this to me. I am so grateful.

I was the Panel 57 BC/Yukon Area Delegate – that means I served at the 2007 and 2008 General Service Conferences in New York. And I want to thank everyone in this room for that extraordinary privilege. It's due to the active service legacy of your groups in the Western Canada Region that we are able to send Delegates to the General Service Conference – and that we are able to send engaged, informed Delegates.

I'd first though like to share with you what the workshops at the General Service Conference are like. They are at once very familiar and at the same time somewhat different from the workshops that we have had here today, really. But I'd like to paint that picture for you so you can get a sense of what our Western Regional Delegates: Gail, Becky, Ray and Noni and our Trustees Cate and Scott will be doing on the Wednesday of the General Service Conference -if the agenda follows the same format as it did when I was Delegate at any rate. The members of the Conference will be broken down into smaller groups, and simultaneous discussion will happen on the topic. So, rather than a series of workshops like we had this afternoon, it's one topic – Clarity of Purpose- with everyone having a chance to share. One of the notable things for me about the workshops, each of the years I was at the Conference, was the extent to which everyone – Delegates, Trustees, General Service Office Staff – referred to their home groups when speaking. It reinforced and made alive the idea of the home group as the essential DNA of Alcoholics Anonymous – the place where we are shaped and where we learn and grow. Truly the Heartbeat. Another thing that struck me was the extent to which I identified with everyone who shared in the small groups – even though we came from very different geographic places, spoke with different accents or through an interpreter (there are 3 official languages at the Conference, and even though we often had wildly differing opinions on what was best for A.A, I could identify. The incredible synergy that happens when alcoholics share with each other was as vital in that workshop room as it was anywhere in AA. And I would have to say as well, that the workshops provided a respite from the intensity of the committee work we had all just completed, and the larger Conference room where we were all gathered to discuss AA as a whole. But enough of the past – on to the present topic: (although, as a side note,

has anyone else noticed or experienced that the longer one serves, the more the tendency to stray from the topic at hand and just launch into something else? Or is that just me? But seriously... and back to the topic. Kind of. Tommi's loving invitation said that "you may interpret the topic in any way you see fit" and I took her at her word.

I was taught, in my first Big Book study, to head to the dictionary to get the real meaning of words instead of what I assumed the meaning to be. In other words to show some humility and be teachable, since I thought I knew EVERYTHING when I came to AA. (I'm glad that has changed) So clarity – what is clarity?

One definition is: The quality of being coherent and intelligible. Another - The quality of transparency or purity. And yet one more - the ability to think clearly and not be confused.

And by the way, all of those definitions are the polar opposite to any qualities or traits that I had when I came to AA.

So, when I looked at those definitions in relationship to this topic, I had a sort of shift. Initially, the topic seemed to me to perhaps lend itself to an examination of our singleness of purpose, and our primary purpose. And it does. But it opened up another area of thought for me, and that's around trust and structure and process. How do we find clarity? And what do we mean by meetings? As well as our crucial recovery meetings (and groups), we also have service meetings – and by that I mean business meetings, Assemblies, District meetings, gatherings like this one, the General Service Conference. How do THESE meetings fit into the clarity of purpose and how do we address the needs of those meetings? Of course, we have a process in place in terms of a loving God as expressed by our group conscience in Tradition Two, but often the question becomes, how do we get there?

And perhaps that's where the 12 Concepts of AA come into sharper focus for us. The Concepts are a good example of clarity of purpose – addressing the structural needs of AA as a whole. And one of my favourite Concepts in terms of Bill's writing and the spiritual foundation of AA is Concept 9. And it's also where all of you today have a role. Here's the beginning of that Concept:

“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. But 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.”

Here are a couple of key points in that quote for me. Bill talks about how the previous 8 Concepts have shown that, for our world service structure, there is a solid structure in place for responsibility and what I would call CLARITY of function. I get that. I’ve seen business and/or service meetings go completely off the rails, because there is no common understanding of what the structure or process for coming to an informed group conscience. And it can be simple things like an agenda, or the process for achieving substantial unanimity, or how a meeting is

conducted. And that leads to a second key principle in that quote: Trust. And trust goes back to the second definition of clarity – transparency. Oh and by the way – those “ever new generations of leaders?” That’s you. As a Delegate, included in my fabulous Delegate binder that was handed to me at the Conference, was a single sheet of paper called “On Trust”. And this is a quote from that.

At the 1955 International Convention the General Service Conference was designated

as the actual voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society. This was done over the objections of those who worried that such a gathering would result in politics,

confusion, expense and fruitless strife. Our founders had faith that future generations of

A.A. members could effectively take responsibility for maintaining our vital world services.

Every delegate, trustee, director and staff member who serves as a voting member of

the General Service Conference is a direct, personal beneficiary of that faith.

And I would add that every member of AA is a beneficiary of that faith as well.

Clarity. Faith. Trust. Transparency. Interestingly, these are themes that also came up in the communications audit. These have to be worked for, they don’t just magically appear. It’s part of the hidden, hard work of being an active member of AA, and knowing what it is that we all belong to.

I’ll close with the rest of the quote from “On Trust”

Each of us justifies that faith by participation at the Conference in a spirit of fellowship

and trust. We are respectful of the committee system which brings matters to the Conference for consideration. We trust that a democratic process engaged in by people

acting in good faith will be in the best interest of our fellowship, even though we may not

agree with all of the decisions made. We trust that future Conferences will carry on

A.A.'s wonderful legacy of service, just as those who came before us have placed that same trust in us.

Godspeed to our Western Canada Region Delegates Gail, Becky, Ray and Noni, our Western Canada Regional Trustee Cate and our Trustee at Large Scott as they head to the 69th General Service Conference in a few short weeks. And godspeed to all of you, our future service leaders, as we all continue on this remarkable journey.

Thank you again for the honour of participating, and the pleasure of being with you this weekend.

Trish

~Past Trustees Panel~

Presenters:

Alex P.

Tom K.

(verbal presentations only)

WORKSHOP REPORTS

Workshop: Archives- *Improving Archives Work with Technology*

Facilitator: Pauline D.

Recorder: Roger C.

Agenda Item: Question #1- How do we start an Archives in our district?

Forming a committee, Collecting oral Histories from long timers and record them in a digital format. Collecting Group histories and District history, Stimulating interest and unity, Using caution when digitizing original material (scanning) or over playing cellular tapes they may get damaged

Recommendations:

- **Make sure you have a safe Repository**
- **Catalogue all your material**
- **Use the Archives workbook and oral history guidelines**

Agenda Item: Question #2- How do we stop duplication and splitting of Archive material between District, Intergroup and Area?

Discussion Key Points: Boxes of documents are in different locations, offices have moved a few times. Not sure what is in Archives boxes. How do we prevent silo's (separate storage of information)?

Recommendations:

- **Only store materials where it is safe and where documents etc. can be preserved.**

- **Catalogue all material so information can be shared across silo's District, Area, Intergroup.**

Agenda Item: #3 -When posting Archival material online, how do we protect anonymity?

Discussion Key Points: How do we need / get consent? Does it apply after death? Ethical considerations - what about re-distribution, ICYPAA uses sign in and password protection on their website. If people share their story with Archives, don't they want it to be used? A.A. does not sell or buy material

Recommendations:

- **Follow A.A. Guidelines**
- **Use specific consent forms**
- **Consult- Anonymity Pamphlet (P-47)**
- **Consult- Frequently Asked Questions About Websites (SM F-101)**

Workshop: Corrections- Using Technology to Address the Needs of Meetings "Inside"

Facilitator: Steve C.

Recorder: Malcolm S.

We had forty people attend our workshop facilitated by Steve C Area 79 Corrections Chair. Some of the members that attended were involved in going into and volunteering at correctional facilities. We had members that had no correctional experience or arrests. Several had been inside and are now out living our way of life. And one member was a retired correctional guard. The saying that we are people who normally would no mix is so true

Topic 1 assigned: **Using technology to address the needs of meetings on the inside.**

So the first thing that got brought up was that Kent Institute maximum was the hardest place to have any sort of technology because of the very high security level.

One member stated that he was able to get some AA speaker compact disks inside of Kent but he started doing it at its "brother" institution first. He went to the minimum Kwikwexwelhp then Mountain medium and showed it was working at these two institutions before bringing it to the maximum security. He also stated that he did the same thing to get step groups established in his district.

It was also discussed that Inmates usually only have access to pay phones as well as snail mail, and sometimes very limited, if any, access to internet. There was talk about the upcoming first annual corrections roundup March 23, 2019 in Abbotsford, B.C. and the fact that we were going to record it, put it on CD and have it brought into as many of the correctional facilities as we could.

Given that often the only way for AAs to communicate with our members inside was in writing we spoke about the AAWS "Corrections Correspondence Program" and how we are in dire need of Canadian members to sign up for this. Information on how to get involved with the Corrections Correspondence Program can be found on aa.org.

A member spoke about some of the institutions she had been in had not even allowed CD's in these institutions as they could be used as weapons. It was also stated that technology and corrections does not exactly go hand in hand.

We spoke about each institution having their own standing orders depending on things like security. As such it is important to develop difference methods of carrying the message inside and adapt your approach to fit the Institution that you are attending.

The correctional volunteers seemed to be in agreement, that it would be nice to get a phone call or email from the prison they are scheduled to be at if it is in lockdown that day.

We had a long-time volunteer speak up and say that the rule is nothing in, nothing out, that Corrections service is very low tech, and what the inmates want is personal contact. One Alcoholic talking to another.

Some of the fellows that have been incarcerated were concerned that correctional staff never even asked the offenders if they had a drinking problem, and therefore a solution had not been offered to them such as AA inside.

We spoke about a possibility of maybe offering a video meeting to some of the inmates in the western region. We also discussed the fact that correctional staff would probably monitor these meetings for security reasons.

A member spoke up and said that in his district 45 they had a direct call no charge option to his local hotline from the Kwikwexwelhp minimum security prison. It was a victory in his district. We also spoke about if we could have a direct line from the prisons to a central office 24 hours a day free to the members on the inside. We had the question could we take a page from Cooperation with the Professional Community Correctional information and maybe educate the prison staff on what we do.

Topic 2: The need for members to become involved in Corrections 12 step work

We discussed at length the overwhelming need for members to become involved in Corrections work.

It takes a high level of commitment and dedication to do this work.

The personal risks need to be considered but should not be a barrier.

The workshop members currently involved spoke with enthusiasm of the great rewards, and joys of serving in Corrections.

There are several ways to become involved:

- 1) Get clearance and attend meetings inside with an experienced AA to start.
- 2) Sign up to be a pre-release contact person in your community to meet these members when they get out and introduce them to AA in your community.
- 3) Become involved in the Corrections Correspondence Program.

We discussed how we could use technology to reach our membership and ask them to please help out and volunteer their time in correctional facilities.

Workshop: CPC-Yesterday and Today –The Changing View on Alcoholism

Facilitator: Cathi N.

Recorder: Donna A.

We had 56 people attend the workshop. Three topics were chosen for the workshop out of the many suggested.

1. Which professional community interacts most often with CPC?

Our group felt that in the past the first line of contact was with Doctors and the Clergy. Today the medical professionals have expanded to include nurses, mental health workers, First Responders, dental hygienists etc.

2. How do we share information with professionals?

Some examples are: holding CPC luncheons, keep it simple/basic, don't come across like you're telling them what they should do, offer to assist, hold meetings on their turf, they are busy people.

We need to connect with and educate social workers, counsellors, HR departments, Unions & union workers, EAP programs, RCMP (training facilities),

Providing literature and electronic information - Cathi N gave an example of displaying literature at the Regional Conference of the BC Medical Conference. The cost to display is \$1,500.

A member from Alberta shared info on a successful CPC model that the University of Calgary has, where pre-doctorate students are required to attend a mock AA meeting as part of their curriculum.

Recommendation: The current videos are outdated and lengthy. We discussed a need for short and concise videos, perhaps using Webinar.

3. How does treatment fit into CPC?

There is a need to define what is and what isn't AA's role. Treatment centers may be hostile to Twelve step programs, so tread softly and cautiously. There should be peer to peer contact. Find out what they want, what they need, what their rules are, let them know what we can offer. Care should be taken as not to appear that AA is affiliated with the Treatment Center. One of the ways to continue to educate and work with people coming out of treatment center is by having a strong Bridging the Gap program or Committee.

Workshop: Finance- *Where "Virtual" Money and Spirituality Mix – Tugging the Heart Strings and the Purse Strings*

Facilitator: Rodney S.

Recorder: Richard H.

My name is Richard and I am an alcoholic. In the Finance panel workshop our discussion topic was "Where Virtual Money & Spirituality Mix." The first discussion topic was concerns regarding virtual money. New technology brings about fear, Fear of the unknown! Most alcoholics can resonate with that. Could this new technology break members' anonymity? There was also discussion about ego – would the groups' treasurer know how much I put in the virtual basket? Would they judge me for the amount?

A comment that kept coming up in our discussion was '*If we (AA) don't keep up, we will be left behind.*' How many times have you forgotten cash only to find yourself in a meeting thinking "I wish I could just use my card...." More people carry debit/credit cards for ease and convenience. Advantages of electronic depositing include less errors, faster deposits to your bank, avoidance of losing out on attendees who forgot to bring cash. Banks are moving more towards charging fees for depositing coins, as our

Area 79 Treasurer has found out! People everywhere are already doing these routine transactions in their every day life. You leave an AA meeting then go use your payment cards at the gas station, grocery store, etc. Why should your AA 7th Tradition be any different in today's modern, increasingly cashless society?

We had the pleasure of an attendee who had implemented one of these technologies already in their home group, to positive effect. The Generation Next group in Victoria uses the Square technology. It is a fast, portable, PCI (Payment Card Industry) Compliant that anyone can use with their cell phone. The group chooses to not have anything AA affiliated show on the contributor's bank statement. Fees are passed on to the merchant (or group). This helped our discussion panel clear away concerns, as someone said, *'we tried this, it worked for us, it can help you too.'*

Recommendations: Take the information learned here back to your group to inform. Each group can explore if this is something they would like to implement and if it would work for them. An informed group consciousness is key.

Workshop: Grapevine – *Using Grapevine to Carry the Message in the Digital Age*

Facilitator: Brenda M.

Recorder: Rio D.

31 in attendance

Intro: The style of communication is very different today than it was twenty years ago when our access to data was limited. The Internet has changed not only how we get information but also how we express ourselves. Digital technology is re-wiring our brains and changing how we communicate. The Internet has turned careful, deliberate readers into hungry information gatherers. Scanning, instead of in-depth reading, is

something many of us do now. For some this transformation is liberating... for others, it's terrifying. The Grapevine is the perfect vehicle for carrying the message in the digital age.

Agenda Item: Is Grapevine available audio? Where do we get it?

Discussion Key Points:

Yes, it is available audio and everything GV is available at

www.aagrapevine.org

Agenda Item: Vision for the future:

Discussion: It was reported by a participant in the group that in 2017 there were 69,249 print subscriptions and 4,077 digital subscriptions to Grapevine. Less than ½ of the attendees in the room currently had subscriptions but quite a few said they would subscribe. Grapevine is available on your mobile devices and content can be easily downloaded for later use if you are in a remote area or away from person to person meetings. This can be a great tool for shut ins, or those unable to attend meetings for any reason.

Agenda Item: What are the needs or comments from your group, district or area about Grapevine?

Discussion: It was mentioned that Grapevine in Spanish is the LaVina and one group in Vancouver decided to order two Grapevines and one LaVina to help support the Spanish printed version. A great idea of signing and giving copies of Grapevines out instead of sobriety birthday cards was mentioned. So was the idea of finding a copy of the month and year of the members anniversary. Which was also well received. It was mentioned that you can get bulk issues of backdated issues and also of current issues. So, if there was one particular issue you liked or your committees could use you could order more of one and use it as a tool to pass the message on in say corrections, treatment or the military. It was also mentioned that groups, districts or areas can also sponsor a subscription to smaller or more remote groups, treatment or corrections centres, for PI/CPC committees for placement in doctor's offices, RCMP stations or other professional buildings. It's important to note that the AA Grapevine is entirely self-supporting through the sale of the magazine and related items. It receives none of the group contributions sent to the General Service Office.

Agenda Item: Story and photo submissions

Discussion: The question was asked has anyone submitted a story or know someone that has? It was heartwarming to hear that a story was done about a long timer in Saskatchewan and that the story was printed in an issue shortly after his passing which recorded his legacy. A question regarding photo submissions was also raised and we were able to find out all the information needed for both story and photo submissions within the pages of the printed copy of the magazine at the session for display.

Agenda Item: The Grapevine magazine and other products.

Discussion: The magazine itself was reviewed showing the many things you can use in it to have a meeting. The preamble, content for topics, the steps the traditions and the serenity prayer. The plays/skits were discussed and aroused some enthusiasm. They are available on the website under the resources tab. The compiled story books are also available and Emotional Sobriety, Sponsorship and the newly released "*One Big Tent*" was also mentioned. A sample of the 75th Anniversary Toolkit was circulated around the room and everyone enjoyed looking at it and saw it as a great tool for their groups and GV reps to have. It includes a 1-year GV complete subscription. 12 GV print and online issues, 12 issues of audio recordings, 1-year access to the GV Story archive, the GV book "*One on One*" about sponsorship in action and more...all for \$49.95 USD shipping not included. Bill W hoped Grapevine would connect members and groups. The Grapevine 75th Anniversary toolkit celebrates and supports this vision.

Workshop: Literature– *Print Literature in the Digital Age*

Facilitator: Bob K.

Recorder: Crystal D.

39 attendees

Item Agenda; Do we go paperless what effect would it have?

Christy read the highlights of the AAWS Literature sales from AA this year. Discussion around AA's hope and goal is to be totally self-supporting without depending on literature sales. Only this way could we go totally paperless. We talked about having all the literature on one app but that would be expensive and who would manage it all. Technology is not always accessible for everyone especially in remote areas. We discussed that how important it is to have the time to share in person our literature and to have a sponsor explain the literature to be able to write in the margins of a book you can't do that on a phone. We need to have balance and perhaps a Hybrid system. With this comes the necessity to be open minded. People like to have a book the way it feels in your hands and to be able to share that special book to be able to "pass it on". Nothing is as endearing as having a sponsor, wives or family members Big Book. Additionally "good books don't have to be plugged in."

RECOMMENDATIONS

Persons with certain medical issues can't see a screen so books are still necessary. As well as in penitentiaries technology is not allowed and books are invaluable. DCM/ GSR kits should be accessed digitally as much as possible to save money and they at times get lost or there is a high turnover. Registrars should be given the option of sending a digital package. Also service material such as the conference agenda and synopsis should go digital as much as possible. Central offices may go out of business due the importance of selling literature. If everyone put in their \$11.00 to cover costs and help GSO to be fully self-supporting. We would

be so dependent on selling literature. The Big Book is always portable. Imagine AA without literature?? You can't give an app to a newcomer!

Item Agenda: Does it affect sponsorship (Literature)

Sponsors share their books their precious books with all the writings the scribbles in the margins different colored highlighting etc. Giving away a book (the Big Blue one) is another way of carrying the message it's free to be freely given away this is invaluable. Reading the book explaining the steps one page at a time is personal and invaluable. Sponsors need to inform us about what AA does and does not do. Sponsors need to have an options about the way they need to share the message with the newcomer the way that newcomer understands best whether that is online or in a book. One member shared about the necessity to this with fruit pickers in the area that did not have room for literature and liked being able to access the material online. One the flip side some people in very remote areas are not able to access the literature and websites digitally so books are a necessity. We had the reminder of one of our past beloved delegates Marty "If you have an opinion ask and Alchy if you want the facts go to the literature. Discussed as well was that service material such as grassroots (the quarterly report from Area 79), preconference material and many other service materials are much better sourced online. Service sponsors should be informing their sponsees and District representatives that the package sent out for new GSR's form GSO is costly and if possible could be passed on or accessed online. Sponsors like to be able to tell someone what page to go to in the literature this works well both online and in paper copy. The key to good sponsorship is through the literature it can't be changed. Sponsors and the fellowship need to be understanding of others experience. This may mean a hybridized system in the future to meet the needs of each individual member.

Workshop: Public Information- *Carrying the Message using Social Media*

Facilitator: Dana H.

Recorder: Marla J.

Topics from the floor: The Do's and Don'ts of Social Media that doesn't break the 12 Steps and Traditions.

- If celebrating a recovery birthday on social media, don't include AA in your post. This ties you to the face of AA. What happens if you relapse? How could the public associate them with AA?
- There are settings on social media that can make your page private. Is that enough?
- Once something is posted to Facebook, Facebook now owns it. Years from now when things change, will that become public in some way?
- Anonymity on public social media; AA's should not publicly display their photo with first and last name attached. GSO recommendations.
- When we are relating to the younger generation are there ways to use social media to spread the word? Could we create private chat groups, lock the comments, and have a write up on the private group chat saying it's not AA related or in anyway affiliated with AA.
- Asking yourself why you are posting AA related topics to social media? (Ego?)
- What are we doing as members to educate people who post AA related posts? Remind them about Tradition 11.
- GSO is looking at how to carry the message to the public on asocial media.
- What are we learning from the younger generation of new comers, are we being open and willing for change? Are we adapting to the change that's inevitable?
- Are non-AA members misunderstanding what we post, what are the risk in that?

- Can we use technology like FaceTime to connect to newcomers, people who are unable to make it to a meeting, or people in remote communities?
- How do we clarify what the guidelines for posting on social media are to newcomer? Pull them aside after a meeting, use correct language to explain. We don't know what we don't know. We were all once in the same shoes.
- Can GSO make a card to read or handout regarding posting on social media, like the "Green Card" (Seventh Tradition Card).
- GSO World Service is using YouTube to share the message by turning the comments off they can have control over that. They even went to the lengths of knowing/ giving input on what ads are displayed before and after the video.

Workshop: Remote Communities- *Geography, Culture, Language - Using Today's Tools to Build that Bridge*

Facilitator: Monica M.

Recorder: Máire O.

There were 40 people in attendance. The meeting started off with a question – What is it like to live in a community with say 300 people and the nearest meeting is 1.5 hours away and you may or may not have the means to get there be it by car, boat, plane or horse? Everyone in the community is either a member of your extended family, or someone you went to school with or someone you work with on a daily basis. Would you be comfortable sharing? Asking someone to sponsor you? Would you be comfortable calling a meeting?

Another other part of Remote Communities is culture. This includes not only language but how people interact with each other, eg touching, eye contact, male/ female interactions, cultural attitudes.

Started off with the group suggesting 3 questions:

- Carrying the message in a small, close-knit =, remote community. The issue of protecting anonymity and reaching out to those sober and isolated there

- Crossing linguistic and cultural divides

The central theme in the discussion was the use of technology:

- Zoom – for video and/or voice connections. These have been very effective

- Skype – can be costly with group function

- Facetime - allows individuals to be in multiple locations on Apple devices

- Spotify for speakers to download, cassette tapes with cassette players, snail mail and the Grapevine

- Telehealth - connects upwards to 20 communities with the result of some developing their own meetings

The other dimension of the use of technology was staying in touch and connected

- Regularly send groups minutes of District meetings and so on to contacts

- Make use of Loners International and online meetings

- Share meeting formats to help run meetings

Challenges

- The need for a high-speed connection for the use of technology

- Maintaining continuity and establishing trust

Invitation from Area 78 - Alberta to join regular Sunday and Wednesday AA meeting at 7:00 Pacific time via Zoom.

Go to <https://zoom.us/>; Go to Join a Meeting; Meeting ID #8864590234

OR call toll free 1 (647) 558-0588.

Workshop: Treatment/Accessibilities – A Changing World- BTG Online/Technology for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing

Facilitator: Carol H.

Recorder:

27 in attendance

Topic 1. In keeping with the theme of the workshops this weekend using technology, our first topic is: What technologies are available for the hard of hearing?

Voice amplification headphones. We looked online and there are many types from large headphones to earbuds available on different sites. The headphones would be worn by the hard of hearing member during the meeting to amplify what is shared. Most styles you can adjust volume.

Ava- an app that can be downloaded to a phone. Uses talk to text technology to transmit what is spoken to written words on the phone. One of our GSRs attending our committee downloaded the app and used it during our session. He reported that laughing, coughing or background noise affected the text but most words came through. There's also a microphone that could be attached to a podium for more clarity.

Committee attendees commented that it could be helpful for a member of each group to have an app of this type in preparation to host a hard of hearing or deaf AA member or visitor.

Topic 2. Bridging the Gap- Using the online forms

The purpose of Bridging the Gap is to have alcoholics leaving treatment centers matched to an AA member in their home community. The temporary contact will take the person to meetings, introduce to AA and help to get comfortable in AA.

3 of our attending Areas have Bridging the Gap forms online that can be submitted directly to the Treatment Chair from the treatment center or upon release.

We had a discussion on the importance of our committees to get these posters into treatment facilities so that they know about Bridging the Gap and can submit the form. There was also a discussion on the importance of our committees having AA members in each District in our Areas ready to receive the calls. Our committee was fun and enthusiastic and we had an informed discussion.

Workshop: Website/Technology/e-Services- *The Spiritual Value of Anonymity on the Internet*

Facilitator: Kathleen M.

Recorder: Lori W.

Attendance: 21 with all four areas represented

Introduction: Kathleen provided a definition of anonymity on the internet, and suggested that we look to A.A. literature for answers to concerns both spiritual and practical.

Agenda Item 1: Protection of anonymity on website

A password-protected website is safe unless a user's private computer is hacked. Area 79 doesn't use last names even in password-protected material. A site using PHP programming is hackable; there are more secure methods. Area 79 doesn't post event notices wherein email addresses include last names. Posting criteria are stated on the website. We were reminded to wipe our hard drives when discarding or selling an old computer.

Agenda Item 2: Anonymity and social media

Facebook is hackable. If you wouldn't put it in the newspaper, why would you put it on social media? As soon as something is posted, it's out of your hands, so you can inadvertently put A.A. at risk. Posting medallions, etc., is

about self-centredness. If I need to wonder if I should post it, I shouldn't. Announcing cakes on social media is dicey even if you don't mention A.A. Non-A.A.s announcing sobriety milestones (not everyone comes to A.A. to get or stay sober) might make us uneasy, but they are not our concern.

We aren't educating members that social media postings are at the level of press, radio and films. Remember that you may regret certain postings in future. Social media postings are being archived by the U.S. Library of Congress. Autonomy is only okay until it hurts other members, groups or A.A. as a whole. We need to educate non-A.A. friends to respect online anonymity.

Sponsorship is lacking. We need to reach out to anonymity-breakers. We can never think everyone is informed as there will always be newcomers. No one wants to deliberately hurt A.A., they just don't know. A group needs an ongoing plan. One group has developed a card to read before open meetings requesting that no photos be taken.

There's a lot of confusion about what anonymity online is — could there be a GSO policy so we could go to the literature with questions? A revision to the anonymity pamphlet is in the works.

WESTERN REGIONAL ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS SERVICE ASSEMBLY

“Our Big Book - 80 Years, 71 Languages”

February 22nd- 24th 2019

The Coast Capri Hotel
1171 Harvey Avenue, V1Y 6E8, Kelowna B.C.
(250) 860-6060

Friday, Feb 22nd

- 2:00 - 10:00 pm** **Registration Open**
- 7:00-10:00 pm** **Opening Session**
Chair: Cate W., Western Canada Regional Trustee- Ballroom
- 7:00 - 7:20 pm** Welcome and Introductory Remarks by:
Cate W. and Tommi H., WRAASA Chair
- 7:20-8:20 pm** **“Our Big Book - 80 Years, 71 Languages”**
Moderator: Cate W., Ballroom
Presentations & Discussion by Western Canada Region
Delegates:
➤ Ray M. - Area 91, Panel 69 Delegate
➤ Noni M. - Area 80, Panel 68 Delegate
➤ Becky P. - Area 78, Panel 68 Delegate
➤ Gail P. - Area 79, Panel 69 Delegate
- 8:20-8:30 pm** **Break**
- 8:30-9:30 pm** **Yesterday’s World - Our Legacies Begin**
Moderator: John S. - Past DCM - Ballroom
Presentations and Discussion by Western Canada District
Committee Members
➤ Barton F. Area 78
➤ Krysten P. Area 80
➤ Lorelei L. Area 91
➤ Diane O. Area 79
- 9:30 - 10:00 pm** **What’s on Your Mind? (Sharing Session)/Ask It Basket**
Moderator: Cate W.

Saturday, Feb 23rd

7:00am - 8:00am AA Meeting (Open): *Start your day off right*
Location: Coast Capri Hotel, Okanagan Room, accessible
from the hotel lobby

9:00am - 5:00pm Registration

9:00 - 11:00 am Saturday Morning Session:
Chair: Cate W.

9:00 - 10:00 am Today's World - Demonstrating Integrity, Anonymity and
Service

Moderator: Bob K. - Past Area Chair - Ballroom

Presentations and Discussion by Area Chairs:

- > Mike M. - Area 78
- > Scott G. - Area 91
- > Don M. - Area 80
- > Rio D. - Area 79

10:00 - 10:30 am What's on Your Mind? (Sharing Session/Ask-it-Basket).

10:30 - 10:45 am Break

10:45 - Noon Workshops:

Archives: Improving Archives Work with Technology -
Pauline D.

Facilitator: Pauline D.

Corrections: Using Technology to Address the Needs of
Meetings "Inside"

Facilitator: Steve C.

Cooperation with the Professional Community: Yesterday
and Today - The Changing View on Alcoholism.

Facilitator: Cathy N.

Finance: Where "Virtual" Money and Spirituality Mix -
Tugging the Heart Strings and the Purse Strings

Facilitator: Rodney S.

Grapevine: - Using Grapevine to Carry the Message in the
Digital Age

Facilitator: Brenda M.

- 12:00 - 1:30 pm** **Lunch!**
Lunch is “open”, you can eat at the hotel or any of the many establishments within a 5-min walk of the hotel.
- 1:30 - 2:30pm** **Workshops:**
- Literature: - Print Literature in the Digital Age**
Facilitator: Bob K.
- Public Information: Carrying the Message using Social Media**
Facilitator: Dana H.
- Remote Communities: Geography, Culture, Language - Using Today's Tools to Build that Bridge**
Facilitator: Monica M.
- Treatment/Accessibilities: - A Changing World- BTG Online/Technology for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing**
Facilitator: Carol H.
- Website/Technology/e-Services: The Spiritual Value of Anonymity on the Internet - tbd**
Facilitator: Kathleen M.
- 2:30 - 2:40 pm** **Break**
- 2:40 - 5:00 pm** **Saturday Afternoon Session:**
Moderator: Cate W.
- 2:40-3:25 pm** **“Tomorrow’s World - Courage to be Vigilant”**
Presentations and Discussion by Alternate Delegates
- Lesley W. Area 91
 - Richard M. Area 80
 - Brad F. Area 78
 - Bob K. Area 79
- 3:25-3:45 pm** **What’s on Your Mind/Ask-it-Basket**
- 3:45 - 3:55** **Break**
- 3:55 - 4:40 pm** **“Clarity of Purpose - Addressing the Needs of Our Meetings”**
Moderator: Michael K., Dist.71 Archives Chair - Ballroom
Presentations and Discussion by Western Canada Past Delegates:

- Lee W. Panel 58, California Northern Interior
- Larry M. Panel 66, Area 78
- Trish L. Panel 57, Area 79

- 4:40 - 5:00** **What's on Your Mind/Ask-it-Basket**
Moderator: Cate W.
- 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.** **Dinner**
- 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.** **Saturday Evening Session:**
Chair: Tommi H. - Ballroom
- 7:00 - 8:15 p.m.** **AA Speaker Meeting - Scott H. Trustee-At-Large Canada**
- 8:15 - 8:25 p.m.** **Break**
- 8:25 - 9:00 p.m.** **What's on Your Mind/Ask it Basket**
Moderator: Cate W.

Sunday, Feb 24th

- 8:00 - 9:00am** **WRAASA Business Meeting**
All AA members are welcome to attend
Chair: Cate W. - Ballroom
Secretary: Drew W.
- Reading and Approval of 2017 Business Meeting Minutes
 - Old Business
 - New Business
 - Other Items of Concern
- 9:10 - Noon** **Sunday Morning Session:**
Chair: Cate W.
- 9:10 - 10:00 am** **Workshop Report Backs**
- 10:00 - 10:15 am** **Break**
- 10:15- 11:15 Am** **Past Trustees' Panel**
Moderator: Cate W. - Ballroom

Alex P.
Tom K.

11:15 - 11:45 **What's on Your Mind/Ask-it-Basket**
Moderator: Cate W.

11:45 - 12:00 noon **Closing Remarks:**
Tommi H. - WRAASA Chair
Cate W. - Western Canada Regional Trustee