

Booze News

Service Work, the Glue that Binds us All

Around 1951, Bill W. defined service as the Third Legacy in the following excerpt:

"Our Twelfth Step - carrying the message - is the basic service that AA's Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore, AA is more than a set of principles; it is a Society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth will die..."

One of the more common sayings you will hear at an A.A. meeting is that, "you have to give it away in order to keep it". What this is referring to is the idea that service in recovery will help the giver as much as the receiver. This giving should not be done in the hope of a reward or praise. Instead the individual does it because they know that it is helping to keep them connected. Acts of service not only help the people getting help to stay sober, but they also help the person doing the service stay sober too. They do it to give back to the place where they found healing and new life, and to support the people that encouraged them to not give up on recovery and keep coming back, and to keep the cycle going for the newcomer. - Miles M.

Q: In your opinion, how do you feel Service Work impacts A.A.?

A: Service work within Alcoholics Anonymous is crucial to me because it fosters a sense of unity and fellowship among members, reinforcing the principle of mutual support in recovery. By actively engaging in service, I not only give back to the community that has helped me immensely but also strengthen my own sobriety through selflessness and accountability. Additionally, service work allows me to play a role in carrying the message of hope to those still struggling with alcoholism. - Lizzy M.

Q: In your opinion, how do you feel Service Work impacts A.A.?

A: Groups like Alcoholics Anonymous could not function without the voluntary services provided by members. All these meetings around the world are organized and maintained by volunteers. There is usually a collection at the start of each meeting, but (in the spirit of the seventh tradition) this money is used to pay for rent, coffee, donuts, literature, and other overheads. Almost every person at these meetings will provide some type of service, even if it is just sharing a bit of their story, or preparing the coffee.- Greg R.

Q: In your opinion, how do you feel Service Work impacts A.A.?

A: Another act of service we can partake in is something that we frequently talk about in recovery, and that is the power of prayer. Praying for those we are angry with is a silent service to both parties. As we change our attitudes and the ways in which we act and react to people, even people we think have offended us, we are creating peace within ourselves while asking God, or your higher power, to help the other person improve his well-being. Tyler C.



SNIP-ITs

"Our very lives, as ex-problem drinkers, depend upon our constant thought of others and how we may help meet their needs."
- A.A. Big Book, pg 20.

"The joy of living is the theme of A.A.'s Twelfth Step, and action is its key word. Here we turn outward toward our fellow alcoholics who are still in distress. Here we experience the kind of giving that asks no rewards. Here we begin to practice all Twelve Steps of the program in our daily lives so that we and those about us may find emotional sobriety."
- 12 & 12, pg 106.

"When by devoted **service** to family, friends, business, or community we attract wide-spread affection and are sometimes singled out for posts of greater responsibility and trust, we try to be humbly grateful and exert ourselves the more in a spirit of love and **service**."
- 12 & 12 pg 124.

"Though Tradition Nine at first sight seems to deal with a purely practical matter, in its actual operation it discloses a so-ciety without organization, animated only by the spirit of **service**—a true fellowship."
- 12 & 12 pg 175.



Booze News

"Service, What it Means and Why we do it"

Service, if you ask any member of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), you are likely to get a myriad of answers. Put simply, it's the implementation of the final step of AA's program of recovery-Step 12. It's an action step that requires a recovered alcoholic to share the solution to our common alcoholic disease. Service is living and sharing the Spiritual Awakening we experience, as a result of working the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and applying the principles we've learned in every aspect of our lives. It ranges from Sponsorship and work with Committees, to sharing at a meeting and all the way to just simply smiling at a stranger. There are many other ways to be of Service to another alcoholic, but the outcome is still the same... Continued Recovery and passing what has been so freely given to us, to the still suffering alcoholic. Samantha A.

Service...According to Meriam-Webster dictionary, the term service has a few meanings that we're all familiar with in AA. Service is described as the "Contribution to the welfare of others...". To me, this implies that service is for the sole benefit of someone other than the giver. Service requires some action on my part to give away what has been so freely given to me. But this action on my part allows me to remain in active recovery, serenity and perpetuates my continued growth in the AA Program of Recovery. There is simply not one without the other... GIVING=RECEIVING, as two sides of the same coin. Service can be as simple as sharing my own experience, strength and hope at a meeting, sending a sincere prayer out for the still suffering alcoholic, volunteering at my local AA Club or committing to serve on a committee that benefits my AA peers. All are acts of service, as defined by Meriam-Webster, but all allow me to continue to receive the gifts of the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. Samantha A.

Service

When I first came into the program of Alcoholics Anonymous, I was introduced to the practical aspects of service such as, making coffee, reading "How it Works" from Chapter 5 from our Big Book at the meeting, eventually chairing meeting in a crunch, and a few years later becoming the lead for one of our service positions, and for the person who wanted to hang in the shadows, when that 2 year obligation was nearing the end, I was all too happy to prepare to give it up.

These preliminary responsibilities are just like training wheels and somewhere down the road we ask that same person to take that job again, and things aren't nearly as scary as the first time. These activities were veiled approaches to taking me out of my comfort zone and show me that I had nothing to fear in the first place.

The next thing I see when we take on service commitments is that our Ego does not want us doing these things. It wants us to make up excuses for why we can't do it and seems to have something to do with "fear of commitment". The new person must be assured that they can't mess up an AA meeting and there is nothing to be afraid of; they always have a room full of long-timers willing to help for they have been there themselves. This all helps us begin the process of taking our lives back from our Ego and that guy doesn't give up easily.

Service doesn't always come by way of a formal commitment but neither does neglect; a word I seldom ever hear being used in the rooms of AA. We know how to open a door for someone and how a gesture like that can warm our hearts ever so slightly and we never regret that we did it. Almost six years later, I still see my sponsor pop up to greet the new face, and offer them a hand-shake and a cup of coffee.

As an alcoholic, I spent a lifetime neglecting those little informal acts of service and as the result, there wasn't too much to like about myself. It cost us nothing to open a door or to make our bed or to return a shopping cart back to the rack, and what is to stop us from doing these things? You got it: My Ego.

My mentors (AKA The "Circle of Sickness") sometimes refer to A.A. as an education in the art of living. The things we learn in the program are meant to be taken with us out into society at large. As the result of the early service commitments that we are encouraged to perform, our confidence is restored, if only a little at a time, and we can face the risks and challenges that we used to avoid.

Service commitments and gestures are what I see as, the first step toward healing our conscience and the more selfless we become, the more our self esteem is restored and most of us become strong enough to take on those formal service commitments that we used to shy away from.

Booze News

A lifetime of neglect has left us without much to like about ourselves but I can tell you from experience that the sack of rocks we hear mention of, in AA meetings, is not so full of rocks as it is full of pebbles depicting all of the little responsibilities that we selfishly neglected in the past that weighs on our conscience and produces the negative vision that we have of ourselves. We didn't get that way over night and it will take time to establish a track record of unselfishness of the spirit.

One by one, as we recognize them, we must replace those deeds, that we selfishly ignored in the past, with unselfish actions, one pebble at a time, without expecting anything in return. As we replace one negative habit with one kind habit we will feel an overwhelming surge of warmth inside that no amount of material gain could ever produce. Unselfishness heals the spirit and the only one that is on the losing end of this level of service is my Ego. This is the true spirit of Alcoholics Anonymous. Thanks for letting me ramble, I'll keep coming back. - Miles

If you want to drink, that's your business. If you want to quit drinking, that's our business.

Events

14 Apr - Women in Recovery Brunch 9:00 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.

Bellecourt Manor 225 East "A" Street, Belleville, IL

Join us for the 9th Annual Women In Recovery Brunch!

Speakers from 4 fellowships: AA, NA, ACA, Al-Anon

Tickets are \$25 each and will not be sold at the doors. Tables seat 8.

Questions? Email womeninrecoverybrunch@gmail.com

Checks or Money must be received by March 31, 2023 and payable to: women's fellowship, 1919 N. Charles St, Belleville, IL 62221 or give to a committee member.

To purchase tickets online: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd9JmdaYjDMSD0Z78JFncG95opLC-eRTkXCnvJcTZMkzgasQQ/viewform?edit_requested=true

14 Apr - District 14 General Service Representative Meeting 1:00 - 3:00 P.M.

O'Fallon Trailer 108 Carbon Hill Road, O'Fallon, IL, United States

Group Service Representatives and District Committee members meet to discuss business and activities related to the district. Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7200742222?omn=86987820245> Meeting ID: 720 074 2222

3 May - Metro-East Recovery Classic Golf

The Orchard's, Belleville, IL 1499 Golf Course Dr, Belleville, IL 62220

\$100/player or \$400/4-some

Breakfast - 7:00 am

Shotgun Start - 8:00am

BBQ Buffet - End of Play

<https://metro-east-recovery-classic.perfectgolfevent.com/>

9 Jun - District 14 General Service Representative Meeting 1:00 - 3:00 P.M.

O'Fallon Trailer 108 Carbon Hill Road, O'Fallon, IL, United States

Group Service Representatives and District Committee members meet to discuss business and activities related to the district. Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7200742222?omn=86987820245> Meeting ID: 720 074 2222

If you know of someone who has passed or have a suggestion of a topic for a future Booze News issue, please contact the committee @ boozenews.d14.a21@gmail.com