

Aloha! Good morning, my name is Ken M., I am alcoholic.

I have the privilege and honor of serving the California Northern Coastal Area 06 as there Panel 61 Delegate.

My home group is the Easy Does It group, Sundays at 5PM at the Alano Club in Vacaville, CA

I'd like to thank the PRAASA committee for the opportunity to present on the topic:

## **Where do Money and Spirituality Mix? –**

### **Additional ways to communicate about Self-Support**

- At the 61<sup>ST</sup> GS Conference I will serve on the Conference Finance Committee, part of my job in preparing for the Conference is to become familiar with past Conference's Advisory Actions, and apparently we've been talking about money, contributions and self support for a long, long time, from the very beginning in fact. More on that in a minute.
- But, to answer the question, that is the first part of the topic. **Where do Money and Spirituality Mix?** I would submit to you – THE HAT! Or, the AA Contribution basket.
- My \$2-\$5 contribution (not \$1) goes from my wallet in to the basket and mixes with other contributions, is when it becomes spiritual
- Then, from that mix - those contribution dollars go on their own spiritual journey
  - Meeting space rent
  - Meeting refreshments (coffee and cookies)
  - Financial support of the groups trusted servants to attend service events such as assemblies and PRAASA
- Remainder distributed to AA Service Entities (% pie charts anyone?)
  - Central Offices/Intergoup (provide vital local services such as AA hotlines, meeting schedules, literature, etc.)
  - District and Area Committee's (those vital middle links in communication between the groups, the Delegate, the GS Conference and the GSB, also the many various service committees that District and Area support)
  - General Service Board (all our World Services, too many to list here!)
- All of the above listed entities exist to better facilitate more and better 12<sup>TH</sup> Step work, fulfilling our Primary Purpose of caring the AA message of recovery to the still suffering alcoholic, a spiritual endeavor indeed!
- The first evidence of this mix came when Ebby T., who got sober in the Oxford group, wanted to help his friend Bill
  - With a couple of nickels, one in the phone booth one in the subway turnstile money and spirituality began to mix
  - "Right then and there Ebby established the principle that AA in action calls for the sacrifice of much time and a little money."

- So, that spiritual mix started before AA was born and has been going on for over 75 years since

Moving on to the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the topic:

### **Additional ways to communicate about Self-Support**

- 2 things come to mind
- This Panels topic: **Sponsorship** – be an example, sponsor others into service, and communicate about Self-Support.
- GS Conference theme: **We Are Responsible for AA's Future – Let it Begin With Us**
- Some say: God will provide – Yes, he will but he works through us, not for us. I might have a job, I might be in a position to hear about the need, but I still have to take the action, God is not going to put the money in the basket for me!
- Finance Agenda Item E – Discuss the list forwarded from the 2010 Conference Finance Committee for additional ways to communicate about self-support:
  - **Birthday Plan** (Suzanne M. sponsored me, Area, District my home group)
  - **7<sup>TH</sup> Tradition Pamphlet** (another pamphlet? Finance Item A?)
  - **Box 459 or Grapevine Articles** (*We're responsible* for GV articles)
  - **Finance Workbook/Tool Kit** (Finance Agenda Items C & D)
  - **Report Costs of Services to Members** (*We're responsible*, it's all of our jobs to make the fellowship aware, not everyone knows, the first time I heard them, WOW!)
    - Per member, \$6.46 Cost/Services, \$4.50 actual, \$1.96 shortfall
    - Per group, \$142.64 Cost/Services, \$102.24 actual, \$40.40 shortfall.
    - That adds up to an annual shortfall of about 2 million dollars (20 years) that shortfall is made up for with the profits from literature sales, which I believe to be another form of self support. This model of literature sales supplementing contributions works good, but, is it the best?
    - 55% of all listed groups contribute nothing to the GS Board
      - Are they really meetings and not groups?
      - Do we have too many meetings?
      - Are these groups practicing the "Power of the Purse?"
      - Are they just struggling financially?
      - How can we reach these groups?
      - There is something these groups are missing out on, not being connected to AA as a whole. When a group lists with the GSO they are saying they want the services provided, but when they fail to make any contribution for those services they are losing that spiritual connection. Any group, no matter how financially challenged could choose to contribute as little as \$1.00 per year to all the service enties we spoke about previously, and a least feel connected, spiritually as well as financially!

- **Discuss Effects of Inflation**
    - 1945 \$.08 = \$1.00 in 2011 - 1984 \$.47 = \$1.00 in 2011
    - Tri-Annual Survey says: 1984 4 meetings per week - 2007 2.4 meetings per week – 40% drop off
  - **Add Additional Financial Information on the Web site**
    - 7<sup>TH</sup> Tradition FSA's - Fellowship Service Announcements (short video talking about our 7<sup>TH</sup> Tradition responsibilities that could be made available to local, IG/CO, District and Area websites in addition to the AA.org website)
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- Who would like to be Self-Supporting through our own contributions?
  - Why are we not?
  - Another AA paradox: Surrender to win, You've got to give it away to keep it! I think the second one applies to self-support as well. Frank Piazza once told me if I'm having fear of financial insecurity I need to increase my basket contribution. It worked! Like every other of service in AA I've ever done I get back X10.
  - When we were drunk, broken and broke we were not concerned with spiritual principles and being self-supporting. Today ***we can*** be responsible, **We Are Responsible for AA's Future – Let It Begin With Us.**

Mahalo!

Aloha!