

"SOME OF US HAVE TRIED TO HOLD ON TO OUR OLD IDEAS...."

I was lucky that I had a low enough bottom that when I arrived at the doors, I was pretty teachable, and I was blessed enough to have good teachers and good examples. When I asked my friend June what that line in the Big Book meant, she said I had to put everything up for inspection to see if how I was doing things made my life better or worse. She explained that everything meant everything—big and small, my behaviors, beliefs, friends, language, politics, clothes, diet.

What are some of the old ideas that I have had to let go?

Love—I had two concepts of love. Both disastrous. One was pretty much all sexual. The other was Hollywoodish where I would fantasize whether I would be willing to throw myself in front of a car to save someone. The first concept led me to misuse people; the second kept me from making commitments. My sponsor, Stubb,

told me that his concept of love involved having respect, trust and understanding for someone. Substituting Stubb's definition for mine, let me go from waiting until someone had yelled in my ear a hundred times before

I could bring myself to walk down the street, hide behind a tree, and whisper, "I love you," to saying those words first, often, and even when I am feeling upset with the person I love.

Discipline—My idea of personal discipline was to avoid it. My friend Nora taught me that having discipline in small things pays off in big ways in terms of generating and keeping my self-esteem and keeping the drama in my world to a minimum. Early on my discipline had a lot to do with personal hygiene. Not only was I becoming a sober person, I was becoming a toothbrusher and a sock wearer. People were grateful. I learned that paying a bill did not need to take a dozen steps and thirty days. Before AA, after a bill arrived I would let it age for a few days. After opening, I'd let the envelope get some air before removing the bill. Some days after that, I would steel myself to look at the number and ponder all the reasons why it was unfair, unjust, or wrong. If I decided to pay the bill, I would write the check, but leave it on the table while I took some time to overcome the indignity of having to put

my account number in the memo line. After another day or two of enjoying the injustice of having to provide my very own stamp to send the profiteers their money, I would seal it, age it some more, and finally mail it . . . and probably get a new bill the same day. Whether it was dragging out bill paying, washing the dishes but not the pans, washing and drying but not folding the laundry, Nora taught me that in much of my daily life I was better off if I didn't think too hard, just do, and keep doing until the task was done.

Who I am today is different from who I was when I first arrived in the halls. Some of the old me survives and continues to make life more difficult than it need be, but much of who I am now came from others. I like to think of myself as a sober version of Mr. Potato Head made up of parts of June, Nora, Stubb, and many others. It felt strange and scary when I first started pulling parts off me and adding parts from others, but being willing to let go of old ideas has let me live a life with more joy and satisfaction than I ever could, or would, have imagined.

CN H.



Delegate's Corner

Pre-Conference Area Assembly

First of all, many thanks to all who took the time to come to the Pre-Conference Assembly in Warwick. I came away from the day in awe of the thoughtful consideration given to the agenda items.

Our 2019 Pre-Conference Assembly went off like a well-oiled machine thanks to our Area Chairperson Alison's diligence and planning. Steve, our Alternate Delegate, has been hard at work as well, making sure that our facilitators had all the background information they needed.

Final conference agenda items arrived about the middle of February and were sent out to everyone to review and share with their groups. For the first time, we shared background material with all of our District Committee Members (DCMs), allowing them greater participation and input. I was invited to District meetings and we had some wonderful discussions. Thank you for allowing me to hear, and teaching me to listen, to what you have to say because you are the voice of Rhode Island AA.

At the Assembly we had five round tables with two facilitators (a Past Delegate and a DCM, as well as a recorder to take notes). Each round table tackled between 7 and 10 agenda items. I want to give a big shout out to the facilitators and recorders. They did an amazing job and the time they

spent preparing
is so much
appreciated!

I spent some time preparing by reading the agenda items prior to the Assembly. I tried not to come to any definite conclusions on my own, and could not wait to hear what RHODE ISLAND AA thought and decided.

HERE IS SOME OF WHAT YOU SAID:

Literature – Item C

Consider requests to develop a Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*

Yes, we don't need any new sections but could use some updated stories that reflect what has happened in the last twenty years.

Unanimous Vote to consider

Cooperation with the Professional Community

– Item B

Consider request to remove text "They may help arrange hospitalization" from the pamphlet "Alcoholics Anonymous in Your Community"

Motion to remove this wording

11 Yes, 1 opposed, 2 abstentions

Corrections- Item A

Consider request for a review of all corrections related literature in order to make the language more modern and inclusive. The background from that area states that they feel like the terms inmate and offender are offensive.

Comment: This is an incomplete request without a suggestion of amended wording – we would like more information gathered to make a decision. Is this an issue in one Area? Is this about alcoholism or being an inmate?

Motion: Need more information – send back

13 Yes, 1 abstention

Finance – Item A

Review suggested Area contribution for Delegate expense for the Conference.

Contributions from Area 61 – our Area gives \$2,200. The minimum amount suggested is \$1,800. Actual cost \$6,000-\$8,000.

Motion to raise the minimum to \$2,000

Yes - unanimous

Literature - Item M

Consider revising the Foreword to the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.

Unanimously

But we would suggest it be added as a footnote so as not to change the original text.

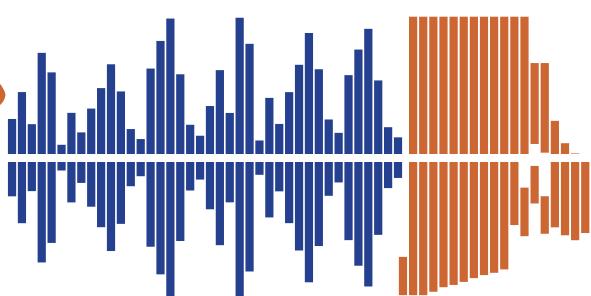
We also covered about 40 other agenda items, and I'm very well prepared to go to the Conference armed with the conscience of RI concerning all these matters.

Of course, it wasn't ALL strictly business at the Assembly. For lunch we had our sweet or savory pie cook-off. We are loose about what we consider to be a pie. There were so many delightful choices: Shepherd's Pie, Chocolate Cream Pie, Chicken Pot Pie, Peanut Butter Pie, Spaghetti Pie, and many others. District 7 brought home first place and District 6 won second place. Thank you to everyone who participated.

As I write this newsletter article, I am only a few days away from leaving for New York City to attend the 69th General Service Conference. I am so very grateful for the opportunity to serve AA and to be your voice and conscience. I know that my Higher

Power and my AA family will be with me and that I never have to do anything alone.

Yours in love and service,
—Mary K.



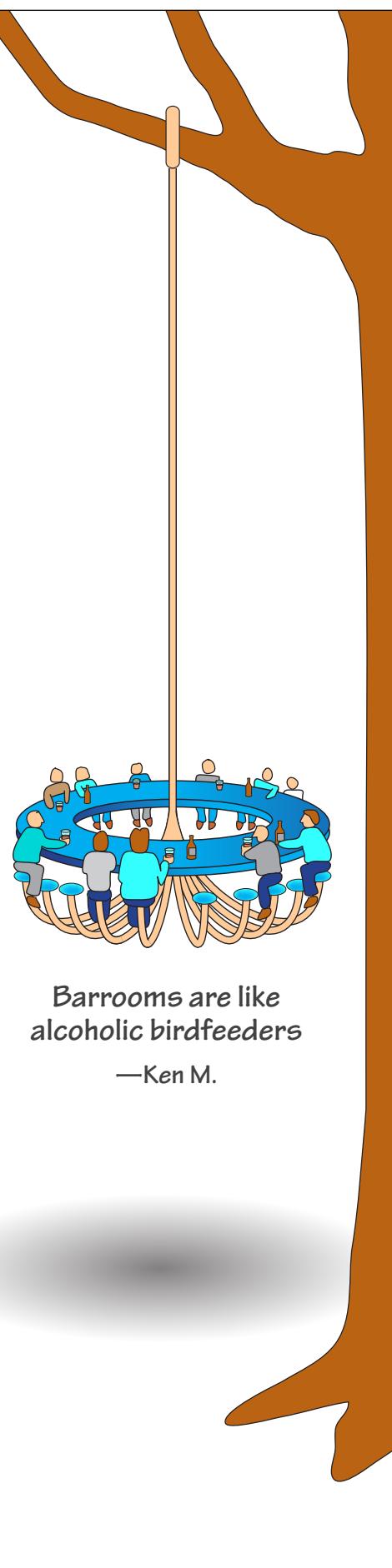
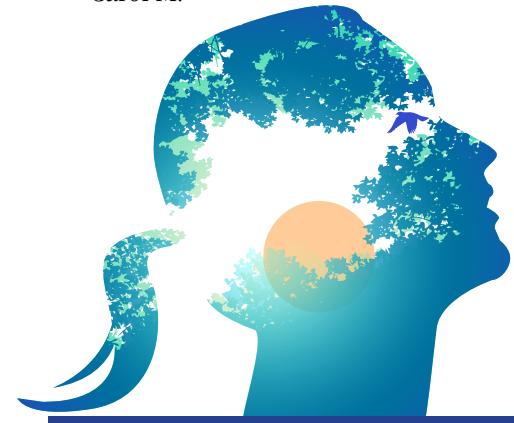
YOU ARE THE VOICE OF RHODE ISLAND AA

MY WAY

My dad passed away peacefully in his sleep, in a nursing home, back in 2004. My dad's two favorite songs were "Sweet Caroline," by Neil Diamond, and "My Way," by Frank Sinatra. They say the apple doesn't fall far from the tree, and I was my dad's daughter, through and through. I followed in his footsteps in oh, so many ways. Alcohol ravaged my father's early years and the missteps he made as a young man would haunt him into adulthood. As a child and young girl growing up in a dysfunctional home, I vowed I would never drink like my father. I didn't know what I didn't know, and in fact, my life mirrored my father's in myriad ways. The one difference, however, is that I found a solution. I discovered a spiritual remedy for what ailed me before it was too late. As a result, at 64 years of age, an age when many people are contemplating retirement and are slowing down, I am just getting started. I found purpose and passion in work that I love. I have connected with like-minded individuals around the globe, and together we are making a difference through our creative energies. I may not have it all, but I have my freedom, and I wouldn't trade it for the house on the hill, the luxury car in the driveway, or a five-star hotel.

Regrets, I've had a few, but then again, too few to mention.

— Carol M.



**Barrooms are like
alcoholic birdfeeders**

—Ken M.



**Area 61
Rhode Island
Alcoholics
Anonymous**

**Area 61 has
a new website!**

aainri.com

**Meeting list, Maps, Calendar,
Committee Info
Register for the Convention**

**Subscribe for updates:
<https://aainri.com/subscribe>**

Text follow area61aa to 40404

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