

MARGENSER

Fostering Unity and Carrying the A.A. Message in Area 29 MARYLAND GENERAL SERVICE

Delegates Corner: We Are Responsible for AA's Future~Let It Begin with Us

Nancy B, Panel 60 Delegate, Area 29

It was with a full and thankful heart that I gave my report back from the 60th General Service Conference on May 15 at the Area 29 Assembly in Lexington Park. I hope that by sharing my experiences from the Conference, others will aspire to some day serve as a delegate. Believe me, it was never my intention to stand for delegate, let alone be elected! It is amazing what miracles take place in our lives when we maintain an open mind, stop thinking, and start praying. I continue to put one foot in front of the other; say "yes" whenever possible; and leave the results up to a Power greater than me.

The theme of the 60th General Service Conference was "Practicing A.A.'s Principles – The Pathway to Unity". What I experienced at the Conference was a group conscience of 131 voting members who were, for the most part, fully informed. **So this is what it means to have an informed group conscience!** I witnessed a unified force of individuals whose sole purpose was to be of maximum service to a Higher Power and their

continued on page 3...

Alcoholics with Special Needs: Dying Just Like Any Other Alcoholic

Bob C, Area 29 Treasurer

At our May Area Assembly, MGS's Special Needs Chairperson made this request in his report: "Please set up A.A. meeting rooms to be user friendly to people in wheelchairs, with plenty of space between the rows so people don't have to run an obstacle course to get where they need to be."

Much to my chagrin, I admit I was at first taken aback. "Old ideas" ran unchecked, and I could hear my second sponsor's voice, misapplied: "Nobody's special in A.A. We're all the same. Terminal uniqueness is what got us here." It was a short jump from there to my own ideas: How different can we all be? If we make accommodations for everybody, where do we draw the line? Just how "special" does someone have to be to qualify for special treatment?

Such was my thinking. "Thinking" should have been my first clue, but I missed it.

The next morning, I heard a radio show where a couple was

continued on page 6...

Table of Contents...

<i>Delegates Corner: We Are Responsible for AA's Future</i>	...1	<i>Unity: Our Common Welfare Should Come First</i>	...2
<i>Alcoholics with Special Needs: Dying Just Like Any Other Alcoholic</i>	...1	<i>I Showed Up and Suited Up</i>	...4
<i>Why Do I Do It?</i>	...1	<i>MGS Contribution Information</i>	...4
<i>The Group Conscience: Seeking Our Ultimate Authority</i>	..2	<i>Maryland General Service 2010 Fall Conference</i>	...5
		<i>Maryland General Service 2010 Calendar</i>	...6

Why Do I Do It?

Tom R, As Bill Sees It Group, Berlin, MD

For many months, even up to a year and a half in early sobriety I struggled with the spiritual concept of recovery from alcoholism. Then being a black-and-white type of person and rapidly grasping only the tangible evidence of recovery, I could not see the spiritual for the simplicity of the Steps. After saying an earnest and simple prayer of, "God, tell me what to do" while driving on I-97 one day, a physical sense of a weight being lifted from me and an overwhelming sense of ease coming over me at that moment was a spiritual experience. There was a Power greater than myself that had been restoring me to sanity and on that day I began to put a name to the God of my understanding.

From the Appendix "Spiritual Experience" in "Alcoholics Anonymous," "Most of us think this awareness of a Power greater than ourselves is the essence of spiritual experience." Little had I realized,

continued on page 3...

MARGENSER STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Area 29 MARGENSER newsletter is published to foster unity and facilitate communication among AA members, groups, districts, and intergroups within the Maryland General Service Area. The MARGENSER aims to be instrumental in carrying the AA message. This quarterly newsletter seeks to publish AA-related material, including personal stories of experience, strength, and hope. Material will be reviewed by the MARGENSER committee chairperson or by a member of the committee. Nothing published in the MARGENSER should be thought of as a statement of Area 29 or AA policy. Finally, publication shall not constitute endorsement by the newsletter itself, Area 29, intergroups, districts, local groups, or AA as a whole.

The Group Conscience: Seeking Our Ultimate Authority

Arnold R

Realizing that the fundamental authority for Alcoholics Anonymous to operate comes from the groups, where our newest members are found, the direction of our Fellowship relies on the concept that divine providence is responsible for the arrival of all our members. In listening to the voice of the drunk who says, "Help me!" we can hear the voice of the higher power, guiding us in the achievement of our primary purpose. Acceptance of such a spiritual concept is the cornerstone of all three of our Legacies.

Implementation of group conscience decisions is the admission that we can do together what no one of us can do alone. Our co-founders discovered this when they were immediately successful, together, in the enlistment of A.A. number three. Bill must have also been reminded of the fundamental value of "we" when he submitted his initial work on the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, to the existing group conscience, which made significant changes. Bill provided the raw material, but a loving God delivered the finished product as he expressed himself in the group conscience, and Bill accepted it.

A.A. leaders are charged with the responsibility of providing and maintaining the structure which allows all good ideas, through the committee system, to be subjected to the group conscience. It is especially important that leadership ideas be subjected to group conscience. As Bill says in the essay on leadership, found in Concept IX: "Good leadership originates plans and policies and ideas for the improvement of our Fellowship and its services. 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."

Acceptance of the group conscience is, therefore, a critical issue. It is most important that current leadership does not seek to revisit the group conscience decisions made under previous leadership without a real desire to do so expressed by a substantial majority of current voting members of the group conscience, which made the original decision. As well, in accordance with the Fourth Tradition and Concept III, the group conscience should always stay within its defined scope of authority and responsibility.

A.A. is now more than 74 years old and functioning well in the beginning of this new millennium for all of mankind. The lives of those afflicted with this disease are still most positively impacted when an A.A. member speaks to the soul of the sufferer, sharing experience, strength and hope.

To be able to continue to do this successfully, we must be guided by the voice of our loving Creator, who instructs us through the group conscience. We must become the channel for peace described in the Eleventh Step prayer. As we learn to function in the proper manner, we will contribute to our steady and continuing growth. As this growth occurs and our Society improves, it will be guided by the leadership of those who are developing their experience now.

Hopefully, they will not find it necessary to challenge every decision made by the group conscience all the way back to Bill and Bob deciding to visit A.A. number three. We must come to believe the truth of the Second Tradition, especially when our point of view is not the one adopted. Bill can no longer provide the raw material. New ideas and better ways to carry the message will come from new leaders; and, the God of our collective understanding will continue to tell us whether or not those ideas are any good through the group conscience.

We should continue to contribute to the group conscience of our Fellowship and listen to the words of the voice that speaks

continued on page 3...

Unity - Our Common Welfare Should Come First

Anonymous

As we all know, the first written record of A.A. experience was the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*. It addressed to the heart of our problem -- release from the alcohol obsession. Seven years after the publication of *Alcoholics Anonymous* came the undertaking of the traditions and learning how to work together. Just as true today as when the traditions were written, unity continues to be a priority in A.A. because just like Bill stated, "Each member of *Alcoholics Anonymous* is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first."

Through the years and even today one of our challenges has been the future of *Alcoholics Anonymous* and how to preserve it. We know that A.A. must continue to live or those who have yet to find us throughout the world will live the hopeless journey to oblivion. Through unity we are able to hold up against troubled times so nothing harms our common cause.

Almost any member of A.A. can tell you what their group problems are. Fundamentally they have to do with relationships, one with the other, and with the world outside. They involve relationships between the A.A. member and the group, the relationship the group to *Alcoholics Anonymous* as a whole, and the place of *Alcoholics Anonymous* in society. Most issues of our basic structure deal with attitudes towards questions of leadership, money and authority. The future of A.A. has always depended on how we feel and act about things that are controversial.

The A.A. program was founded on the principle of humility. Humility implies that as A.A. members we work toward trying to relate ourselves rightly to God and to our fellows; that we each see ourselves as we

continued on page 7...

(Delegates Corner) continued from page 1...

fellow man. Although discussions may have focused on each Area when relating experiences, I got the sense that the votes taken, and the resulting actions, were absolutely for the benefit of ALL A.A. Voices were not raised; tempers did not flare; calm prevailed; emotions ran high; and the sense of spirituality and gratitude was prevalent. Principles were being practiced!

There was an incredible amount of work facing the Conference this year. The Final Agenda consisted of 67 items for the 13 committees. Each Conference Committee worked from six to nine hours during Conference week discussing and formulating recommendations for the Conference members to vote on. The final result of the committee's reports and recommendations was 37 Advisory Actions which included 4 Floor Actions (out of 17 submitted). In addition there were approximately 60 Additional Considerations which included suggestions for the General Service Board, A.A. Grapevine Board, A.A. World Services, Inc., the Fellowship, and the delegates of the 61st General Service Conference to act upon. Some of the action items that the Fellowship has an opportunity to participate in are:

- ♦ Review the Additional Considerations and formulate ideas for possible new Agenda Items for 2011. Talk to your Group Service Representative (GSR) or District Committee Member (DCM) to find out how you can participate and share your ideas.
- ♦ Watch for workshops, sharing sessions, newsletter articles, etc. on the "hot" topics for the 2011 General Service Conference. Some of the topics are designed to raise the Fellowship's awareness of anonymity in a digital age.
- ♦ Consider sharing personal stories that relate experiences pertaining to our 7th Tradition and the use of those funds by the General Service Office, the District, the Area, etc. How have contributions to these entities helped carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic?

- ♦ Look for the **Grapevine Questionnaire** on www.marylandaa.org or ask me, your DCM, your GSR or others to give you one. Please complete this questionnaire and return it to me by November 30, 2010. The A.A. Grapevine, Inc. needs to know if the Fellowship still wants the Grapevine magazine.

As a result of the work of the Area 29 Regional Panels, the Assembly discussed, approved, and submitted two Agenda items to the General Service Board which were placed on the Final Agenda for this Conference. One of those Agenda Items became an Advisory Action and the other an Additional Consideration. If more members of the fellowship would consider attending the Regional Panel meetings and the Area 29 Mini Conference, we could perhaps submit additional Agenda Items in 2010 for possible inclusion on the Conference Agenda for 2011. Our voices should be heard!

Please contact me at delegate@marylandaa.org if you would like me to visit your district or Intergroup to give a short version of the Conference report. Copies of the Summer Edition of Box 459 (News and Notes from the General Service Office) also contain the highlights of the Conference. I will provide copies of Box 459 when we meet or you can find it online at www.aa.org.

I look forward to seeing many of you over the summer at the MD State Convention in Hagerstown in June; the 2010 International Convention – A.A.'s 75th Anniversary, in July; Area meetings; and District events. Check out the Area 29 website at www.marylandaa.org for many upcoming events, and mark your calendar!

There is a lot to be done by all of us to continue carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic. And there is a lot to be done to make twelve step work possible. Now that we have focused on "Practicing A.A.'s Principles ~ The Pathway to Unity" for the past year, let us begin to look at the theme of the 61st General Service Conference in 2011...and remember that "We Are Responsible for A.A.'s Future ~ Let It Begin with Us". ▲

(Why Do I Do It?...)continued from page 1...

until after the fact as with most personal experiences that the promise that my whole attitude and outlook on life would change, had happened and is happening. This I suspect a result of working the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, and not drinking. As my sponsor has most simply put it, the most spiritual thing an alcoholic can do is not pick up a drink.

Seeing past the tangible and in the experience of being, the simple actions of how I stay sober has also defined, and defines my spiritual experience – talking to another alcoholic on a daily basis, carrying the message, attending meetings, and service work. The intrinsic value of sharing with another alcoholic, greeting people at my home group, going to a business meeting, and participating in Alcoholics Anonymous is that I get to stay sober. These actions and simple reasons are summed up in "Dr. Bob's Nightmare:"

"I spend a great deal of time passing on what I learned to others who want and need it badly. I do it for four reasons:

1. Sense of duty.
2. It is a pleasure.
3. Because in doing so I am paying my debt to the man who took time to pass it on to me.
4. Because every time I do it I take out a little more insurance for myself against a possible slip."

p 180-181 Alcoholics Anonymous ▲

(Group Conscience...)continued from page 2...

through substantial unanimity. We can guard against being influenced by the grandiose, self-deluded, ego-driven characteristics of active alcoholism, which can appear in our deliberations. For us, the miracle is the sudden ability to hear God's voice of love, to stop drinking and to surrender to the offer of sobriety and usefulness. It is a whispering voice that can be heard only by those listening as only the dying can.

As we accept the gifts offered to us, and use them to climb out of the pit of insanity and despair, may we never let the sound and fury of our individual voices rise to a pitch which drowns out the whispering voice of truth, hope and love. ▲

I Showed Up and Suited Up

Terry P

When I showed up at the doors of AA, I no longer knew how to live without a drink. But I also knew I could not live with one either. I was done. I remember early on seeing people laugh and enjoy each other's company. These were things I simple could not do, but I wanted to feel better. Not long after that I was invited to come along after a meeting and go bowling. I had heard that I needed to change my behavior, and the places I hung out. So I went along. This was my first step into the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, and though I didn't know it at the time, it was also a step into a wonderful life, full of friends and recovery.

I followed the suggestions I heard, and I got phone numbers, and a sponsor. I did whatever it took. Soon I was making coffee and later leading meetings. I was introduced to service work early on, and I became involved with my local intergroup. I now had a host of A.A. friends, and I was meeting people who freely gave their time to be of service to the program. A few years into my

sobriety, I was living in San Diego and the international convention was coming to town. I heard there were a lot of service opportunities at the convention. You can only imagine how many people it takes to pull off a convention for many tens of thousands of people. I went to the volunteer training with my service buddies, and we were amazed to be in a crowd of hundreds of people who showed up to volunteer. There were plenty of jobs to go around, and this was my biggest sense of A.A. unity I had ever felt in sobriety. The feeling of being involved in something so big, that had not only saved my life, but all the hundreds of people I was there with, and the many thousands across the country and around the world. Our assignments were handed out randomly, and I was given a two hour stint as a greeter for the marathon meeting. When my appointed time came, I was so enthusiastic, and on fire from the whole convention atmosphere, that I think the other greeters thought I was a newcomer. Well on that stage I certainly was. Later when we all attended a meeting at the local football stadium with close to seventy thousand of our closest friends, you could feel the electricity in the

air. I remember thinking of the power of A.A. unity as we recited the serenity prayer in a stadium full of drunks.

To think, it all starts with a coffee maker or a secretary in some church room or Alano club somewhere. The hand of A.A. can be there for the next alcoholic that comes through the door. I know that when we go to San Antonio in a few weeks, there will be a host of newcomers there. Those newcomers would have no chance to get sober and attend a meeting in the Alamo dome with thousands of other sober members of Alcoholics Anonymous, if it were not for the service that is committed to every night and on sunny weekends and snowy drives to New York for a service conference. These service commitments have become an integral part of my recovery. As I stay in the middle of the three legacies and intertwine unity, service and recovery together, A.A. has given me a life beyond my wildest dreams, and all I have to do is show up, and give something back. Sometimes it's as simple as having a cup of coffee with a suffering alcoholic, and sometimes it's as easy as inviting that newcomer to go out bowling after the meeting. ▲

THE MARGENSER IS YOUR NEWSLETTER

The Margenser Committee welcomes submissions. We are here to serve you. Submissions should be no more than 750 words and about service or recovery. Please include your first name, last initial and home group. Email all correspondence to Margenser@marylandAA.org or mail to Maryland General Services, P.O. Box 701, New Market, MD 21774. The submission deadline for the next issue is August 22, 2010.

REACHING OUT TO THE "DARK DISTRICTS"

Many of our neighbors do not actively participate in Area 29, nor are their voices heard within AA as a whole. We encourage you to reach out to those districts without active GSRs or DCMs, sharing your experience of service beyond the home group and carrying the message one-on-one. Area 29 welcomes your ideas on how we can best do this and offers our support.

SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO...

In accordance with the 7th Tradition and abiding by the group conscience of your home group, you may send contributions in support of Area 29 to:

Maryland General Service, Inc.
P.O. Box 701
New Market, MD 21774

The 26th Annual Area 29

Fall Conference



October 28 – 31, 2010

Hosted by Maryland General Service
With Al-Anon Participation

LODGING INFORMATION

The Fall Conference will be held at the Clarion Hotel and Hager Hall Conference Center at 901 Dual Highway in Hagerstown, Maryland 21740. Their phone number is 301-733-5100

The room rates are \$79.00/night. Mention you are attending the MGS Fall Conference.

THURSDAY

4pm **Shirley B.**
Pasadena, MD
8pm **Rich B.**
Ocean City, MD

FRIDAY

9am **Annette T.**
Columbus, NJ
11am **Beatriz C.** (AFG)
Parkton, MD
8pm **Rob B.**
Arnold, MD

SATURDAY

9:30am **Dorothy W.**
Indianapolis, IN
11am **Bo T.** (AFG)
W. Blocton, AL
8pm **Larry T.**
Los Angeles, CA

SUNDAY

10am **Shirley T.**
W. Blocton, AL

ALCATHONS

Insomnia has its benefits. Alcahons will run 24 hours so if you can't sleep do drop in! They begin at 5:00 pm on Thursday and run continuously (but will break during Speaker meetings) until 9:00 am on Sunday.

ACTIVITIES

Thursday: Game Night/ Name that Tune Trivia

Friday: Halloween Parade and Costume Party, Dancing, and more

Saturday: Dance, Scavenger Hunt, District 20 Play "Root, Root, Root for the Home Group"

A.A. Workshops:

- Third Step Promises
- Fifth Step Promises
- Eleventh Step Promises

Al Anon Workshops:

- Parents: Our Own Recovery
- Steps & Traditions as Family Principles
- Al Anon's Promises

A.A./Al Anon Workshop:

- The Family Disease

REGISTRATION AND MEAL SELECTION

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone (day) _____

Phone (evening) _____

Email: _____

Attending: _____ A.A. _____ Al-Anon

Other _____

\$ Registration before October 1st \$27.00

\$ Registration after October 1st \$29.00

\$ Friday Sunrise Buffett \$13.50

All you can eat... Scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, country fried potatoes, and French toast sticks with warm maple syrup, freshly baked biscuits.

\$ Friday Lieutenants Buffet Dinner \$23.00

All you can eat... Tossed Garden salad, chef's choice of starch and vegetable, rotisserie chicken, beef tips with mushrooms, warm rolls and butter, assorted cakes and pies. Coffee, Tea, Iced Tea.

\$ Saturday Gettysburg Breakfast \$13.50

All you can eat... Assorted chilled fruit juices, sliced seasonal fresh fruits, basket of homemade breakfast breads, scrambled eggs and home fried potatoes, and sliced country ham

\$ Saturday Statesmen's Buffet \$31.00

All you can eat... Tossed garden salad, steamed broccoli, wild rice, baked chicken, sliced roast pork loin, warm rolls and butter, assorted cakes. Coffee, Tea, Iced Tea.

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$

Please make check payable to **MGS Fall Conference, P.O. Box 1274, Fredrick, MD 21702** confirmation will be your deposited check**

(Special Needs...) continued from page 1...

interviewed about raising their autistic child. With modern combinations of social resources, behavioral therapy and medications highly specific to autism, their son can be a contributing member of society and is able to experience unity with those around him. The eye-opener for me was when the mother described cultural changes made in the past 30 years that allow their autistic son to be, so to speak, a part of, not apart from. She told how, when asked what he wants to do on a family day, he often responds, "I want to go to Goodwill." She went on to explain that Goodwill Stores go to great lengths to be user-friendly to people with special needs, with wide aisles, handrails and ramps, understanding and well-trained volunteers, and importantly to her son, well-organized displays and departments that make a visit interesting rather than daunting, captivating but not overwhelming.

Out of the blue, how this relates to

what Ed said the day before hit me right between the eyes: If Goodwill Stores can be user-friendly to people with an extra hurdle to overcome, can't we at least do the same thing in A.A., where the cost of poor "customer relations" may mean death? To say that an A.A. member has special needs doesn't mean he or she is "special"; it only means the member may need help overcoming an obstacle so that getting sober (rather than getting into the room or understanding what is said) can become their primary concern. "Special needs" in A.A. simply means a person needs a little consideration to have the same chance of getting sober as anyone else.

The Responsibility Statement is something I've taken many times in A.A.: "When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there...." Combining that with the second part of the Serenity Prayer, "to change the things I can," I find that whenever I have

the *capacity* to help a newcomer overcome the initial shock of waking up in the Fellowship of the Last Resort, then I have the *responsibility* to do so – whether by widening the aisles (or providing a cleared-out area near the door if the meeting space is limited), bringing coffee to a dexterity-challenged member, making arrangements for American Sign Language or other language translation services (or helping the member find meetings where such services are available), or discreetly making myself available to help a non-reader understand the Big Book.

The Responsibility Statement tells me it's my job to make not only those *lacking* special needs feel at home in A.A., but to make *everyone* feel that way. We conclude the Responsibility Statement with the words, "And for that, I am responsible." To that, I like to add the postscript passed along from our sister fellowship: "And let it begin with me." ♾

MARYLAND GENERAL SERVICE, AREA 29 2010 CALENDAR

MD State Convention	June 17-20	Hagerstown, MD
International Convention	July 1 – 4	San Antonio, TX
Area Committee	July 17	District 11
Area Assembly	August 14	District 40
Area Committee	September 18	District 21
Area Assembly (Inventory)	October 16	District 35
Fall Conference	Oct. 28-31	Hagerstown, MD
Area Committee	November 20	District 20
Area Assembly	December 18	District 22

(Unity...) continued from page 2...

really are -- "a small part of a greater whole." When we can do this, we will enjoy serenity and peace of mind with ourselves and within our group. That is why A.A. Tradition can confidently state, "Our common welfare comes first." To this end, one of A.A.'s principles is the belief that we cannot impose penalties on anyone for non-conformity. A.A. always suggests that compliance or non-compliance with any principle of A.A. is a matter for the conscience of the individual; he/she must be the final judge of his/her own conduct. So if A.A. has no authority to dictate to its individual members or groups, how can we be sure that the common welfare does come first?

Some members use the traditions to justify doing whatever they please since there is no authority to prevent them from taking any actions they feel are justified. Although the truth is that we really can do as we please, somehow it seems as if our common welfare is protected by powerful spiritual safeguards. Think about it for a minute; let's say an individual takes an action that seriously threatens our common welfare. They may think they get away with the action but if known by the group, a loving God will eventually express himself through the group conscious. If the action continues, a group will continue to lovingly let the individual know they are off the beam. If the loving suggestions from the group don't seem to penetrate through to the individual, I believe his/her own conscience will eventually persuade them that they are in the wrong. If the individual has total disregard and continues the non spiritual behavior or actions contrary to the group conscious, I believe they will be miserable or inevitably get drunk.

Through experience we have learned that in matters deeply affecting the group

as a whole, "Our common welfare comes first." In cases of belligerent denial of spiritual principals or self will run riot, I believe the behavior or actions usually cease and cooperation begins because it must. Through our own experiences we have disciplined ourselves to get back on the beam and cooperate because we really wish to; we see that without substantial unity there can be no A.A., and that without A.A. there can be little lasting recovery for anyone. We gladly set aside personal ambitions whenever these might harm A.A.

Unity reminds me that I am a small part of a greater whole. Although I may not agree with a particular decision, as a member of a greater whole, I try to apply the principal of humility in my life and remind myself it's not about me. Unity does not imply that the individual does not count nor have an opinion, quite the contrary. Varying voices are as important as mine. I simply try to remind myself how often I have relied on my own twisted thinking. This is where the group and people like you remind me that if I want to recover, I should start following directions -- however grudgingly.

Our common welfare also represents our primary purpose -- to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. The best way to preserve our common welfare is by our group conscience. It is essential that our common welfare not be threatened by our misdirected thoughts or actions and we must also be careful not to let our desire for prestige and our ambitions interfere with the welfare of A.A. as a whole.

As *Bill Sees It* states: "The A.A. Traditions are neither rules, regulations, or law." However, for me, I know if I don't try to the best of my ability to follow these spiritual principles, I will end up drunk again with no guarantee I'll get back to Alcoholics Anonymous. A.A.

doesn't need any rules since A.A. is filled with people like me who know they will ultimately destroy themselves if they don't follow the Steps or the Traditions as best as they can.

The *Big Book* describes the sources of unity: "We are people who normally would not mix. But there exists among us a fellowship, friendliness, and an understanding which is indescribably wonderful. We are like the passengers of a great liner the moment after rescue from shipwreck when camaraderie, joyousness, and democracy pervade the vessel from steerage to Captain's table. Unlike the feelings of the ship's passengers, however, our joy in escape from disaster does not subside as we go our individual ways. The feeling of having shared a common peril is one element in the powerful cement which binds us. But that in itself would never have held us together as we are now joined. The tremendous fact is that we have found a common solution."

The "Twelve and Twelve" states: "The unity of Alcoholics Anonymous is the most cherished quality our Society has. Our lives, the lives of all to come, depend squarely upon it. We stay whole, or A.A. dies. Without unity, the heart of A.A. would cease to beat; our world arteries would no longer carry the life-giving grace of God; his gift would be spent aimlessly."

We come from all walks of life, and represent all races and religions and human conditions. Most alcoholics have ideas and opinions all their own, but I believe that there is one fact that we can all agree on: *We need Alcoholics Anonymous in order to survive.* For me, this is the guiding force behind each A.A. member's individual efforts to uphold our Traditions because deep down we all know that our Traditions keep us together, and our togetherness keeps us alive! ♠

MARGENSER

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New Market, MD 21774

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New Correction Change

Group Individual

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mail to Maryland General Services, P.O. Box 701,
New Market, MD 21774