

SERVICE WITH WILLINGNESS

At the first General Service Conference held in New York City in April, 1951, these words were the voice of Alcoholics Anonymous: To serve AA is to live. We gladly accept our Third Legacy and may we guard it well and use it wisely. God grant that the Legacy of Service remain ever safe in our keeping.” The Big Book says that we cannot live with resentment. If “to serve AA is to live”, then resentment cannot be a part of our service or AA will not live nor will we. Our beautiful program and fellowship will wither and die with no one to help those that are still seeking help.

Likewise, expectation usually has a list of A’s, B’s, and C’s to it—agendas of our own plans and ideas of results. Resentment goes along with expectation. Someone may spoil our plans and ideas. Thus the ugly growth of the “how dare they” resentment. In January, 1947, Bill W. wrote (speaking of leaders) “...they have authorization to serve, never to command....Each leader soon discovers that while he can always guide by example or persuasion he can never boss.” Bill himself found himself “shouted down” when he tried governing AA. “Heavy-handed assertion of my personal authority always created confusion and resistance,” Bill wrote. If we approach service with the expectation that all our ideas will be embraced or that all our commands will be followed, we, too, will discover that we are “shouted down” and “loudly” so. We may even find ourselves with resentments that no one would listen to us. The slogans *Easy Does It* and *Live and Let Live* are the epitome of service. In AA, we can only be a servant, not a commander.

Approaching service with an attitude of knowing brings rewards beyond our wildest dreams. Knowing is an attitude of looking for the good without a preconceived expectation list. This attitude comes with an open mind and willingness which has helped me enjoy the many surprises that have been come to me through service.

As I venture on to my newly elected position as Area 60 Delegate in January, I am honored to be your servant. The gratitude that I feel to be entrusted with such a daunting task is beyond words. The Conference has been called the “new beacon light of service”. I am humbled to be a little glimmer in that beacon of light.

I thank you for your confidence. I will willingly serve you without resentment or expectations but with a humble, grateful heart.

Jan H. Alt. Delegate
(Panel 57 Delegate-Elect)