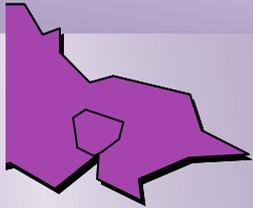


# D-Liberation

March 2018  
Volume 9, Issue 2



**We're on the web!**

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[www.ared.org.au](http://www.ared.org.au)

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## Note from the editor

In this edition of the newsletter there's great reading on service and on what Area D is offering to support service. This newsletter features a new addition: a letter from Rita, Area D Chair, will appear in each edition.

It's inspiring to read Barry and Peter's members' stories contributions and easy to agree with Peter's comment: *'While the exact service position I may take up will vary, what is not optional for me is whether I get involved in Service or not. Service is all about ensuring the Fellowship stays faithful to its primary purpose and as an individual member I have a responsibility to contribute to this.'*

As well as the value of service – the focus of D-Liberation -the other important element of AA, for me, is learning by listening at meetings. I was at a meeting a few weeks ago and sitting across the table from a younger, male member of the Fellowship. His story and his life differed from mine: different genders, different age groups – his kids were still young, mine are grown; other drugs were part of his journey- they didn't feature in mine. But listening to the honesty and passion with which he explained his complete commitment to Step 1, I felt that he and I were exactly the same. I left the meeting that night reflecting on the fact that any meeting can provide us with the information we need to hear. It was a very moving moment and serviced to remind me of the value of both sobriety and of AA.

I've also been thinking a lot about my early sobriety, having completed the questions on getting into AA, in the AA survey.

Deadline for group or district notices, stories on service, or members' journeys for next edition: **30<sup>th</sup> of May, 2018**. Send to: [arednewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:arednewsletter@gmail.com)

*" I learned, for the first time, that I was a sick person, emotionally and physically. As every member knows, this knowledge can be an enormous relief."*

*Adapted from : The Language of the Heart, p.244*

## Area D Committee Contact Emails:

Area Position	Email Address
Chairperson	<a href="mailto:areadchair@gmail.com">areadchair@gmail.com</a>
Secretary	<a href="mailto:theareadsecretary@gmail.com">theareadsecretary@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer	<a href="mailto:areadtreasurer@gmail.com">areadtreasurer@gmail.com</a>
Delegate	<a href="mailto:areaddelegate@gmail.com">areaddelegate@gmail.com</a>
Literature	<a href="mailto:areadliterature@gmail.com">areadliterature@gmail.com</a>
Registrar	<a href="mailto:areadregistrar@gmail.com">areadregistrar@gmail.com</a>
Public Information	Vacant
Area Newsletter	<a href="mailto:areadnewsletter@gmail.com">areadnewsletter@gmail.com</a>
Area Webmaster	<a href="mailto:areadwebmaster@gmail.com">areadwebmaster@gmail.com</a>

## Area D -from the Chair

### *What's happening in Area D?*

Area D is functioning well, with regular and structured Committee meetings and quarterly Assemblies. On average there are between 12 and 18 GSRs attending together with DCMs from the two active Districts and Area D Committee members.

We have been blessed to have a committed and active Area D Delegate, Peter who has kept us very well informed. Peter rotated off in March, and we are grateful to him for his service and example. Peter has been replaced by David from Ballarat, and we look forward to having David on board, and continuing to have strong communication channels with General Service Board and National Conference.

We are also pleased to welcome our new Southern Regional Trustee, Penelope from Bendigo, and look forward to working closely together. Penelope replaces Mick from Western Unity, who served us so well for the past four years.

Even though we have committed GSR's attending Assemblies, we would love to see more groups sending along their group representatives. We'd be lucky to have 15 per cent of all the groups in Area D represented at Assemblies. Our unity would be greatly strengthened if more of the groups could come together regularly to be part of the General Service Structure. We extend a warm welcome to any AA member to come along to area assemblies to observe and learn more about how it all works.

It is fabulous that we have been joined by GSRs from Port Fairy and Warrnambool. As Area A is not functioning at the moment, these groups are so keen to be connected to the structure of AA, that they requested to be part of Area D, and to travel long distances to attend Assemblies.

Area D is so pleased to be hosting the upcoming Southern Regional Forum which will take place in October 2018 in Melbourne. The focus of the forum is **AA into the Future**. More information to come in the near future.

If anyone wishes to contact Area D, please email me at [areadchair@gmail.com](mailto:areadchair@gmail.com).

Yours in service

Rita S,  
Area D Chair



## ® 2018 Conference Inventory Committee

### Summary

Members will recall the Workshops we held during 2017 regarding a possible inventory of the AA Service Structure.

The 2017 General Service Conference, after careful consideration and extended discussion, determined that AA Australia ought undertake a structural inventory.

An Inventory Committee was established and asked by Conference to implement a simple, agreed plan to begin this inventory process.

The Discussion Paper and an accompanying online Member Survey are the two parts of the first stage of this process. The details of the link for the Survey are listed on page 5 of this Discussion Paper.

We will also arrange for it to be uploaded to our Area D Website – [www.ared.org.au](http://www.ared.org.au) – as soon as possible. We also plan to have it available on the AA Service Website – [www.aaservice.org.au](http://www.aaservice.org.au)

We strongly encourage both individual members and Groups to consider carefully the Discussion Paper and complete the online Survey. Responses to the Survey will be taken up until 20 June 2018 and, as indicated on page 5 of the Discussion Paper, the results of the Survey will be reported to 2018 Conference to help decide the next Stage in the Inventory Process.

For individual members, completing the Survey should take no longer than half an hour. We also encourage Group Members to complete the Survey as a Group Conscience activity, in the same way they would personally - without rushing, fearless and thorough from the very start. It's important to remember that we have taken our 3 legacies as the guiding principles for this document and survey.

Should individual members or groups have queries, or want assistance, I am very happy to be contacted. My contact details are below.

Yours in Fellowship and Service,

*Peter*

Peter O'D

Member Conference Inventory Committee

Area D Southern Region Delegate 2015-2017

Mob. 0408 438 568

Email: [petero16@hotmail.com](mailto:petero16@hotmail.com)

## ***The Southern Regional Festival is coming to town***

An invitation to all Districts, Areas and groups within the Southern Region (Victoria and Tasmania) to come together in October to envisage:

### ***AA into the Future***

*Area D in unity with Area B and F, and our new Southern Regional Trustee, are planning to hold a Southern Regional Festival to be held in Melbourne on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2018. The forum will be an opportunity to discuss a range of topics relevant to AA Service in the Southern Region, and AA into the future. Topics will cover issues around technology, growing the membership, how a group cares for its members, and how we can make change happen in AA.*

*As the Festival is for and by the Southern Region, we are calling on the groups, Districts and Areas within the Southern Region to begin considering:*

- *Offering a one-off financial donation towards the cost of running the Festival,*
- *Promoting the Festival and encouraging members to attend*
- *Whether your group would like to be involved in some way*

### ***More will be revealed ..... stay tuned!***

*For enquiries, email [areadchair@gmail.com](mailto:areadchair@gmail.com)*

*Any groups wishing to make contributions, can do so by:*

*Mailing cheques to: Area D, PO Box 535 Yarraville, 3013*

*Direct Deposit to: Alcoholics Anonymous, Area D,  
BSB 063 240  
Account 10059701*

*Please clearly stipulate that your contribution is for the Southern Regional Forum 2018*

***We didn't save the world, but we did  
manage to help some individuals.  
Jim's Story- Big Book, 4th Edition,  
p.245***

## MEMBERS' STORIES – Barry & Peter

### What AA Service Has Meant for Me

**Alcoholics Anonymous** cannot really be distinguished from the people who participate in it. As we own no property the only thing that would be left of AA if members stopped doing service would likely be old sets of AA banners left in some car boots and an odd assortment of unsold AA literature in boxes scattered in some ex member's homes. A sad prospect if it ever occurred. AA cannot continue if members don't step up to take on service roles.

**Those who are involved in AA** seem to me to fall into two main types - those who 'go to AA' and those who make a commitment and contribution to the work of AA and become 'a part of AA'. To me there seems a profound difference between a member's experience of those two types of situation.

**Of course all new members need** to just 'go to AA' while they get sober and try to get to understand what AA is basically about. However, after a year or so of being sober their sobriety can be significantly enhanced by taking on a service role within their AA home group. At that point the member is no longer just 'going to AA' and looking in from the outside but instead becomes 'a part of AA' by serving others. There is a term used in AA called 'service at the end of a tea towel' and once a member even takes the responsibility to wash or dry the cups of other members they have taken a big step in their sobriety.

**Service positions** within the home group are the fertile ground in which the strengthening of a members' sobriety grows. The taking on of the role of a group Secretary, group Treasurer or Literature person may be challenging for some new members but that challenge almost always results in a growth in that member's confidence and the feeling of being 'a part of AA' grows and that member is no longer merely 'going to AA'.

**My own service journey** in AA is similar to that of many other members. It was within much less than two years of my starting to 'go to AA' that I volunteered to take on the role of group Treasurer and that sense of becoming 'a part of AA' automatically happened to me. It was a psychological shift that bought a new sense of belonging I had not experienced previously. A year or so later I took on the role of group Secretary and a year or so again after that the role of General Service Representative (GSR).

**The role of a GSR** quickly bought home to me how little I knew about AA's formal structure beyond the group level. Attending both AA District meetings and AA Area Assemblies was both challenging and educative for me. The more I learned the more I had to re-evaluate the assumptions I had about the way AA worked. Like most jobs in AA I wasn't actually competent in it until it was time to rotate out of the position. But it showed me that service in AA is a continuous learning process. In later years I had the privilege of undertaking several different roles on the Area D Committee and to do that successfully also involved learning more about the way AA is structured and designed to function effectively.

**Throughout these various service roles** there were always other members with more experience and AA history than me who were very willing to offer me their advice and support. Again that is what being a part of AA is about. Anyone who takes on a service position will find experienced members who they can call on for information and support.

**I strongly encourage** members to take on service roles at the appropriate time in their sobriety. It will not only greatly benefit that individual member but will ensure that AA survives, flourishes and is there ready to greet those who are yet to join us.

Yours in service, Barry H, Yarraville Meditation Group

## It's simple! It is essential to being a Member of AA

*"Why did you get involved in Service and what would you say to the Newcomer?"*

This was the question put to me when I was asked to write something for this edition of D-Liberation and I asked for an indication of what my article might cover. Here, then, is my attempt to answer the question.

As we know there are Three Legacies or Elements to AA Membership: Recovery, Unity and Service.

These Three Legacies are expanded upon in The 12 Steps, The 12 Traditions, and The 12 Concepts for World Service. The challenge for me has been to appreciate that all three, though listed separately, are in fact part of the greater whole: that is, The Fellowship of AA and the reality that I am a member of this greater whole.

In practical terms, what have I come to understand and appreciate about this through my active involvement in Service over the past eight years?

Step 12 states: *Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and practise these principles in all our affairs.* Tradition 5 states: *Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose – that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.* Concept 1 states: *The final responsibility and ultimate authority for AA world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.*

And so I have come to understand and apply in my daily living in recovery that, (1) having gained freedom from the compulsion to drink, having had a spiritual awakening as the result of the 12 Steps, I am called to practice the principles and carry the message; (2) having chosen to join a Group I am called to do what I can to assist it to fulfil its primary purpose ; and (3) as a member, I accept that I need to make my contribution to the collective conscience of the whole Fellowship.

The common activity in all three of these elements is **Service** for it is through this that I live out my sobriety in a united Fellowship and do what I can to ensure the message of hope is available to the alcoholic who still suffers whenever and wherever it is sought.

The following Statements reinforce for me what it means to say "I am a member of AA".

**Responsibility Statement** (adopted by 30<sup>th</sup> AA International Convention, Toronto, 1965)

*I am Responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.*

**Unity Statement** (adopted by 35<sup>th</sup> AA International Convention, Miami, 1970)

*This we owe to AA's future: to place our common welfare first; to keep our Fellowship united. For on AA unity depend our lives and the lives of those to come.*

The opportunities for Service are numerous. There are positions at Group level, at District level, at Area level, at National level. There are opportunities to assist with PI activities, to be part of organising committees for AA Events, to be on the roster for the telephone Helpline, to be a volunteer at CSO, to be on the roster for taking the message to Prisons and Treatment Centres.

What is often missing is the willingness of members to take up these opportunities.

Sure some of these opportunities can be time consuming and some will be more suitable for the individual member than others. But what I have become committed to is the fact that as a member of the Fellowship I have a responsibility to involve myself in Service.

Exactly what form this may take will depend on a number of things such as – my length of sobriety, keeping a balance in my life, what particular skills and abilities I can bring to the task, and so on.

However, whilst the exact service position I may take up will vary, what is not optional for me is whether I get involved in Service or not. Service is all about ensuring the Fellowship stays faithful to its primary purpose and as an individual member I have a responsibility to contribute to this.

I became involved in Service at the Area level initially because I was asked to consider it. Like many, I had held service positions at the Group level, but I had no real understanding of service beyond this.

But I was assured that help would be readily provided by other members.

Inevitably, my initial fears subsided, my understanding of service grew, my quality of sobriety was enhanced, and my appreciation of the Fellowship matured. What started at the end of a tea towel in 2002, resulted in seven years on Area Committee including three extraordinarily fulfilling years as Conference Delegate 2015-2017. It also provided me with the chance to assist the 2014 National Treatment and Correctional Facilities Forum and motivates me to continue to help take the AA message into Port Phillip Prison.

Yes, I am sure that in the beginning I could have come up with many reasons-and probably did-why not to become involved. In the end, however, my understanding of what it means to be a member of AA has become so much of who I understand myself to be today, that I am very fortunate and grateful not to have missed the opportunities. My quality of life today would have been the poorer.

**Peter O'D, February 2018**

It is easy to let up on our spiritual program of action and rest on our laurels. We are headed for trouble if we do, for alcohol is a subtle foe. -Into Action, Big Book 4<sup>th</sup> edition, p.85

## Support for Service:

### 12th Step Service Opportunity!!!

North West Intergroup 12th Step  
24 hour Phone Service

# WORKSHOP for new/existing 12th STEP PHONE VOLUNTEERS



- WHEN:** Saturday 12th May at 11:00 am  
**WHERE:** 9 Newcastle St, Newport  
**WHO:** This workshop is for **ALL** volunteers (new or existing) from any area  
**HOW:** Contact [info@aanorthwestmelb.org.au](mailto:info@aanorthwestmelb.org.au) or just turn up!

AA (ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS)®\*  
24 HOUR HELPLINE (NORTH WEST INTER-  
GROUP)

E-mail: [info@aanorthwestmelb.org.au](mailto:info@aanorthwestmelb.org.au)  
Website: [www.aanorthwestmelb.org.au](http://www.aanorthwestmelb.org.au)



\*The words "Alcoholics Anonymous" are a registered Trademark of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous Australia

**Area Events**

<p>March 18@ 8:30 am                  - 6:00 pm</p>	<p><b><u>Steps in Rosanna Illustrated Steps</u></b></p> <p>Steps 1 to12 presented by Chris and David with guest speakers on each step. Sunday 18th March Registration 8.30am. Presentations from 9.00am to 6.00pm</p> <p>Rosanna Fire Station Community House 232 Lower Plenty Road, Rosanna Refreshments and lunch provided \$15 per head Enquiries: 0418661332</p>
<p>March 29 @ 8:00 am                  - April 2 @ 5:00 pm</p>	<p><b><u>Australian AA National Convention 2018</u></b></p> <p>53<sup>rd</sup> Australian National Convention, with Al-anon and Alateen participation.</p> <p>Rendezvous Hotel, Scarborough, Western Australia</p>
<p>April 13 @ 7:00 pm -                  April 15 @ 7:00 pm</p>	<p><b><u>Melbourne AA Steps Weekend 2018</u></b></p> <p>Over 2 and half days, twenty six invited speakers will share their experience of the the Alcoholics Anonymous Twelve Step program. Each of the nine session ends with a Q&amp;A period where the guest speakers can answer your queries about the steps.</p> <p>Banyule Theatre 10 Buckingham Drive, Heidelberg</p>
<p><b>May 25th-27th</b></p>	<p>A Common Solution – Retreat – walk through the 12 steps with other members of the fellowship. 25<sup>th</sup> arch 5PM bbq and anniversary 9 year.</p> <p>Join us on May 25th – 27th 2018 while we walk through the 12 Steps of recovery and enjoy a weekend of fellowship.</p> <p>A unique approach to a retreat style weekend, where everyone will get an opportunity to share their experience, strength and hope with special guest speakers from around Australia.</p> <p><a href="https://commonsolutionretreat.org">https://commonsolutionretreat.org</a>, or Danny R:</p>
<p><b>June 3<sup>rd</sup></b></p>	<p><b><u>Area D Assembly</u></b></p> <p>Venue TBA</p>

**To share your event or meeting with a special focus, contact:**  
[areadnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:areadnewsletter@gmail.com)

**And just repeating:**

## Australian Fellowship Survey

December 7, 2017 admin

The end date for acceptance of completed survey forms has now been extended to June 30, 2018. Please pass this message on to your AA contacts, who may not have participated in this initiative, and to pass this message on to their own AA contacts.

The survey can be found and completed at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/S26J52S>

A hard copy of the survey can be downloaded here and can be returned by post to GSO, 48 Firth Street, Arncliffe NSW 2205

### *Attraction, Not Promotion*

*“Through many painful experiences, we think we have arrived at what that policy ought to be. It is the opposite in many ways of usual promotional practice. We found that we had to rely upon the principle of attraction rather than promotion.”*

*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, pp 180-181*

### About Area D



Area D Southern Region is a part of the Alcoholics Anonymous General Service Conference Structure of Australia. As such we fully participate in the Australian General Service Conference. We also support the AA National Office in any way we are able.

Bordered by the Yarra river, the Area includes the Western and Northern suburbs of Melbourne and extends to include other major cities such as Geelong and Ballarat, and regional centres such as Daylesford.

**Disclaimer:** Except for material identified as being taken directly from AA Conference Approved Literature, articles published in this Newsletter are the experience and opinion of the author, and are not necessarily the opinion of AA.