

## **Delegate's Corner: December 2024**

In September 2009, after four calamitous years of daily drinking (and drugs!), I found myself in a rehab unsure of what to do with my life. I did not want to keep what I had, but I did not think there were any other options for me. I felt broken, alone, and consumed by anger toward the world. The future seemed impossibly frightening. Yet I was blessed with the gift of desperation.

I am no longer trapped in that place of desperation. My life gradually improved – at times quickly, other times more slowly – during my first few years of sobriety. I realized I was capable, returned to school, and pursued a new career. I built meaningful friendships, navigated a few relationships, and, along the way, learned to trust myself. I also discovered new hobbies that brought me joy.

I have always struggled with the spiritual aspects of AA – I have a Higher Power, but it changes shape so often it can sometimes be hard to connect with. But I see how a Higher Power worked in my sobriety; it is easier to see in hindsight. I was such a troublemaker in my early sobriety that I was dragged to the back table of my home group to sit with the group treasurer, who turned out to be a past Delegate. She kept encouraging me to try different things. And not knowing any better, I just followed suggestions.

That is how I ended up here with all of you. I was a terrible GSR. But I was enthusiastic in my ignorance. People here were kind to me. Jeff O. (a past Alternate Delegate in our Area) was the first person outside of District 04 to encourage me to keep doing service. So I did. And now... at least this part of my General Service journey ends.

For some of you, it might be ending too. I know my participation in AA will continue. In a couple of weeks, my home group is holding elections, and I will be available. Hopefully, they pick me. I now know that service is not my gift to you; it is how my Higher Power gifts me with everything I have.

As I approach the final few weeks of serving as your Delegate, I am excited to find out what comes next. But I know I will keep participating. I just do not know what that will look like yet. This experience, and the past eight years of serving as an Area Officer, have changed me. You have changed me.

Yet, one thing remains unchanged: the spiritual power in the simple act of one alcoholic sharing with another. The future now feels full of possibility, I have confidence in who I am, and I am deeply grateful for the life I have today. I feel joy. I will keep coming back.

Eric L.

Panel 73 Delegate