

Dear Fellows,

Happy New Year!

**Coming Soon: Letters to the Editor**– *Katie M, Chairperson, Ways and Means Subcommittee*

*“With support from the General Service Board (GSB), future issues of the Ways and Means newsletter will offer a place for members to express their issues, comments, and concerns on debting, earning or D.A. as a whole.”*

Submit your letter to [waysandmeans@debtorsanonymous.org](mailto:waysandmeans@debtorsanonymous.org) with the subject **Letter to Editor**.

**Feature Recovery Story** – *The Best D.A. Meeting I Never Expected by Domingo R.*

*“HIP Committee asked for volunteers to bring a D.A. meeting into a county prison. . . I shared that material things never brought me the peace and serenity that I had been looking for all my life”.*

**Newcomer Corner** – *I Had to Take Risks in Order to Grow by Sharon F.*

*“I noticed that I don’t feel fear when I’m engaged with helping others.”*

**Call for D.A Recovery Story Submissions:**

*How does staying active in DA boost your recovery? Write about your experience in 500-750 words and send it via email to: [waysandmeans@debtorsanonymous.org](mailto:waysandmeans@debtorsanonymous.org)*

Yours in Recovery,

Alfa, Katie, Marianne, and Monty

## FEATURE RECOVERY STORY

### ***The Best D.A. Meeting I Never Expected***

Domingo R.

I debted, in part, to numb and distract myself from a world I felt ill-equipped to live in. I was very young when I began seeking refuge in compulsive behaviors. And I am grateful that I had a way to survive until I could find a sustainable and loving way to live.

In my teenage years, I turned to drugs and alcohol for solace and oblivion. It helped me deal with the effects of growing up in a family affected by the disease of alcoholism. To fund that lifestyle I shoplifted, stole whatever I could find of value, and even sold drugs to support my disease. The friends I hung around with would share stories of 'getting busted' for various reasons. Which was another word to describe being arrested.

That's when I learned of California's many juvenile detention facilities, Youth Authority (Y.A.) camps, jails, and prisons. Telling stories of what it was like being locked up was like sharing old scars on the playground. It was a way to pass the time and gain respect and status amongst one's peers. It was only by dumb luck that I did not have those same stories to tell. But from experience, I learned, in part, why and how people easily wound up in those institutions.

Thankfully, I was beaten into submission by the disease of compulsive debting and I came to D.A. in 2009. I was fresh off the hope I had found in a 12-Step food program earlier that same year. My sponsor told me that the 12 steps could solve any problem I had. I so desperately wanted and needed recovery from debting and the demoralizing hopelessness that comes from suffering from "abundance blindness".

In 2012, I took on the role of Intergroup Service Representative (ISR) for the Southern California Regional Area Group (RAG). During one of the monthly meetings, the Hospitals, Institutions, and Prisons Committee (HIP) asked for volunteers to bring a D.A. meeting into a county prison. Immediately I remembered the war stories of my youth and became all too aware of how that could have been me at one of those facilities. Thanks to my recovery, I had the willingness to raise my hand and join Beth P. on her next visit to Los Angeles County Prison.

I was nervous on the way there. I was nervous going in. "What will I say? What do I have to share with them?"

Beth told me to keep it simple, that now was not the time for fancy footwork. Now was the time for some good old straight talk in the frankest and most genuine way possible. And that's what I did.

I told them what it was like to live in a world of lack, how I felt compelled to act like I thought others wanted me to. I told them about how I gave my power away to creditors and everyone

else alike and then resented them for it. I told them how I thought the only way to live was to “get mine while the getting was good.” Because that is what I thought all life was, a greedy scramble to the top of the heap. After all, wasn't that what everyone else was doing?

And then I told them about recovery. About how wrong I had been about the really important things in life. I shared how I found the real definition of true and lasting happiness beginning on the middle of page 124 of the A.A. Twelve and Twelve that continued to the end of that chapter. I shared that material things never brought me the peace and serenity that I had been looking for all my life. I told them that there was a way to live peacefully and joyfully with anything that life brings. That no matter how dark my compulsion to obsess and worry can seem, it is not the truth of my being.



*“I discovered that if I trusted and just stuck my hand in my spiritual pocket, the one I was convinced held nothing but lint, I would find the spiritual currency that I needed.”*

I discovered that if I trusted and just stuck my hand in my spiritual pocket, the one I was convinced held nothing but lint, I would find the spiritual currency that I needed. I might find I had something to share that someone might find useful and reach up and catch it. And that it might be with them to this day. And that they might share it freely with others and pass it on someday.

Today I get to remember that abundance is all around me. I remember that I am a spring of abundance, that we all are springs of abundance, and that inside of us is our Higher Power, fueling that abundance.

I'm grateful for the several times I got to perform that HIP service and share and receive back exactly what I needed in kind. I unexpectedly learned so much during that experience. One of them was that the meeting I was most scared of attending, would wind up being the best meeting I never expected.

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## NEWCOMER CORNER



### ***I Had to Take Risks in Order to Grow*** Sharon F.

To me, service in D.A. is about connection, hope, growth and abundance. When I'm making an outreach call, welcoming a newcomer, serving as the tech host for a meeting or sitting on a PRG, I feel a strong connection to others in a positive way. I noticed that I don't feel fear when I'm engaged in helping others. That is a miracle because so much of my life has been spent living in

fear, isolation, and self-doubt. Since starting D.A. a year and a half ago, my life has greatly improved through service.

The first service position I took on was the We-Care Coordinator. At every meeting, I would announce how others can connect. I was very nervous at first speaking in front of the whole group. I gained confidence as I continued to show up each week. I took on another service position of Tech Host at a B.D.A. meeting. In that role, I would monitor the video conference room and put up the readings on the screen. It took a lot of coordination and attention to detail. I was also very nervous when I started, but I knew I had to take these risks in order to grow. After the first meeting, the chairperson said I was the best tech host he ever encountered! I thought that was so funny because I'm always so hard on myself. After 6 months of solvency, I volunteered to be co-chairperson for a meeting. Being the chairperson was very rewarding because I felt that I was helping the whole meeting run smoothly. I started to feel real growth in my connection to my higher power and others. Today I have hope and fellowship because of this program. Service to me is about giving back what has been so generously given to me.

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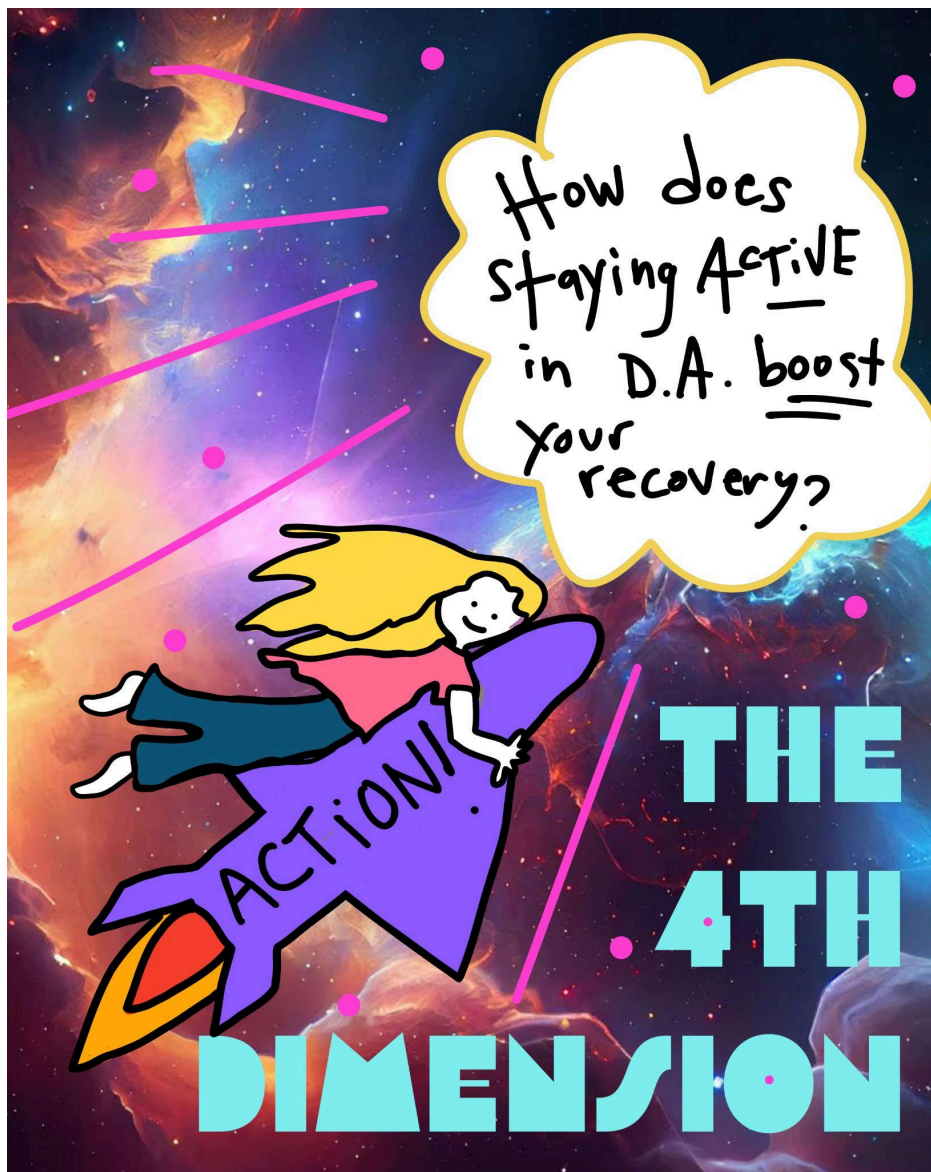
## CALL FOR SUBMISSION

### *How does staying active in D.A. boost your recovery?*

In 500-750 words, share your experience, strength, and hope on the prompt, “How does staying active in D.A. boost your recovery?” Email your submission to:

[waysandmeans@debtorsanonymous.org](mailto:waysandmeans@debtorsanonymous.org)

You may see your story published in a future issue of *The Ways and Means!*



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