

Dear Fellows,

We are pleased to release our third issue of 2024. In this issue the focus is on SERVICE!

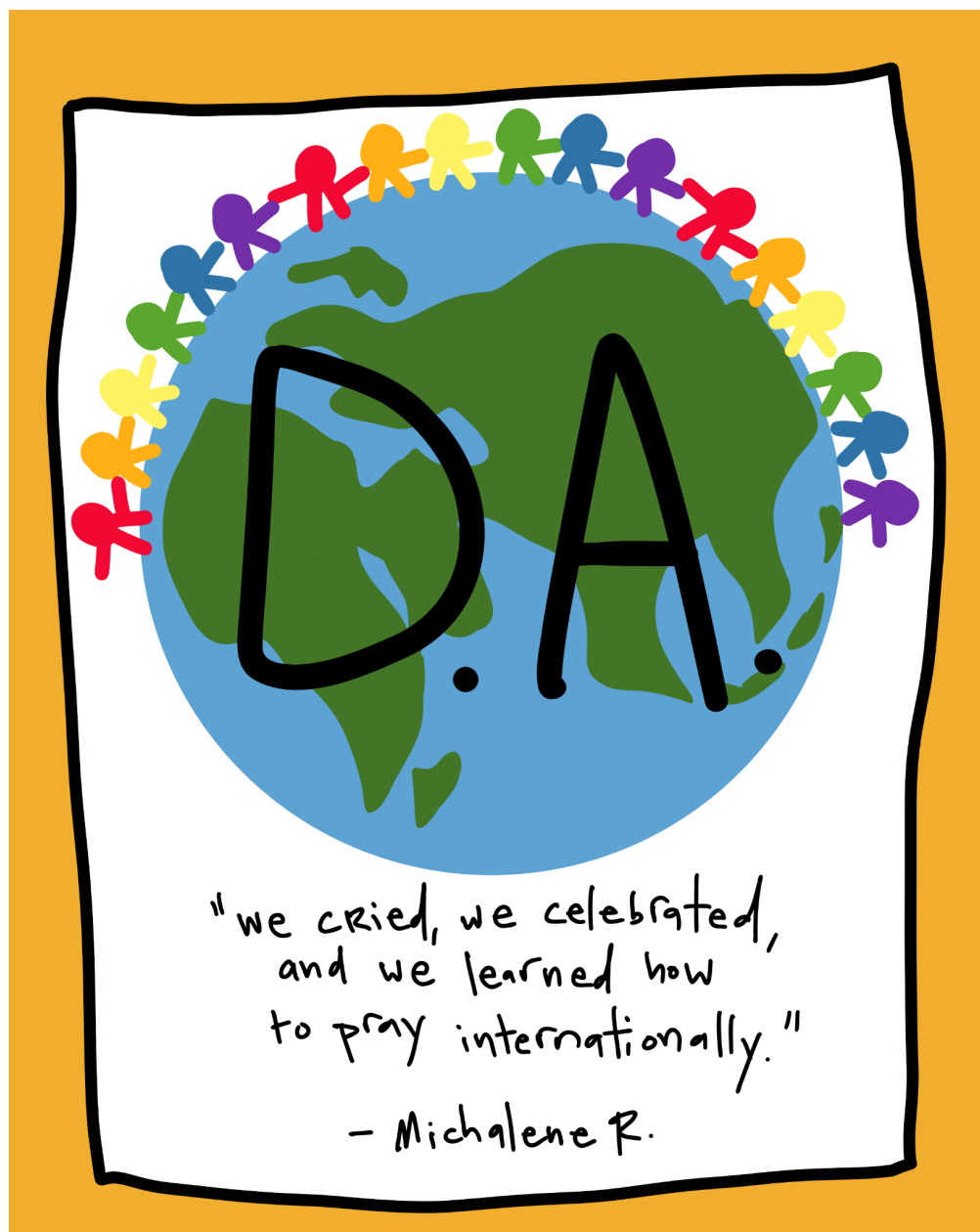
The 11th tool of D.A. tells us:

We perform service at every level: personal, meeting, Intergroup, and World Service. Service is vital to our recovery. Only through service can we give to others what so generously has been given to us.

One wonderful gift of service for us WAM members is to prepare this newsletter for you. We hope you enjoy it. If you have a story of recovery that you'd like to share and see in our next newsletter, waysandmeans@debtorsanonymous.org.

Yours in recovery,

Alfa, Katie, Marianne, and Monty



My Two Cents on the WSC Class B Trustee Michalene R.

Debtors Anonymous is a worldwide Fellowship of people, united by a common message of hope for the still-suffering debtor no matter where they may live. The World Service Conference (WSC) is the place that brings that hope together, ensuring that wherever you travel, the message of D.A. will be spoken at every meeting.

Those who give service as a General Service Representative (GSR) are expected to attend the annual WSC. It is the responsibility of each GSR to serve on a WSC committee and report changes and updates, big and small, back to the homegroup. Being a GSR and attending the WSC is a fantastic way to get a crash course on the makings of our 12-Step Fellowship.

My first World Service Conference as a Class B, non-debtor Trustee was in 2016. This August 2024 was my last World Service Conference. It's been a privilege and an honor to watch the conference change and grow over that time.

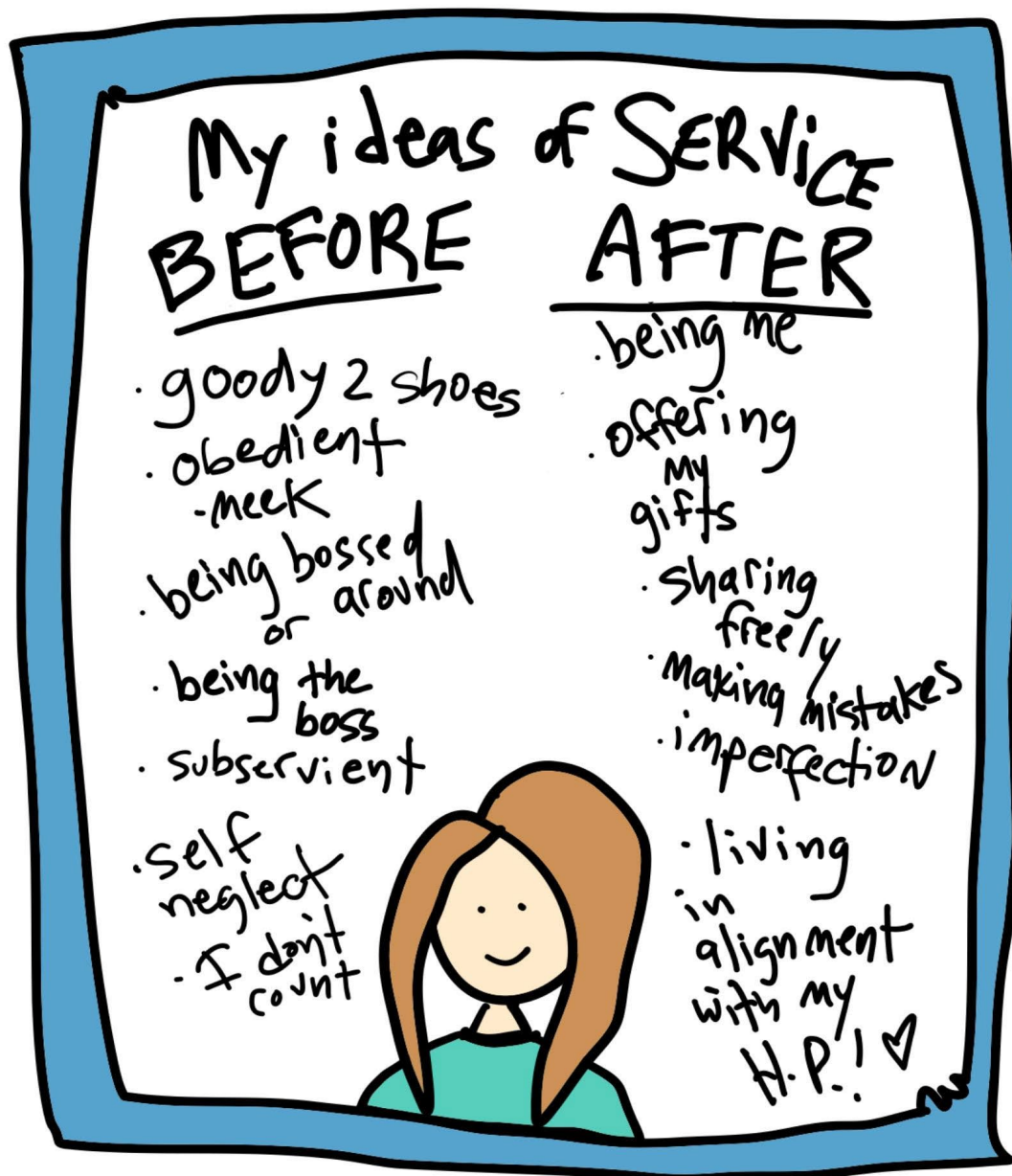
This year's 38th annual conference took place in its second international location, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. This international location is one of the many impressive changes that I've seen during my tenure as a trustee. I have seen the Board work with people all over the world to inform and encourage the growth of the Fellowship. I have seen WSC Committees promote international participation in the conference. And I have personally met members representing countries from Ireland, the United Kingdom, Russian Federation, Netherlands, France, Spain, Switzerland, Germany, Australia, Kenya, Japan, Ukraine, Brazil, South Africa, and Canada plus virtually from Argentina and New Zealand. Through the literature translation process, we are reaching others such as in China, India, Italy, Iran and more.

One of the most profound moments of my time as a Class B trustee is closing the conference with the Serenity Prayer spoken in many languages. The first time it happened, we cried, we celebrated, and we learned how to pray internationally. What an honor to be there with these fellows who have come to help make Debtors Anonymous into a Fellowship that allows anyone, anywhere to get help with the problem of compulsive debting.

When I attended the first meeting of my fellowship, I felt all alone in the universe with a problem not even God could solve. Today I know that God could and would if sought – so we seek to bring more and more people and countries represented to the conference to make decisions for D.A. as a whole, a complete whole, worldwide so they too can benefit from the Spiritual Experience which is the World Service Conference and carry the message of Debtors Anonymous to everyone who reaches out.

Michalene R, Class B Trustee

Debtors Anonymous General Service Board



Being of Service

Marianne B

When I joined my first 12-step recovery program 24 years ago, I was told to get a service commitment and that 'giving back' was the key to my recovery. This made me cringe.

At the time, I understood 'being of service' as something a goody-two-shoes would do; something to show off or a way to earn an 'A' in your homegroup. It was a deceptive and

coercive way to wrestle me into submission. It felt familiar to the rules I grew up with, ones which kept me quiet and powerless. I wanted no part of service.

But I wanted what you had, so thankfully, I took your suggestions. And I got better.

I joined D.A. in December of 2021 and I'm so grateful to have discovered a new meaning for 'being of service'.

Today, being of service in recovery and life — means being me, with all the gifts and quirks and talents and issues I bring.

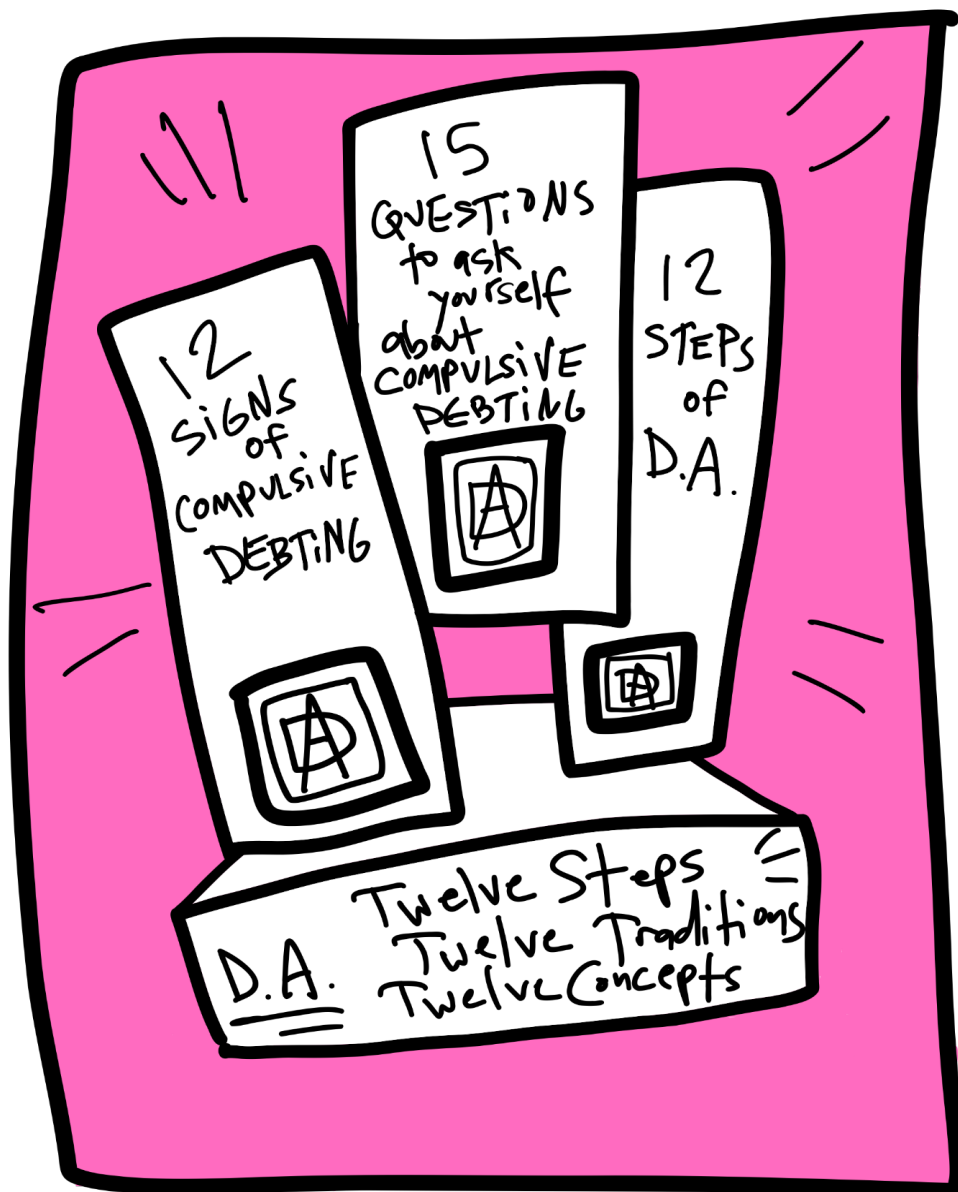
I don't need to pretend to be someone I'm not. I can be right where I am and give the amount of service that I can give, at that time.

Being of service means relaxing into and accepting the person that HP wants me to be.

Last August, I completed my first year as a GSR for my homegroup, Spiritually Sustainable Earning, which meets on Sundays at 9am Eastern Time (US) on video. The challenges and opportunities I've faced in this service position have allowed me to deepen my relationship with my HP, my sponsor, my fellows, and my homegroup... as well as my life outside of 12-step recovery.

Today, I strongly believe that in order to keep it, I must give it away. I must share what was so freely given to me.

I am so grateful that this Fellowship gives me all the room to resist, push back, not help, be cantankerous or adversarial until I'm ready (or not) to share all of myself with all of you.



My Service in Hospitals, Institutions and Prisons

Laura L

My name is Laura L. and I am a compulsive debtor. My solvency date is November 6, 2014. As part of my program of recovery, service to DA is paramount. On the meeting level, I have led meetings, written and conducted workshops, served as secretary, and served as treasurer. I was an Intergroup representative. I am currently a sponsor and I work with a sponsor.

I've been a healthcare professional and educator for over 40 years. When attending my first WSC as a GSR, I chose the Hospitals Institutions and Prisons (HIP) Committee. In my work, I've seen staff and clients suffering from financial woes and I know D.A. has a solution.

To share the message of D.A., our committee decided to send D.A. literature to hospitals and healthcare facilities that might not know about our program. I started this by obtaining the names and phone numbers of the Human Resource Departments at all the healthcare facilities in South and North Carolina. During my second year on the Committee, I contacted National Employee Assistance Programs, utilizing the resources in the HIP Toolkit as a reference for the calls. It was a gamble as to whether I was able to even speak to someone about D.A., but this service gave me the opportunity for me to share my experience, strength, and hope.

When speaking with a facility representative, I told them about what it was like to live as a debtor. I described my belief that if I made enough money, I would be able to pay my bills. Even though I made plenty of money, my spending and vagueness repeatedly caused a monetary deficit. I told them how I suffered physically, emotionally, and spiritually...all of which affected my work on the job. I explained that many professionals get caught up in the same cycle, resulting in compromised quality of patient care.

Several facilities requested information and promised to provide social workers and staff with the information forwarded. I do not know what happened to the literature that I sent to the facilities. I do not know if anyone came to D.A. as a result of these efforts. The bottom line is that I stayed solvent. I have learned to do the footwork and leave the results to my Higher Power.

I am so grateful that I had this opportunity to carry the message about a program that saved my life – Debtors Anonymous

NEWCOMER CORNER



What D.A. Has Meant To Me

Betsy M

My adult journey with money was very sad. Somewhere in my late 20s, I began seriously using credit cards. I was never taught how to handle money or even the value of it. I incurred debt attempting to make myself feel better or like a big shot. My issue was always about not being worthy or good enough.

In the late 90s or early 2000s, I went to DA meetings. I won't say I was in DA because I never really felt I belonged there. Which, of course I did. However, I had not hit bottom.

I declared bankruptcy twice in my life. Most recently in 2020. Of course, I learned nothing from that and incurred more debt.

I just didn't get it. I kept asking myself, "What is wrong with me? Why do I always end up in the same situation?" I felt stupid, scared, like a total failure. I kept repeating the same debting behaviors, expecting different results. Anytime I got large sums of money, it was gone within a year!! Never did I save for retirement, always thinking I would start tomorrow. Well, tomorrow never came. I just turned 70 and have no retirement savings.

In January of 2022, I was really broke and super scared. I remember getting a nudge in the middle of the night (from HP) to go back to DA. The next morning, I looked up meetings and was thrilled to see so many Zoom meetings.

I started with the Radical Clarity Group which met on Saturday and Sunday. This time, I was going to do whatever was suggested. In the beginning, I went to a meeting every day. I shared about what was going on in my life, not hiding or pretending anymore.

It was suggested I stop incurring unsecured debt, so I did. I cut up all my credit cards, which was really scary, but I did it! I was determined. I arranged a Pressure Relief Meeting, and got a fabulous action partner. Most importantly, I started keeping my numbers!!!! That was huge! I never did that in my whole life. Clarity was a foreign word to me! I have kept my numbers ever since.

Today, life is really good and getting better every day. Last summer, I lost a job suddenly and struggled quite a bit. Instead of debting, I kept going to meetings, got a sponsor, talked with my action partner, and continued with PRGs. I listened and took suggestions! I also prayed, and prayed some more. I truly began to trust God! I was honest about my journey and struggles.

Today, I feel stronger, closer to God than ever before. I have so much gratitude for my life and blessings, which is due to being **in** DA not just going to meetings. Thanks to my sponsor, wonderful action partner, and my PRG team, I am not alone anymore! I turned my life over to a Higher Power.

A DA miracle occurred this summer. I have a 10-year-old German Shepherd, Jake, who had a torn ligament in his knee. The operation would cost \$6,500. I did not have that money or even close. I prayed for an answer to help him. Three different people suggested I do a GoFundMe page.

An old friend from High School, who I have not seen in many, many years, offered \$1,000 for Jake to have the operation. I took this all as a message from my Higher Power. I put my pride aside and did the GoFundMe page.

Well, Jake had his operation and it was completely paid for with no debt!! This has been a powerful learning experience. I am so very grateful, both for my Higher Power and for me being willing to listen.

All artwork in this issue is courtesy of Marianne B. The stories contained in this issue are not conference-approved literature but are the individual voices of each writer. Mention of any product or brand does not imply endorsement by D.A. but simply reflects the writers' experience.