

WAYS & MEANS®

Fall 2002

\$2.00

FALL SPOTLIGHT:

The World Service Conference

16th Annual World Service Conference A Huge Success!

Jimmy W.
Secretary, GSB

A huge round of applause must be extended to the New York Host Committee for making D.A.'s largest-to-date WSC a phenomenal success. Correct me if I'm wrong, but this may actually be the highest attended conference in D.A.'s 26-year history. The Host Committee Chair/Diva, Kathleen M., its Registration Goddess, Alexandra, and the too-too many to name volunteers who helped make the whole thing possible overcame a scorching heat-wave, numerous late night trips to Kinko's to meet the needs (and demands) of 110 registered GSRs, ISRs, and Board Members, and a torrential thunder and lightning storm (that left this attendee both soaking wet and in absolute awe of its beauty... We rarely get those out hyeah in California) to make possible the amazing amount of work achieved by the Conference. Anyway, the results are in: New



York Rocks (even in spite of temperatures nearing 100 and humidity levels at plus 70%!!)

This year, more than half the delegates were attending their first-ever conference. This could have proved cumbersome to those having experience with past conferences, and confusing to the newbies; instead, the work accomplished by all those in attendance – conference “veterans” and “virgins” alike – was prolific. This hard work will certainly help D.A. break out of its current status as “World’s Best Kept Secret,” and will carry forth D.A.’s primary purpose (Tradition Five) for the next year in new and exciting ways.

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A Quarterly Newsletter For the Fellowship of Debtors Anonymous

Progress, Not Perfection

*I got clear about
one thing:
for me,
debt is a drug*

If money is the measure, I'm surely no model of D.A. recovery. I'm no closer to being debt free than when I came into program. I'm badly behind on my taxes and late on more than one bill. I'm still struggling with under-earning, too, and despite my job hunting efforts, I somehow don't ever quite seem to get a "B" job. My sponsor reminds me to just keep working my program and stay out of the results. And I do work a program. I get to my home meeting whenever humanly possible. I bookend. I have regular PRMs and slog through the action plans. I do service when I can. I give PRMs. I'm available to sponsor. And, oh yeah, I'm working the Steps.

Most of all, I am working to not debt, one day at a time. I haven't used a credit card in 3½ years. That has not been easy, either. There were days when I had less than a dollar to my name. I spent the better part of a year house-sitting or sleeping on friends' couches. There's more, but you get the idea. Along the way, though, I got clear about one thing: for me, debt is a drug, just as dangerous as alcohol for alcoholics. It's a way for me to live a lifestyle I haven't earned – to live in a fantasy and avoid the consequences of my

decisions. Debt numbs me out, too, like any other drug, so I miss the pleasure of life just as much as the pain.

Abstinence from debting meant facing some tough times, but without debt, I also began to discover little joys I'd forgotten. When I didn't have money to eat out, I remembered I liked to cook. When I didn't have money for gas, I remembered I loved walking and cycling. When I admitted I couldn't afford to go out to dinner, people offered to buy me a meal. My relationships improved. Perhaps more importantly, abstinence forced

"...abstinence forced me to get out of vanity and shame and be honest about who I am..."

me to get out of vanity and shame and be honest about who I am and where I am in my life. Instead of hiding from creditors, I had to get honest with them, explain my situation, offer payments I could afford and admit I couldn't pay more than that. Without exception, they have thanked me for my honesty and done their best to work with me while I get back on my feet. There are still days when I'm frustrated or afraid, days when I feel hopeless. But those days are fewer and farther apart now. I know I'm not in this alone. If I don't like living this way, I can make different decisions and somehow, some way, the universe responds. It's all kind of humbling. But I'm enjoying that humility and I'm prepared to face my future, whatever it holds.

—David C.

Ways & Means

A Quarterly Newsletter
for the Fellowship of
Debtors Anonymous

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Published by the General Service Board of Debtors Anonymous, *Ways & Means* is a forum for sharing the experience, strength, and hope of D.A. groups, members and service entities. It does not interpret D.A. traditions and principles.

The *Ways and Means* is edited and produced by the Fellowship Communications Committee of the World Service Conference.

Articles, jokes, and cartoons in the spirit of D.A. recovery are welcome. All submissions are subject to editing and cannot be returned.

Subscriptions are \$8.00 per year in the U.S. \$8.50 (U.S.) in Canada and \$13.00 (U.S.) abroad. Make checks payable to D.A.G.S.B.

2002 Conference passes resolution

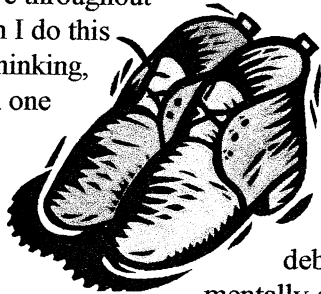
At the 2002 Conference, the GSRs and ISRs passed the following resolution:

"The 2002 World Service Conference resolves that this conference and the Fellowship as a whole embrace the notion that each meeting commit to [purchasing] two yearly subscriptions of the Ways & Means."

Suiting Up and Showing Up

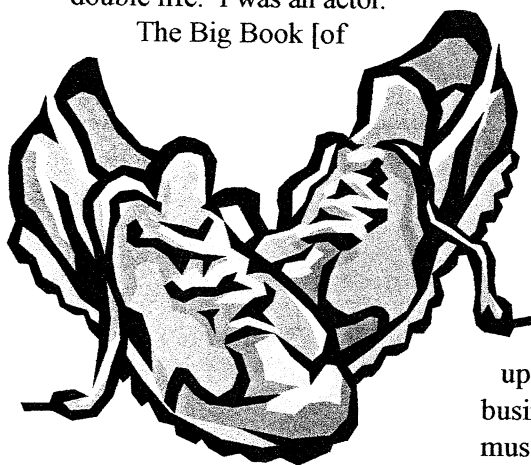
"The rules for other employees do not apply to me."

What was true when I got here, remains the same: I suit up, show up, do what is in front of me and stay out of the results. I pray in the morning for God's spiritual navigation as I move throughout the day. The reason I do this is, left to my own thinking, I do not know from one moment to the next the proper action to take. So, I ask God, who for me, translates into good orderly direction, what to do.



Suiting up was a suggested direction I got from one sponsor. One example was to make a change in my work attire to something that announced to the world that I was making a change in my life. Prior to program, when I would dress up, I was, as the book describes it, leading a double life. I was an actor.

The Big Book [of



Alcoholics Anonymous] says, "To the outer world he presents a stage character. This is the one he likes his fellows to see. He wants to

enjoy a certain reputation, but knows in his heart of hearts, he does not deserve it." Now, when I suit up and show up for work, there is a purpose behind it: to present myself in an honest dignified fashion.

In terms of the issue of showing up, the first thing that comes to mind is that, as a debtor, I am bodily and mentally different from my fellows. The rules for other employees do not apply to me. My recovery related to showing up is that the time that I put on my time card must be precisely the time I show up. If I am late, then I stay late. I also need to be present throughout the day. If another employee needs something from me, I attend to it quickly. If there is going to be a wait, I let them know. Being present frees me from having to explain myself at a later time. It is my way of keeping my side of the street clean.

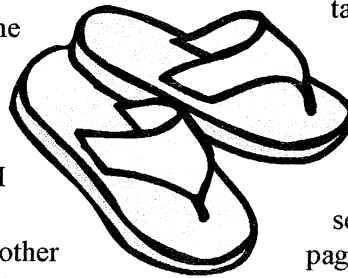
The principle of showing up also transcends into my business, which is giving private music lessons. It is imperative that I am not "phoning in" my instruction. In order to make sure that the students receive the instruction they need to advance, it is necessary that I am mentally

present to do so.

The same is true for my family relations. I need to be present. My parents are in their senior years. I am available to be of service in their lives. This task also falls under the category of doing what is in front of me. By attending to matters as they present themselves, I stay within God's will and out of my own. This is how God works in my life.

The final part is acceptance. Acceptance is staying out of the results, realizing that the gift is taking the action. Action is my M.O. I take inspiration from the sentence on page 85 of the Big Book. It says, "What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition." For me, the plan is simple: suit up, show up, do what is in front of me and stay out of the results.

—Alex K.



16th Annual World Service Conference a Huge Success, *Continued from page 1*

For example, the conference approved a new piece of D.A. literature that successfully negotiated the arduous path through the **Literature Committee**, titled "Under-Earning." This piece will be available for purchase in 2003.

The **Public Information Committee** had so many motions, it would take three newsletters to list and explain them all! But here's a taste: forms were approved to provide outreach to Spanish-speaking communities and colleges and will be sent to all registered groups this year. Also, the conference approved a motion asking the Board to designate the year 2003 as "The Year of the Prisoner" with slogans: "From Cell to Solvency" and "Freedom From the Bondage of Debt."

The **Fellowship/Communications Committee** worked diligently on ways to increase subscriptions to D.A.'s "meeting in print," the *Ways & Means*, as well as developing a business plan for it (with hopes of hiring a paid editor).

The **Resource Development Committee** (aka the **FUND Bunch**) presented ways to increase the overall prosperity and income of D.A., because, as we know, the more you give, the more you get. Information on their "Double Your Dollar," and "Thrive With Five" campaigns, as well as next year's World Service Week, (formerly WISH Week), will be forthcoming.

The **Conference Committee** passed its motion to amend the third sentence of Article 9 of the Charter; however, the motion to

amend the last sentence of Article 3 of the Charter failed to pass. It also presented a schedule change to next year's conference: the 2003 WSC will be held in Minneapolis.

Finally, the **Office Committee** addressed the issue of moving the office to a larger space... indications of D.A.'s continued growth!

Whew! This is only a smidgen of what happened at the Conference; the Convocation minutes will give a full report. ♦



The Internet Caucus

Online Debtors Anonymous Intergroup (ODAI)

Online Debtors Anonymous Intergroup (ODAI) is created to serve the online D.A. community and to strengthen the D.A. fellowship as a whole. ODAI will have its first email Intergroup meeting, beginning October 1, 2002 and lasting 10 days. Subsequent meetings will begin on the first Tuesday of the month.

Internet address:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ODAIintergroup>.

Each registered online D.A. group is encouraged to have an ODAI representative join this

yahoo.groups.list, participate in monthly ODAI meetings via email and share and gather information about D.A. recovery online.

ODAI maintains a website with links to online meeting and event details. ODAI volunteers respond to inquiries and conduct 12th step work online. GSRs and alternates from Registered Online Groups are also most welcome and urged to participate. There are no dues or fees for membership. The Intergroup is self-supporting through contributions of D.A. members and groups.

ODAI is a service entity for online D.A. groups — the ODAI Group is essentially a business e-meeting. Those looking for a meeting or help with compulsive debtors are invited to contact Debtors Anonymous and attend an open meeting. ODAI is a registered D.A. group but the web page is not endorsed nor approved by Debtors Anonymous World Services, Inc. It is solely provided by the Online D.A. Intergroup (ODAI) as part of its 12th Step work in reaching out to the compulsive debtor who still suffers. ♦

GSRs and ISRs share on the 2002 World Service Conference

When asked "What was the highlight of the Conference for you?"

GSRs and ISRs said...

- The fellowship
- Being with pals from last year
- Conscious contact
- D.A. meetings
- Fellowship Day
- The dinner and dance
- The talent show!
- The Open Forum and the Convocation
- The "Meeting in a Box" video
- Incredible thunder storm
- Hearing the speaker at Fellowship Day



Attention Conference Committees and Caucuses!

Let the Fellowship know what you are doing during the year.

The Ways & Means can help you publicize your Committee's work.

Email your info to the Ways & Means Editor:
da-gso@mindspring.com

LAUGHING MATTERS

Full capacity, able to multi-task and act rationally at all times. Pleasant and productive.

Near full capacity. Still pleasant, productive, multi-tasking function not available.

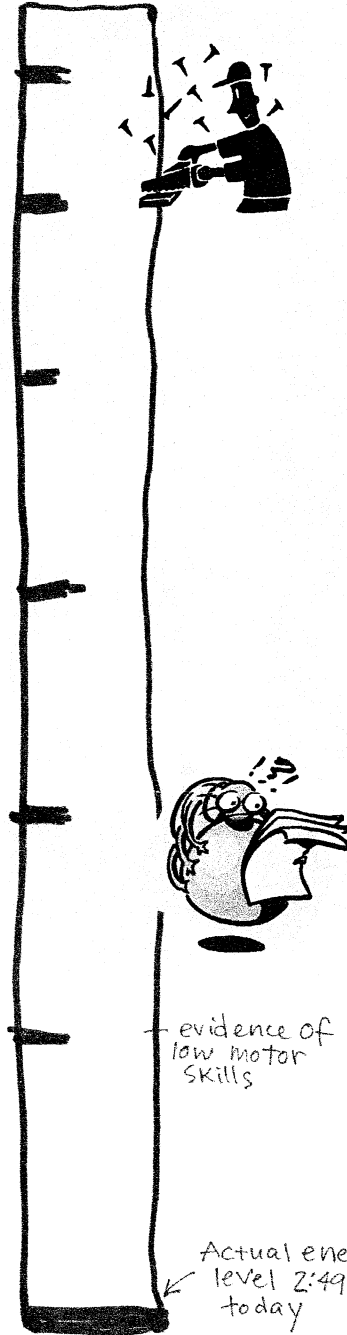
Capacity. still productive, but not pleasant to everyone, only those she really likes.

Less than Capacity. still productive, but no longer pleasant to anyone, even those she really likes.

Low-level warning sounds, indicating still productive but no projects or thoughts make any sense. Just bits of neuron input.

Extreme danger. Lowest amount of detectable energy. Esther is now Snappy and short tempered, likely to storm off at a moment's notice.

Unintelligible sounds are heard, grunts, etc.



Esther's

Energy-O-Meter

D.A. World Service Conference
Seattle 1998

Many thanks to Esther H., Santa Monica, Calif.

WAYS & MEANS

Wanted:**Ways & Means Editor**

D.A. is seeking a member of the fellowship with experience in journalism, graphic design and/or desktop publishing to serve as Editor of its publication, Ways & Means. The Editor will have primary responsibility for the timely publication of this newsletter, which is published four times per year. This person will oversee editorial content, handle design and layout and coordinate volunteer staff, working closely under the direction of the Fellowship Communications Committee.

This is a part-time contracted position, with a stipend per issue.

Please email resumes to Ways & Means Editor (da-gso@mindspring.com) with ATTN: Fellowship & Communications Committee in the SUBJECT line of the email. Please submit resume by November 15, 2002.

D.A. World Service Needs Your Help

Recent reports show that our D.A. World Service income is down compared to 2001. We need to increase our income to meet our 2002 Spending Plan. At the request of the Annual Conference, the literature prices were reduced this year, which helps the struggling newcomers. Unfortunately, the price reduction has had a negative effect on our income. With only 2 ½ months left in 2002 we are urgently asking D.A. meetings, Intergroups and individuals to increase contributions to the D.A. World Service over the next few months. The primary use of your contributions is to help still-suffering debtors find meetings, to print D.A. literature, to provide members services and to keep our World Service Office up and running. Please announce this request at all of your D.A. meetings for the remainder of the year.

Mail contributions to: DAGSO, PO Box 920888, Needham, MA 02492-0009.

Make checks payable to: Debtors Anonymous. Thanks for your help.

—The D.A. General Service Board

Debtors Anonymous World Wide

The First International D.A. Convention in Cannes, France

"My mission was to get to Cannes so I kept my focus on that goal."

I arrived in Paris on a Thursday evening with such jet lag that I never actually got to see the city. I have included the Eiffel Tower on my Vision poster for the past 2 years yet I did not get the chance to see it. But my mission was to get to Cannes so I kept my focus on that goal. The next day I enjoyed a 3-hour train ride to what I thought was Cannes. But de-training at the station, I walked out into rainy weather and thought it didn't look much like the Mediterranean. I asked around and discovered I had arrived in Caen (pronounced Conn). I was intent on my destination. I was not about to get this far and not reach my goal. I hurriedly took the next available train back to the Paris station and discovered that I had to take the Metro to a different train station (Gare St. Lyon), at which they did not have any tickets for Cannes. I was then sent to another metro to another train station (Gare Austerlitz). I finally got on a night train and arrived the next morning at 7:30 AM to be picked up by my D.A. contact and after camping out in the bathroom, emerged ready at 8:45 a.m. to enter the convention which started at 9 a.m.! I had made it! I had committed myself to being at this



convention and I had arrived.

The first workshop on the agenda was called Fear with Money Issues and, after opening remarks, began promptly at 9:45. There were a grand total of 11 of us in attendance. This was their first attempt at an International Convention and I was awestruck at their attempt. There are a total of 10 D.A. members in all of the city of Cannes and 8 were in attendance that day. I was the only representative of the United States.

There was a representative from London, who, by the way, began the first D.A. meeting there 13 years ago, and a representative from Paris. To even fathom a concept of 10 individuals beginning a convention to call the entire world to them was inspiring to me – and also humbling! ♦

Ways & Means Newsletter Subscription Form

Yes! I would like to become a subscriber to *Ways & Means*, the newsletter for the fellowship of Debtors Anonymous.

Name _____ # of subscriptions _____

Address _____ @ subscription price _____

City/State/ZIP _____ Enclosed is \$ _____

Is this a gift? Giver's name _____

Is this for a D.A. meeting? _____

Please list the group name _____

PLEASE PRINT

Subscription Rates

	United States	Canada	Foreign
1-4 subscriptions	\$8/yr. each	\$8.50/yr. each	\$13/yr. each
5-9 subscriptions	\$7/yr. each	\$7.50/yr. each	\$12/yr. each
10+ subscriptions	\$6/yr. each	\$6.50/yr. each	\$11/yr. each

All amounts must be drawn on U.S. banks only. Please remember that it could be up to three months before you receive your first issue. *Ways & Means* is published quarterly, but the publication schedule may vary. Subscribers will receive four issues per paid subscription. Please notify the *Ways & Means* Newsletter if you change your address. If notification is not received and your issue is returned undeliverable with no forwarding address, your subscription will be cancelled.

Please make checks or money orders payable to "D.A.G.S.B."

Mail your payment and subscription order to:

**Debtors Anonymous
Ways & Means
P.O. Box 920888
Needham, MA 02492-0009
(781) 453-2743**

Know someone who can't get to a meeting? Consider giving them a gift subscription to the *Ways & Means*.

Help create D.A.'s new Daily Meditation Book! (You could win \$50!)



Write a 100-200 word personal reflection on your Debtors Anonymous experience, strength and hope. Suggested topics include: The 12 Steps, the 12 Traditions, the Tools, Signs, Promises, Principles and Slogans. Include a "Thought for the Day" and your favorite quote.

Email your entries (maximum 5) by March 1, 2003 to elmenopea@aol.com or mail to the General Service Office, Attn: Daily Meditation Book, Debtors Anonymous, P.O. Box 920888, Needham, MA 02492-0009. Remember to include your contact information.

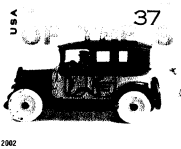
All entries will be entered in the "most inspirational submission" contest. The prize of \$50 will be awarded by the Daily Meditation Book Subcommittee of the Conference Literature Committee at the 2003 World Service Conference. All entries used in the book are subject to editing, may require a signed consent to release form, and cannot be returned.

The *Ways & Means*
wants your
D.A. jokes
D.A. cartoons
D.A. shares

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