

Around the Campus

Service as Gratitude in Action

At the Missouri State Convention and at different locations over the past two months, Eastern Area members involved in general service were asked for their input on 2 questions, which were:

1. What motivates you to do general service?
2. What benefits do you receive from doing general service?

Most of the answers had common denominators; thus, many comments are distilled and combined. The Gazette thanks all of our Fellowship participants.

Motivation—why I became involved in service, and why I stay in service:

“I wanted more out of sobriety.” ♦ “I’m passionate about sobriety and have a desire to share all that I can.” ♦ “I love AA—this gives me a way to give back to this wonderful Fellowship.” ♦ “‘Meeting sobriety’ is not enough for me—I need more” ♦ “I was pushed into service by my sponsor—I stayed because of the wonderful examples of the service people around me.” ♦ “The examples of other people attracted me into service—I followed their lead.” ♦ “I noticed that some of the best trusted servants around were former bad drunks.” ♦ “I became involved almost through necessity—through desperation; happiness was elusive and I wanted this thing. I stay in service because it has filled my life.” ♦ “My HP guided me into service—this is what I was meant to do, how I’m able to carry the message through expressing what talent I have.” ♦ “Doing service is my gift, my purpose, my giving back.” ♦ “I’m motivated to grow spiritually.” ♦ “I like hanging out with Third-Legacy people—people on fire” ♦ “Associating with people all doing something for AA keeps me motivated.” ♦ “I treat my sober life as a one shot deal; I’m less careless about ‘keep coming back’—I want to make the best of sobriety; service is a way for me to live a richer life.” ♦ “Gratitude got me into service; gratitude keeps me there.” ♦ “I wanted to learn more about the AA structure—being involved in service has given me great education—I keep learning.” ♦ “Through learning about AA’s history, I was motivated to get involved.” ♦ “I wanted to learn how to better practice the Traditions and Concepts in my life.” ♦ “I wanted a deeper connection with AA” ♦ “A desire to be more giving, to practice humility got me involved.” ♦ “I wanted to help people more—to go beyond my Home Group and sponsoring” ♦ “I wanted to jazz-up my AA experience.” ♦ “I have a desire for increased fame and fortune (laughs)!” ♦ “I needed a sense of purpose.” ♦ “A service position was vacant—I thought I would try it out.” ♦ “Someone visited our Group, said that service help was needed, and asked us to step up to the plate.” ♦ “Everyone does sobriety in their own way—some do service and some don’t—and it’s all OK; I wanted to be someone that does service.” ♦ “I saw that the service people seemed like a happy group of people—all working for a common good—I wanted that.” ♦ “I need all Three Legacies to grow and stay sober.” ♦ “I can’t stay sober on ‘the glow’—I have to take action.” ♦ “I keep wanting more in life (sound familiar?)—doing service helps me channel this in a positive direction.” ♦ “I wanted feel more a part of the ‘bigger organization.’” ♦ “The more I did in service, the more I wanted to do.” ♦ “I got ‘hooked—there’s no retirement from service.’” ♦ “I feel motivated to pass it on: to show others how positive service can be—service people don’t complain—and how service can make us so grateful.”

Benefits—what I personally receive from service:

“It helps my personal recovery.” ♦ “My sobriety is enriched.” ♦ “The benefits and principles of service have spilled over into my personal life.” ♦ “I have formed wonderful friendships” ♦ “I learned how to better relate to people.” ♦ “Service is stimulating—it makes me feel alive.” ♦ “Through service work, I have learned to be more a part of society.” ♦ “Service involvement helps to remove fear from my life.” ♦ “It keeps me more involved with AA.” ♦ “I’m more open with other people.” ♦ “I feel more connected with others” ♦ “Service work continues to keep me falling in love with AA—it’s like kissing the bride!” ♦ “I meet new people; make new friends.” ♦ “I learned to accept help and support from others, and to be more supportive myself.” ♦ “Having a service commitment kept me focused throughout a crisis in my life—it kept me going.” ♦ “Working in service keeps me out of my head—takes me out of myself” ♦ “I feel that service work has saved my life.” ♦ “Service—as it says in the Big Book, ‘intensive work with others’—helped me over a rough patch in my life.” ♦ “The further down the upside-down triangle I get, the more I learn about humility and anonymity.” ♦ “Humility—I now know how to be one of many, to be willing to serve, to not have a title; like Dr. Bob said, ‘It is nothing I have done—I have only been used.’” ♦ “I’m becoming right-sized—not anything special—just another alcoholic.” ♦ “It helps me live the St. Francis Prayer.” ♦ “I grow every time I do some service in AA: general service work, the District, chair a meeting, attend the Forums, or give reports—whatever it is.” ♦ “It adds to my program—I grow and change.” ♦ “I’m fulfilling my 12th Step by doing the work.” ♦ “Service work gives me a better insight into how AA works.” ♦ “Service keeps me from coasting down-hill; one doesn’t tread water in this program—they sink.” ♦ “I have learned: to be on time, to stop judging others, love and tolerance, integrity with words, teamwork, working with committees, the meaning of Tradition One Unity.” ♦ “It teaches me to learn my limits, to ask for help, to develop humility.” ♦ “I don’t have to be afraid of trying something new; there will always be help available—I learned that service is not just doing the job for which we’re best equipped; we’re capable of doing any of these jobs—so I just step up to the plate at rotation time, and get the help I need.” ♦ “I have overcome the fear that ‘I can’t do it right.’” ♦ “I have learned how to balance service with my life.” ♦ “I get an on-going education.” ♦ “I love feeling ‘on fire’ at Assemblies.” ♦ “I’m enthusiastic; I caught a positive outlook from other service people—enthusiasm or apathy is contagious.” ♦ “I get to be with happy people—service people are happier people because they’re involved with others, they’re positive—the people not involved with service are missing out.” ♦ “I keep a positive attitude about what I’m doing—to help, not expect pats on the back—keeps my ego in check. Sometimes I do stuff I don’t want to do, but if I have a positive attitude, I do a positive job.” ♦ “Active involvement—it helps me live these Steps and Traditions; it prevents apathy. If I’m not active, I get apathetic and uncomfortable.” ♦ “I can be an example for other members—they don’t know what they don’t know.” ♦ “I get to spend quality time with service people—it’s the journey, not the outcome.” ♦ “Service work has made me a better person.” ♦ “My gratitude just keeps on growing!”