

Gratitude in action, expressed through our service work and contributions, is how we help the still-suffering alcoholic. Sometimes the one right in front of us, often one we never meet. Each of us has a responsibility to keep the doors open to our home group as well as to fund the services that help others around the world. The amount of our financial contribution is secondary to the spiritual connection of this act. Our Area treasurer recently showed me a check written to our Area for 28 cents. That group is participating in our 7th tradition as surely as one that happens to be able to contribute more.

At the 71st General Service Conference, we approved two recommendations from the Finance Committee related to pages 7 and 13 in the pamphlet “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix.” The goal was to help groups make more informed decisions about where to send excess funds. Needs vary in different locations, and at different times. There are a number of resources available at www.aa.org regarding contributions and self-support—look for the Self-Support link at the bottom of the home page. And this year, we know the cost of services per member provided by our General Service Office in NY averages out to \$7.34, and the cost of services per group is \$151.85. It’s a little lower than in previous years due to the pandemic and some cost-saving measures that will continue even when we are back to more of our in-person activities. There is a grassroots effort again this year to build awareness about services and self-support. If you are so inclined, you might encourage everyone in your group to send \$7.34 to GSO on July 31. Your DCMC has a flyer and you can make that contribution online at aa.org and credit it to your group. Or, you might prefer a different way to communicate the need for contributions to help carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

One thing I get a kick out of about contributing directly to GSO is that I get a thank you acknowledgement that states that “no goods or services were provided to the donor in return for the donor’s contribution.” I know it’s standard nonprofit tax language, but it always makes me smile. Because I know I owe my entire life today to the services and support so freely given to me by Alcoholics Anonymous.

In service and gratitude,
Jennifer B., Panel 71 Delegate

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