

While letting my mind percolate on what to write about this month – and looking for something else – I stumbled across some old gems in my digital archives.

The following was written by a past delegate from the California Northern Interior Area 07 about Third Legacy elections: *“This is one of the few times we get to take the inventory of others and then act on it. This is basically what you are doing when considering how you will vote. I ask myself the following questions before I vote:*

- *Do they have the leadership qualifications described in Concept IX?*
- *Do they have the time available to give what is necessary to do the job? (All jobs are different; some are very demanding.)*
- *What have they demonstrated in the past regarding willingness, dedication, promptness, commitment and reliability?*
- *Do they listen—are they teachable—or do they already know everything?*
- *Are they a good example of the A.A. fellowship and sobriety?”*

One thing I've learned over the years, especially in these past few rotations, is the importance of electing the best possible people we can name for positions of great responsibility. There should be no “Well, it's their turn, they've been around a long time.” The best qualified person may not be my friend, or even the person I like the most. Knowledge and experience are important, but ultimately, it comes down to character.

The other thing I stumbled across while procrastinating was these suggested service inventory questions from Hawaii Area 17:

- Why am I in service? Is it ego? Is it a desire to carry the message? Both? Why did I stand for the position I serve today?
- Am I familiar with the 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts? Do I work to apply them not only in my service position but in all of my affairs?
- Am I responsible to my service position? Do I know what my duties are? Do I practice Step Ten's suggestion – “love and tolerance of others is our code” – in carrying out these duties? Do I ask for help when I see that I am unable to fulfill my duties?
- Am I working towards Bill W.'s suggestion of accepting criticism from others with grace, while keeping an open mind on their comments?
- Do I accept the group conscience? Do I work to carry it out or do I feel that I need to push for my point of view?
- Do I hold A.A.'s unity as a high priority in my service work?
- Do I allow other “trusted servants” serving in A.A. to grow into their job or am I quick to criticize?
- Are my offers of “help” a disguise for stepping in and controlling?
- When I leave this position will I be able to say that the Group/District/Area is more unified, more active in carrying the message, more informed in A.A.'s history, current Conference topics and service structure than it was when I first took the position?

A few months ago, someone asked me what kind of past delegate I'm going to be. I jokingly replied, “A bleeding deacon.” But of course, that's not who I want to be. I'll continue to keep these questions in mind as I rotate, in the hopes of being a good example and not a cautionary tale.

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