

Some of you are familiar with the quote from past General Manager, Bob P.: "I echo those who feel that if this Fellowship ever falters or fails, it will not be because of any outside cause...it will be simply because of us. It will be because we can't control our own egos, nor get along well enough with each other. It will be because we have too much fear and rigidity and not enough trust and common sense."

Bob P.'s Conference talk was, by his own admission, inspired years before by Bob H., also a past GSO manager. Bob H. had suggested that any internal failure "will be because we think too much about our 'rights,' and too little about our obligations and responsibilities." I'm telling you all this because I want to riff a bit on rights vs. responsibilities.

Each group is autonomous, with the right to be wrong, but our fourth tradition reminds us of the responsibility not to take actions that affect other groups or A.A. as a whole.

You have the right to practice A.A. as you wish. And each of us has the responsibility to do our share of service at group level and carry the message to others.

You have the right of decision in any service position based on the responsibilities and authority you have been given, but also the duty to report to those you serve what decisions you make, and why.

You have the right of participation, and with it the obligation to become informed and show up to business meetings to exercise that right. Some ways to stay informed:

- Read GSO's *Box 4-5-9* newsletter, the *CNCA Comments*, and any newsletter or reports in your district.
- Routinely check out the "What's New" tab at aa.org and/or the "News" section of the Meeting Guide App. Also, the "What's New" tab at cnca06.org.
- Read the Final Conference Report, and the background on Conference agenda topics.
- If you aren't receiving information in your district from the area, bring it to the attention of your DCM or DCMC. We can work together to improve communication at all levels.

You have the right of appeal, often in the form of offering a minority opinion after a vote. You also have the responsibility to speak up *prior to the vote* to help the group conscience be fully informed.

If you see a problem or a need, don't just complain. Get into action. Make a motion in your group or district. Join a committee and get involved. Share your thoughts with your delegate, regional trustee, or GSO. You may have better success when you keep in mind that "the difference between a demand and a simple request is plain to anyone."

Bob H. also said, "...I don't think we're going to fall apart. I think we are going to stick together and keep A.A. strong and growing." I couldn't agree more.

Congratulations to all the newly elected trusted servants! I know A.A. is in good hands for Panel 73.

Service gladly rendered, obligations squarely met,
Jennifer B.
Panel 71, Incoming Past Delegate