Q of the Month Jan 2019

**Tradition 1: Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends on unity.”**

This month we will talk about unity as a definition, unity as it relates to sharing our ESH and unity in service. “You help me feel less alone and less afraid because you have walked this same road as me and have shared your life and experiences with me.” (SESH p16)

Our common welfare is our well-being; our health, our comfort and our safety. Welcoming newcomers is the first place unity is seen and felt. Unity says, “Hello. Friend. You are no longer alone. You can choose to be part of something that is bigger than yourself and your problems.” When we practice the spiritual principles in all our affairs, the natural result is unity. A healthy, thriving group cannot be controlled, managed, or forced into well-being. Traditions are understood in the mind, but also in the heart, and it is through the heart that we act in a loving and compassionate way toward one another.

Unity does not equal uniformity. Unity in sharing begins with the willingness to be honest when we speak and to listen attentively when others speak. Unity provides each of us with love and support as we trial and error our way through multiple paths until we find what works for us. We do not give advice, offer solutions, or rescue one another because we must each find a way to recovery that works for us.

We use “I” language when we share our experience, strength and hope. No one is entitled to tell another how to work their recovery. What you were willing to do may not be something I am willing to do. Likewise, I may not be willing or able to live in the same place with my addict another minute, while you may not be able to physically detach from yours. Participation is essential to unity. It is how we start to feel like we belong. However, we cannot dictate participation, nor should we. Participation will come through the atmosphere of acceptance, freedom, love and courage created by the existing group.

We talk about service like it is a responsibility. It is. Sometimes we complain about service because it can be frustrating. It can be. More often than not, though, service is a tool. We are learning to act in a spirit of love. This is pretty easy on us once a week at a meeting. We all feel kind, warm and supportive then. When we are preparing an agenda for Group Conscious, recording and writing up meeting minutes, tracking the treasury funds, or writing articles it is not so easy to feel the flush of universal love pouring out of our chests. Doing as the group asks, rather than doing what we want, is a form of surrender. If we act in faith that our Higher Power is still in charge, the greater good will prevail. We often tell others who are in such a hurry for change to just “slow down and take a breath.” “Give yourself some grace.” Sometimes this is what we need to tell ourselves.

Nar-Anon gives us the opportunity to become better people inside and outside the meeting rooms. We learn to communicate more effectively with our families, our spouses and partners, our co-workers and others. By reflecting on tolerance and acceptance, we make room for possibilities and solutions we would never have considered before. By being open-minded, ideas that previously seemed impossible may now feel fresh, creative and do-able. By being aware, we may avoid that verbal rant that would send the company back 6 months in the morale department. Perhaps as we look at the goals for 2019, the committees can keep these service thoughts in the forefront. Thinking about principles before acting is never a mistake.

Q. Do you share honestly? Q. Listen attentively? Q. Lead your life with your head or your heart?