

D.A. was not this member's first twelve-step program but it was the one she came into with suicidal thoughts. Through working the program her life turned around and they began to experience miracles. Her recovery was further enriched by being of service and there was no turning back from there.

I'm a compulsive debtor with 10 years of solvency—not incurring unsecured debt one day at a time. D.A. was not my first twelve-step program but it was the one I entered with suicidal thoughts, trembling and shaking, hyperventilating. With four years of recovery in another program, one of the promises was not coming true—that one about fear of economic insecurity leaving us. I had a problem keeping me from enjoying my recovery: a crushing weight of debt pressing down on me 24/7. I was obsessed with trying to figure out how to get rid of the debt. But my best thinking led me to D.A.

The legacy I brought with me from the other program helped me to do the right things, right away. I immediately got a sponsor and picked up a desire chip. By the grace of my Higher Power and the D.A. members HP spoke through, I have been solvent since that day. My sponsor put a premium on service, right from the start. At the same time that I was recording my numbers, having my first Pressure Relief Meeting (PRM), implementing a spending plan, and contacting creditors after my moratorium of 30 days, she pushed me gently into group service. I became the Acting Secretary at the business meeting, which was barely attended, although the meeting itself had over 40 regulars. I soon began to experience a series of D.A. miracles too numerous to recount, one of them being the release of almost \$43,000 of unsecured debt in three years.

I served as group Secretary for two years, and then Treasurer for two more. I helped form the area's first Intergroup, and put my name and phone number on the Intergroup's website for those wanting information on D.A. I was to receive calls for many years as a result, from desperate compulsive debtors and their loved ones. I was a part of several Day in D.A. workshops, spoke at many meetings, and took part in numerous PRMs. Service was a vital part of my program. And the miracles kept on occurring.

I did so much service as a newcomer because I had learned in my first program that the successful people in recovery did service. They *gave back*. Some did this at higher levels than the meeting, such as Intergroup, District, Area, Region, and World Service. But D.A. in my city didn't have those multiple levels; there was the group level, there was our new Intergroup, and there was World Service somewhere far, far away. I had no notion that I would ever be able to do service at that level.

As a writer by profession, I was usually roped into transcribing the minutes of business and Intergroup meetings, and I also produced newsletter articles and created flyers for workshops. I believe my writing ability is a gift from my Higher Power and one that can benefit my fellowships. And that same ability prompted a D.A. friend and Board member to suggest that I apply for an Appointed Committee Member (ACM) position on the Literature Services Committee of the General Service Board (GSB). He said D.A. needed me, and that I could help D.A. to produce more literature. But first I had to do something I never had to do before in D.A.—apply for the position!

Appointed Committee Members must make a rigorous application for service positions, which includes a recommendation letter from a D.A. member and the applicant's own letter of qualifications with a service biography. The criteria for selection are *special qualifications, service experience, and dedication*. At the time of the open position, I had a lot going on in my life. My husband was enduring a second round of chemotherapy and I was the sole support for our household. I had my twelve-step programs. I sponsored nine people. Did I have time for this World Service position? By the time I finished my service biography, I knew not only did I have time, but I truly wanted to be selected to serve.

Once chosen as an ACM, I had dreams of writing and editing a veritable flood of D.A. literature, cranking it out while helping the Fellowship. And I did have the privilege of editing many pieces of literature, along with—you guessed it—recording the meeting minutes! The four Literature Services Committee members met via phone conference once per month, and someone recorded minutes. We opened and closed with a prayer, and then went over the various pieces of literature we were working on offline with writers, both paid and

volunteer. We worked through differences of opinion using the principles of the program. Everyone did their part, even though death of family members, health problems, job losses, and other “life on life’s terms” events occurred as they will. The other Committee members, through their integrity, open-mindedness, and humility, showed me the seriousness with which they took this service and the deep love and gratitude they felt for D.A. We also had a lot of fun, and much good work was done.

My service term came to an end last year, and I ended up taking a job across the country—another series of miracles landed us in the hometown of my youth with a dream job and a house down the street from my sister. The D.A. in my new town has a different focus than the one I left behind, and as a result, attending meetings has been quite challenging for me. Thankfully, my ACM service turned out to be my strong backbone in that respect, reminding me to focus on our primary purpose—to stop debting one day at a time and to help other compulsive debtors to stop incurring unsecured debt. Service has, once again, saved the day.

Carolyn