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I had the opportunity to stand on the stage at the 2025 International Convention and gain a real-time perspective on the line in Tradition One where it says that “each of us is a small part of a great whole.” While we may each be a small part, each one of us is a vital part.

The future of Alcoholics Anonymous is up to each one of us. Whether A.A. is here in the future for the still-suffering alcoholic will depend upon the efforts of us all.

In the book *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, Bill speaks of what is required of us as A.A. members — a sacrifice of much time and little money. When I look up the word “sacrifice” in the dictionary, it says “giving up something of value for something with a higher calling.” So, a sacrifice of time is not my spare time, because spare time, like spare change, has little value. A sacrifice of time is the time where I might prefer to be doing something else.

Every minute I have had for the past 27 years has been given to me by Alcoholics Anonymous. But for Alcoholics Anonymous, I would not have seen my children finish elementary school, graduate from high school, graduate from university or get married. I would not have seen my grandchildren born. I would not have had the opportunity to laugh and cry with my family and friends. I would not have the best friend that I do. When I think of the time I give to Alcoholics Anonymous, I must ask myself, as you may ask yourself, am I really making a sacrifice for Alcoholics Anonymous? For me, that one hour where I go to my home group is not a sacrifice. Nor are the two or three or four hours I spend attending other meetings. If I am involved in service outside of my home group, whether that is acting as a General Service Representative, taking a meeting into a hospital or prison, volunteering with a central office or intergroup, or meeting with sponsees, this may be the beginning of a sacrifice. But even if I do that for 10 hours a week, that is less than 6% of my time in a week. Would I gladly give up 6% of my time to spend the other 94% with

my family? Would my family happily give up 6% of my time for another 27 years with me? Would I gladly give up 6% of my time to have this life? Would I happily give up twice that? For me, I would gladly give up much more than that. This life is worth far more than that.

All of the money in my pocket today was earned by me in the last 27 years. A dead man would have no money in his pockets. Everything I have, I owe to Alcoholics Anonymous. When I put money in the basket, I am simply giving back to Alcoholics Anonymous a very small fraction of what Alcoholics Anonymous has given to me. When the basket comes by, or when there is an opportunity to be of service, I ask myself, what am I willing to sacrifice to help save that still suffering alcoholic from dying an alcoholic death? I find I am often not satisfied with my own answer.

What I know is that there are tens of millions of alcoholics who need our help. Am I willing to sacrifice a few things: time, money, my opinions, my need to be right? I ask myself, am I really a different person than I was when I got to Alcoholics Anonymous, or am I still concerned with my own comfort, my own wants and needs or my own decisions about what I must have in order to have a good life? Have I actually achieved any degree of humility? For me, sacrifice has a good deal to do with humility. Again, sometimes I am not happy with my own answer.

If asked, what would I report about the sacrifices that I have been willing to make to help some alcoholic I will never meet avoid being doomed as we once were? What would I report that I have done to help that person be given the opportunity for a new life the way we have been given that opportunity.

Scott H.
Chair of the General Service Board

Learn more about group and individual contributions and their impact at aa.org.