

5/29/21 D19 Sharing Session to prepare for upcoming workshop
23 members were present.
I came in as Monty had just finished his intro.

Jean, CEC: drinking among seniors had escalated. Some nursing homes do not want us in there. Some seniors are not into Zoom.

Nik, transgender: I was chair of CPC. I've experienced members telling me to "get right with" my HP. The messages of society seep into AA. These messages are the kind that look down on people who are different. We could be more conscious of this.

Adrian, DCM, D19: I'm a part of and I don't feel any barriers but for years I've been aware of the Spanish speaking districts. I'm bilingual. I've had fear of not being accepted but I visited D15 and D18. It turned out I realized "if I have a skill or asset" I can use that to help carry the message.

Monty: What barriers have you encountered?

Doris: Thanks for the event. Doris is from District 15. It's a linguistic district – very large. Sometimes they do not feel very connected. Adrian's visit was GREAT. Fliers are not so effective. When personal visits happen it works. We feel connected. Maybe it's a cultural thing but that's how it is. Join us in our events. You are always welcome.

Maire, DCM D6: from a service perspective, I've noticed that in Area 8 as a whole, the 7th tradition is important to support our Spanish and ASL interpreters. I get the feeling that our Area 8 members are not really thinking of our members who have differences.

Esther, Alt GSR?: from linguistic district 18 in north county, (we adjusted our settings) something that I see in D18 is it feels like we're different from the rest of the area. Only the district is connected with each other but not with the area. Members feel ostracized. We need more support from the area. We have Rodrigo, he's from the young peoples. He's helping us with technology so we can have a website for the first time. We've tried before but we do not know how to use them.

Bryan: from the hearing impaired community. He's on the accessibility committee. Since Covid we had to find a way of connecting. The issue of funding came up. We in the deaf community cannot access meeting without interpreters. Covid caused a huge change – we now have access to zoom meetings. The meeting got larger. With Covid winding down it's starting to hurt us. Interpreters are being cut off as meetings go face to face. This reminds me that I need to be in meetings. I feel like we're begging for money. It feels bad.

Bryana: speaking for the native community. There are meetings on the reservations but they lack contact with the outer community. I think it's necessary to make a conscious outreach – to go out there. It's important that the Area takes responsibility and doesn't wait for someone to come down from the mountain. Gracias.

Phoenix ASL to Everyone (11:29 AM) copied from the chat.
Phoenix deaf alcoholic. live in part of country that ASL is a desert. Pandemic made zoom more available so more accessible. still need BB study with presentation. not reading book.

Lynn: acknowledged the importance of Esther's and Doris' shares on D18 and D15. Lynn will go to

D15 soon. I'm hoping that we'll be providing Spanish language workshops so that stories will be on the you tube channel and in La Vina because they have so much to contribute. The second thing is that our Area has not been good at providing meetings for parents. There were only 14 mtgs with childcare – 10 were women's mtgs. Only 4 for single fathers. We're not helping young parents. As we go back the need is great. I'm hoping we'll find a way to serve these parents and their children.

Linda P: identifies as a Zoom baby. July 1st will be one year (sober). I am proud and appreciative of the support I have received. This is my first time around. I am finding out a lot about the way AA works. One of my meetings reaches out to hearing impaired – is it once a week? We seem to have a surplus of money that could be shared to provide ASL. Even though I do not have children I certainly support having childcare and adding that to the budget.

Kendall, D19 Secretary: I want to speak from my experience with the Spring RoundUp. These sharing sessions, this one in particular, with people from marginalized or underserved sharing, is very important. Going out of my way to serve – and about the spring round up, bringing more diversity – its the panels we have at the conference. Circuit speakers tend to be . . .

now we have an atheist and agnostic panel. That was well attended, especially be people who felt they did not have a voice. We need a global voice because we are a global fellowship. Its on us as the spring RU committee to invite people to participate.

Rose: Change is hard for us. Lets do what we can to support change, a culture of change. Talk about it at Area Assemblies and the monthly ACMs. What does it look like? What will we do that's different?

Karen: (Area Webmaster) If we can help in any way I am available. Esther said how they need help with technology. I am available as long as I can work with a translator. Also I never want the deaf community to feel we are letting them down because of the money issue. We are just wrapping our heads around money. If there is any way the area can serve by helping with technology please let me know.

Arlene: ASL Oregon. This zoom has given us access. It offers a huge-r pool of qualified translators. In my area of Portland there are not qualified translators. In zoom I get to see people's faces. I feel more heard. Service opportunities are becoming available to the hearing impaired community. Members are coming from all over – I'm giving a presentation next week in Seattle. Bryan did it last week. In my own community I'd have to drive an hour to do the service I was invited to do. In Seattle they have their mtgs translated. Deaf members are encouraged to take service positions. We are actually asked. There's a lot of “soft bigotry” (re: the hearing impaired community). I used to be a hearing person. I see the difference. Its assumed I don't know as much – as though I'm not as intelligent. There are plenty of misunderstandings.

Ray, GSR, D19: I've been dealt cards that did not fit me. I'm a gay white man. I grew up in poverty. I came in with nothing to my name. Everyone assumed I had everything. I've learned to admit that I need help. I don't want people to look at me and think i'm not as good as everybody else. I just asked the District for funds for my home group so that we can give members books – members who cannot afford books. We need to get the message to members – to the elder community. I want everyone to get the message that I got here at AA. I only see and hear so much but at this sharing session i'm hearing vulnerability. I loved hearing the “global” view. Thanks.

Rick: (timekeeper) I want to talk about people who are in institutions. I work with Scripps and we got cyber hacked and now I realize that without having peoples records ?

I'm finding people there because of suicide attempts. I'm hoping we'll reach out to these people.

Bill S. Area 8 Registrar: The principle of Unity maybe something I could share more about and foster togetherness. I think most of us are open and willing to carry the message of AA but the How To . . . that's perhaps something that we could all be sharing. The invitation is really important -as Doris expressed earlier – inviting and having more communication. I'd love to participate in more mixed meetings with the Spanish community - I think there would be some real magic in that. I remember being at an anniversary event in D15 and wearing headphones. Its was so welcoming and uplifting. The members made me feel wonderful.

Adrian: this thing has turned out exactly like its supposed to be. The communities that showed up, parents, childcare, institutions, native community, hearing impaired, Spanish/Linguistic districts. At my home group we did an inventory and inclusivity was something we want to work on. Instead of having male/female sponsors we had people identifying as male or female but we didn't say that (use those terms). I hope we'll have hybrid meetings at the district and model how to do that so GSRs can bring it back to their own meetings.

Nik: I've been in AA for over 34 years. I've meandered my way through many minority groups – i've lived in foreign countries where I've been the minority language, I've been in institution - the longer we live in AA the more we'll have opportunities to experience minority communities. I have to learn how to carry the message without proselytizing. In my own home group I've been trying for years to have them read the unity pledge either at the beginning or the end. We can do this simple thing to remind ourselves that its what we're about.

Jean: a lot more young people are coming in on zoom. We're seeing them coming back. They are more deft at technology. The hybrid can allow person to person and other people online. It allows more accessibility and flexibility. Zoom is one of the gifts of the pandemic.

Ray: Thanks for mentioning the young peoples group. They do need help. They're strong and willing to help but as a district and an area it would be great to see more resources offered to the young people, and mixing meetings. Recovery is not a fingerprint, its a snowflake.

Doris:(Spanish translator) a lot of the Spanish community does not have technology. When the last big online event happened only 80 members showed up instead of well over 100 as we would have expected. Many members do not know how to use zoom. They are texting (Doris) asking how to get onto/into a meeting, an event. I have tried. The assemblies! Aye – on zoom – the Spanish speaking GSRs are technology challenged. Please reach out if you are tech savvy.

Karen: There was a person who would meet up with members before an assembly or an AcM to help those who were tech challenged. I love the idea of putting more focus on helping people get the most out of zoom.

Bryan, ASL: I'm a little afraid of whats going to happen with zoom, face to face, and hybrid. Thanks you for this event.

Monty: We're here to be open to hearing your voice so we can carry it on to our members and AA as a whole.

Adrian: I'm taking from this that I am responsible. This has been transcribed. I'll be putting it into a document for anyone to access.

Arlene: One thing I've noticed is that there are people who decide what you need without asking you what you need. Its critical at business meetings and its scary to go alone. I'm asking for money, for access. But the point is NOW you have an opportunity to speak on matters that affect you directly.

Monty: (12:29) checking on any last comments.

Ray: Thank you to everybody. This is exactly what we hoped would happen. We are going to take all the notes we have and post it on our area website so that we can serve everyone in AA. I want to encourage us all to serve in any way we can. We'll close with the responsibility pledge.

I am responsible, when anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help. I want the hand of AA always to be there and for that, I am responsible.

Notes by Rose P.