

“Whenever you find yourself in the Majority it is time to reform(or pause and reflect)” – Mark Twain

The Minority Opinion

In Alcoholics Anonymous, every member has both a voice and a vote, and I’ve been fortunate to witness this principle in action. Having attended Mini-Conferences in Areas 54, 55, and 56, I’ve seen firsthand how essential the minority opinion is to our Fellowship. It isn’t just a procedural step – it’s a spiritual safeguard.

Concept Four gives us the **Right of Participation**, reminding us that every trusted servant has a place and a vote at the General Service Conference, including the staff members. This is radically different from corporate structures and is one of the things that sets AA apart as a spiritual entity. At the group level, this principle shows up in **Tradition Two**: “a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience.” Participation protects us from the misuse of power and keeps us grounded in humility.

Just as recovery required me to change my thinking, service asks me to stay open-minded as well. That’s the magic of the minority opinion. After a vote is taken, the prevailing side listens to the minority. If someone is moved to call for a revote, we take one. There’s something almost mystical about this process – it forces us to pause, to reconsider, and to remain teachable.

More than once, I’ve encountered issues that seemed like “no-brainers.” Then the minority opinion is voiced, and suddenly I see something I hadn’t seen before. My mind has to stay open. This is how AA finds its way forward.

It takes courage to speak from the minority. It takes thoughtfulness, conviction, and a willingness to stand alone. And time after time, those voices offer insights that deepen our understanding and strengthen our unity.

Seeing this process through the lens of a delegate is inspiring. At our Mini-Conference we often say, **“We are all delegates in training.”** Even though we’re a year away from the next one, I encourage you to participate wherever you serve – in your intergroup, your district, your home group, or your committee meetings. This process is what will keep AA alive for our children and grandchildren.

As I prepare to attend the General Service Conference, my prayer is simple: that I remain open to the minority opinion, and that I take the time to pause and reflect – just as Mr. Twain reminds us to do – before making decisions that affect our Fellowship.