

A Workshop Guide to The Twelve Traditions of S.L.A.A.

"As the Twelve Steps of S.L.A.A. are our recipe for individual recovery, the Twelve Traditions of S.L.A.A. are our recipe for group unity."

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Introduction:

Alcoholics Anonymous (The Big Book, 4th Edition) p. xix

The test that it faced was this: Could these large numbers of erstwhile erratic alcoholics (addicts) successfully meet and work together? Would there be quarrels over membership, leadership, and money? Would there be strivings for power and prestige? Would there be schisms which would split A.A. apart? Soon A.A. was beset by these very problems on every side and in every group. But out of this frightening and at first disrupting experience the conviction grew that A.A. 's had to hang together or die separately. We had to unify our Fellowship or pass off the scene.

As we discovered the principles by which the individual alcoholic (addict) could live, so we had to evolve principles by which the A.A. groups and A.A. as a whole could survive and function effectively. It was thought that no alcoholic man or woman could be excluded from our Society; that our leaders might serve but never govern; that each group was to be autonomous and there was to be no professional class of therapy. There were to be no fees or dues; our expenses were to be met by our own voluntary contributions. There was to be the least possible organization, even in our service centers. Our public relations were to be based upon attraction rather than promotion. It was decided that all members ought to be anonymous at the level of press, radio, TV and films. And in no circumstances should we give endorsements, make alliances, or enter public controversies.

This was the substance of A.A. 's Twelve Traditions, which are stated in full on page 561 of this book. Though none of these principles had the force of rules or laws, they had become so widely accepted by 1950 that they were confirmed by our (AA) first International Conference held at Cleveland. Today the remarkable unity of A.A. is one of the greatest assets that our Society has.

Clarifying Questions and Answers:

Q: What test did we face? **A:** Could erstwhile erratic alcoholics (addicts) successfully meet and work together?

Q: What was the second question? **A:** Quarrels over membership, leadership, and money.

Q: What was the third question? **A:** Strivings for power and prestige.

Q: What was the fourth question? **A:** Schisms which would split A.A. apart.

Q: Were these concerns valid? **A:** Yes.

Q: What conviction came from this period? **A:** A.A. 's had to hang together or die separately.

Q: What did they realize they must do? **A:** Hang together or die separately.

Q: What did the principles, for which they were searching, produce? **A:** Unify our Fellowship.

Q: Where in this book do we find these lifesaving principles? **A:** p. 561 - 4th Ed. A.A.

Q: Did these prove to be laws? **A:** No.

Q: Did the Fellowship approve of them? **A:** Yes, in 1950 at the First International Conference.

Q: What is one of our greatest assets? **A:** Unity.

THE A.A. TRADITION

Alcoholics Anonymous (The Big Book, 4th Edition) p. 561

To those now in its fold, Alcoholics Anonymous has made the difference between misery and sobriety, and often the difference between life and death. A.A. can, of course, mean just as much to uncounted alcoholics not yet reached. Therefore, no society of men and women ever had a more urgent need for continuous effectiveness and permanent unity. We alcoholics see that we must work together and hang together; else most of us will finally die alone. The "12 Traditions" of Alcoholics Anonymous are, we A.A. 's believe, the best answers that our experience has yet given to those ever-urgent questions, "How can A.A. best function?" and, "How can A.A. best stay whole and so survive?" On the next page, A.A. 's "12 Traditions" are seen in their so-called "short form," the form in general use today. This is a condensed version of the original "long form" A.A. Traditions as first printed in 1946. Because the "long form" is more explicit and of possible historic value, it is also reproduced.

Suggested Readings:

Twelve Steps Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous p. 129

No A.A. can compel another to do anything; nobody can be punished or expelled. Our Twelve Steps to recovery are suggestions; the Twelve Traditions which guarantee A.A.'s unity contain not a single "Don't." They repeatedly say, "We ought.." but never "You must!"

Clarifying Questions and Answers:

Q: What does the Program of Sex, Love Addicts Anonymous mean to members of the Fellowship of S.L.A.A.? **A:** The difference between misery and sobriety - between life and death.

Q: S.L.A.A. can, of course, mean what to whom? **A:** Much to uncounted sex and love addicts.

Q: Therefore, no society of men and women ever had a more urgent need for what? **A:** Continuous effectiveness and permanent unity.

Q: What do we recovered addicts see we must do and Why is that so? **A:** Work together and hang together; else most of us will finally die alone.

Q: The "12 Traditions" of S.L.A.A. are what? **A:** Best answers that our experience has yet given to those ever-urgent questions,

Q: What are those two urgent questions? **A:** How can S.L.A.A. best function? How can S.L.A.A. best stay whole and so survive?

Q: What is the "short form" considered to be? **A:** The form in general use today.

Q: Why is the "long form" reproduced in the book, Alcoholics Anonymous? **A:** More explicit and of possible historic value.

Tradition One (Short): Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon S.L.A.A. unity.

Tradition One (Long Version): Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward. (A.A.12&12:189)

Suggested Readings:

A.A. Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, P. 130

"...he finds he cannot keep this priceless gift unless he carries the A.A. message...the moment this Twelfth Step work forms a group, another discovery is made—that most individuals cannot recover unless there is a group. Realization dawns that he is but a small part of a great whole; that no personal sacrifice is too great for preservation of the Fellowship. He learns that the clamour of desires and ambitions within him must be silenced whenever these could damage the group. It becomes plain that the group survive or the individual will not."

Clarifying Questions and Answers:

Q: What is each member of S.L.A.A.? **A:** A small part of a great whole.

Q: What must S.L.A.A. continue to do? **A:** Live or most of us will surely die.

Q: What must come first? **A:** Common welfare comes first.

Q: What follows? **A:** Individual welfare follows close afterward.

Tradition Two (Short): For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority -- a loving God as this Power may be expressed through our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

Tradition Two (Long): For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. (A.A. 12&12:189)

Suggested Readings:

A.A. Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, P. 135

Does AA have any real leadership?" Most emphatically the answer is "Yes, notwithstanding the apparent lack of it." Let's turn again to the deposed founder and his friends. What becomes of them? As their grief and anxiety wear away, a subtle change begins. Ultimately they divide into two classes known in AA slang as "elder statesmen" and "bleeding deacons." The elder statesman is the one who sees the wisdom of the group's decision, who holds no resentment over his reduced status, whose judgment, fortified by considerable experience, is sound, and who is willing to sit quietly on the sidelines patiently waiting developments. The bleeding deacon is one just as surely convinced that the group cannot get along without him, who constantly connives for reelection to office, and who continues to be consumed with self-pity. Some hemorrhage so badly that—drained of all AA spirit and principle—they get drunk. At times the AA landscape seems to be littered with bleeding forms. Nearly every old-timer in our society has gone through this process in some degree. Happily, most of them survive and live to become elder statesmen. They become the real and permanent leadership of AA. Theirs is the quiet opinion, the sure knowledge and humble example that resolves a crisis. When sorely perplexed, the group inevitably turns to them for advice. They become the voice of the group conscience; in fact, these are the sure voice of Alcoholics Anonymous. They do not drive by mandate, they lead by example. Such is the experience which has led us to the conclusion that our group conscience, well-advised by its elders, will be in the long run wiser than any single leader. (*Do we practice rotating leadership, stepping out of office regardless if we believe others are not available, not willing and not qualified or do we remain frozen in office?.*)

A.A. Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, P. 134

"...the group now has a so called rotating committee, very sharply limited in its authority. In no sense whatever can its members govern or direct the group. They are servants. Theirs is the sometimes thankless privilege of doing the group's chores...The committee gives no spiritual advice, judges no one's conduct, issues no orders. Every one of them may be promptly eliminated at the next election if they try this. And so they make the belated discovery that they are really servants, not senators. These are universal experiences. Thus throughout AA does the group conscience decree the terms upon which its leaders shall serve."

Clarifying Questions and Answers:

Q: For each group there is only one what? **A:** One ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience.

Q: How may this ultimate authority express itself? **A:** In our group conscience.

Q: What are our leaders to be? **A:** Trusted Servants.

Q: What must our leaders not do? **A:** Govern.

Tradition Three (Short): The only requirement for S.L.A.A. membership is a desire to stop living out a pattern of sex and love addiction. Any two or more persons gathered together for mutual aid in recovering from sex and love addiction may call themselves an S.L.A.A. group, provided that as a group they have no other affiliation.

Tradition Three (Long): Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism (addiction). Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation. (A.A. 12&12:189)

Suggested Readings:

The S.L.A.A. Conference Service Manual (Revised January 2020) p. 11

General Member: "Any person who has a desire to stop living out a pattern of sex and love addiction" as defined in Article III, Section 2 of the By-Laws.

A.A. Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, P. 141

"...that we would neither punish nor deprive any A.A. of membership, that we must never compel anyone to pay anything, believe anything, or conform to anything...The answer, now seen in Tradition Three, was simplicity itself. At last experience taught us that to take away any alcoholic's full chance was sometimes to pronounce his death sentence, and often to condemn him to endless misery. Who dared to be judge, jury, and executioner of his own sick brother?"

Clarifying Questions and Answers:

Q: Who should our membership include? **A:** All who suffer from sex and love addiction.

Q: Who may we refuse membership? **A:** None who wish to recover.

Q: What ought we not depend on? **A:** Money or conformity.

Q: How many members are required before there can be an S.L.A.A. group? **A:** Two or more who gather for mutual aid in recovering from sex and love addiction.

Q: Provided they do not do what? **A:** No other affiliation.

Tradition Four (Short): Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or S.L.A.A. as a whole.

Tradition Four (Long): With respect to its own affairs, each A.A. group should be responsible to no other authority than its own conscience. But when its plans concern the welfare of neighbouring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted. And no group, regional committee, or individual should ever take any action that might greatly affect A.A. as a whole without conferring with the Trustees of the General Service Board. On such issues our common welfare is paramount.

Suggested Readings:

<https://slaafws.org/trquestion/howmethodandtraditions>

Each Group is autonomous. They are free to create parameters for their meeting that creates a specialized meeting as long as there is no other affiliation per Tradition 2 “Any two or more persons gathered together for mutual aid in recovering from sex and love addiction may call themselves an S.L.A.A. group, provided that as a group they have no other affiliation.”

<https://slaafws.org/trquestion/literature-on-the-traditions>

However, groups may still conduct Traditions study meetings using the AA 12 & 12 or even the 12 & 12 of Al Anon. Although these are not Conference Approved materials, groups are able to use these resources by group conscience. Tradition 4 tells us that each group is autonomous, which means that they can choose to follow whatever format they choose to use and to employ the resources of other 12 Step recovery programs if we are lacking in material on the subject. You may certainly change references to AA to S.L.A.A. as the members are reading in order to gain more understanding of the reasons behind the 12 Traditions.

The Language of the Heart: Bill W's Grapevine Writings. pp. 80-81

Bill Wilson on Tradition Four: "With these concepts in mind, let us look more closely at Tradition 4. The first sentence of Tradition 4 guarantees each A.A. group local autonomy. **With respect to its own affairs, the group may make any decisions, adopt any attitudes that it likes. No over-all or intergroup authority should challenge this primary privilege.** We feel this ought to be so, even though the group might sometimes act with complete indifference to our tradition. For example, an A.A. group could, if it wished, hire a paid preacher and support him out of the proceeds of a group night club. Though such an absurd procedure would be miles outside our tradition, the group's "right to be wrong" would be held inviolate. We are sure that each group can be granted, and safely granted, these most extreme privileges. We know that our

familiar process of trial and error would summarily eliminate both the preacher and the night club. Those severe growing pains which invariably follow any radical departure from A.A. tradition can be absolutely relied upon to bring an erring group back into line. An A.A. group need not be coerced by any human government over and above its own members. Their own experience, plus A.A. opinion in surrounding groups, plus God's prompting in their group conscience would be sufficient. Much travail has already taught us this. **Hence we may confidently say to each group, "You should be responsible to no other authority than your own conscience."**

Clarifying Questions and Answers:

Q: Who is each group responsible to so far as its business and practices are concerned? **A:** each S.L.A.A. group should be responsible to no other authority than its own conscience.

Q: If other groups might be affected, what should be done? **A:** when its plans concern the welfare of neighbouring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted.

Q: No group nor any S.L.A.A. service entity should ever do what? **A:** Take any action that might greatly affect S.L.A.A. as a whole.

Q: Without first doing what? **A:** Conferring with the Board of Trustees.

Q: What is paramount? **A:** Our common welfare.

Tradition Five (Short): Each group has but one primary purpose -- to carry its message to the sex and love addict who still suffers.

Tradition Five (Long): Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity *having but one primary purpose*—that of carrying its message to the alcoholic (addict) who still suffers.

Suggested Readings:

A.A. Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, P. 150

"Shoemaker, stick to thy last!" ...better do one thing supremely well than many badly. That is the central theme of this tradition. Around it our Society gathers in unity. The very life our Fellowship requires the preservation of this principle.

Clarifying Questions and Answers:

Q: What should each group be? **A:** A spiritual entity.

Q: Having how many purposes? **A:** One primary purpose.

Q: What is that purpose? **A:** To carry its message to the addict who still suffers.

Tradition Six (Short): A S.L.A.A. group or S.L.A.A. as a whole ought never endorse, finance, or lend the S.L.A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

Tradition Six (Long): Problems of money, property, and authority may easily divert us from our primary spiritual aim. We think, therefore, that any considerable property of genuine use to A.A. should be separately incorporated and managed, thus dividing the material from the spiritual. An A.A. group, as such, should never go into business. Secondary aids to A.A., such as clubs or hospitals which require much property or administration, ought to be incorporated and so set apart that, if necessary, they can be freely discarded by the groups. Hence such facilities ought not to use the A.A. name. Their management should be the sole responsibility of those people who financially support them. For clubs, A.A. managers are usually preferred. But hospitals, as well as other places of recuperation, ought to be well outside A.A. —and medically supervised. While an A.A. group may cooperate with anyone, such cooperation ought never go so far as affiliation or endorsement, actual or implied. An A.A. group can bind itself to no one.

Clarifying Questions and Answers:

Q: What will divert us from our primary spiritual aim? **A:** Problems of money, property and prestige.

Q: What do we think should be done with property of considerable value? **A:** Separately incorporated and managed.

Q: What is being divided by doing so? **A:** The material from the spiritual.

Q: What should a S.L.A.A. group never do? **A:** Go into business.

Q: What would be secondary aids? **A:** Clubs and hospitals.

Q: How should secondary aids be organized? **A:** Incorporated and so set apart.

Q: What distinct advantage does this offer? **A:** Can be freely discarded by the groups.

Q: What should such facilities not do? **A:** Use the S.L.A.A. name.

Q: Who should manage such facilities? **A:** Management should be the sole responsibility of those people who financially support them.

Q: Who will make a good manager for a S.L.A.A. club? **A:** S.L.A.A. managers are usually preferred.

Q: What about various health facilities? **A:** Be well outside S.L.A.A. —and medically supervised.

Q: While a S.L.A.A. group may do what? **A:** Cooperate with anyone.

Q: Such cooperation ought never go so far as what? **A:** Affiliation or endorsement, actual or implied.

Q: Who can a S.L.A.A. group bind itself to? **A:** No one.

Tradition Seven (Short): Every S.L.A.A. group ought to be self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

Tradition Seven (Long): The A.A. groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that each group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous, whether by groups, clubs, hospitals, or other outside agencies; that acceptance of large gifts from any source, or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is unwise. Then too, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.

Clarifying Questions and Answers:

Q: Who should fully support a S.L.A.A. group? **A:** The Group's own members.

Q: By what kinds of contributions? **A:** Voluntary.

Q: Do we think this should take a long time? **A:** Soon not later.

Q: How about asking the general public for contributions? **A:** Highly dangerous.

Q: How about large gifts or obligatory contributions? **A:** Unwise.

Q: What about keeping funds in excess of the prudent reserve? **Comment:** An informed Group conscience (Tradition Two) determines what the prudent reserve should be. **A:** Much concern.

Q: Of what has experience forewarned us? **A:** Can destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.

Tradition Eight (Short): S.L.A.A. as such, should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centres may employ special workers.

Tradition Eight (Long): Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional. We define professionalism as the occupation of counselling alcoholics for fees or hire. But we may employ alcoholics where they are going to perform those services for which we might otherwise have to engage nonalcoholics. Such special services may be well recompensed. But our usual A.A. "12 Step" work is never to be paid for.

Suggested Readings:

A.A. Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, P. 166

Alcoholics Anonymous will never have a professional class. We have gained some understanding of the ancient words "Freely ye have received, freely give." We have discovered that at the point of professionalism, money and spirituality do not mix. Almost no recovery from alcoholism has ever been brought about by the world's best professionals, whether medical or religious. We do not decry professionalism in other fields, but we accept the sober fact that it does not work for us. Every time we have tried to professionalize our Twelfth Step, the result has been exactly the same: Our single purpose has been defeated (Tradition Five). Alcoholics simply will not listen to a paid twelfth-stepper...The money motive compromises him and everything he says and does for this prospect.

Clarifying Questions and Answers:

Q: How should S.L.A.A. forever remain? **A:** Non-professional.

Q: How do we define professionalism? **A:** The occupation of counselling addicts for fees or hire.

Q: Where may we employ addicts? **A:** Those services for which we might otherwise have to engage nonalcoholics.

Q: How should such services be compensated? **A:** Well recompensed.

Q: What is never to be paid for? **A:** Twelve Step work.

Q: What does not mix? **A:** Money and spirituality.

Q: What happens when we try to professionalize our Twelve Step Work? **A:** Our single purpose has been defeated (Tradition Five).

Q: What will addicts not listen to? **A:** A paid twelfth-stepper.

Q: What does the money motive do? **A:** Compromises everything we say and do for this prospect.

Tradition Nine (Short): S.L.A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

Tradition Nine (Long): Each A.A. group needs the least possible organization. Rotating leadership is the best. The small group may elect its secretary, the large group its rotating committee, and the groups of a large metropolitan area their central or intergroup committee, which often employs a full-time secretary. The trustees of the General Service Board are, in effect, our A.A. General Service Committee. They are the custodians of our A.A. Tradition and the receivers of voluntary A.A. contributions by which we maintain our A.A. General Service Office at New York. They are authorized by the groups to handle our over-all public relations and they guarantee the integrity of our principal newspaper, the A.A. Grapevine. All such representatives are to be guided in the spirit of service, for true leaders in A.A. are but trusted and experienced servants of the whole. They derive no real authority from their titles; they do not govern. Universal respect is the key to their usefulness.

Suggested Readings:

A.A. Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, P. 173

You might think A.A.'s headquarters in New York would be an exception. Surely, the people there would have to have some authority. But long ago, trustees and staff members alike found they could do no more than make suggestions, and very mild ones at that. They even had to coin a couple of sentences which still go into half the letters they write: "Of course, you are at perfect liberty to handle this matter any way you please.

A.A. Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, P. 174

It is clear now that we ought never to name boards to govern us, but it is equally clear that we shall always need to authorize workers to serve us. It is the difference between the spirit of vested authority and the spirit of service, two concepts which are sometimes poles apart. It is in the spirit of service that we elect the A.A. group's informal rotating committee, the intergroup association for the area, and the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous for A.A. as a whole.

Clarifying Questions and Answers:

Q: What is it S.L.A.A. needs very little of? **A:** Least possible organization.

Q: What kind of leadership is best? **A:** Rotating leadership.

Q: A small group may elect a what? **A:** Secretary.

Q: A large group may need what? **A:** A rotating committee.

Q: Large cities may find it desirable to have what? **A:** A District or Area Service Committee.

Q: What would be required for the central committee? **A:** Suggested 10 or more groups.

Q: The trustees of the S.L.A.A. are what? **A:** Fellowship-Wide Services Committee.

Q: Of what are they custodians? **A:** Our 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts.

- Q:** What do they receive? **A:** Voluntary contributions from Groups and Intergroups.
- Q:** What do our contributions maintain? **A:** Fellowship-Wide Services Office in Los Angeles.
- Q:** What have the groups authorized them to do? **A:** Handle our over-all public relations.
- Q:** They guarantee the integrity of what? **A:** The integrity of our newsletter, “the Journal.”
- Q:** All representatives are to be guided by what? **A:** The spirit of service.
- Q:** Our true leaders are what? **A:** Trusted and experienced servants.
- Q:** They derive no what? **A:** Real authority.
- Q:** What do they not do? **A:** Govern.
- Q:** Universal respect is what? **A:** The key to their usefulness.

Tradition Ten (Short): S.L.A.A. has no opinion on outside issues; hence the S.L.A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

Tradition Ten (Long): No A.A. group or member should ever, in such a way as to implicate A.A., express any opinion on outside controversial issues—particularly those of politics, alcohol reform, or sectarian religion. The Alcoholics Anonymous groups oppose no one. Concerning such matters they can express no views whatever.

Suggested Readings:

A.A. Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, P. 178

"The Washingtonian Society, a movement among alcoholics which started in Baltimore a century ago, almost discovered the answer to alcoholism. At first, the society was composed entirely of alcoholics trying to help one another. The early members foresaw that they should dedicate themselves to this sole aim...Their membership passed the hundred thousand mark... Instead, the Washingtonians permitted politicians and reformers, both alcoholic and nonalcoholic, to use the society for their own purposes...Soon, Washingtonian speakers violently and publicly took sides on this question...it didn't have a chance from the moment it determined to reform America's drinking habits. When the Washingtonians became temperance crusaders, within a very few years they had completely lost their effectiveness in helping alcoholics. The lesson to be learned from the Washingtonians was not overlooked by Alcoholics Anonymous. As we surveyed the wreck of that movement, early A.A. members resolved to keep our Society out of public controversy."

Clarifying Questions and Answers:

Q: What should no S.L.A.A. Group or individual member do? **A:** No opinion on outside issues.

Q: This applies particularly to what? **A:** Controversial issues—particularly those of politics, alcohol reform, sex and gender issues or sectarian religion.

Q: Who does S.L.A.A. oppose? **A:** No one.

Q: Aside from our Program of Recovery, our Traditions and our Concepts, on what may we express our views? **A:** None.

Tradition Eleven (Short): Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV, film, and other public media. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all fellow S.L.A.A. members.

Tradition Eleven (Long): Our relations with the general public should be characterized by personal anonymity. We think A.A. ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our names and pictures as A.A. members ought not be broadcast, filmed, or publicly printed. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never a need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us.

Suggested Readings:

A.A. Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, P. 183

This, in brief, is the process by which A.A.'s Tradition Eleven was constructed. To us, however, it represents far more than a sound public relations policy. It is more than a denial of self-seeking. This Tradition is a constant and practical reminder that personal ambition has no place in A.A. In it, each member becomes an active guardian of our Fellowship.

Clarifying Questions and Answers:

- Q:** How should our relations with the general public be characterized? **A:** Personal anonymity.
- Q:** What should S.L.A.A. avoid? **A:** Sensational advertising.
- Q:** As S.L.A.A. members, how should our names and pictures be treated? **A:** Not broadcasted, filmed or publicly printed.
- Q:** What principle should guide our public relations? **A:** Attraction rather than promotion.
- Q:** What do we never need to do? **A:** Praise ourselves.
- Q:** If we don't, who will? **A:** We let our friends recommend us.

Tradition Twelve (Short): Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Tradition Twelve (Long): And finally, we of Alcoholics Anonymous believe that the principle of anonymity has an immense spiritual significance. It reminds us that we are to place principles before personalities; that we are actually to practice a genuine humility. This to the end that our great blessings may never spoil us; that we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him who presides over us all.

Suggested Readings:

A.A. Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, P. 184

THE spiritual substance of anonymity is sacrifice. Because A.A.'s Twelve Traditions repeatedly ask us to give up personal desires for the common good, we realize that the sacrificial spirit—well symbolized by anonymity—is the foundation of them all. It is A.A.'s proved willingness to make these sacrifices that gives people their high confidence in our future.

A.A. Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, P. 187

The promoter instinct in us might be our undoing. If even one publicly got drunk, or was lured into using A.A.'s name for his own purposes, the damage might be irreparable. At this altitude (press, radio, films, and television), anonymity— 100 percent anonymity—was the only possible answer. Here, principles would have to come before personalities, without exception. These experiences taught us that anonymity is real humility at work. It is an all-pervading spiritual quality which today keynotes A.A. life everywhere. Moved by the spirit of anonymity, we try to give up our natural desires for personal distinction as A.A. members both among fellow alcoholics and before the general public. As we lay aside these very human aspirations, we believe that each of us takes part in the weaving of a protective mantle which covers our whole Society and under which we may grow and work in unity. We are sure that humility, expressed by anonymity, is the greatest safeguard that Alcoholics Anonymous can ever have.

Clarifying Questions and Answers:

Q: Members of S.L.A.A. believe what? **A:** Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions.

Q: It reminds us to do what? **A:** Place principles before personalities.

Q: What are we to practice? **A:** Genuine humility.

Q: That what may never spoil us? **A:** Our great blessings.

Q: That we shall forever do what? **A:** Live in thankful contemplation.

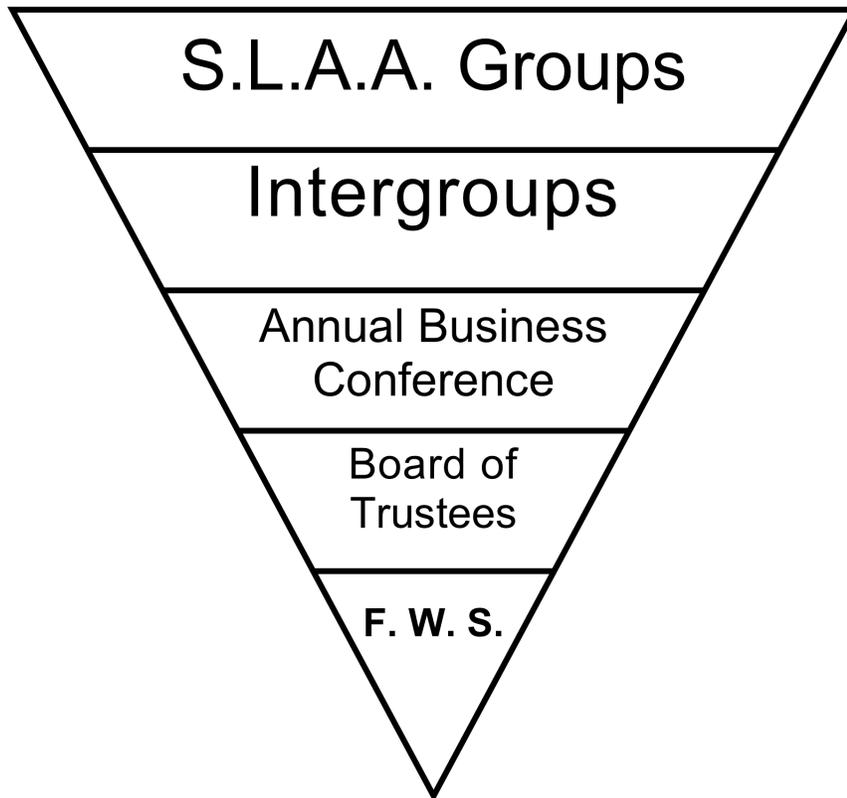
Appendix I

Service and Responsibility in S.L.A.A.

At all levels of service in S.L.A.A., we work together to achieve our primary purpose to help the sex and love addict who still suffers. Concept One states that “Ultimate responsibility and authority for S.L.A.A. world services always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.” The image of an inverted triangle illustrates the service structure of S.L.A.A. that begins with S.L.A.A. Groups. Service entities of Fellowship-Wide Services and the Board of Trustees are responsible to the Conference, Intergroups, Groups, and members as well as the public asking for information.

Annual Business Conference Structure

The following Conference Service Organizational Chart details the service structure of the inverted triangle. Individuals gather to form an S.L.A.A. Group. An S.L.A.A. Group may or may not elect to participate in a regional/local Intergroup, or function as an Intergroup. An Intergroup or a Group functioning as an Intergroup (see By-Laws Article IV, Section 1b) may choose to select a Delegate to attend the Annual Business Conference/Meeting. The Conference creates Conference Committees to accomplish much of the Fellowship’s work throughout the Conference Year. The Conference also elects the Board of Trustees to manage the legal and business affairs of the Fellowship, as well as oversight of the F.W.S. Office.



Appendix II - Group Service Representative (IR)

GROUP SERVANTS

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern. (OUR SECOND TRADITION)

S.L.A.A. groups may create such service positions, as they deem necessary to carry on the group functions with such job duties and sobriety requirements, as they feel appropriate. Such positions by way of illustration might include: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Literature, Coffeemaker/Hospitality, Greeter, etc. The suggested business positions of groups are:

INTERGROUP REPRESENTATIVE (IR)

Suggested sober time: One year. Term: One year

The IR position is a very important service position for which a member can be elected. Great care should be taken with this choice; the quality of the Intergroup Services and ultimately Fellowship-Wide Services can only be as good as those choices the individual Groups make. As with the Secretaries, IR candidates should only accept positions for those Groups that they regularly attend (50% of the time). They are the ones who will carry the information back to the Group as to what is going on in our Fellowship on an Intergroup level as well as the World level.

It should be understood that a IR does not require Group approval to vote on matters affecting the Group or S.L.A.A. as a whole, although it is the IR responsibility to vote mindful of the group conscience. (See Concept 3). A good IR is familiar with the S.L.A.A. Conference Service Manual and the Twelve Concepts of Fellowship-Wide Services. If the IR cannot attend, an Alternate should attend. The person elected IR should be trusted with the Group vote. Before accepting a nomination for IR, the nominee must consider the level of commitment as well as the sacrifice of time involved.

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Sees that the Traditions are followed within the Group.
2. Attends all appropriate business meetings.
3. Conducts communication between the Group, Intergroup.
4. Reads/reviews communications from the Intergroup and F.W.S.

ALTERNATE IR: The purpose and responsibility of the Alternate IR is to assist the IR and to assume the responsibilities of the IR when necessary. Suggested requirements and qualifications are the same as those for IR.

Appendix III - A Facilitators Guide for Grievance Resolutions Suggested Group Business Meeting Format

Open with a prayer (Serenity Prayer).

Read the 12 Traditions, followed by: "Traditions are to the group what the steps are to the individual".

Read: "Therefore, no society of men and women ever had a more urgent need for continuous effectiveness and permanent unity. We addicts see that we must work together and hang together, else most of us will finally die alone. The '12 Traditions' of S.L.A.A. are, we S.L.A.A.'s believe, the best answers that our experience has yet given to those ever-urgent questions, 'How can S.L.A.A. best function?' and, 'How can S.L.A.A. best stay whole and so survive?'"

Read Tradition One: (Short Form) Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon S.L.A.A. unity. (Long Form) Each member of S.L.A.A. is but a small part of a great whole. S.L.A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.

Set Parameters for Initial Discussion:

Read Tradition Twelve: (Long Version) "We of S.L.A.A. believe that the principle of anonymity has an immense spiritual significance. It reminds us that we are to place principles before personalities; that we are actually to practice a genuine humility. This to the end that our great blessings may never spoil us; that we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him who presides over us all.

- State the problem or conflict that has arisen
- Ask what steps have been taken so far to solve the problem on a group level. If this is a continuation of a previously tabled discussion, then the minutes of the last meeting ought to be read.
- Open the discussion by allowing members to voice their perspective on the matter.

Remember the Facilitator's role is to:

- Ask clarifying questions
- Reiterate the Twelve Traditions
- Facilitate resolutions from the group —Not to dictate answers
- Listen for finger-pointing, blame, accusations
- Listen for answers and resolutions

After the initial discussion, ask the group:

- To what length are the group members willing to cooperate and come to a consensus on a solution?
- Implement the solution OR table discussion until the next business meeting.

Close with a prayer (Serenity Prayer).

Appendix IV - Case Studies

Case Study One:

An agnostic group, based on group conscience, rewrites Steps 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 11 of S.L.A.A. into their own version?

Step Two: **Came to accept and to understand that we needed strengths beyond our awareness and resources to restore us to sanity.** [Was: Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.]

Step Three: **Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of the S.L.A.A. program.** [Was: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him.]

Step Five: **Admitted to ourselves without reservation, and to another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs.** [Was: Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.]

Step Six: **Were ready to accept help in letting go of all our defects of character.** [Was: Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.]

Step Seven: **Humbly sought to have our shortcomings removed.** [Was: Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.]

Step Eleven: **Sought through mindful inquiry and meditation to improve our spiritual awareness, seeking only for knowledge of our rightful path in life and the power to carry that out.** [Was: Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.]

Clarifying Questions and Answers:

Q: Can this group still be identified as part of S.L.A.A.? If Yes: Explain Why?

Q: Does this group's action affect other groups? If Yes: Should the group be expelled—no longer endorsed by S.L.A.A. at the Intergroup Level and removed from the S.L.A.A. meeting list?

Q: How might the Traditions be used to resolve this schism—both within the group and at the Intergroup Level?

Case Study Two:

A Group is using non-conference approved literature in their meeting.

Suggested Readings:

Clarifying Questions and Answers:

Q: Is it OK for a group to use non-conference approved literature in meetings?

Q: Does non-conference approved literature imply Conference disapproval? If yes? Would that imply that S.L.A.A. has an opinion on outside issues?

Q: Does the group's use of Non-Conference approved literature at their meetings affect S.L.A.A. as a whole? If Yes, How is our common welfare impacted by the use of these materials at S.L.A.A. meetings and events?

Q: How does the use of non-conference approved literature affect Tradition Six: A S.L.A.A. group or S.L.A.A. as a whole ought never endorse, finance, or lend the S.L.A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

Case Study Three:

A member continuously disrupts group meetings with loud abusive and bullying behaviour towards fellow members and newcomers. Membership in the group continues to decline. New people coming to the meeting for the first time often do not return.

Suggested Readings:

A.A. Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, P. 143-144

The elders led Ed aside. They said firmly, "You can't talk like this around here. You'll have to quit it or get out." With great sarcasm Ed came back at them. "Now do tell! Is that so?" He reached over to a bookshelf and took up a sheaf of papers. On top of them lay the foreword to the book "Alcoholics Anonymous," then under preparation. He read aloud, "The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking." Relentlessly, Ed went on, "When you guys wrote that sentence, did you mean it, or didn't you?" Dismayed, the elders looked at one another, for they knew he had them cold. So Ed stayed.

The Twelve Traditions Illustrated

Our brother the noisy drunk affords the simplest illustration of this Tradition (One). If he insists on disrupting the meeting, we "invite" him to leave, and we bring him back when he's in better shape to hear the message. We are putting the "common welfare" first. But it is his welfare, too; if he's ever going to get sober, the group must go on functioning, ready for him.

Clarifying Questions and Answers:

Q: Can a member be thrown out of a group for disrupted, abusive behaviour?

Q: How might the group deal with a member whose conduct is threatening the common welfare of the group?

Case Study Four:

Does the Activity of Fundraising Conflict with Tradition Seven?

Discussion Points:

Fundraising conflicts with the expressed and adopted definition of the phrase "fully self-supporting" from Tradition Seven, which states, "all expenses are to be liquidated by individual contributions". Our founders wished to be very clear. Fundraising activity interferes with our faith that a God of our understanding will direct and provide for our fellowship if we follow traditions. Practicing tradition is our path to a higher power and true unity.

Fundraising activities divert time, resources, intention and focus of individuals and groups from our primary purpose as stated in Tradition Five. Extraordinary time and energy are put into making events "successful" rather than purposeful.

When fundraising generates monies, controversy results concerning "money, property or prestige". The traditions are unequivocal about the danger to unity of these subjects. Prudent reserves may become inflated and committees dependent upon fundraising events are pressured to raise more funds for bigger and better events. This further leads us away from the spiritual focus of our fellowship and our primary purpose as stated in Tradition Five.

Fundraising activities in meetings changes the atmosphere in meetings so necessary to our primary purpose of carrying the message to the newcomer. Intimidating, enthusiastic or manipulative sales behaviors are not supportive of our relationship to the newcomer. Inaccurate impressions of our program and purpose are made to newcomers and non-addict visitors. Some members of our fellowship will only attend some meetings if they can promote fundraising events, a significant diversion from our primary purpose.

Fundraising diminishes individual member's and group's abilities to effect change or voice discontent with any committee by the practice of withholding funds from the "basket" or donations from the group. Committees are often substantially financed by fundraising allowing them to ignore any diminished funding from the "basket". This principle created by our tradition's founders is inherent in the 7th Tradition and is a right granted to individual members.

Fundraising promotes governance rather than service, a clear contradiction expressed in the Tradition Two. Committees may decide on activities supported by fundraising which may have no relation to the collective group conscience. Majority democratic votes are used by committees often to rationalize this behaviour. Democratic votes while useful are not to be confused with, nor are they the equivalent of, the spiritual concept of conscience of the fellowship. Governance of this sort is also justified by the notion that what we are doing is "good" or "necessary", are euphemisms for "the ends justify the means", hardly the most spiritual concept. Governance is organizational self will and blocks the effect of "a loving God as he may express himself in or group conscience", central to the 2nd Tradition.

Fundraising permits the receipt of outside contributions to the funding of our fellowship, precisely prohibited by our 7th Tradition. There is no way to establish membership at the time of sale of goods or services and some activities such as raffles, lotteries, auctions of donated merchandise and resale of outside event tickets skirt legalities and does associate our fellowship with outside enterprises.

Fundraising encourages our membership to miss the underlying spiritual experiences inherent in the phrase "fully self-supporting". Simplicity, faith, generosity and responsibility are for many, necessary experiences required to have changed lives, becoming fully contributing members to our fellowship and to society as a whole.

Various fundraising activities encourage our membership to continue the self-centered behavior of "giving only if there is something in it for me". This does not contain the underlying spiritual principles of generosity, faith, selflessness and "giving freely of what we have found," inherent in the principle of self-support of Tradition Seven.

Social events once designed to promote recovery, fellowship and a sense of belonging, all worthy contributions of fellowship to the goal of unity, have changed from activities designed to celebrate the freedom of recovery to events with the primary purpose of fundraising. This often excludes members from fellowship activities who see fundraising activity contrary to many of the traditions.

For obvious practical requirements and to ensure fullest participation in fellowship events, entire fellowship support is required. This support is simply measured by the willingness of individual member contributions to fund a particular service. No financial support for a particular event or service is one indication of the expression of our collective group conscience. Funding from the fellowship donations helps to avoid the creation of committee events that a particular local Intergroup may not be large enough to support or indeed even desire. Funding of events by fundraising thought to be "good" are not a substitute for informed group conscience, the spiritual essence of Tradition Two and our collective path to a higher power.

Fundraising activities conducted in the group setting change our group to a "business" activity rather than a "spiritual entity". Our founders of the traditions cautioned in the creation of Tradition Five that business and spirituality should not be mixed, that discussions of money should be kept to a minimum, that we embrace the notion of corporate poverty and that we be ever vigilante in matters of money. Beware. They are seldom as emphatic as when discussing the subject of money and the 12 step fellowship.

Q: Is your Group's fundraising efforts taking your fellowship in a different direction?

Q: Does your Intergroup's fundraising efforts circumvent the 'power of the purse'?

Q: If your group withholds contributions from your Intergroup in an effort to exercise its "power of the purse," should our Group's IR communicate that decision with the Intergroup Delegate?

Appendix V - THE TWELVE CONCEPTS of S.L.A.A.

1. Ultimate responsibility and authority for S.L.A.A. world services always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
2. The Annual Business Conference, by delegation, is the voice and conscience for our world services and of S.L.A.A. as a whole.
3. To insure effective leadership, each element of S.L.A.A. - the Conference, the Board of Trustees, staff, and committees - all possess the "Right of Decision."
4. The "Right of Participation" is maintained by allowing members the opportunity to cast one vote up to the level at which they are trusted servants.
5. The "Right of Appeal" prevails so that minority opinion is heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.
6. The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the Board of Trustees.
7. The Articles of Incorporation and the By-Laws of the Fellowship are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. Although the Conference Charter is a legal document; it also relies on tradition and the power of the S.L.A.A. purse for final effectiveness.
8. The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, including their ability to hire staff.
9. Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership must be assumed by the Board of Trustees.
10. Every service responsibility is matched by equal service authority – the scope of this authority is always well defined whether by tradition, by resolution, by specific job description or by appropriate charters and by-laws.
11. The trustees need the best possible committees, staff, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, systems of rotation, and rights and duties are always matters of serious concern.
12. The Conference observes the spirit of S.L.A.A. Tradition,
 - a) taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power;
 - b) that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle;
 - c) that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others;
 - d) that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity;
 - e) that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy;
 - f) that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Fellowship it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

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