

Tradition 6 // Twelve and Twelve Notes

Short Form:

"An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose."

Long Form: 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 to go so far as affiliation or endorsement, actual or implied. An A.A. group can bind itself to no one.

Tradition Six Checklist

From the Grapevine, November 1969

- Should my fellow group members and I go out and raise money to endow several AA beds in our local hospital?
- Is it good for a group to lease a small building?
- Should an A.A. member serve on the national committee on alcoholism as a member of A.A.?
- Some alcoholics will stay around AA only if we have a TV and card room. If this is what is required to carry the message to them, should we have these facilities?
- Is it within tradition to use the fellowship of A.A to raise money for non-A.A. functions and causes?

Questions

1. Does this tradition have parallels with Step 6?
2. Have I gotten side-tracked by religion, philosophy, therapy or other worthy pursuits to the exclusion of my primary purpose in life: to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers?
3. What is the sixth tradition asking us to sacrifice?
4. How have you broken this tradition, or seen it broken?
5. What are some examples of "implied" endorsement in a meeting?

Scenarios

1. Your home group has more than enough money and decides to donate some of it to the various levels of AA service, and some to the Salvation Army and Goodwill stores, as they provide beneficial services for many group members. How do you vote?
2. A non-profit group holds a community event related to Alcoholism and addiction and has requested the local AA groups send one or more people to share their story of recovery. You've been asked to go, what do you do?
3. You work at a recovery facility and are an A.A. member. You take the patients to outside meetings and are responsible for them while there. How does this mesh with this tradition?
4. Your group is deciding on whether to read from the book 'Drop the Rock', a popular twelve-step-friendly recovery book, once a month as the topic. How do you vote?
5. Your home group is voting to read the "24 hours a day" book, published by the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation at each meeting. How do you vote?
6. The tables in the church basement room where you hold your meetings are old and in need of repair. The group is voting to replace the tables. How do you vote?
7. Your home group wants to change its name to "The Monday Night A.A. Group". How do you vote?



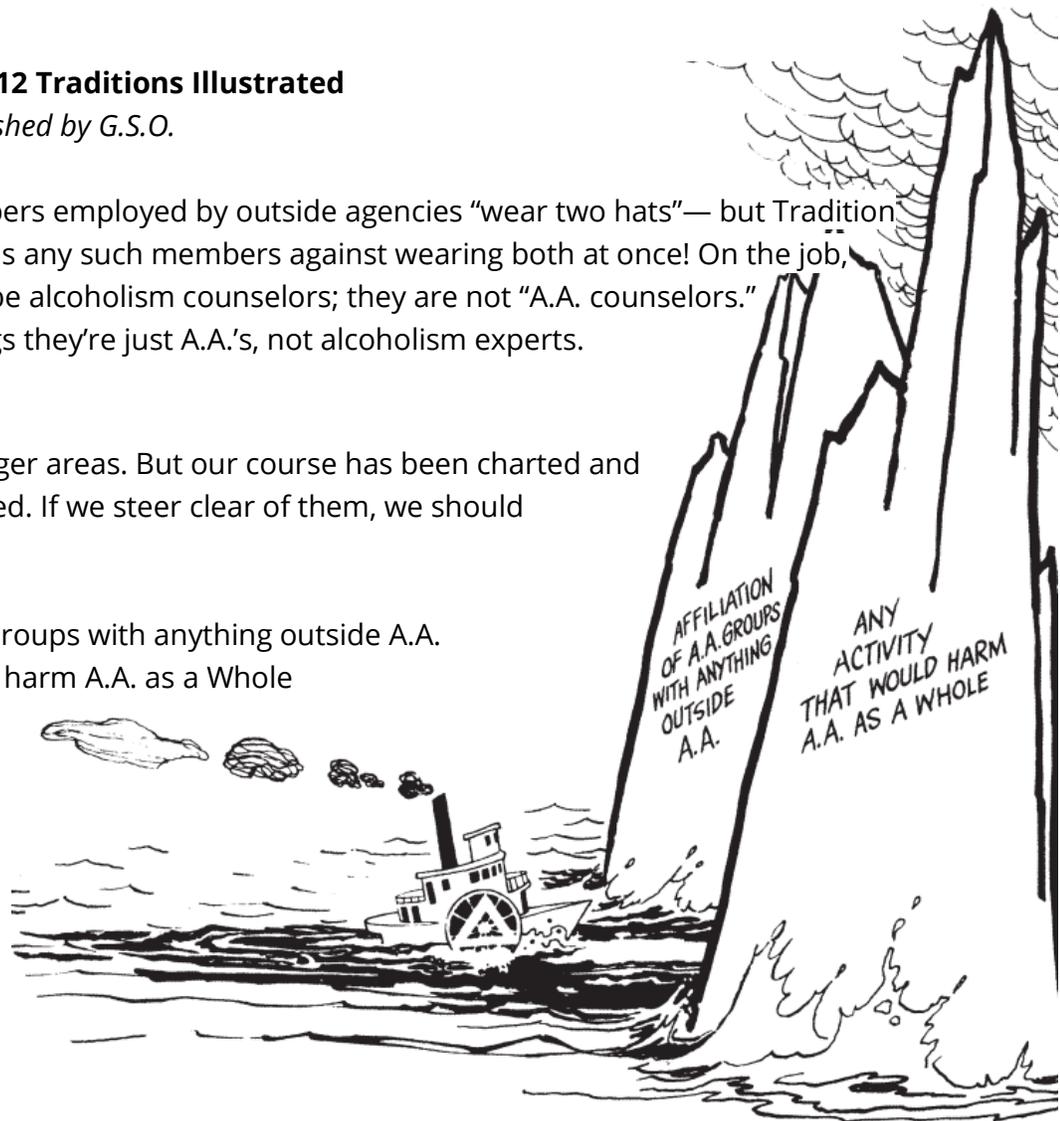
From the 12 Traditions Illustrated

P-43, published by G.S.O.

A.A. members employed by outside agencies "wear two hats"— but Tradition Six cautions any such members against wearing both at once! On the job, they may be alcoholism counselors; they are not "A.A. counselors." At meetings they're just A.A.'s, not alcoholism experts.

There are two major danger areas. But our course has been charted and the hazards clearly marked. If we steer clear of them, we should have smooth sailing.

1. The Affiliation of A.A. Groups with anything outside A.A.
2. Any activity that would harm A.A. as a Whole



Tradition 6 // Twelve and Twelve Notes

From **"AA Comes of Age"** written by Bill W.

"Our Traditions are a guide to better ways of working and living, and they are also an antidote for our various maladies. The Twelve Traditions are to group survival and harmony what AA's Twelve Steps are to each member's sobriety and peace of mind . . .

But the Twelve Traditions also point straight at many of our individual defects. By implication they ask each of us to lay aside pride and resentment. They ask for personal as well as group sacrifice . . . The Traditions guarantee the equality of all members . . . They show how we may best relate ourselves to each other and to the world outside."

Bill W., Grapevine Article, March 1982

Tradition 6: In this Tradition, I began to learn the importance of singleness of purpose, both in AA and in my private life. I came to understand the difference between that which helps and that which hinders. By keeping my AA program simple, I underscored my own way to "Live and Let Live."

Glossary

Bankrupt-idealist one who has gone broke on vain, childish dreams of perfection and power (p156)

Consternation Amazement or horror that confounds the faculties, and incapacitates for reflection; (p156)

Derelict A thing voluntarily abandoned or willfully cast away by its proper owner. (p155)

Meritorious Possessing merit; deserving of reward or honor; worthy of recompense; valuable. (p155)

Neurosis a relatively mild mental illness that is not caused by organic disease, involving symptoms of stress (depression, anxiety, obsessive behavior, hypochondria) but not a radical loss of touch with reality. (p156)

Providence Foresight; care; especially, the foresight and care which God manifests for his creatures; hence, God himself, regarded as exercising a constant wise prescience. (p156)

Glossary definitions taken, when possible from the 1913 Edition of Webster's Dictionary

Tradition 6 // Twelve and Twelve Notes

A.A. Grapevine, May 1948

Editorial by Bill W.

The sixth of our 12 Points of A.A. Tradition is deemed so important that it states at length the relation of the A.A. movement to money and property. Too detailed to print here, this Tradition declares in substance that the accumulation of money, property and the unwanted personal authority so often generated by material wealth comprise a cluster of serious hazards against which an A.A. group must ever be on guard.

Tradition 6 also enjoins the group never to go into business nor ever to lend the A.A. name or money credit to any "outside" enterprise, no matter how good. Strongly expressed is the opinion that even clubs should not bear the A.A. name; that they ought to be separately incorporated and managed by those individual A.A.s who need or want clubs enough to financially support them.

We would thus divide the spiritual from the material, confine the A.A. movement to its sole aim and insure (however wealthy as individuals we may become) that A.A. itself shall always remain poor. We dare not risk the distractions of corporate wealth. Years of experience have proven these principles beyond doubt. They have become certainties, absolute verities for us.

Thank God, we A.A.s have never yet been caught in the kind of religious or political disputes which embroil the world of today. But we ought to face the fact that we have often quarreled violently about money, property and the administration thereof. Money, in quantity, has always been a baleful influence in group life. Let a well-meaning donor present an A.A. group with a sizable sum and we break loose. Nor does trouble abate until that group, as such, somehow disposes of its bank roll. This experience is practically universal. "But," say our friends, "isn't this a confession of weakness? Other organizations do a lot of good with money. Why not A.A.?"

Of course, we of A.A. would be the first to say that many a fine enterprise does a lot of good with a lot of money. To these efforts, money is usually primary; it is their life blood. But money is not the life blood of A.A. With us, it is very secondary. Even in small quantities, it is scarcely more than a necessary nuisance, something we wish we could do without entirely. Why is that so?

We explain this easily enough; we don't need money. The core of our A.A. procedure is "one alcoholic talking to another," whether that be sitting on a curbstone, in a home, or at a meeting. It's the message, not the place; it's the talk, not the alms. That does our work. Just places to meet and talk, that's about all A.A. needs. Beyond these, a few small offices, a few secretaries at their desks, a few dollars apiece a year, easily met by voluntary contributions. Trivial indeed, our expenses!

Nowadays, the A.A. group answers its well-wishers saying, "Our expenses are trifling. As good earners, we can easily pay them. As we neither need nor want money, why risk its hazards? We'd rather stay poor. Thanks just the same!"

Bill W.

The A.A. Grapevine, May, 1948