

## **Tradition 9// Twelve and Twelve Notes**

### **Short Form:**

A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.” 12x12 pg. 172

### **Long Form:**

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 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 overall public relations and they guarantee the integrity of our principle 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. 12x12 pg.191

### **Principle Behind Tradition Nine**

Equality: the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities. "AA as an organization is ultimately guided by the model of a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience ."

### **Connecting with the Big Book**

We had to unify our Fellowship or pass off the scene. As we discovered the principles by which the individual alcoholic 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... that our leaders might serve but not govern; There was to be the least possible organization, even in our service centers. BB pg. XIX

### **Tradition Nine: Group Inventory Questions**

- As a group do we defer to a strong personality or do let the minority opinion be heard?
- As a group do we understand and use “group conscience” as our guide to decision making?
- As a group do we hold our elected officers accountable as they serve, as “trusted servants”, and their actions must reflect our “group conscience”.

- As a group do we understand the GSR “right of decision” as applied to business at the Area Level?
- As a group do we understand the “spirit of rotation” so that one individual(s) does not control the group as the authority or carry the burden of responsibility?

***What is behind Tradition 9? The answer is far simpler than you might think.*** The 12&12 notes that the Ninth Tradition appears to contradict itself. However, the book points out that AA does not conform to usual protocol regarding most organizations which give authority to certain individuals. As per the Second Tradition, we view ourselves as “trusted servants” rather than authority figures. In this manner, our groups do not resemble organizations as we generally define them. When considering AA’s primary purpose, this is important to remember. Alcoholics Anonymous isn’t a traditional group in any sense of the word. This is why AA considers themselves to be a program of suggestion. The Twelve Traditions provide an important foundation. But at the end of the day, these principles can be suggested only, but they cannot be prescribed. AA groups are not in the business of issuing orders. As group members we might accept healthy recommendations, but we do not tolerate mandates. 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, or most of us will die alone and as a fellowship fade from the scene. This extends not only to members, but to all levels of service as well. AA is animated only by the spirit of service—a true fellowship.

***Tradition Nine: Personal Checklist*** <https://www.aagrapevine.org/>

- Do I try to “boss” things in AA?
- Do I ever resist formal aspects of AA because I see them as authoritative?
- Do I try to understand and use all elements of the AA program—even if no one makes me do so—with a sense of personal responsibility?
- Do I exercise patience and humility in any AA job I take?
- Am I aware of all those to whom I am responsible in any AA job?
- Why doesn’t every AA group need a constitution and bylaws?
- Have I learned to step out of an AA job gracefully—and profit thereby—when the time comes?
- What has rotation to do with anonymity? With humility?

**Tradition**

***Glossary*** not needed for this tradition, it is clear and easy read.