

Tradition 1 // Twelve and Twelve Notes

Short Form:

Our common welfare should come first; personal progress depends upon AA unity.

Long Form:

"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." -p189, Twelve Steps + Twelve Traditions

Principle Behind Tradition One

Unity: The A.A. member conforms to the principles of recovery; at first because he must, later because he discovers a way of life he really wants to live.

Connecting with the Big Book

"The feeling of having shared in a common peril is one element in the powerful cement which binds us. But that in itself would never have held us together as we are now joined. The tremendous fact for every one of us is that we have discovered a common solution. We have a way out on which we can absolutely agree, and upon which we can join in brotherly and harmonious" -p17, AA Big Book

Tradition One: Group Inventory Questions

"Some groups take inventory by examining our Twelve Traditions, one at a time, to determine how well they are living up to these principles." -From "The AA Group"

- Related to fostering unity, what more can the group do to carry the message?
- Is the group attracting alcoholics from different backgrounds? Are we seeing a good cross-section of our community?
- Do new members stick with us, or does the turnover seem excessive? If so, does this relate to the first tradition? What can we as a group do?
- Are all members given the opportunity to speak at meetings and to participate in other group activities?
- Does our group put the interests of any individual above the welfare of the group or of AA as a whole?
- Are we doing all we can to provide an attractive meeting place?

The story of Eddie Rickenbacker, p131

Eddie Rickenbacker was an American fighter ace in World War I and Medal of Honor recipient. With 26 aerial victories, he was America's most successful fighter ace in the war. In October 1942 his plane was forced to ditch in the central pacific ocean and he and his 9 crewman floated on rafts without supplies for 24 days. It was only by working together and capturing a seagull, to be used as fishing bait, that most of them survived.

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Tradition One: Personal Checklist

From the Grapevine, November 1969

1. Am I in my group a healing, mending, integrating person, or am I divisive? What about gossip and taking other members' inventories?
2. Am I a peacemaker? Or do I, with pious preludes such as "just for the sake of discussion," plunge into argument?
3. Am I gentle with those who rub me the wrong way, or am I abrasive?
4. Do I make competitive AA remarks, such as comparing one group with another or contrasting AA in one place with AA in another?
5. Do I put down some AA activities as if I were superior for not participating in this or that aspect of AA?
6. Am I informed about AA as a whole? Do I support, in every way I can, AA as a whole, or just the parts I understand and approve of?
7. Am I as considerate of AA members as I want them to be of me?
8. Do I spout platitudes about love while indulging in and secretly justifying behavior that bristles with hostility?
9. Do I go to enough AA meetings or read enough AA literature to really keep in touch?
10. Do I share with AA all of me, the bad and the good, accepting as well as giving the help of fellowship?

Glossary

Abiding lasting a long time; enduring (p131)

Anarchy A state of disorder due to absence or non-recognition of authority or other controlling systems. (p129)

"Anvils of Experience" meaning, created out of our shared experiences (p131)

Compel Force or oblige (someone) to do something (p129)

Clamor A loud and confused noise, especially that of people shouting (p130)

Erratic Not even or regular in pattern or movement; unpredictable. (p130)

Frail Easily damaged or broken; weak. (p131)

Hamlets A small settlement, generally one smaller than a village (p131)

Lavishes Spent or given in profusion (p129)

"Liberty verging on license" meaning, healthy freedom (liberty) turning into an unhealthy lack of any restraint (license) (p130)

Outset The start or beginning of something. (p130)

Stalemated A situation where further progress by opposing parties is impossible. (p130)

Transcend Be or go beyond the range or limits of (p131)

Unity The state of being united or joined as a whole; The state of forming a complete and harmonious whole (p129)