

TRADITION ONE:

“Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity”

1. GOD AND A.A.: Am I still being a loner at A.A. meetings? Do I volunteer to help? Do I stick out my hand? Do I try to help others? Or, do I go just for myself, hide in the corner and go home as soon as possible without contributing anything to meetings or other members? I need to do more than just attend meetings; I need to bring enthusiasm for others to it. How long has it been since I gave my phone number to a newcomer who raised his hand at a meeting? Am I placing our common welfare first at meetings?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a). The Story: Sometimes I go to a meeting with a withdrawn attitude.
- b). What Did I Do Wrong? Self-centered fear of new experiences and laziness.
- c). What Would God Have Me Do The Next Time? Take action by going to a discussion meeting, make myself share, stick my hand out to one person I don't know at the meeting, and give my phone number to a newcomer.

2. RELATIONSHIPS: Am I being a loner in relationships? Do I place the common welfare of the relationship first, or my own needs in the relationship? Do I ask myself what I can contribute to the relationship?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.))

- a). The Story: I give a polite ear but not an involved heart to some topics that are important to my wife.
- b). What Did I Do Wrong? I'm selfish and only interested in myself.
- c). What Would God Have Me Do The Next Time? Pray for a listening ear and an understanding heart and try to be helpful in any way I can to my wife and her concerns.

3. WORK: Do I place the unique service my company offers to its customers first or do I place my advancement in the company first? Do I work to give service or to earn as much money as possible? Do I care about fellow workers or just myself? Do I use money just for myself or to benefit others? Am I being a financial loner?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences)

- a) The Story: I feel disappointed when my company does not make a lot of money.
- b) What Did I Do Wrong?: I am concerned about my welfare, not the message of service my company is carrying to its customers.
- c) What Would God Have Me Do The Next Time?: Pray to be of service to my company and its customers and to be grateful for the opportunity to give service and let God be my financial manager.

TRADITION TWO:

“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.”

Working a step, tradition, or concept to me means that I am willing to take written inventory and allow it to surrender something within me. The second tradition suggests to me that I surrender three old ideas:

1. Have I surrendered my old insane view of God as a vengeful God for a view of Him as a loving God?
2. Do I fear the group conscience since its conclusions might be different from mine? Am I still a loner? Am I willing to trust the group conscience? Do I seek advice from others? Do I trust my sponsor as the voice of a loving God speaking to me through the group conscience?
3. Am I willing to give up my self-centeredness in my relationships with others and be a trusted a servant?

Let us examine these ideas in the area of our relationship with God and A.A., soul-mate relationships, and in work relationships.

1. GOD AND A.A.: Do I trust God by trusting the group? Am I trusted by God and those in A.A.?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: I get bored at most speaker meetings.
- b) What did I do wrong? I listen to be entertained rather than to be instructed.
- c) What would God have me do instead? Listen to the voice of the group conscience in what this particular speaker has to say to me about his life.

2. RELATIONSHIPS: Do I see a loving God in my soul-mate or those whom I love? Do I see a loving God in those I do not love?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: I sometimes have a closed mind when it comes to hearing an opinion from my wife that is contrary to mine.
- b) What did I do wrong? I don't respect her opinion as the expression of a loving God speaking to me through the group conscience.
- c) What would God have me do instead ? As I feel myself turn off to her, I need to pray for a listening ear and an understanding heart.

3. WORK AND OTHER TALENTS: Do I express the spirit of a loving God in the service I give to others?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: I don't respect the authority God gives to others over me.
- b) What did I do wrong? I rebel and only want to be the one in charge.
- c) What would God have me do instead? Respect the authority of those over me as coming from a loving God and pray for an obedient spirit.

TRADITION THREE:
“The only requirement for A.A. membership is the desire to stop drinking”

1. GOD and A.A.: Do I have financial or soul-mate demands on God before I feel I can be happy?

Inventory Example – (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: I feel depressed when I think about my precarious financial situation.
- b) What Did I Do Wrong?: Financial demands make me unhappy in my relationship with God and others.
- c) What Would God Have Me Do Instead The Next Time?: Surrender all of my demands that I might allow gratitude for my sobriety to be the bond between my Maker and myself.

2. RELATIONSHIPS: Do I have demands on my soul-mate before I can be happy with him or her or do I love her or him without reservation?

Inventory Example – (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: Sometimes I think we need to achieve the next goal in our marriage in order to be happy.
- b) What Did I Do Wrong?: I don't accept the marriage as it is right now.
- c) What Would God Have Me Do Instead The Next Time?: Through prayer, become grateful for the joys of today's relationship and stay sober.

3. WORK AND OTHER TALENTS (arts, sports, etc):

Inventory Example – (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: I become discouraged when I don't achieve my work or sports goals.
- b) What Did I Do Wrong?: I view life as a competition and myself as the loser.
- c) What Would God Have Me Do Instead The Next Time?: Pray for a grateful attitude that I can participate in life because of the gift of my sobriety and see setbacks and losses, not from the viewpoint of competition, but as learning experience.

TRADITION FOUR:

“Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.”

HOMEWORK: WRITING INVENTORY – PART ONE

1. GOD AND A.A.: Do I take responsibility for my sobriety and attend meetings and set aside times to be alone with God and write inventory and pray? Do I attend certain meetings to seek approval rather than to make a contribution?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences)

- a) The Story: Sometimes I prefer speaking at larger meetings.
- b) What did I do wrong? I speak for approval rather than solely to carry the message.
- c) What would God have me do instead the next time? Pray to be a tool to the one person I was sent to share with.

2. RELATIONSHIPS: Is my marriage or soul mate relationship autonomous? Do I make decisions for my good or our good? Do I seek my mate’s approval for doing some things I feel I shouldn’t rather than seeking God’s approval?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences)

- a) The Story: Sometimes I won’t go someplace with my wife unless I choose where we go.
- b) What did I do wrong? I don’t surrender for the good of the relationship.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? Pray for the willingness to surrender to my wife’s choices that we may grow closer.

3. WORK AND OTHER TALENTS (arts, sports, etc.): Do I stand on principle at work, or do I make decisions in order to get approval? Do I consult God before I make business (or other) decisions?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences)

- a) The Story: I tend to want to agree with persuasive people rather than take unpopular stands based on principle that I think would please God
- b) What did I do wrong? I am swayed by personalities because I get approval of others when I agree with them.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? Take stands based on principles dictated by my inner voice.

HOMEWORK: WRITING INVENTORY – PART TWO

The other half of the fourth tradition suggests that I not be autonomous affecting others. Let us take inventory on any misuses of our autonomy. Do I fail to consult others when making decisions that affect them?

4. GOD AND A.A.: Do I fail to consult God about decisions? Am I a dictator in A.A.? Do I share with those I sponsor, or do I tell them?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences)

- a) The Story: I find myself saying, “You do this” to those I sponsor.
 - b) What did I do wrong? I am acting like a dictator rather than sharing my experience, strength and hope.
 - c) What would God have be do instead the next time? Pray that I only share my experiences and not my opinions.
5. RELATIONSHIPS: Am I a dictator in relationships, or do I consult my mate about decisions that affect her?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences)

- a) The Story: I sometimes make financial decisions without discussing the situation with my mate.
 - b) What did I do wrong? I act unilaterally rather than seek unanimity in decisions that affect my marriage.
 - c) What would God have me do instead next time? Pray for a trusting attitude and fully discuss the situation with my mate and trust the decision of our group conscience.
6. WORK AND OTHER TALENTS (arts, sports, etc.): Do I consult the opinions of others at work about decisions I must make that affect our common good? Do I consult customers to see how they view my services?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences)

- a) The Story: I tend to run my business life like a dictator.
- b) What did I do wrong? I sometimes don’t consult the people I work with and others about decisions that might affect them.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? Pray to seek the advice of others and try to make decisions based on consensus and become more sensitive to the group conscience.

TRADITION FIVE:

“Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers”

1. GOD AND A.A.: When something is primary in my life I spend time doing it. Am I spending time in prayer that I can use to carry the message?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences)

- a) The Story: I sometimes dislike receiving calls from alcoholics who repeatedly complain about the same things.
- b) What did I do wrong: I get wrapped up in complaining myself instead of taking action.
- c) What would God have me do instead the next time?: Pray for willingness to risk losing the person’s approval by pointing out what happens to me when I constantly complain and to pray for the eternal patience God has shown me.

2. RELATIONSHIPS: Do I treat my loved ones with the same consideration I would give a newcomer. Can I carry a message of spiritual support to the non-alcoholic as well as to the alcoholic?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences)

- a) The Story: I am sometimes more patient with strangers than I am with my family.
- b) What did I do wrong: I don’t always carry a message of love in my own home.
- c) What would God have me do instead the next time?: Pray to be as loving at home as I am with a newcomer and not presume on the tolerance of those who love me.

3. WORK AND OTHER TALENTS (arts, sports, etc.): What kinds of message do I carry at work? Is it self-seeking or am I the servant of all in my attitude?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences)

- a) The Story: I get impatient at work and become too demanding.
- b) What did I do wrong? My motive is self-centered and my attitude is un-loving.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? Pray to carry a message of sobriety at work as I try to do in A.A.

TRADITION SIX:

“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.”

1. GOD AND A.A.: Are my prayers obsessed with money please or do I ask for opportunities to carry the message?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences)

- a) The Story: Thoughts of financial fear sometimes dominate my thinking.
 - b) What did I do wrong: I become concerned with the opinion of the world than the opinion of God and the kingdom about fulfilling my primary purpose.
 - c) What would God have me do instead the next time?: Do what God places in front of me to do a day at a time and concentrate on carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
2. RELATIONSHIPS: Do I seek prestige in a romantic relationship? Do I seek a beautiful woman to feed my ego? Am I a taker? What is the message I carry in my relationship or marriage?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences)

- a) The Story: Sometimes I expect my wife to satisfy my needs and become unhappy if she doesn't.
 - b) What did I do wrong: I take her inventory rather than inventory the message I should be carrying to her.
 - c) What would God have me do instead the next time?: Pray that I center on what I can contribute to our relationship rather than take from it.
3. WORK AND OTHER TALENTS (arts, sports, etc.): What is my message at work? Have I become sidetracked from carrying it by my concern about getting paid more?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences)

- a) The Story: I sometimes accept the world's yardstick about the success of my company and become disappointed if the company is not profitable.

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- b) What did I do wrong? Accept profit as the bottom line rather than carrying the message.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? Pray to stay centered on God's message in my business, not the worlds.

TRADITION SEVEN:
“Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”

1. GOD and A.A.: Do I take spiritual responsibility for myself and work a program or do I coast on meetings and the sobriety c

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: I used to depend on more meetings to make me feel better, rather than work the steps.
- b) What did I do wrong? I was not spiritually responsible for myself since I leaned on others whenever possible.
- c) What would God have me do instead the next time? Face everything that comes up in the day and use prayer and especial inventory and the following steps when I have problems.

2. RELATIONSHIPS: Do I lean on a human relationship in order to feel happy? Am I able to have a happy relationship with God despite the difficulties that might occur in my single or married life?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: When I have a disagreement with someone I care for I let it make me unhappy in all my relationships.
- b) What did I do wrong? I'm not spiritually responsible for my emotions or moods.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? Pray that I speak the truth in a loving manner and live in a loving attitude rather than the ups and downs of my emotions.

3. WORK AND OTHER TALENTS (arts, sports, etc.): Do I think that the world owes me a living? Does the world owe me happiness? Do I go to the other extreme and demand security? Am I greedy?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: I thought that now I'm sober I can really earn the money and become wealthy.
- b) What did I do wrong?: I realize that I am greedy and more concerned about my security than I am about my primary purpose carrying the message to the sick and suffering alcoholic.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time?: Father, I now humbly ask you to remove my grandiose dreams and give me a spirit of poverty and selflessness in regard to money for the sake of my sobriety.

TRADITION EIGHT:

“Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special Workers.”

- 1) GOD and A.A.: (First half of the eighth tradition): What is the state of my zeal in carrying the message and in my prayer life?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: Sometimes I approach writing nightly inventory with dread.
- b) What did I do wrong? I am lazy and I project the effort it is going to take to face myself in writing.
- c) What would God have me do instead the next time? Pray for “zeal” and surrender to a zealous spirit and write my inventory a sentence at a time.

- 2) GOD AND A.A.: (Second half of the eighth tradition): Have we criticized A.A. members for being alcoholic counselors or been silent while others criticize such members?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: I let others criticize A.A. members for being alcoholic counselors without lovingly disagreeing.
- b) What did I do wrong? I was too lazy to research the question and afraid to disagree with such people who are generally determined.
- c) What would God have me do instead the next time? Pray for guidance in the principles of the traditions and pray for courage to state these principles in a loving way.

- 3) HOME: What is the state of my zeal in my love relationships? Do I surrender with enthusiasm or reluctance?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: Sometimes I reluctantly agree to go someplace my wife wants to go.
- b) What did I do wrong? My negativity takes joy out of the occasion.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? Pray for a zealous spirit of surrender so that my mate doesn't know I surrendered.

- 4) WORK AND OTHER TALENTS (arts, sports, etc.): Would my fellow workers characterize me as a zealous worker? Have others told me to improve my attitude at work?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: There are some tasks I do at work with the greatest reluctance.
- b) What did I do wrong? When faced with a difficulty, I think I am supposed to solve it, so I don't pray.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? Pray for a zealous spirit especially when faced with tough assignments.

TRADITION NINE:

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

1. GOD and A.A.: Am I willing to surrender my concept of human order God’s divine order?

Inventory Example – (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: Although I don’t say no to an A.A. request I too often have a negative reaction to other requests that are not convenient for me.
- b) What did I do wrong? I control my time too rigidly.
- c) What would God have me do instead the next time? Pray to be more open to hear his voice when others request my help.

2. HOME: Am I willing to respect my neighbors pace and sense of divine order?

Inventory Example – (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: When things aren’t just so at home, I get disturbed.
- b) What did I do wrong? I expect my wife to conform to my ideas and order without delay.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? Pray to release to her sense of divine order at her own divine pace.

3. WORK AND OTHER TALENTS (arts, sports, etc.): Will I surrender old rigid ideas and accept new spontaneous ones? Will I stop trying to organize fellow workers into my idea of their order?

Inventory Example – (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: I hung on to my old ideas of business solutions because I was afraid to risk my financial welfare behind a new idea.
- b) What did I do wrong? I tried to control my business with an idea.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? Dedicate my business to service and surrender to the divine order of God’s financial plan, whatever the risk!

TRADITION TEN:

“Alcoholics Anonymous has not opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.”

1. GOD and A.A. Do I gossip about other A.A. members? Do I like to listen to others gossip? Do I get high on controversy? Do I avoid taking my own nightly written inventory? Do I pray to be a peacemaker?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: I am usually silent when someone gossips to me about another A.A. member's lack of a program.
- b) What did I do wrong? By my silence, I encourage gossip.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? Pray to be a peacemaker and next time state that this person is doing the best they know to do, just as we are.

2. HOME: Do I criticize other members of my family? Am I constantly taking my mate's inventory? Do I love with the attitude of a peacemaker?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: I find that critical thoughts occur first to me in the morning about my wife when she is not ready to handle problems.
- b) What did I do wrong? Pray before I speak.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? Pray to say loving thoughts and express my needs as a request and not as a criticism.

3. WORK AND OTHER TALENTS (arts, sports, etc.): Do I judge those in business who disagree with me? Do I avoid seeking justice and giving justice under the guise of avoiding “outside issues”? Am I a competitor or a peacemaker with my fellow workers, customers and other companies?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences)

- a) The Story: When I brought suit on a business matter of justice, I really only wanted justice for me, and I condemned the motives of those who disagreed with me.
- b) What did I do wrong? I judged those I sued, took their inventory and behaved in a controversial manner.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? Pray for justice for all concerned, stick to principles, love my enemies and remember that it is God’s fight, not mine!

TRADITION ELEVEN:

“Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.”

1. GOD and A.A.: Are my prayers attractive to God or manipulative? Am I carrying the message in A.A. without taking credit for the good I might do?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: The theme of too many of my prayers is for material happiness.
- b) What did I do wrong? Burden God with money requests rather than offering service.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? Pray for more essential needs such as sobriety and service.

2. HOME: Do I take loving actions to help my mate without taking credit? Do I practice loving restraint in heated conversations and say nothing of my prayers for self-control?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: When I do something selfless, I think I should receive a reward.
- b) What did I do wrong? Base my self-esteem on the applause or lack of it from the world.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? Pray for a selfless spirit in the giving I do.

3. WORK AND OTHER TALENTS (ART, SPORTS, ETC.)

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: I once acted as if I had to command obedience from those who worked for me.
- b) What Did I Do Wrong?: I commanded instead of requesting, and was not an example.
- c) What Would God Have Me Do Instead Next Time?: Pray to be a source of attraction to my employees by leading through being an example of service.

TRADITION TWELVE:

“Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.”

1. GOD AND A.A.: Do I place principles first in my prayer life, or do I pray only when convenient or in great need?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: I tried to get along doing the minimum in my relationship with God by not taking written nightly inventory and doing daily prayer and meditation.
- b) What did I do wrong? Tried the easier softer way.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? After I discovered the benefits of working a rigorous program, I have no problem writing inventory every night and making time for prayer and meditation each morning.

2. HOME: Will I interrupt pleasures such as watching TV or other activities in order to be helpful and not say a word of complaint? How well do I handle telephone interruptions? Do I think of what I can do to ease my mate’s burden, or do I only think of what my mate can do for me?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: I dislike receiving telephone calls when I am working.
- b) What did I do wrong? I thought of a call as an interruption to my concentration rather than an opportunity to be helpful.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? Pray for a helpful spirit and to remember that it is God who is calling, since He permitted the call to happen.

3. WORK AND OTHER TALENTS (arts, sports, etc.): Can I try to listen to the principles behind the words of a fellow worker especially when they disagree with me? Can I begin to see myself and business actions in terms of principles rather than likes or dislikes?

INVENTORY EXAMPLE - (Try to condense to three sentences.)

- a) The Story: I get very involved in my assessment of myself in my actions in the business world.
- b) What did I do wrong? I placed my personality before principles.
- c) What would God have me do instead next time? Ask myself how would God assess my situation and pray to act on those principles.