



TRADITION 7



*First
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Short Form:

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



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Long Form:

“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.”. An A.A. group can bind itself to no one.”



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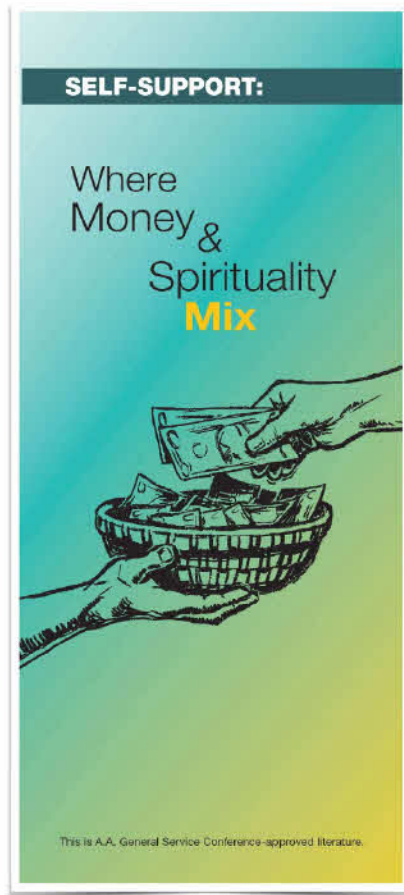
Overriding Idea of This Tradition:

Spirituality and Money DO Mix

Spiritual Principle of This Tradition:

RESPONSIBILITY

SUMMARY



Download A.A. pamphlet:

**“Where Money & Spirituality
Mix”**



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SUMMARY

SELF-SUPPORT:

Where
Money &
Spirituality
Mix



This is A.A. General Service Conference-approved literature.

“Self-support begins with me, because I am part of us — the group. We pay our rent and utility bills, buy coffee, snacks and A.A. literature. We support our central office, our area committee, and our General Service Board. If it were not for those entities, many new people would never discover the miracles of A.A.”



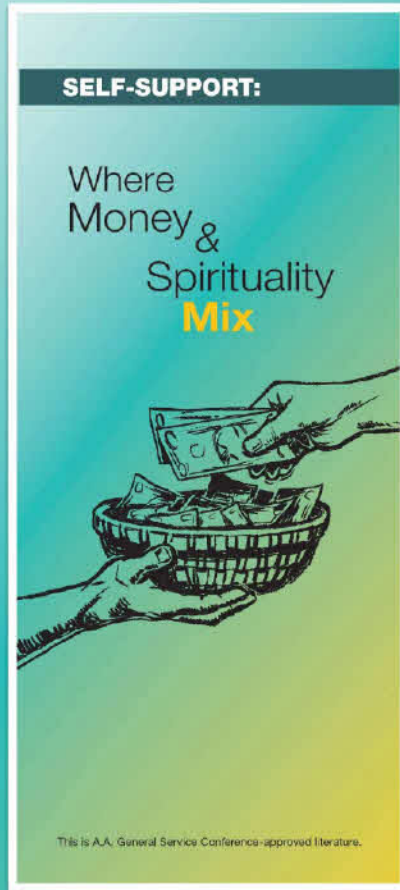
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SUMMARY



"While the Fellowship has always faced problems of money, property and prestige in one form or another, through the wisdom of the Seventh Tradition we have never been diverted from our primary purpose of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers — wherever he or she may be. This is the fundamental work of Alcoholics Anonymous, and to ensure that the hand of A.A. will always remain outstretched, money and spirituality must continue to mix. And for that, we are all responsible."



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THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEART

Bill W.'s
Grapevine Writings

Large Print Edition

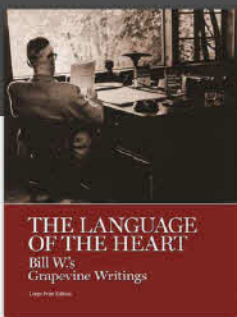
LANGUAGE OF THE HEART

Tradition Seven June 1948

Our growth continuing, the combined income of Alcoholics Anonymous members will soon reach the astounding total of a quarter of a billion dollars yearly. This is the direct result of AA membership. Sober we now have it; drunk we would not.

By contrast, our overall AA expenses are trifling.

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Tradition Seven June 1948

For instance, the AA General Service Office now costs us \$1.50 per member a year. As a fact, the New York office asks the groups for this sum twice a year because not all of them contribute. Even so, the sum per member is exceedingly small. If an AA happens to live in a large metropolitan center where an intergroup office is absolutely essential to handle heavy inquiries and hospital arrangements, he contributes (or probably should contribute) about \$5.00 annually. To pay the rent of his own group meeting place, and maybe coffee and doughnuts, he might drop \$25.00 a year in the hat. Or if he belongs to a club, it could be \$50.00. In case he takes the AA Grapevine, he squanders an extra \$2.50!

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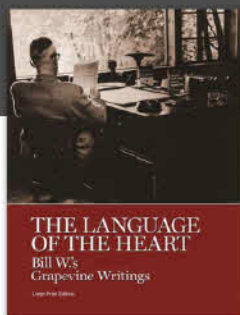


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So the AA member who really meets his group responsibilities finds himself liable for about \$5.00 a month on the average. Yet his own personal income may be anywhere between \$200 and \$2,000 a month—the direct result of not drinking.

“But,” some will contend, “our friends want to give us money to furnish that new clubhouse. We are a new small group. Most of us are still pretty broke. What then?”

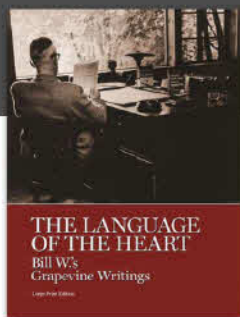


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I am sure that myriads of AA voices would now answer the new group saying; "Yes, we know just how you feel. We once solicited money ourselves. We even solicited publicly. We thought we could do a lot of good with other peoples' money. But we found that kind of money too hot to handle. It aroused unbelievable controversy. It simply wasn't worth it. Besides, it set a precedent which has tempted many people to use the valuable name of Alcoholics Anonymous for other than AA purposes. While there may be little harm in a small friendly loan which your group really means to repay, we really beg you to think hard before you ask the most willing friend to make a large donation.

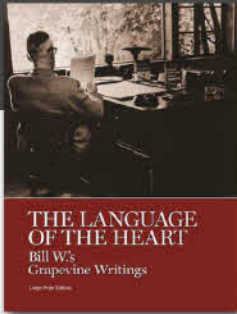


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You can, and you soon will, pay your own way. For each of you these overhead expenses will never amount to more than the price of one bottle of good whiskey a month.

You will be everlastingly thankful if you pay this small obligation yourselves.

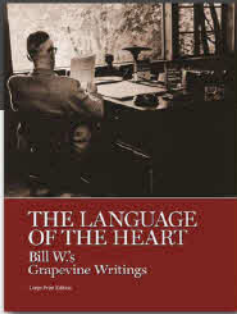


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When reflecting on these things, why should not each of us tell himself: "Yes, we AAs were once a burden on everybody. We were 'takers.'"

Now that we are sober, and by the grace of God have become responsible citizens of the world, why shouldn't we now about-face and become 'thankful givers'! Yes, it is high time we did!"



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Short Form:

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



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Long Form:

“Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional. We define professionalism as the occupation of counseling 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. Twelfth Step work is never to be paid for.”



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Overriding Idea of This Tradition:

**Paid Staff Help Make 12 Step Work
Possible**

Spiritual Principle of This Tradition:

NON-PROFESSIONAL

SUMMARY

Paid Staff Help Make 12 Step Work Possible

The eighth tradition makes it clear that A.A. may employ professional secretaries and other professional staff members. Their job is not to DO Twelve Step work; but to make Twelve Step work possible. “Our Twelfth Step is never paid for, but those who labor in service for us are worthy of their hire.” (12×12, Page 171)



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SUMMARY

Paid Staff Help Make 12 Step Work Possible

There is a difference between doing twelve step work for pay and working for a master's degree as a counselor in the field of alcoholism and being of service in a hospital where more and more newcomers first find sobriety.

Professional counselors do their counseling job and THEN go to A.A. meetings and carry the message "for free and for fun" just like the rest of us. Their job is not a substitute for working an A.A. program.



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SUMMARY

Paid Staff Help Make 12 Step Work Possible

We must always remember that we cannot do the work of carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic if we don't have people in our various service centers assisting us in the logistics of US carrying out our primary purpose.

We see that our few paid workers are performing only those service tasks that our volunteers cannot consistently handle. Primarily these folks are not doing Twelfth Step work. They are just making more and better Twelfth Step work possible.



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LANGUAGE OF THE HEART

Tradition Eight July 1948

Throughout the world AAs are twelfth-stepping with thousands of new prospects a month. Between one and two thousand of these stick on our first presentation; past experience shows that most of the remainder will come back to us later on.

Almost entirely unorganized, and completely nonprofessional, this mighty spiritual current is now flowing from alcoholics who are well to those who are sick. One alcoholic talking to another; that's all.

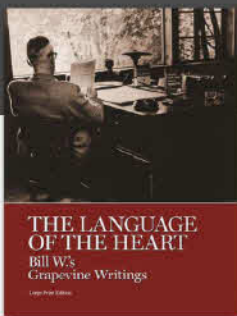


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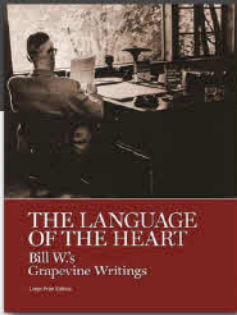


LANGUAGE OF THE HEART

Tradition Eight July 1948

Could this vast and vital face-to-face effort ever be professionalized or even organized? Most emphatically, it could not. The few efforts to professionalize straight Twelfth Step work have always failed quickly. Today, no AA will tolerate the idea of paid “AA therapists” or “organizers.” Nor does any AA like to be told just how he must handle that new prospect of his. No, this great life-giving stream can never be dammed up by paid do-gooders or professionals.

Alcoholics Anonymous is never going to cut its own lifelines. To a man, we are sure of that.



LANGUAGE OF THE HEART

Tradition Eight July 1948

But what about those who serve us full time in other capacities—are cooks, caretakers, and paid intergroup secretaries “AA professionals”?

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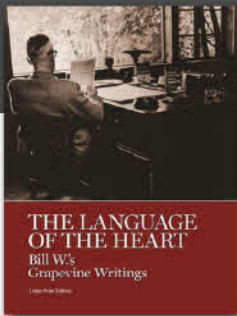


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Tradition Eight July 1948

Because our thinking about these people is still unclear, we often feel and act as though they were such. The impression of professionalism subtly attaches to them, so we frequently hear they are “making money out of AA” or that they are “professionalizing” AA.

Seemingly, if they do take our AA dollars they don't quite belong with us AAs anymore. We sometimes go further; we underpay them on the theory they ought to be glad to “cook” for AA cheap.

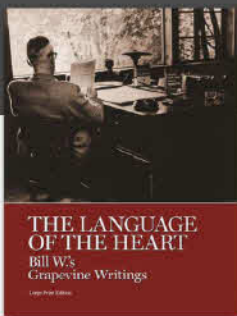


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Tradition Eight July 1948

Now isn't this carrying our fears of professionalism rather far? If these fears ever got too strong, none but a saint or an incompetent could work for Alcoholics Anonymous.

Our supply of saints being quite small, we would certainly wind up with less competent workers than we need.

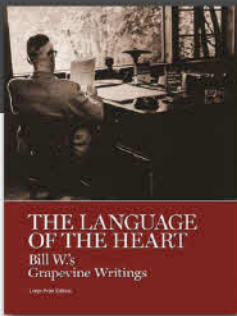


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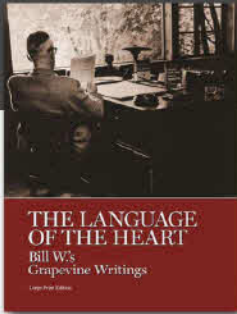


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Tradition Eight July 1948

We are beginning to see that our few paid workers are performing only those service tasks that our volunteers cannot consistently handle. Primarily these folks are not doing Twelfth Step work. They are just making more and better Twelfth Step work possible. Secretaries at their desks are valuable points of contact, information, and public relations.

That is what they are paid for, and nothing else. They help carry the good news of AA to the outside world and bring our prospects face to face with us. That's not "AA therapy"; it's just a lot of very necessary but often thankless work.



LANGUAGE OF THE HEART

Tradition Eight July 1948

So, where needed, let's revise our attitude toward those who labor at our special services.

Let us treat them as AA associates, and not as hired help; let's recompense them fairly and, above all, let's absolve them from the label of professionalism.

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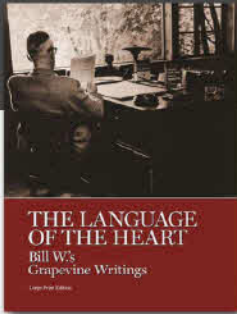


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Tradition Eight July 1948

Let us also distinguish clearly between “organizing the AA movement” and setting up, in a reasonably businesslike manner, its few essential services of contact and propagation. Once we do that, all will be well. The million or so fellow alcoholics who are still sick will then continue to get the break we sixty thousand AAs have already had.

Let's give our “service desks” the hand they so well deserve.



What's the most important thing I need to know about A.A.'s Tradition 8

What It Means:

At its core, Tradition Eight protects the spiritual foundation of A.A. by ensuring that 12th Step work—carrying the message to another alcoholic—is always freely given, never paid for. Sponsorship, meetings, and support must remain acts of love and service, not commerce or career.

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What's the most important thing I need to know about A.A.'s Tradition 8

Why It Matters:

A.A. is a fellowship, not a profession. Members help each other based on shared experience, not credentials.

This tradition preserves humility—no one is seen as an expert or authority over another alcoholic.

However, A.A. can hire workers (like office staff, bookkeepers, or janitors) to perform practical tasks necessary to operate A.A. service structures. These are non-12th Step roles and ensure the organization functions smoothly.

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What's the most important thing I need to know about A.A.'s Tradition 8

In A Nutshell:

The message is free; the mechanics may be paid.

Tradition Eight keeps A.A. focused on service, not profit, so the heart of recovery remains one alcoholic helping another—freely, with love and purpose.

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