

Each chapter contains

Guiding Principles: The Spirit of Our Traditions

Unity changes us. When we rise above our differences we start to understand who we are, how we fit, and how much we have to offer the world. The degradation of addiction robs us of self-respect. The care and respect we show each other in Narcotics Anonymous reminds us of our own value and humanity. The experience of unity restores us to dignity.

Our willingness to come together in unity and anonymity means we recognize that each of us matters. The Basic Text tells us in Step Eight, "We want to look the world in the eye with neither aggressiveness nor fear." Then, in Chapter Nine, the Basic Text mentions, "We no longer need to make fools of ourselves by standing up for nonexistent virtues." These passages describe freedom from animosity. When we feel dignity, we are not turned by a passing breeze, and we no longer need to defend ourselves from every shadow.

We often say "our unity is our strength," and it's true for us both as individuals and as a Fellowship: We draw personal strength from NA unity. We know that today we don't have to go it alone. We walk together on this path, and the addict yet to come will follow in our footsteps. We draw strength, courage, and honor from being part of something so much greater than ourselves.

*NA unity is our bond with fellow addicts:
those who came before us, those who are
here today, and those who have yet to find us.
Our practice of unity makes room for
all addicts to recover in NA.*

introduction

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WORD BY WORD

Define, expand on, or clarify the words or phrases from this Tradition, one at a time or in relation to each other, for writing or discussion with your sponsor or other NA members.

Example: welfare

Welfare is a word that's used more than it's understood. *Welfare* typically refers to our health, comfort, and well-being. Many definitions of this word also mention safety and happiness. When Tradition One suggests that our common welfare should come first, it's telling us that the well-being of the group should be more important than the desires of the individual. Together, as a Fellowship, we all share a common responsibility for each other and for the Fellowship that makes our personal recovery possible.



SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES

Each Tradition embodies a variety of spiritual principles. The list of principles and values below may be useful as we consider applications of this Tradition. Explore them in writing or discussion with your sponsor or other NA members. If other principles or values not listed below seem relevant for you, include those as well.

- | | | | |
|---------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| *unity | *surrender | *acceptance | *commitment |
| *selflessness | *love | *anonymity | *safety |
| *hospitality | *empathy | *goodwill | |

Example: unity

When we experience unity with the group, we call it commitment. When we experience unity within ourselves, we call it integrity. Of course, this doesn't come automatically. Each example of unity begins with surrender. Personal recovery begins with surrender to the First Step; surrender to the First Tradition brings us to understand that we are part of something much greater than ourselves.

The atmosphere of recovery that helps us welcome newcomers is made possible through unity. When we are in conflict with each other, when a meeting is full of tension or bitterness, it doesn't matter what we say: A message of hope won't get through. On the other hand, unity is a message in itself. When we walk into our first meeting and see addicts coming together in unity, the spirit touches us even before the words get through.

introductory exercises

For Members

Tradition One asks us to shift our perspective. For the first time, "we" comes before "me." To let go. We are a part of something greater than ourselves. There is a balance of principles or the desire for us to the learn through members at

For Groups

NA is a program of attraction, and unity is attractive. We feel unity in a group when we receive the understanding we haven't expected. It gives us hope in the group's

- The group meetings and carry the message. Serving, sharing, and fellowship are not the only membership responsibilities. We take responsibility to make sure the group is safe and healthy. When we are clear and a source and requirement for the message of NA, we cannot expect a first walk in a helpful. The understanding is more powerful than just looking for us, the message tools we have empathy, patience, and understanding.
8. In what ways does this group contribute to NA unity locally and beyond? Is there anything we're doing that may be disunifying?
 9. Are we in communication with our local service bodies? How can we help to improve the flow of information? Do our members participate in service, and communicate to the group about what's going on?
 10. How does this Tradition help us understand anonymity? How does anonymity help us understand this Tradition? How do we practice anonymity in terms of this Tradition?
 11. Discuss any bridges between this Tradition and other Traditions. What do these bridges teach us about our group?
 12. What more can we do to bring the principles of this Tradition into our group efforts? What could we do differently to better fulfill our primary purpose?

In Service

When we come together in service, we connect with each other in a vital way. Most of us feel better when we are productive, and doing something together that helps addicts stay clean gives us a sense of belonging. The friendships we develop in service are unlike any in our lives—not because they are always easy or pleasant, but because we work hard, walk through struggles, and solve problems together. In contributing to our common welfare, we find meaning and joy. In creative action we find love and purpose.

Our vision statement includes the hope that every addict will be able to hear the message and that every member has the chance to "experience spiritual growth and fulfillment through service." We experience unity in service when we see our work as part of a greater whole, in service to our primary purpose, and connected to our personal recovery. In whatever way we serve, our vision must be at the center. We can be so focused on our task that we neglect to reach out to members who might be willing or interested. Vision is important, and we must constantly adjust our focus—zooming in on the task at hand, and pulling back to see how it fits in the larger frame.

Our experience, strength, and hope is our message. We share how NA works in our lives. When we're just going through the motions, we can feel it—and so can the newcomer. A hospital and institutions (HAI) panel leader

main sections

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Each group has but one primary purpose— to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

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integrity	responsibility	unity	anonymity	commitment
empathy	service	purpose	open-mindedness	surrender
fidelity	consistency	vigilance	passion	compassion
security	hope			

Example: consistency

Consistency is a spiritual principle that keeps us doing what we do. It begins with the refrain, “Keep coming back!” Coming to meetings regularly helps us stay clean, and it also carries a message of hope: We keep coming back because it works. The group depends on its members, and members depend on the group being true to its purpose. Showing up consistently, sharing honestly, and treating others with respect all further our primary purpose. A consistent message is powerful. When our actions and message are clear and consistent, our groups cannot fail.