

Fill in the relationship or area you are currently working on.



## Twelve Traditions Inventory

### *Al Kohallek Goes High-Stepping*

#### Twelve Traditions Inventory Introduction

AA. gives us thirty-six Principles which, when practiced in all our affairs as a way of life, will enrich our lives far beyond our fondest dreams. These thirty-six Principles are grouped into three sets of twelve each. The Twelve Steps of Recovery awaken us to a Higher Power, a higher self with the ability to both give and receive love. The Twelve Concepts of Service are guidelines and tools for our passing on this love through Service. The Twelve Traditions teach us how to relate lovingly to others, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

The purpose of this Traditions Inventory is to learn how we may better practice the Principles of the Twelve Traditions in all areas of our daily lives. Although the Traditions inventory on the following pages could be used on its own, it is suggested that you use this inventory as part of/in combination with Step Four of the Twelve Steps.

**ACTION** - You are asked to respond to the following questions as they relate to your *Relationship(s)* in a major area of your life, such as the group you attend, your family, lovers, friends, or business. The word *Relationship* is used in the following questions to denote all your *relationships* of two or more. Our goal here is to get a better insight and understanding as to how we relate to God, others and ourselves.

**ACTION** - *Choose one important Relationship* to work on at a time. Work the first three Steps, using this workbook, and staying focused on that one *Relationship*. After you have completed those Steps, answer the following questions using the Traditions as they may apply to this *Relationship*. After you have completed this Fourth Step Traditions Workshop, continue working Steps Five through Twelve on this same *Relationship* again using this Workbook.

**ACTION** - An outline of the "how to" use the following Traditions Inventory.

1. Respond to each of the questions. (Some of the questions may seem not to apply to the relationship you are currently working on but try to respond anyway. You could get a whole new understanding.)
2. Stay focused on the relationship you are currently working on. (However some unrelated idea comes to mind, try to keep an open-mind it maybe showing you a connection.)
3. Keep your response simple, brief and to the point. If you need additional space use the back of a facing page or a separate sheet of paper. Put the number of the question you are responding to.
4. Keep the basic Format For A Step Four Inventory handy. When you have responded to a question or statement which causes you to have a strong response, positive or negative, go back to the List Boxes. In other words you will realize some of your Asset, Resentment, perhaps what your Part was and what was Affected, Forgiveness problems, Fears, Harms done to yourself or others. Most importantly you are likely to uncover some of your habits of thoughts and feelings, your personal "reality". These will be found in My Patterns List Boxes.
5. After the end of each of the Tradition Questions you will find an affirmation for that Tradition. Write out how you may apply this affirmation to the relationship.
6. All the above actions will cause you to be ready and willing for the remaining Steps.

Fill in the relationship or area you are currently working on.	
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**TRADITION ONE: OUR COMMON WELFARE SHOULD COME FIRST; PERSONAL RECOVERY DEPENDS UPON AA UNITY.**

*The willingness to forgive is the key to all healing of relationships!* "So at the outset, how to live and work together as groups became the prime question." (Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions - Reprinted with permission) We were created in such a way that we must share our individual lives. We may choose to share selfishly, in the illusion of separateness or choose to be closer to our true nature. God is love and so are we. Our fulfillment in this life depends on the maintenance of our spiritual condition.

This Tradition goes to the root of the human problem - selfishness/self-centeredness. Unity/love is the solution of the human problem. In a long-term relationship we may find it useful to view this relationship as a third party - that is we may have to do something for the common welfare of our relationship when we are unwilling to do the same for the individuals in this relationship(s). This act will insure continuance when all else fails. There can be little or no recovery without unity.

1. List examples where your selfishness or self-centeredness got in the way of unity, love, or "our common welfare."

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2. List examples where your selflessness brought about unity, love, healing, or harmony.

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3. Are you a peacemaker without being an enabler? List examples in each area.

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4. Is there a type of personality you find yourself unable to open up around? That you tend to withdraw from or remain silent or you become aggressive toward?

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5. What are your strong points and what are your weak points in your communications?

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**Affirmation for Tradition One -- Let me remember that my fulfillment, love, joy and forgiveness come through my sharing and joining with others in our common welfare.**

**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.**

The meaning of the phrase "group conscience" is very important to our understanding of these Traditions. One definition of a group is a number of persons gathered or classified. A definition for conscience: a sense of right and wrong. "We are people who normally would not mix...the tremendous fact for every one of us is that we have discovered a common solution." This solution, this Program, this Higher Power is how we understand Him. (Alcoholics Anonymous page 17 - Reprinted with permission)

Each one of us is drawn to a group (relationship). If we stay in that group (relationship), we must have in common a general agreement of what we think is right and

wrong (conscience). How our Higher Power may express Himself to one group may be a good deal different from other groups. In other words, we are no more nor less than part of a Greater Whole; however, we are not the whole, nor were we intended to be.

"As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show, humbly saying to ourselves many times each day, Thy will be done." (Alcoholics Anonymous page 87 - Reprinted with permission)

Fill in the relationship or area you are currently working on.

1. What attracted you to this relationship?

2. Who or what is the ultimate authority in this relationship?

3. What is a successful or useful relationship of this type?

4. In what ways do you see/feel your relationship failing?

5. In what areas are you still a selfish user of people, places or things?

6. Do you feel/think you or others must control or govern, otherwise nothing gets done?

**Affirmation for Tradition Two - Let me remember that God, as we understand Him, is our only True Source, that we are His children, His agents, His individual expressions, and that we have come together for His purpose. Even now He is guiding and directing us.**

**TRADITION THREE: THE ONLY REQUIREMENT FOR AA MEMBERSHIP IS A DESIRE TO STOP DRINKING.**

The principle found in this Tradition is one of the basic laws of all successful relationships with God, with people, places, or things. It is so very simple we often miss it. We must first want the relationship. When we want a relationship enough, we will find every way we can to make it work. When we no longer want the relationship enough, we will find every reason for it not to work. Your motive only matters at the time you have that "want". As any relationship with God, with people,

places, or things progresses our motive may change from day to day, hour to hour, maybe moment to moment. Our Higher Power or Higher Self only needs our willingness to want to open the door. An honest motive is not likely at first; it is useful not to judge the motive. It is enough to *want* to do whatever it takes. There will always be a great many who need something far more than we do; however they must want to change before the healing can begin.

1. When and with whom have you been willing to do "whatever it takes" to make "it" work?

2. When you no longer wanted the relationship enough, did you find every reason for it not to work?

3. Do you tend to get stuck with your or someone else's motive? Give examples.

4. What qualifying information do you seek entering into a relationship such as this?

Fill in the relationship or area you are currently working on.	
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5. One person cannot make a relationship successful alone and unaided. Both must want the relationship even if it is for different motives. Can you give examples when there was a mutual desire to make it work and when this mutual desire was not present?

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**Affirmation for Tradition Three - Let me remember that out of enlightened self-interest I want and I choose to share all I can with whomever He brings.**

**TRADITION FOUR: EACH GROUP SHOULD BE AUTONOMOUS EXCEPT IN MATTERS AFFECTING OTHER GROUPS OR AA AS A WHOLE.**

Each of us has been drawn to each other for some common purpose, conscious or unconscious. This Tradition gives us the freedom to express our individual part in this common purpose. Every relationship to some degree must be self-governed; however some gave up that right when they became irresponsible. We became "children of chaos". We can, with some limitations do as we please until that doing takes away from another. When we are ego - driven, fear - driven, selfish, self - centered

we may claim a right to govern the world. Part of the healing or growing process has to do with regaining that privilege of being self-governing. This whole process of the changing of responsibility is often painful when the change is resisted.

When we let that which is outside our relationship govern this relationship, we are setting ourselves up for failure. We must be free inside this relationship to choose.

1. Do you insist that there is only your way or the highway?

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2. In what way does your relationship sharing its ideas, taking action or inaction affect those outside of your circle? Positively? Negatively?

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3. Do you put down the behavior of others when it is different from yours, or do you learn from it?

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4. How can you be self-governed and still preserve overall unity?

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5. What is the difference between autonomy, self-centeredness or license?

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**Affirmation for Tradition Four - Let me remember that the one(s) I am sharing with and myself must come to our own decisions or agreements but not at anyone else's expense.**

**TRADITION FIVE: EACH GROUP HAS BUT ONE PRIMARY PURPOSE - TO CARRY ITS MESSAGE TO THE ALCOHOLIC WHO STILL SUFFERS.**

"Better [to] do one thing supremely well than many badly. That is the central theme of this Tradition." (Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions - Reprinted with permission) The primary purpose of the relationship and how this message is carried is very important to our understanding of this Tradition. Whatever brought each member to this group, business, or personal relationship,

to a large extent, will determine just what the message is, as well as to whom his or her message is to be shared. When we have experienced healing in any area, it is our **privilege** to share that healing with those who "still suffer". The more we share our message with others, the more we receive.

Fill in the relationship or area you are currently working on.	
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1. Can you share an example of your message, or primary purpose for this area?

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2. When you are asked to help or share with another your experience, strength, and hope is it without regard to who it is or what you are asked to do?

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3. What has happened to you as the result of your trying to share beyond your experience, strength, and hope?

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4. "You can't keep it unless you give it away." This statement has been around a long time. Can you give an example of how this wisdom has worked in your life?

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**Affirmation for Tradition Five - Let me remember that as an individual God created, we all have a special message to share. Joined with those we are drawn to, the sharing of this message is our primary purpose.**

**TRADITION SIX: AN AA GROUP OUGHT NEVER ENDORSE, FINANCE, OR LEND THE AA NAME TO ANY RELATED FACILITY OR OUTSIDE ENTERPRISE, LEST PROBLEMS OF MONEY, PROPERTY AND PRESTIGE DIVERT US FROM OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE.**

This Tradition is once again reminding us that each group, relationship, business or service organization has something special to offer the whole. When we try to be all things to all people we water down our primary purpose that is our individual part of the whole. This Tradition offers protection by keeping each member responsible for an area he/she can be responsive to. Some of us have tried to prove our worth with money, property, and

prestige. We become servants to these symbols of worth instead of letting them serve us. "Lack of power that was our dilemma." (Alcoholics Anonymous page 45 - Reprinted with permission) The more we feel powerless the more we misuse our gifts, unless we let our Higher Power use our weakness to build a new life of strength through sharing.

1. When did you have a life changing experience "catch on fire"? Did you try to "make" it work everywhere, with everyone, and in everything? Where and how did you force it?

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2. How do you feel about the legal system, one in authority, or one in a controlling position forcing people to join your relationship? Should we endorse this practice?

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3. How can you give and receive encouragement or some form of support to and from related facilities or outside enterprises without compromising this Tradition?

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4. Can you give an example of how problems of money, property, and prestige divert you from your primary purpose?

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**Affirmation for Tradition Six - Let me remember that we ought never try to share our special message with those for whom it is not intended nor endorse or give our power or prestige to a cause we have no business in, since doing so may divert us from our primary purpose.**

Fill in the relationship or area you are currently working on.	
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**TRADITION SEVEN: EVERY AA GROUP OUGHT TO BE FULLY SELF-SUPPORTING, DECLINING OUTSIDE CONTRIBUTIONS.**

" The irresponsible had become responsible, and that by making financial independence part of its tradition, Alcoholics Anonymous had revived an ideal that its era had almost forgotten." (Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions reprinted with permission) Yes, it is very important that

we become fully self-supporting financially, but it becomes equally important to be responsible in all areas of our lives at all levels (mental, physical, emotional, social and spiritual) to complete the cycle of integrity, of coming of age.

1. How do you react when someone who is an outsider tries to control or manage your relationship? Insider?

2. Have you learned yet that it is best for you to be a worker among workers, a friend among friends, one who gives of yourself in a relationship, or do you still take pride in being a user?

3. Are you fully self-supporting when it comes to spiritual matters? Do you depend on church or a spiritual adviser to make your spiritual decisions and do spiritual activity for you such as prayer and meditation? Do you draw from them but seek your own conscious contact and spiritual activity?

4. Are you fully self-supporting when it comes to your emotional stuff? Do you stay out of the victim role?

5. Are you fully self-supporting when it comes to your financial matters? Are you being responsible for your fair share?

6. Are you fully self-supporting when it comes to family matters? Are you being responsible for your fair share?

7. Are you fully self-supporting when it comes to friends and social matters? Are you being responsible for your fair share?

**Affirmation for Tradition Seven - Let me remember that as God's agents we are able to be fully self supporting - by His Divine Grace we can be free of outside interference. He will give us all we need to do His Will.**

**TRADITION EIGHT: ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS SHOULD REMAIN FOREVER NONPROFESSIONAL, BUT OUR SERVICE CENTERS MAY EMPLOY SPECIAL WORKERS.**

Each of us as individuals has something special we must freely give. Freely we have been received and freely we must give. We may receive a great deal but we can only keep what we give away.

We cannot without problems trade this special gift for money, property, prestige or power. You may be paid a sum of money to maintain your physical human needs; however, your special gift must be given freely.

1. What is your special gift(s)?

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2. Do you try to get rewarded, even if not for money, for your personal efforts? What are those rewards?

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3. Do you try to sound like or act as a professional on?

Alcoholism	Drugs	Recovery	Relationships	Business	Medicine	Sociology	Program	Spirituality	Psychology

4. What do you think or feel when you are given goods or service? When you pay for those same goods or service how do you think or feel?

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5. How do you feel about yourself and/or others when you compromise yourself?

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6. What are your unrealistic expectations both for yourself and others in this area? Do you have any role models?

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**Affirmation for Tradition Eight - Let me remember that we were freely given our special gifts so we must share them freely, not as a professional.**

**TRADITION NINE: AA, AS SUCH, OUGHT NEVER BE ORGANIZED; BUT WE MAY CREATE SERVICE BOARDS OR COMMITTEES DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE TO THOSE THEY SERVE.**

To organize or to be organized has much in common with the "letter" of the law and way too often without the "spirit" of the law. The "letter" of the law can be cold and unyielding and all too often used to hammer one into shape with little love if any. It is the "spirit" of the law where loving growth can best take place. This Tradition

is reminding us of this and is an extension of Tradition Two "there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience". There are no bosses in AA or authorities. No one can be punished or expelled as in the traditional organization. Those who do choose to serve are but trusted servants.

1. What is your understanding of: "ought never be organized"?

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2. Do you still try to be the boss or seek out a boss to boss you?

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3. To what extent do you believe this relationship needs a set of: rules, bylaws, and/or guidelines? Give examples.

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4. Can you be punished or expelled from your relationship? By whom and how?

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**Affirmation for Tradition Nine - Let me remember that we need to keep an open-mind for His guidance, His flow of love and wisdom, avoiding the closed-mindedness of too many rigid rules or over organization.**

Fill in the relationship or area you are currently working on.	
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**TRADITION TEN: ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS HAS NO OPINION ON OUTSIDE ISSUES; HENCE THE AA NAME OUGHT NEVER BE DRAWN INTO PUBLIC CONTROVERSY.**

The extremes are often our best teachers. This holds true in this Tradition for sure. Most of us have heard or read of the celebrated 'airing their dirty wash in public'. Maybe at first it was just a difference of opinion, or maybe they were using the general public to prove a point but somehow got drawn into public controversy. Once the ego, pride, selfishness and self-centeredness go

on the defense, all will soon be polarized. Now it's my side against your side. All too often the relationship fails or is greatly damaged. The type of relationship, personal, business or other types of organizations, does not seem to matter. The public controversy may sell a lot of papers, but the outside pressure takes the relationship down the drain.

1. Can you give an example where this Tradition has been breached?

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2. How are you personally affected by controversies: mentally, physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually?

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3. List the areas/people you can allow to disagree with without feelings of rejection or being on the defensive?

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4. List the areas/people you cannot allow to disagree with without feelings of rejection or being on the defensive?

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5. When, where, with whom, and how are you most likely to get into useless arguments?

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6. Do you hold grudges or can you forgive quickly?

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**Affirmation for Tradition Ten - Let me remember that we need to stay focused on our primary purpose, avoiding useless arguments on outside issues.**

**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.**

Attraction is a universal principle, which like most things in this life we may use for good or evil. When used as a spiritual principle, attraction becomes a most powerful force for sharing love and unity. Living in a commercial world as we do, most of us become very weary of promotions.

real or illusion) determine to a large degree how we view, feel and experience life and the people, places, and things within it. We could say that we have our own personal "reality". Whatever makes up this personal "reality" will be attracted to or repelled from us, real or illusion to confirm this "reality". A shortcut to your inventory is nothing less than this: look at the people, places and things you are attracting and repelling.

Everything we have ever done, said, thought, or felt and all the experiences we have ever had, (conscious or not,

1. How have you promoted your beliefs or ideals? What motivated you?

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Fill in the relationship or area you are currently working on.	
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2. Have you ever promoted something so fanatically that you made it seem unattractive?

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3. Have you used someone's good name to promote yourself or your cause?

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4. Is your Relationship attractive enough that someone may want what you have?

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5. Is there someone important to you in your relationship that wants no part of what you have? How do you react?

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6. What motivates you and your relationship into action? What turns you off?

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**Affirmation for Tradition Eleven - Let me remember that we must walk the talk. Our willingness to be His agent will attract what or whom we need to do His Will. Humility goes hand in hand with this willingness.**

**TRADITION TWELVE: ANONYMITY IS THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION OF ALL OUR TRADITIONS, EVER REMINDING US TO PLACE PRINCIPLES BEFORE PERSONALITIES.**

Anonymity is much more than a silent giver. One who lives in an anonymous state of mind is living closer to reality/humility. They have awakened to the fact that all they have has been given and if they choose to keep and expand it, they must make a point of passing it on. Attributes of a God-centered life are: love, forgiveness, selflessness, willingness, gratitude, and humility. Attrib-

utes of a self-centered life are: resentments, fear, pride, arrogance, and selfishness. To place principles before personalities is like saying the moon reflects the light of the sun. Personality, the mask, reflects reality or illusion as filtered through our personal "reality" and our Higher Self. Personality has no light of its own; our Higher Self is part of the Light.

1. Can you give an example of how you placed principles before personalities?

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2. Can you give an example of how you placed personalities before principles?

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3. How have you let pride, ego, selfishness or arrogance disrupt this area?

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4. What part of this Program, process, slogans or affirmations draw you back to the principles of these Traditions? Which of these draw you away?

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5. Which principles are the most difficult for you to practice consistently? Which is the least difficult?

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**Affirmation for Tradition Twelve - Let me remember that we need to credit the results to Him - to take off our mask and practice His Principles in all of our affairs.**