



PP.17 - 18

How an A.A. Group Functions

Tradition Four: Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.

How to Start a New A.A. Group

Reasons for starting a new group vary, but the ways to go about it are basically the same.

Important to establishing an A.A. group is the need for one as expressed by at least two or three alcoholics; the cooperation of other A.A. members; a meeting place; a coffeepot; A.A. literature and meeting lists; and other supplies.

Once the group is off to a good start, it would be helpful to announce its presence to neighboring groups; your local intergroup (central) office, if there is one; your district and area committees; and the General Service Office. These sources can provide much support.

Contact G.S.O. for copies of the New Group Form, which should be completed and returned for the new group to be registered. Each new group receives a complimentary handbook and a small supply of literature at no charge when it registers with G.S.O. (one of the many services made possible by the regular support of other A.A. groups and individual members). The New Group Form can be downloaded from our website (www.aa.org), or requested by mail at G.S.O., Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163.

Naming an A.A. Group

No matter how noble the activity or institution, experience has taught A.A. groups to carefully avoid any affiliation with or endorsement of any enterprise outside 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.

Even the appearance of being linked to any organization, club, political or religious institution needs to be avoided.

Therefore, an A.A. group that meets in a correctional or treatment facility or a church should take care not to use the institution's name, but to call itself something quite different. This makes it clear that the A.A. group is not affiliated with the hospital, church, prison, treatment facility, or whatever, but simply rents space there for meetings.

Our A.A. group conscience, as voiced by the General Service Conference, has recommended that "family" meetings, "double trouble" and "alcohol and pill" meetings not be listed in our A.A. directories. The use of the word "family" might also invite confusion with Al-Anon Family Groups, a fellowship entirely separate from A.A.

The primary purpose of any A.A. group is to carry the A.A. message to alcoholics. Experience with alcohol is one thing all A.A. members have in common. It is misleading to hint or give the impression that A.A. solves other problems or knows what to do about drug addiction.

There has also been a recommendation by the A.A. General Service Conference suggesting that no A.A. group be named after any actual person, living or dead, A.A. or non-A.A. That is one way we can "place principles before personalities."

FURTHER GUIDELINES FROM GSO.

A.A.'s traditions suggest that a group not be named after a facility or member (living or deceased), and that the name of a group not imply affiliation with any sect, religion, organization or institution.

Group names are subject to review by A.A. world services (G.S.O.).

A group name should be different from other groups in that city.

Group name, location, primary contact, and meeting information are required to create a group.

Group names should end with the word "group".

A.A.'S TRADITIONS SUGGEST THAT A GROUP NOT BE NAMED AFTER A FACILITY OR MEMBER (LIVING OR DECEASED), AND THAT THE NAME OF A GROUP NOT IMPLY AFFILIATION WITH ANY SECT, RELIGION, ORGANIZATION OR INSTITUTION.

GROUP NAMES ARE SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY A.A. WORLD SERVICES (G.S.O.).

- *A GROUP NAME SHOULD BE DIFFERENT FROM OTHER GROUPS IN THAT CITY.*
- *GROUP NAME, LOCATION, PRIMARY CONTACT, AND MEETING INFORMATION ARE REQUIRED TO CREATE A GROUP.*
- *GROUP NAMES SHOULD END WITH THE WORD "GROUP".*