



News Sheet

AA's Seventh Tradition

12th step groups protect the Fellowship structure and basic spiritual foundations of Alcoholics Anonymous by being self-supporting and declining outside contributions. Tradition 7 of Alcoholics Anonymous states, *"Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."*

Being Self-Supporting

One of the principles of the Twelve Traditions is that each member is responsible for their own recovery. The first part of Tradition 7 *"Every group ought to be fully self-supporting"*, is clear that responsibility starts with the members of each group contributing as 'the basket' is passed to help pay rent and maintain the group's literature supply.

If an AA group collects more than is necessary to meet its expenses, the group can contribute its surplus funds through the AA structure in the prescribed manner. Contributions have declined in recent times, but are still an necessary to help carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic and the maintain vital AA Services.

Rejecting Outside Contributions

The second part of this tradition *"declining outside contributions"* relates to the AA not getting involved with outside issues or conflicts that could arise by accepting "outside contributions." If such contributions were accepted the members of a group might feel obligated to make concessions to the individual or organisation making the donation. By declining these contributions we keep AA independent from outside influences. It also removes the need to seek donor funding and government grants.

This News Sheet is intended as an aid to Service in AA.

The views and opinions expressed in the News Sheet are not necessarily those of the Fellowship of Alcoholics

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Seventh Tradition

"Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

As the Internet and the worldwide pandemic became a part of daily life, members of 12-step groups naturally began gathering online for mutual support.

Many 12th Step online support groups (but not all) were able to adhere to Tradition 7 and remain self-supporting, however, some surplus funds are not being passed through the Structure to the General Service Office in Ireland. We would appeal to our groups to forward surplus funds to our GSO to ensure the services of AA can continue.

Taking Responsibility

AA members will appreciate the many benefits of Tradition 7, for the alcoholic, the AA group, and for AA as a whole. Many come to AA at rock bottom, without a job or place to stay. No fees are required to attend AA, but as the alcoholic becomes sober and makes progress in other areas of their life, they are better placed to contribute at an AA meeting. Contributing helps instill a sense of personal responsibility and gratitude for getting sober and keeps AA's services available for the still-suffering alcoholic who has yet to reach out to us.

Some longtime AA members may feel they have contributed enough and leave the onus of financial responsibility to the newcomers. The co-founders of AA understood this and Tradition 7 protects us from seeking help from outside AA. The program shows how an alcoholic who was

socially irresponsible came to be responsible.

Enhancing Dignity

For some, we were thought of as 'that pitiful drunk.' Some felt we were only looking for a handout in life, maybe some of us were, but not anymore. The dignity of the AA member is enhanced by encouraging them to take responsibility and care of the group's needs.

Now with member contributions, we can also help maintain our own sobriety. We can rely on ourselves and each other for the most precious gifts of dignity and sobriety. As one AA member notes, "We didn't and don't take money from outsiders, no matter how kind or well-intentioned. W.H.O. stands for We Help Ourselves."



AA in Action

How and why the Seventh Tradition came to be is comprehensively explained elsewhere in this issue of your News Sheet.

It is understandable that some members feel that we “are always going on about money.” But, as has been often stated, “AA IS NOT ABOUT MONEY, BUT WITHOUT MONEY THERE WILL BE NO AA.

This past year has been a difficult one for us all, individually as alcoholics and AA members, and collectively as the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. With physical meetings drastically curtailed, the “Pass the Basket” or “Pass the Hat” options to contribute are no longer available to us.

It is easy to think that AA will be fine and that we can contribute again once meetings open up. Or, at home after attending a meeting online, how easy it is to make another cup of tea and not even realise that AA is still providing all its services to our membership and to the wider public. Our staff in the General Service Office are answering 12th Step calls, passing on requests, dealing with literature orders, preparing and publishing our Road Back magazine, our News Sheet, our leaflets and pamphlets, updating our Groups’ Meeting information and contact details. Our rent still gets paid. Our phone bills, our electricity bills, our wages bills, all still need to be paid. Our office needs to be maintained in good condition, our computer and electronic equipment needs to be able to handle the jobs expected of it.

The AA pamphlet “Self-Support – where Money and Spirituality mix” explains that this self-support begins with me, the individual member. I am part of us – the AA group. The group is part of our Area. Our Area is part of

our Provincial Intergroup. And our General Service Office coordinates all our activities. The Twelfth Step is the lifeblood of AA – carrying the message to the suffering alcoholic. This vital contact between an AA member and a still-suffering alcoholic involves investment – the investment of time and money to connect the two.

Money has never been a requirement for AA membership. To keep it that way, our Trusted Servants have an ongoing obligation to inform groups and individual members about the value of being self-supporting and of the need for voluntary contributions throughout the Fellowship. All of AA’s financial information is available on our website. This information is in the public domain and accounts are audited annually. AA’s financial affairs are an open book, available to all, member and public alike.

The fundamental work of AA is to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers – wherever he or she may be. To ensure that the hand of AA will always remain open to those who still suffer, money and spirituality must continue to mix. We are all responsible. The Finance Committee, led by the AA National Treasurer, regularly meets and manages the finances of the Fellowship. The Committee prepares budgets for approval by the General Service Board and carefully administers the funds in its care. No contribution, no matter how small, is too small to make a difference. This is how our “collective obligation” works. Collected together, our contributions are the only means that AA has to be there for the members yet get to our door.

AA in Action calls for the investment of much time and a little money.

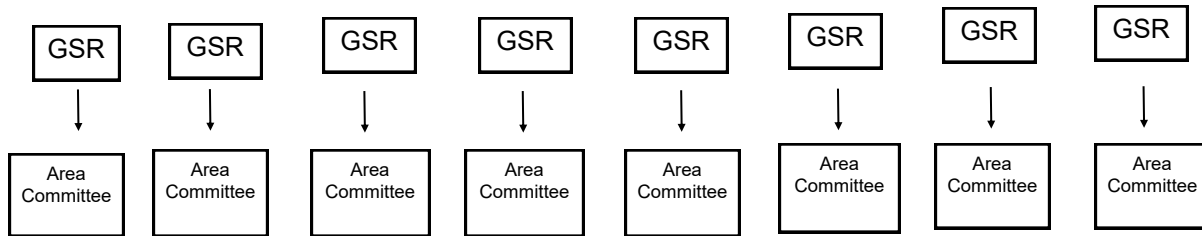
What can you do for AA today?

STRUCTURE OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS IN IRELAND

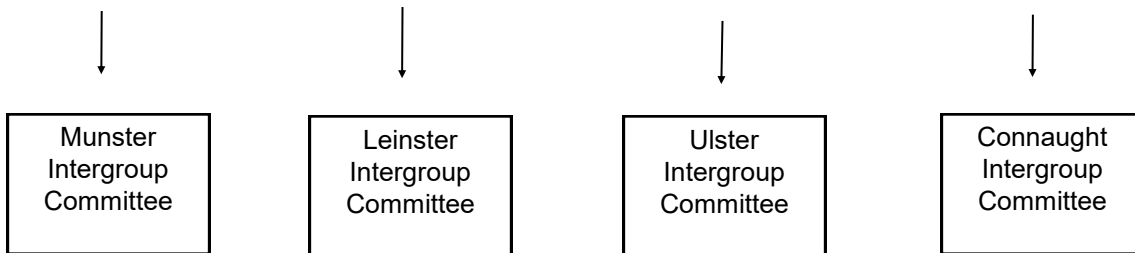
AA GROUPS (G)



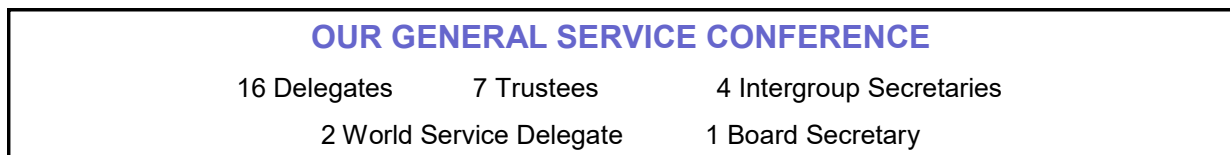
TWO GSR's FROM EACH GROUP FORM AREA COMMITTEE



FOUR MEMBERS FROM EACH AREA COMMITTEE FORM PROVINCIAL INTERGROUP COMMITTEES



FOUR DELEGATES FROM EACH PROVINCIAL INTERGROUP TO GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE



See our website www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie
 For details of forthcoming events in Ireland and abroad (when available)