

DEFINITIONS OF SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES OF TWELVE CONCEPTS

FIRST CONCEPT:

1. RESPONSIBILITY: Moral, legal, or mental accountability, trustworthiness

SECOND CONCEPT:

2. AUTHORITY: Power to influence or command thought, opinion, or behavior

THIRD CONCEPT:

3. DELEGATION: The act of empowering, to act for another.

FOURTH CONCEPT:

4. LEADERSHIP: A trait of a person who has a commanding authority or influence

FIFTH CONCEPT:

5. ACCOUNTABILITY: The quality or state of being accountable (subject to giving an account)

SIXTH CONCEPT:

6. SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE: Spiritual: Of, relating to, or consisting of spirit
Guidance: The act or process of guiding

SEVENTH CONCEPT:

7. PARTICIPATION: The state of being related to a larger whole; to take part.

EIGHTH CONCEPT:

8. COMMUNICATION: The act or instance of transmitting a verbal or written message.

NINTH CONCEPT:

9. OPEN-MINDEDNESS: Receptive of arguments or ideas; unprejudiced

TENTH CONCEPT:

10. FAIRNESS: Something that is fair or fortunate

ELEVENTH CONCEPT:

11. FINANCES: To furnish with necessary funds

TWELFTH CONCEPT:

12. SERVICE, NOT GOVERNMENT: SERVICE: Contribution to the welfare of others
NOT: Used as a function word to make negative of a preceding group of words
GOVERNMENT: The act or process of governing, specifically authoritative direction or control.

THE TWELVE CONCEPTS FOR NA SERVICE STUDY GUIDE

Narcotics Anonymous, as a fellowship, is defined by its principles. Our Twelve Steps detail our program for personal recovery. Our Twelve Traditions relate experience that can help NA groups maintain their unity. And our Twelve Concepts are guiding principles for our service structure. The Twelve Concepts, together, help ensure that our fellowship's service structure remains forever devoted to *service, not government*.

The Twelve Concepts for NA Service are a relatively recent addition to our fellowship's body of guiding principles. Since NA's inception in the 1950's, we have used the Twelve Steps as guidance in our personal recovery and the Twelve Traditions to steer our groups. The Traditions also offer fundamental ideals to guide all our collective efforts. Our common welfare and unity, the ultimate authority of a loving God, leadership as service instead of government, group autonomy, our fellowship's primary purpose, cooperation without affiliation, self-support, the employment of special workers, attraction rather than promotion, public anonymity---without a doubt, the principles of our Twelve Traditions offer guidance for everything we do as a fellowship. The Twelve Concepts for Service were created to provide our *service structure* with the specific direction it needs to serve by.

Finally, just as the Twelve Traditions conclude by summarizing all Twelve in a single word, ANONYMITY, so the Twelfth Concept offers a fundamental ideal that underlies all the concepts: "OUR STRUCTURE SHOULD ALWAYS BE ONE OF SERVICE, NEVER OF GOVERNMENT."

These Concepts have been crafted from our experience. They are not intended to be taken as the "LAW" for NA service, but simply as guiding principles. We find that our services are stabilized when we conscientiously apply these concepts, much as our steps have stabilized our lives and our traditions have stabilized and unified our groups. The Twelve Concepts guide our services and help ensure that the message of Narcotics Anonymous is available to all addicts who have a desire to stop using and begin practicing our way of life.

FIRST CONCEPT (Responsibility)

To fulfill our fellowship's primary purpose, the NA groups have joined together to create a structure which develops, coordinates, and maintains services on behalf of NA as a whole.

Our fellowship's primary purpose is to carry the message "that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live." One of the primary means by which that message is carried, addict to addict, is in our meetings. These recovery meetings, conducted thousands of times each day by NA groups around the world, are the most important service offered by our fellowship.

- 1. What is the primary purpose of a group?**
- 2. What Tradition is involved with the primary purpose?**
- 3. What are the most important services offered by our fellowship?**
- 4. What Principles joins the Home Groups together to create services?**

However, while recovery meetings are NA's most important service, they are not the only means we have of fulfilling our fellowship's primary purpose. Other NA services attract the still-suffering addict to our meeting, carry our message to addicts in institutions, make recovery literature available, and provide opportunities for groups to share their experience with one another. No one of these services, by itself, comes close to matching the value of group recovery meetings in carrying our message; each, however, plays its own indispensable part in the overall program devised by the NA Fellowship to fulfill its primary purpose.

- 5. What are some other NA services that attract the still-suffering addict to our meetings?**
- 6. Which one or all of these other services comes close to matching the value of group recovery meetings?**
- 7. What can each service do?**

We can do together what we cannot accomplish separately. This is true in our personal recovery, and is equally true in our services. In new NA communities, groups often perform basic services in addition to their meetings. But fulfillment of the full range of NA services---phone-lines, H & I panels, public information work, outreach, and the rest---usually requires more people and more money than a single group can muster on its own. The degree of

organization necessary to carry out such responsibilities would divert most groups from carrying the NA message in their meetings. And the lack of coordination among groups delivering various services on their own could result in duplication, confusion, and wasted resources. For these reasons, most groups do not take such responsibilities on themselves. They do so by combining their resources, joining together to create a structure which develops, coordinates, and maintains those services for them, leaving the groups free to carry out their own primary responsibility.

8. Should groups perform services on their own? How does Anonymity relate to this service?

9. What other services are offered that a group by themselves cannot fulfill?

10. What other responsibilities, other than the meetings themselves, could divert a group from their primary purpose?

11. What could result when a group tries to perform their own services?

12. How, then, can NA's groups ensure the fulfillment of these services?

13. What Traditions apply to this Concept? Why?

14. What is the Spiritual Principle of Concept One and what is the definition?

SECOND CONCEPT (Authority)

The final responsibility and authority for NA services rests with the NA groups.

The NA service structure has been created by the groups to serve the common needs of the groups. Our fellowship's service boards and committees exist to help groups share their experience with one another, provide tools which help groups function better, attract new members to group recovery meetings, and carry the NA message further than any single group could carry it alone. Because the groups have created the service structure, they have final authority over all its affairs. By the same token, the groups also have the final responsibility for the support of all its activities. The two go hand in hand.

1. Who creates the service structure and for what reason?

2. Why are service boards and committees created?

3. Who has final authority over all of the service structures affairs?

4. Who has the final responsibility to support all the activities of the service structure?

5. Which Tradition applies in the decision making of these groups regarding the service structure?

Ideally, responsibility and authority are flip sides of the same coin; the exercise of one is also an exercise of the other. When our groups provide the resources---conscience and ideas, people, money----needed to fulfill NA services, they also provide direction to the service structure. Let's take a look at a few examples of how this principle works.

6. How do spiritual principles of responsibility and authority work together?

The most important resource contributed to the service structure by an NA group is almost exclusively spiritual: its ideas and its conscience. Without the voice of the groups, the service structure may not know what kinds of services are needed, or whether the services it provides are ones the groups want. The groups provide the ideas and direction needed to guide the service structure in fulfilling its responsibility. By voicing their needs and concerns, the groups also exercise their authority for the service structure they have created.

7. What is the most important resource a group can contribute to the service structure?

8. How does the service structure know what services the groups want?

9. How do the groups exercise their authority to the service structure?

The people who give their time to service work are a vital resource; without them, our service boards and committees would not exist, much less be able to serve. The group's responsibility to the service structure is to elect a group service representative who will serve the best interests of the group and the entire NA Fellowship. By carefully selecting its GSR, then providing that person with regular support and guidance, the group exercises its ability to impact NA services, both directly and indirectly. In choosing a qualified GSR, then sending him or her out to serve on the groups behalf, the group fulfills a large part of both its responsibility and authority for NA services.

10. What is another vital resource and why is it needed?

11. What is another responsibility of the group to the service structure?

12. What are the key points in selecting a qualified GSR?

13. Who is responsible for the training of the GSR in relation to Traditions and Concepts?

Money is required to fulfill NA services. Without it, our phone lines would be closed down, our meeting lists would not be printed, there would be no NA literature to distribute, our H & I panels would go without pamphlets, and our public information workers would be unable to provide printed materials about our fellowship to the community. The message of the Second Concept in regard to money, however, is simple: Since the groups have created the service

structure to perform certain tasks, the groups are also responsible to provide the necessary funds.

14. What other resource is needed to fulfill NA services?

15. What would happen without this resource being fulfilled?

16. What is another responsibility of the groups to the service structure?

17. What Traditions apply with this responsibility?

This concept also speaks to the service structure. The groups have, directly or indirectly, created every one of our service boards and committees. The NA groups have, directly or indirectly, provided the resources used by those service boards and committees. The groups have established the service structure as a medium through which, together, they can better fulfill our fellowship's primary purpose. Therefore, in all the affairs of all its elements, the service structure must carefully consider the needs and desires of the groups. The Second Concept can be seen as the groups' way of saying to the NA service structure, "Be responsible with the spiritual, personal, and financial resources we have provided you. Seek our advice; do not ignore our direction."

18. What responsibility does the service structure have to the groups?

19. What responsibilities do the groups have in choosing their trusted servants to fulfill the positions of the service structure?

20. What does the Second Concept say for the groups to the service structure?

The NA groups bear the final authority in all our fellowship's service affairs, and should be routinely consulted in all matters directly affecting them. For example, proposals to change NA's Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, name, nature, or purpose should be approved directly by the groups. Conversely, if something goes wrong in the service structure, NA groups are responsible to take constructive steps to help correct the problem. Since change rarely occurs overnight, patience and acceptance may be called for. Nonetheless, the exercise of final authority for NA services, a vital part of the system of service established by our fellowship, is both the right and the responsibility of the groups.

21. Who has the final authority in all our fellowship's service affairs?

22. Who is the ultimate authority in all our fellowship's service affairs and why?

23. What are some examples of proposals that should be approved directly by the groups?

24. What can the groups do if something goes wrong within the service structure?

25. Why should the groups perform the final authority?

26. What Traditions apply to this Concept?

27. What is the Spiritual Principle of Concept Two and what is the definition?

THIRD CONCEPT

(Delegation)

The NA groups delegate to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it.

The NA groups maintain final responsibility and authority for the service structure they have created. Yet if they must involve themselves directly in making decisions for all of our service boards and committees, the groups will have little time or energy left to carry the recovery message in their meetings. For this reason the groups entrust the service structure with the authority to make necessary decisions in carrying out the tasks assigned to it.

1. How do the groups balance their responsibility and authority in regards to the service structure?

2. What will happen if the groups involve themselves in every decision of our service structure?

3. What is the significance of the groups choosing trusted servants who are qualified?

The delegation of authority can do much to free up both our groups and our services. Service decisions not directly affecting the groups can be made expeditiously; our phone lines, H & I panels, public information efforts, and literature development projects can move forward at full speed to serve NA's primary purpose. And our groups, not required to ratify every decision made on their behalf at every level of service, are freed to devote their full attention to carrying the NA message in their meetings.

4. What will free up both our groups and our services?

5. How can some service decisions made by the service structure affect the primary purpose?

6. What happens when the group has to ratify every decision made on their behalf?

7. How important is the responsibility of the group to train their trusted servants in the understanding and application of the literature important in this situation?

We often use motions and guidelines to help us apply the Third Concept. We clearly describe each task we want accomplished, and the kind of authority we are delegating to those who will fulfill the task. However, even the most exhaustive set of guidelines cannot account for every eventuality. Our trusted servants will serve us best when we grant them the freedom to

exercise their best judgment in fulfilling the responsibilities we've assigned them. Our services must remain directly accountable to those they serve, yet they must also be given a reasonable degree of discretion in fulfilling their duties. A group, service board, or committee should consult its collective conscience in arriving at its own understanding of the best way to apply this concept.

- 8. How are guidelines important to help us apply the Third Concept?**
- 9. How can guidelines hinder us in applying the Third Concept?**
- 10. When will our trusted servants serve us best?**
- 11. Who is accountable for our services?**
- 12. What are the limits to our service duties?**
- 13. How should a group, service board, or committee best apply this Concept?**
- 14. What is the importance of our trusted servants having knowledge through understanding and application of our guiding documents?**

Sometimes we fear that delegation will mean a loss of control over our services. Together, Concepts One, Two, and Three have been designed to help us maintain responsibility for our service structure without tying our trusted servants' hands. The Third Concept encourages our groups to focus on their own responsibilities, while assuring that the service structure is given the authority it needs to fulfill other necessary NA services. Our Twelve Concepts do not ask our groups to abdicate their authority, allowing the service structure to do whatever it pleases. The groups, after all, have established the service structure to act on their behalf, at their direction. And when the groups need to exercise final authority in service matters, they are encouraged to do so. However, in day-to-day matters, the groups have given our service boards and committees the practical authority necessary to do the jobs assigned them.

- 15. What do we sometimes fear about delegation?**
- 16. Which Concepts help us maintain responsibility for our service structure without tying our trusted servants' hands?**
- 17. What does the Third Concept encourage the groups to do?**
- 18. What is the definition of abdicate?**
- 19. What do the Twelve Concepts not ask the groups to do?**
- 20. Who establishes and directs the service structure?**
- 21. Who gives the practical authority for day-to-day matters?**

Delegating authority can be a risky business unless we do so responsibly. To make Concept Three work, other concepts must also be applied consistently. Most importantly, we must give careful attention to the selection of trustworthy trusted servants. We cannot responsibly delegate authority either to those who are fundamentally incapable of administering that authority or to those who are not willing to account fully for their actions. However, if we select our leaders carefully, choosing those who can be trusted to responsibly exercise delegated authority in fulfilling the tasks we've given them, we can feel much more comfortable with the concept of delegation.

22. What is the danger in delegating authority?

23. What is required to make Concept Three work?

24. Describe a trustworthy trusted servant....

25. What are some drawbacks in delegating authority?

26. How should we select our leaders? What will be the outcome?

27. What is the Spiritual Principle of Concept Three and what is the definition?

When we give our trusted servants a job, we must adequately describe to them the job we want done, and we must provide them with the support they need to complete their job. Then once we've given them instructions and support, we must delegate to them the authority necessary to make decisions related to the task they've been assigned. When our groups delegate sufficient authority to our service structure, our groups need not be overcome with the demands of making every service decision at every level of service, and our fellowship's primary purpose can be served to the fullest. With the Third Concept squarely in place, our groups are free to conduct recovery meetings and carry the NA message directly to the addict who still suffers, confident that the service structure they have created has the authority it needs to make the decisions involved in fulfilling its responsibilities.

28. What must we do when we give our trusted servants a job to do?

29. Once we have given the servants instructions and support; what must we do?

30. What happens when the Third Concept is squarely in place?

FOURTH CONCEPT

(Leadership)

Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants.

The trust necessary to confidently delegate service authority is founded on the careful selection of trusted servants. In the following paragraphs, we highlight a number of the qualities to be considered when choosing our trusted servants. No leader will exemplify all these qualities; they are the ideals of effective leadership to which every trusted servant aspires. The more we consider these qualities when selecting NA leaders, the better our services will be.

1. Explain Trust in this Concept....

2. How do the qualities of our leaders affect our services?

Personal background and professional or educational qualifications, though helpful, do not necessarily make for effective leadership. When selecting trusted servants, after all, it is the whole person we trust, not just their skills. And one of the first things we look for when selecting trusted servants is humility. Being asked to lead, to serve, to accept responsibility is a humbling experience for a recovering addict. Through continuing to work the Twelve Steps, our trusted servants have come to know not only their assets but their defects and their limitations. Knowing that, they have agreed to serve our fellowship to the best of their ability, with God's help. Good NA leaders do not think they have to do everything themselves; they ask for help, advice, and direction on a regular basis. Our fellowship's leaders ought not be dictators or order-givers; they are our servants. Able leadership in the spirit of service does not drive by arrogant mandate, demanding conformity; it leads by example, inviting respect. And nothing invites us to respect our trusted servants more than clear evidence of their humility.

3. Read the Second Tradition. What kind of leaders does NA have?

4. What are the qualifications for effective leadership?

5. What are one of the first things we look for in selecting trusted servants? Explain.....

6. Why is it important that an effective leader continues to work the steps?

7. Who is the most important help for an effective leader?

8. Do NA leaders do everything themselves?

9. How are good leaders characterized?

10. What invites us to respect our trusted servants the most?

Capable NA leadership exhibits the full range of personal characteristics associated with a spiritual awakening. We depend on those who serve us to report on their activities completely and truthfully. Our leaders must have the integrity needed to hear others well, yet still be able to stand fast on sound principle; to compromise, and to disagree without being disagreeable; to demonstrate the courage of their convictions, and to surrender. We seek trusted servants who are willing to expend their time and energy in the diligent service of others, studying available resource materials, consulting those with greater experience in their field of responsibility, and

carefully fulfilling the tasks we've given them as completely as possible. Honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness, indispensable in recovery, are also essential to leadership.

11. How does having a spiritual awakening in their personal recovery apply to NA leadership?

12. How does the spiritual principle of integrity affect our leaders?

13. How does selflessness apply to our leaders?

14. What are some other spiritual principles that affect effective leadership?

Any NA member can be a leader, and every NA member has the right to serve the fellowship. Effective NA leadership knows not only how to serve, but when it will serve best to step aside and allow others to take over. An entrenched bureaucracy inhibits our fellowship's growth, while a regular influx of new leadership, balanced by continuity, inspires NA growth. The effective leader also knows that, in order to maintain the distinction in service between principles and personalities, it is important to observe the practice of rotation.

15. Explain what is balanced continuity of service?

16. Who can be a leader and who has the right to serve the fellowship?

17. What inhibits and inspires our fellowship's growth?

18. Why is the practice of rotation of service important?

In some positions, trusted servants need specific skills in order to act as effective leaders. The ability to communicate well can help our trusted servants share information and ideas, both in committee work and in reporting to those they serve. Organizational skills help trusted servants keep small service responsibilities simple and make straightforward even the fulfillment of complex tasks. Leaders capable of discerning where today's actions will take us, and of offering us the guidance we need to prepare for the demands of tomorrow, serve Narcotics Anonymous well. Certain educational, business, personal, and service experiences may suit a recovering addict more to one type of service commitment than another. We do ourselves, our fellowship, and our trusted servants a disservice when we ask our members to perform tasks they are incapable of fulfilling.

19. What do effective leaders need in some positions of the service structure?

20. What ability do our trusted servants need to serve well?

21. What certain skills suit a recovering addict more to one type of service commitment than another?

22. Who do we do a disservice to when we ask our members to perform tasks they are incapable of fulfilling?

When we carefully consider the leadership qualities of those we ask to serve, we can confidently give them the room they need to exercise those qualities on our behalf. We can allow effective leaders freedom to serve, especially when they demonstrate their accountability to us, reporting regularly on their work and asking, when necessary, for additional direction. True, our leaders are but trusted servants, not governors; yet we also expect our trusted servants to lead us. If we select them carefully we can confidently allow them to do so.

23. How do we allow effective leaders the freedom to serve?

24. What do we expect of our trusted servants?

Effective leadership is highly valued in NA and the Fourth Concept speaks of the qualities we should consider then selecting leaders for ourselves. However, we should remember that the fulfillment of many service responsibilities requires nothing more than the willingness to serve. Other responsibilities, while requiring certain specific skills, depend for their fulfillment far more heavily on the trusted servant's spiritual maturity and personal integrity. Willingness, spiritual depth, and trustworthiness are strong demonstrations of the kind of leadership valued most highly in Narcotics Anonymous.

25. What is highly valued in NA?

26. What are the two specific skills that the trusted servants possess?

27. What other skills needed by trusted servants represent the kind of leadership most highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous?

We should also remember that NA's leaders are not only those we vote into office.

Opportunities for selfless service arise wherever we turn in Narcotics Anonymous. NA members exercise personal leadership by helping clean up after a meeting, taking extra care to welcome newcomers to our fellowship, and in countless other ways. As recovering addicts, any of us can fulfill a leadership role, providing a sound example, by serving our fellowship. This modest spirit of service to others forms the foundation of our Fourth Concept, and of NA leadership itself.

28. What other leaders does NA have that are not elected into office?

29. What forms the foundation of the Fourth Concept and of NA leadership itself?

30. What is the Spiritual Principle of the Fourth Concept and what is the definition?

FIFTH CONCEPT

(Accountability)

For each responsibility assigned to the service structure, a single point of decision and accountability should be clearly defined.

The key to applying the Fifth Concept is in defining the task that needs to be done, and the easiest way to apply it is right from the start. When we first create a service task, we should consider what kind of authority we must delegate in order for that task to be accomplished, and what kind of accountability we should require of those to whom we are giving that task. Then one particular trusted servant, service board, or committee should be designated as the single point of decision and accountability for that assignment. This simple principle applies to all the services provided in Narcotics Anonymous, from the group to our world services.

- 1. What is the key to applying the fifth concept?**
- 2. What are the two things we should consider when creating a service task?**
- 3. Who is the single point of decision and accountability for an assigned task?**
- 4. What attributes or principles should the single point of decision and accountability possess in order to be considered for this duty?**
- 5. Whom does this simple principle apply to?**

When we decide a certain service task should be done, and clearly say which trusted servant, service board, or committee has the authority to accomplish the task, we avoid unnecessary confusion. We don't have two committees trying to do the same job duplicating efforts or squabbling over authority. Project reports come straight from the single point of decision for the project, offering the best information available. An assigned service responsibility can be fulfilled swiftly and directly, because there is no question of whose responsibility it is. And if problems in a project arise, we know exactly where to go in order to correct them. We do well when we clearly specify to whom authority is being given for each service responsibility.

- 6. How can we avoid unnecessary confusion in selecting a trusted servant?**
- 7. What principles should a trustworthy trusted servant have in their personal program?**
- 8. Where should the project reports come from?**
- 9. What should a service board or committee use to help them make decisions?**
- 10. Why should we not have two committees assigned to the same project?**
- 11. What Tradition comes into play in fulfilling a service responsibility?**

The single point of decision we define for each service responsibility is also a single point of accountability. As we've already seen in the Fourth Concept, and as we shall see further in Concept Eight, accountability is a central feature of the NA way of service. When we give our trusted servants responsibility for a particular service task, we hold them accountable for the

authority we've delegated them. We expect them to remain accessible, consistently providing us with reports of their progress and consulting with us about their responsibilities.

12. What are the two points we define for each service responsibility?

13. What is the central feature of the NA way of service?

14. Who is held accountable for the authority we've delegated?

15. What are our expectations of our trusted servants?

16. How often should our trusted servants consult with us about their responsibilities?

Accountability does not mean that we delegate authority only to take it right back. It simply means that we want to be informed of decisions our trusted servants are considering as they go about the tasks we've assigned them. We want to have the opportunity to impact those decisions, especially if they directly affect us. And we want to be kept up-to-date on each responsibility we've assigned to the service structure so that, if something goes wrong, we can take part in making it right.

17. What does accountability not mean?

18. What does accountability mean?

19. How does Tradition Four apply to accountability?

20. How should the common welfare or unity be applied to our service structure?

The Fifth Concept helps us responsibly delegate our authority for NA services. In exercising the Fifth Concept, we make a simple, straightforward contract with our trusted servants. Right from the start, they know what we are asking of them, what decisions they are expected to make themselves, and to what degree we will hold them accountable for the service work they do on our behalf. Exercise of Concept Five is not a task to be taken lightly. It calls for us to carefully consider the service work we want done; to clearly designate who should do that work; to delegate the authority to do it; and to maintain accountability for those duties. It takes effort to conscientiously apply Concept Five, but the results are worth the effort.

21. What does the Fifth Concept do for us?

22. What should the trusted servants be expected to do?

23. What does the Fifth Concept call for us to do?

24. What does it take to apply Concept Five?

25. Define effort.....

26. What is the spiritual principle of the Fifth Concept and what is the definition?

SIXTH CONCEPT

(Spiritual Guidance)

Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions.

Conscience is an essentially spiritual faculty. It is our innate sense of right and wrong, and internal compass that each of us may consult in our personal reflections about the best course to take. Our Basic Text refers to conscience as one of those "higher mental and emotional functions" which was "sharply affected by our use of drugs." By applying our steps, we seek to revive it and learn how to exercise it. As we steadily apply spiritual principles in our lives, our decisions and actions increasingly become less motivated by self-interest, and more motivated by what our conscience tells us is good and right.

1. What should our conscience always be a reflection of?

2. How does our Basic Text define conscience?

3. How does the 12 step apply in the Sixth Concept?

When addicts whose individual consciences have been awakened in the course of working the steps come together to consider service-related questions, either in their NA group or in a service committee meeting, they are prepared to take part in the development of a group conscience. The exercise of group conscience is the act by which our members bring the spiritual awakening of our Twelve Steps directly to bear in resolving issues affecting NA. As such, it is a subject which must command our most intent consideration.

4. What is group conscience and how does it differ in individual conscience?

The development of a group conscience is an indispensable part of the decision-making process in Narcotics Anonymous; however, group conscience is not *itself* a decision-making mechanism. To clarify the difference between the two, let's look at our personal lives. People living spiritually oriented lives usually pray and meditate before making major decisions. First, we

look to our source of spiritual strength and wisdom; then, we look forward and chart our course. If we automatically claim that God has guided us every time we make a decision, whether or not we've actually invited God to influence us prior to making that decision we fool only ourselves. The same applies to group conscience and collective decision making.

5. Read Tradition Two and explain how group conscience applies to this paragraph?

Developing a collective conscience provides us with the spiritual guidance we need for making service decisions. We pray or meditate together, we share with one another, we consider our traditions, and we seek direction from a Higher Power. Our groups, service boards, and committees often use the vote as a rough tool for translating that spiritual guidance into clear, decisive terms. Sometimes, however, no vote is needed; following thoughtful, attentive discussion, it is perfectly apparent what our collective conscience would have us do in a given service situation. Just as we seek the strongest possible spiritual unity in Narcotics Anonymous, so in our decision making we seek unanimity, not merely a majority vote. The more care we take in our considerations, the more likely we are to arrive at unanimity, and no vote will be needed to help us translate our group conscience into a collective decision.

6. What provides us with the spiritual guidance we need for making service decisions?

7. What are the four things we do to gather a spiritual guidance decision?

8. Define unanimity.....

9. What will guide us to arrive at unanimity?

When making specific service decisions, voting, or consensus, may be the measure of our group conscience. However, group conscience can be seen in all our fellowship's affairs, not merely in our decision-making process. The group inventory process is a good example of this. When members of an NA group gather together to examine their group's effectiveness in fulfilling its primary purpose, they each consult their own conscience concerning their individual role in the life of the group. They consider the concerns of the group as a whole in the same light. Such a group inventory session might produce no specific service decisions whatsoever. It will, however, produce among group members a heightened spiritual sensitivity, both to the needs of the still-suffering addict and to the needs of fellow group members.

10. What is the difference in voting and consensus?

11. Where can the group conscience be applied?

12. What are the results of having a group inventory?

Another example of group conscience being developed without producing a service-related decision, one each of us can identify with, can be found every day of the week in our recovery meetings. Many are the times when we go to an NA meeting with a personal problem, seeking

comfort, support, and guidance in the experience of other recovering addicts. Our members, each with their individual personalities, backgrounds, and needs, speak to one another---and to us---of the spiritual awakening they've found in applying the Twelve Steps in their lives. From the diversity of the group a common message arises, a message we can apply to our own lives: the message of recovery. In this message we find "the therapeutic value of one addict helping another." We also find in this message the group conscience, applied not to a service issue but to our own spiritual growth.

13. Where can another example of group conscience be found?

14. What is the common message that arises from the diversity of the group?

15. Where else can the group conscience be applied?

Group conscience is the means by which we collectively invite the ongoing guidance of a Higher Power in making decisions. We apply the Sixth Concept when we pursue our own personal recovery with vigor, seeking that ongoing spiritual awakening which makes it possible for us to apply the principles of the program in all our affairs, including our service affairs. We apply the Sixth Concept when we listen not just to the words our fellow members speak, but to the spirit behind their words. We apply the Sixth Concept when we seek to do God's will, not our own, and to serve others, not ourselves, in our service decisions. We apply the Sixth Concept in our groups, service boards, and committees when we invite a loving God to influence us before making service-related decisions.

16. What is group conscience?

17. How do we apply the Sixth Concept to our own personal recovery?

18. What are other instances where we can apply the Sixth Concept?

19. What is the spiritual principle of the Sixth Concept and what is the definition?

SEVENTH CONCEPT

(Participation)

All members of a service body bear substantial responsibility for that body's decisions and should be allowed to fully participate in its decision-making process.

The Seventh Concept is one way of putting the principle of group conscience to work in the service environment. This concept suggests that each service body should encourage all its members to participate in its decision-making process. By bringing their different perspectives

together, we give our service bodies the opportunity to develop a fully informed, balanced group conscience leading to sound, sensitive service decisions.

1. How does the Seventh Concept apply to the service environment?

2. How does participation affect group conscience?

Our service boards and committees represent a cross-section of NA perspective and experience. Each participant's contribution to the decision-making process is important. Determining participation at the group level is fairly simple: if you're a group member, you may fully participate in the group's decision-making process. Determining participation in the decision-making processes of most service boards and committees is a little more involved, yet the same basic principles still apply. Freely expressed individual conscience is the essential element in group conscience at any level.

3. What determines the participation as a group member?

4. What is the essential element of group conscience?

5. How does Tradition Two apply to group conscience?

NA service is a team effort. Our service representatives are responsible to the NA Fellowship as a whole rather than any special constituency; so are all the other trusted servants on the team. The full participation of each member of the team is of great value as we seek to express the collective conscience of the whole.

6. How does Tradition One apply to a NA service team?

7. Who are our service representatives responsible to?

8. What is of great value when we seek to express the collective conscience of the whole?

There is no firm rule about how to apply the concept of participation to every situation. In an atmosphere of love, mutual respect, and frank, open discussion, each service body decides these things for itself. In significant matters affecting the groups, a service body will want to ask for guidance directly from the groups. In the vast majority of cases, however, the service body will exercise its delegated authority in fulfilling the responsibilities the groups have assigned to it, disposing of the matters in the normal course of its service meetings.

9. What is the rule for applying the concept of participation to every situation?

10. What is needed for a service body to decide these things for itself?

11. Where will a Service Body get the guidance to decide significant matters affecting the groups?

12. In most cases how will the service body exercise its delegated authority?

NA's principle of spiritual anonymity is the foundation for the Seventh Concept. This principle points our fellowship toward a leveling of the individual's relative importance as a participant in NA service. The Seventh Concept, with its emphasis on equalizing the relative weight of each voice on the team, puts the spiritual principle of anonymity into practice. Though we may not all participate in every decision made in our fellowship, we all have the right to participate fully and equally in the decision-making processes in the service bodies in which we are members.

13. What is the foundation for the Seventh Concept?

14. How does the spiritual principle of anonymity apply to the Seventh Concept?

15. Who has the right to participate in the decision-making processes?

16. What is the spiritual principle of the Seventh Concept and what is the definition?

EIGHTH CONCEPT (Communication)

Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.

Our fellowship's service structure is founded on the unity of our groups; to maintain that union we must have regular communications throughout Narcotics Anonymous. Together, our groups have created a service structure to meet their common needs and to help them fulfill their common purpose. The effectiveness of the service structure depends on the continued unity of the NA groups, and on their continued support and direction. These things can only be maintained in an atmosphere of honest, open, and straightforward communication among all parties concerned.

1. What is our service structure founded on?

2. Read the Ninth Tradition and explain how it applies.....

3. What does the Unity of the Home Groups depend on?

4. What does the service structure depend on?

Regular communication plays a large part in the fulfillment of our groups' final responsibility and authority for NA services. Through their GSRs, the groups regularly report their strengths, needs, ideas, and conscience to the service structure. Taken together, these group reports give our service boards and committees clear guidance in their efforts to serve NA as a whole. When the groups are regularly given full and accurate information from all elements of the service

structure, they become familiar with the structure's normal patterns of activity. The groups are then able to recognize when something goes wrong with one of our service boards and committees, and are in a better position to know how to help correct the problem. And, knowing what kinds of resources are needed to fulfill service tasks, our groups are also more likely to provide the service structure with adequate support.

5. What plays a large part in the fulfillment of our groups' authority for NA services?

6. How do the group's report to the service structure?

7. How do the group's receive their information about the service structure?

8. What will more likely cause the groups to supply adequate support to the service structure?

Clear, frequent two-way communication is an important prerequisite for delegation. When our groups ask the service structure to fulfill certain responsibilities on our behalf, we delegate to the structure the authority needed to make decisions related to those responsibilities. We need to be able to trust our trusted servants before we can confidently delegate them that degree of authority. That kind of trust depends in large part on continuing communication. So long as our service boards and committees regularly issue complete, candid reports of their activities, we can be confident that we have delegated our authority wisely.

9. What is an important prerequisite for delegation?

10. What must we have before we can confidently delegate authority?

11. What is the definition of trust?

12. What does trust depend on from the groups?

13. How can we be confident that we have delegated our authority wisely?

Open and frank communication is a critical ingredient of effective leadership. To better know the ideas, wishes, needs, and conscience of those they serve, trusted servants must listen carefully to their fellowship. To give the NA groups the information they need to guide and support our services, NA leaders regularly distribute full, unequivocal reports. We do not want our trusted servants to constantly inundate us with every fact and figure possible, though we do expect them to provide us with complete information on all their activities and discussions if we ask for it. In communicating with those they serve, trusted servants demonstrate an open attitude, one that is inclusive, inviting, and clearly influenceable. Such openness and forthrightness may be uncomfortable, but is essential in maintaining the integrity of our services.

14. What is a critical ingredient of effective leadership?

15. What must trusted servants do to better know the conscience of those they serve?

16. What do we require from our trusted servants?

17. What is essential in maintaining the integrity of our services?

Finally, full and frequent communication is essential in the development of group conscience, the spiritual means by which we invite the influence of a loving God in making our collective decisions. To develop group conscience, communications must be honest and direct. Without the full picture, seen from all sides, our groups, service boards, and committees cannot develop an informed group conscience. When we gather together to consider service issues, we openly share ideas and information with one another, frankly speaking our minds and hearts on the matter at hand. We listen closely to one another, considering carefully the information and insights we've heard; we consult our individual consciences on the matter; then, we make a decision. A conscience fed on ignorance is an ineffective conscience incapable of providing reliable guidance. An effective conscience can develop only in an atmosphere of regular, open communication among all parties concerned.

18. What is essential in the development of group conscience?

19. What is group conscience?

20. What does it take to develop group conscience?

21. What must we do when we consider service issues in making a decision?

22. What causes an ineffective conscience?

23. What is the only way to have an effective conscience?

The purpose of our services is to help our fellowship fulfill its primary purpose: to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. Honest, open, straightforward communication is essential to both the integrity and the effectiveness of the NA service structure. Unity, group responsibility and authority, delegation, leadership, accountability, group conscience, participation---all depend on good communication among the various elements of the NA Fellowship. With regular two-way communication, our groups and our services are well positioned to uphold the ideals and fulfill the responsibilities described in our Twelve Concepts.

24. What is the purpose of our services?

25. How does the Fifth Tradition apply here?

26. How is the Twelfth Step applied to the NA service structure?

27. What do the spiritual principles depend on from the fellowship?"

28. What will best uphold the responsibilities described in our Twelve Concepts?

29. What is the spiritual principle of the Eighth Concept and what is the definition?

NINTH CONCEPT

(Open-mindedness)

All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making processes.

It's easy to discuss things with those who agree with us. But in recovery we've learned that our own best thinking may not necessarily offer us the best possible guidance. We have been taught that, before making significant decisions, we should check our judgment against the ideas of others. Our experience has shown us that the ideas of those who disagree with us are often the ones we need most to hear. The Ninth Concept puts this aspect of our recovery experience to work in the service environment. When making a decision, our groups, service boards, and committees should actively seek out all available viewpoints.

1. What should we do before making significant decisions?

2. What has our experience shown us?

3. When making a decision, who should seek out all available viewpoints?

An effective group conscience is a fully informed group conscience. The Ninth Concept is one tool we use to help ensure that our group conscience is as well-informed as it can possibly be. In any discussion, it is tempting to ignore dissenting members, especially if the vast majority of members think alike. Yet it is often the lone voice, offering new information of a unique perspective on things that saves us from hasty or misinformed decisions. In Narcotics Anonymous, we are encouraged to respect that lone voice, to protect it, even to seek it out, for without it our service decisions would undoubtedly suffer.

4. What makes an effective group conscience?

5. Should we ignore the dissenting members?

6. What is NA encouraged to do with the lone voice?

Concept Nine also encourages us, individually, to frankly speak our minds in discussions of service issues, even when most other members think differently. No, this concept is not telling us to become perpetual nay-sayers, objecting to anything agreed to by the majority. It does say, however, that we are responsible to share our thoughts and our conscience with our fellow members, carefully explaining our position and listening with equal care to the positions of others. When we show the courage necessary to speak our mind, while also showing respect for one another, we can be confident that we act in the best interests of the NA Fellowship. By

insisting on thorough discussion of important issues, the worst we can do is take a little of each other's time; at best, we protect the fellowship from the consequences of a hasty or misinformed decision.

7. What does Concept Nine encourage us individually to do?

8. What is our responsibility as members in Concept Nine?

9. How do we express our courage in Concept Nine?

10. How should we apply patience in making our decisions?

When a service body is in the process of making a decision, the Ninth Concept can be exercised in a variety of ways. If you are a member of that service body, all you need do is raise your hand and speak. If the point you wish to make is complex, you may wish to put it in writing, so that other members of the board or committee can study it more carefully.

If you are not a member of the service body in question but, as an NA member, still have something to say about a service matter, there are a variety of avenues you can take to express your position. By sharing your views at your group's business meeting, you ensure that your ideas will be included in the mix or group conscience that guides your GSR when she or he participates in service discussions. Many service boards or committees set aside a portion of their agenda for open forums, when you can speak your own mind on issues before the body. Fellowship newsletters and journals, from the local to the world level, often offer space where NA members can share their viewpoints on service matters at hand. Whether or not you are a member of a service body, there are a variety of ways in which you can personally exercise the Ninth Concept.

11. How can the Ninth Concept be exercised in the process of making a decision?

12. Is participation restricted to just the members of the service body? Explain.....

13. What is an open forum?

Our decision-making process is not perfect. Many groups, service boards, and committees acknowledge this, and the value of the minority's position, with every decision they make. Whenever a motion is approved by something less than unanimous consent, these service bodies often ask those who voted against the measure to state their reasons for doing so, either out loud or in writing. If the decision needs to be revised at a later date, such minority opinions may prove invaluable in helping chart a new service course.

14. What is the value of the minority position in the decision-making process?

15. What happens when a motion is approved by something less than unanimous consent?

Concept Nine encourages us to continue to consult group conscience, even after a decision has already been made. If discussions are raised about a question already decided, the body is bound to hear those discussions. It may be that, based on such discussion, a service body will alter its earlier decision. However, if a past decision is questioned, discussion is well heard, and the decision still stands, the time comes from everyone to accept that decision and to cooperate wholeheartedly in its implementation. Halfhearted support of, or outright resistance to, such a decision runs contrary to our principles of surrender and acceptance. Once a decision has been made, reconsidered, and confirmed, we need to respect it, and go on about the business of serving our fellowship.

16. What does Concept Nine encourage us to do?

17. What happens if a past decision is questioned, discussed and the decision still stands?

18. What happens when a decision has been made, reconsidered and confirmed?

19. How do surrender and acceptance apply here?

The expression of the individual conscience to the group is the foundation of group conscience. Without it, we block the guidance of a loving God, our ultimate authority. When a position supported by many of us is challenged by a few of us, our service boards and committees should always treat such input with great respect and careful consideration. The information and insights offered by the few may save us from dangerous mistakes; they may even lead us to new, previously undreamt-of horizons of service, where we might fulfill our fellowship's primary purpose more effectively than ever. For the sake of our fellowship and for the sake of our members yet to come, our groups, service boards, and committees must always carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making processes.

20. What is the foundation of group conscience?

21. What happens without it?

22. How should the input of only a few be handled?

23. Who is affected when our groups, service boards, and committees consider all viewpoints in our decision-making process?

24. What is the spiritual principle of the Ninth Concept and what is the definition?

TENTH CONCEPT

(Fairness)

Any member of a service body can petition that body for the redress of a personal grievance, without fear of reprisal.

The Tenth Concept is our fellowship's guarantee of respect for the individual trusted servant. This concept may seem self-evident, but our belief in the principle involved is so strong that we want to say it loudly and clearly. Narcotics Anonymous is a spiritual society, with high ideals for how we treat each other. Our members, however, are only human, and we sometimes mistreat one another. The Tenth Concept is our spiritual society's promise that if one of us is wronged in the service environment, the aggrieved trusted servant may ask that the wrong be made right.

1. What is the purpose of the Tenth Concept?

2. What is the promise of our spiritual society?

The Tenth Concept's guarantee of the right to appeal for redress of a personal grievance is designed, in part, to protect those who exercise their Ninth Concept responsibility to speak their mind in service discussions. Together, the Ninth and Tenth Concepts support an atmosphere in which our members feel free to express themselves frankly on matters at hand. This open atmosphere is essential in developing an effective group conscience. If, after having demonstrated the courage of their convictions, individuals become the subject of reprisals initiated by those who have disagreed with them, the Tenth Concept allows them to petition the appropriate service body for redress of their grievance. Thus, the respect of our service structure for the rights of the individual NA member is guaranteed. In a fellowship such as ours, whose success is based upon mutual support and cooperation, that kind of respect for the individual is indispensable.

3. Why is the Tenth Concept's guarantee of the right to appeal for redress of a personal grievance designed?

4. How do the Ninth and Tenth concepts work together?

5. What are the rights of the individual NA member?

The Tenth Concept is our fellowship's guarantee of respect for the individual trusted servant. If you think you've been wronged in the course of your participation in an NA service body and wish to apply Concept Ten, talk to your sponsor about it, inventory your own involvement in the matter, pray, and meditate. If, upon reflection, you still believe you have been personally aggrieved and that you should petition for redress, write a letter explaining the situation to your service body, or share your problem in the body's sharing session. The service body then needs to address the matter and, if it agrees that you have been wronged, how to make amends. Hopefully, the Tenth Concept will need to be applied only rarely in NA service. Should the need arise, however, it is here, ready to put our spiritual fellowship's ideals into action.

6. What is the Tenth Concept's guarantee by the fellowship?

7. What should you do if you think you have been wronged in the course of service?

8. After that, if you still feel you have been aggrieved, what do you do next?
9. What is the responsibility of the service body in this matter?
10. What is the purpose of the Tenth Concept?
11. What is the spiritual principle of the Tenth Concept and what is the definition?

ELEVENTH CONCEPT

(Finances)

NA funds are to be used to further our primary purpose, and must be managed responsibly.

NA members around the world contribute money to help our fellowship fulfill its primary purpose. It is incumbent upon every element of our service structure to use those funds to carry the NA recovery message as far as possible. To do that, our service bodies must manage those funds responsibly, accounting fully and accurately for its use to those who have provided it.

1. What is the purpose of NA members contributing money?
2. What is the responsibility of the service structure regarding our funds?

Narcotics Anonymous funds should always be used to further our primary purpose. Money is used to pay the expenses involved in running NA recovery meetings, to inform the public about NA, and to reach addicts who can't get to meetings. It is used to develop, produce, translate, and distribute our message in written form, and to bring our members together in a service community committed to the vision of spreading our message around the world to those in need. All of this is done in support of NA's spiritual aim: to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

3. What should Narcotics Anonymous funds always be used for?
4. What is the purpose for Narcotics Anonymous to have money?
5. What is NA's spiritual aim?

Service funds aren't easy to come by. To fulfill our primary purpose, we need all of the financial resources at our fellowship's disposal. Our groups, service boards, and committees must make prudent use of the money we give them, refusing to spend money frivolously or self-indulgently. With NA's primary purpose in mind, our services will avoid wasting money, using the funds they've been given to carry our message as effectively as possible.

6. What is the definition of prudent?

7. How does the Fifth Tradition and the Seventh Tradition apply to the Eleventh Concept?

One way we apply Concept Eleven is by establishing clear spending priorities and measuring each proposed expenditure against that priority list. Many groups, service boards, and committees have more items on their priority lists than their budgets will allow. In such cases, only the highest priorities can be funded.

8. What is one way Concept Eleven is applied?

9. Which priorities should come first on a list of priorities?

Money is only one of the resources we must responsibly prioritize. While the eleventh Concept applies directly to the management of funds, it also has implications for the management of all our service resources. Most projects depend as much on ideas, information, conscience, and members' time and willingness as they do on money. If we have the funds needed to carry out a project but lack the time or the ideas, we'd best wait until we've gathered all the needed resources before proceeding. If we don't, we will have wasted NA service funds. In responsibly planning and prioritizing our service efforts, we must consider the total resource picture, not just our finances.

10. What other resources must we prioritize other than money?

11. What does the Eleventh Concept suggest that we do after we have the money needed?

12. Other than finances, what other responsibilities must be considered?

In setting priorities, we may be tempted to look only at our own needs, tightly holding on to funds, spending money only on our own projects, and neglecting our role in providing needed funds to all levels of service. That kind of thinking is contrary to the Eleventh Concept. High on our list of priorities should be a commitment to further the goals of NA as a whole. For NA to deliver the services necessary to keep growing and fulfilling our primary purpose around the world, the flow of funds must not bottleneck at any point in our structure.

13. What should we consider when setting our priorities about spending money?

14. What should we consider about the flow of funds to NA as a whole?

While groups are responsible to fund our services; they are also responsible to carefully manage their service contributions. When contributing money, groups should ask themselves what that money will do once it leaves their hands. Will it aid in the delivery of useful services to the groups? Will it help carry our message to the addict who still suffers? Will the service board or committee use it wisely? Our groups are free to decide for themselves how much they will contribute to the different levels of our service structure. We encourage them to do so, and to do so responsibly.

15. What responsibilities do the groups have with their funds?

16. Who decides how much funds the group will contribute?

This is not to suggest that groups earmark contributions for any particular subcommittees. The groups have created the service structure not only to deliver services on their behalf, but to *coordinate* those services. In delegating to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill its responsibilities, the groups have also delegated the authority to coordinate the allocation of service resources at each level of service. That way, the needs and goals of all fields of service can be effectively balanced against the total resources of the coordinating service body.

17. Why have the groups created the service structure?

18. What is the balance in the needs and goals of all fields of service?

Clear, frank communication from our service structure is the best way to help our groups contribute their funds in a responsible way. When the groups receive full, regular reports on the activities of their service boards and committees, they begin to see the total service picture. The groups should also receive information on how much those activities cost. That kind of communication helps assure our groups that their contributions are being handled responsibly.

19. What is the best way to help our groups contribute their funds in a responsible way?

20. How do the groups see the total service picture?

21. What should the groups receive from the service structure?

Direct group contributions to our service structure encourage responsible management of service funds and help our services maintain their focus on NA's primary purpose. It is our experience that, when we make a commitment to fund the work of each level of the service structure exclusively through group contributions, we find it easier to maintain a strong link between our groups and our other service units. Our groups tend to be more aware of the work being done on their behalf and of their responsibility to provide their boards and committees with the necessary financial resources. When all levels of our service structure receive direct financial support from the groups, the bonds of mutual responsibility are strengthened between them. Additionally, by freeing our service boards and committees from the need to engage in fundraising activities, we make it possible for those service units to devote their full energies to the fulfillment of NA's primary purpose.

22. How do direct group contributions to our service structure encourage responsibility?

23. What creates a strong link between the groups and our other service units?

24. How do the bonds of mutual responsibility get strengthened between the groups and the service structure?

25. What happens when our service boards and committees are freed from the need to engage in fundraising activities?

Accountability is an essential aspect of responsible NA financial management. When the members of Narcotics Anonymous provide groups, committees, offices, and conventions with funds, our service structure is responsible to account for how those funds are used. Regular financial reports, open books, and periodic audits of NA accounts, as described in the various guides developed for NA treasurers, help our members be sure their contributions are being used well, and help our services remain financially accountable to those they serve. Treasurers' reports help us see how well our actual service spending matches up with the priorities we've established. Consistent financial records help us make realistic spending plans for future service activities. Regular financial reporting and auditing also help deter the theft of NA service funds; and if funds are stolen, regular audits ensure that such thefts cannot go long unnoticed.

When NA members contribute service funds, they expect their money to be used carefully, and to be used for the sole purpose of furthering our primary purpose. By accepting those contributions, our groups, service boards, and committees make a commitment to use those funds to carry the NA message, and to manage them responsibly.

26. What is an essential aspect of responsible NA financial management?

27. What is the definition of Accountability?

28. How does our service structure provide the accountability?

29. What do our treasurers reports help us see?

30. What will deter the theft of NA service funds?

31. What are the expectations of NA members when they contribute their funds?

32. What is the commitment of the groups, service boards, and committees when they accept the funds?

33. What is the spiritual principle of the Eleventh Concept and what is the definition?

TWELFTH CONCEPT

(Service, not government)

In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous our structure should always be one of service, never of government.

Selfless service is an essentially spiritual endeavor. Our Twelfth Step says, in part, that "having had a spiritual awakening," we individually "tried to carry this message to addicts." Our

collective service efforts arise from that same spiritual foundation. Having experienced the results of this program in our own lives, we join together to carry the recovery message farther than we could individually. NA service is not about forcing our will or our ideas on others; rather, it is about humbly serving them, without expectation of reward.

1. Define selfless service?

2. How does this apply to our collective service efforts?

3. What is NA service not about and what is NA service about?

This principle underlies all we do in our groups, service boards, and committees. The Twelfth Concept reminds us that we ourselves have experienced recovery only because others put this selfless principle into action before us, taking the time and the care to carry the NA message to us when we were still suffering from active addiction. In service, we express our gratitude for the recovery others have shared with us by carrying ours to others. Nothing could be further from the drive to rule or direct than this spirit of selfless service.

4. What is reciprocal to what we are asked to do in our groups, service boards, and committees?

Our groups were created because we found that, alone, we could not “stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live.” In the same way, our groups have joined together to create a service structure, a cooperative effort designed to help them carry the message further than they could carry it separately. The service structure has not been created as a way for some groups to force others to do their bidding. Rather, it has been developed to combine the strength of our groups to better fulfill necessary services which usually cannot be fulfilled well, if at all, by individual groups: developing and distributing materials that share our message in print, providing information about NA to the general public, transmitting our message to addicts who cannot attend meetings, and supporting new groups and new NA communities. NA service is the cooperative effort of trusted servants receiving guidance from the groups, not a rule enforced by a governing body.

5. How is this paragraph similar to the Ninth Tradition? The Fifth Tradition? Hospitals and Institutions? Public Information? Outreach?

The process of joining together to create the service structure is an expression of our groups' humility. Separately, they can do far, far less to fulfill our fellowship's primary purpose than they can do together. In the same way, the various elements of our service structure each play their own particular role in the broader Narcotics Anonymous service plan. All the elements depend on all the others for their effectiveness; when any one element attempts to act as an agency of government, rather than a vehicle for service, it strains the ties that bind us all

together, threatening our fellowship's overall effectiveness in fulfilling its primary purpose. Humility is an essential attribute of nongoverning service in Narcotics Anonymous.

6. Explain how humility works in this paragraph.....

In order to serve well, each element of our service structure must make an earnest effort at effective communication. As groups, as trusted servants, as service boards and committees, we must share all with others, and listen carefully and respectfully to their words to us. Others may use language to divide the strength of their opponents, so that they may rule them; in NA service, we share with one another so that we may combine our strength, the better to fulfill our fellowship's primary purpose. To maintain our accountability to those we serve, we are bound to inform them in a complete, accurate, and concise fashion of our activities. The nongoverning nature of our service structure dictates that we seek others' advice in our own decisions, their consent in decisions affecting them, and their cooperation in decisions affecting us all. Open, honest, and straightforward communication nurtures the spirit of service in our fellowship, and poisons the impulse to govern.

7. What is the importance of effective communication?

8. What nurtures the spirit of service in our fellowship?

The kind of authority that our groups have delegated to our boards and committees is the authority to serve, not to govern. Each element of our service structure, from the group to the world, has its own role to play; all, however, serve together as a team, striving toward a common goal, "that no addict seeking recovery need die without having the chance to find a new way of life." It is our sometimes hard-won experience that quality service, just like quality recovery, can only be accomplished in an atmosphere of mutual respect, mutual support, and mutual trust. Together, we recover, and together, we serve---this is the spiritual core of our program, the foundation of our fellowship. A structure based on that foundation could only be one of service, never of government.

9. What kind of authority have the groups delegated to our boards and committees?

10. Explain how Anonymity applies to the Twelfth Concept?

11. How do the steps apply to our trusted servants?

12. How does this apply to our Common Welfare?

13. What is the spiritual principle of the Twelfth Concept and what is the definition?