

Three Legacies. Six Programs.

This is a visual exegesis of the three primary texts used by six of the largest recovery programs based on the Twelve Steps, Traditions and Concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous. As A.A. established the Twelve Steps, Traditions and Concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous, other programs sought permission to adapt the steps to the specific needs of their Fellowships.

A.A.'s original text and the unique changes made by other fellowships are in black; gray text corresponds to the original A.A. texts.

AA 1935 New York, New York	Al-Anon 1951 Virginia Beach, Virginia	NA 1953 Van Nuys, California	OA 1960 Rio Rancho, New Mexico	GA 1957 Los Angeles, California	DA 1976 Needham, Massachusetts
<p>Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable. 2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him. 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. 7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all. 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. 10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it. 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out. 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs. 	<p>Twelve Steps of Al-Anon</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable. 2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him. 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. 7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all. 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. 10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it. 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out. 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs. 	<p>Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable. 2. We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. 3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him. 4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. 5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. 6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. 7. We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. 8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all. 9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. 10. We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it. 11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out. 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs. 	<p>The Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We admitted we were powerless over food—that our lives had become unmanageable. 2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him. 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. 7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all. 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. 10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it. 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out. 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs. 	<p>Gamblers Anonymous Principles for Recovery</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We admitted we were powerless over gambling - that our lives had become unmanageable. 2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to a normal way of thinking and living. 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of this Power of our own understanding. 4. Made a searching and fearless moral and financial inventory of ourselves. 5. Admitted to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. 6. Were entirely ready to have these defects of character removed. 7. Humbly asked God (of our understanding) to remove our shortcomings. 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all. 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. 10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it. 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out. 12. Having made an effort to practice these principles in all our affairs, we tried to carry this message to other compulsive gamblers. 	<p>The Twelve Steps of Debtors Anonymous</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We admitted we were powerless over debt, that our lives had become unmanageable. 2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him. 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove these defects of character. 7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all. 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. 10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it. 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out. 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive debtors, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.
<p>Twelve Traditions Of Alcoholics Anonymous (Short Form)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity. 2. 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. 3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking. 4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole. 5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers. 6. 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. 7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. 8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers. 9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve. 10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy. 11. 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. 12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities. 	<p>Al-Anon's Twelve Traditions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity. 2. For our group purpose there is but one authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants—they do not govern. 3. The relatives of alcoholics, when gathered together for mutual aid, may call themselves an Al-Anon Family Group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend. 4. Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or AA as a whole. 5. Each Al-Anon Family Group has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of AA ourselves, by encouraging and understanding our alcoholic relatives, and by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics. 6. Our Family Groups ought never endorse, finance or lend our name to any outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim. Although a separate entity, we should always co-operate with Alcoholics Anonymous. 7. Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. 8. Al-Anon Twelfth Step work should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers. 9. Our groups, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve. 10. The Al-Anon Family Groups have no opinion on outside issues; hence our name ought never be drawn into public controversy. 11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, and TV. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all AA members. 12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities. 	<p>Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon NA unity. 2. 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. 3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using. 4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole. 5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. 6. An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose. 7. Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. 8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers. 9. NA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve. 10. Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy. 11. 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. 12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities. 	<p>The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity. 2. 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. 3. The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively. 4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole. 5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers. 6. An OA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose. 7. Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. 8. Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers. 9. OA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve. 10. Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy. 11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, television and other public media of communication. 12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities. 	<p>Principles to Maintain Unity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon group unity. 2. [...] Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern. 3. The only requirement for Gamblers Anonymous membership is a desire to stop gambling. 4. Each group should be self-governing except in matters affecting other groups or Gamblers Anonymous as a whole. 5. Gamblers Anonymous has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive gambler who still suffers. 6. Gamblers Anonymous ought never endorse, finance or lend the Gamblers Anonymous name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose. 7. Every Gamblers Anonymous group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. 8. Gamblers Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers. 9. Gamblers Anonymous as such ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve. 10. Gamblers Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the Gamblers Anonymous name ought never be drawn into public controversy. 11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films and television and Internet. 12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of the Gamblers Anonymous program, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities. 	<p>The Twelve Traditions of Debtors Anonymous</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon D.A. unity. 2. 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. 3. The only requirement for D.A. membership is a desire to stop incurring unsecured debt. 4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or D.A. as a whole. 5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the debtor who still suffers. 6. A D.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the D.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose. 7. Every D.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. 8. Debtors Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers. 9. D.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve. 10. Debtors Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the D.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy. 11. 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. 12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.
<p>The Twelve Concepts for World Service</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship. 2. The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in its world affairs. 3. To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A.—the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional "Right of Decision." 4. At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge. 5. Throughout our structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration. 6. The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board. 7. The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purse for final effectiveness. 8. The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities. 9. Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees. 10. Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined. 11. The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern. 12. The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action. 	<p>Al-Anon's Twelve Concepts of Service</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ultimate responsibility and authority for Al-Anon world services belongs to the Al Anon groups. 2. The Al-Anon Family Groups have delegated complete administrative and operational authority to their Conference and its service arms. 3. The right of decision makes effective leadership possible. 4. Participation is the key to harmony. 5. The rights of appeal and petition protect minorities and insure that they be heard. 6. The Conference acknowledges the primary administrative responsibility of the Trustees. 7. The Trustees have legal rights while the rights of the Conference are traditional. 8. The Board of Trustees delegates full authority for routine management of Al Anon Headquarters to its executive committees. 9. Good personal leadership at all service levels is a necessity. In the field of world service the Board of Trustees assumes the primary leadership. 10. Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority and double-headed management is avoided. 11. The World Service Office is composed of selected committees, executives and staff members. 12. The spiritual foundation for Al-Anon's world services is contained in the General Warranties of the Conference, Article 12 of the Charter. <p>General Warranties of the Conference</p> <p>In all proceedings the World Service Conference of Al-Anon shall observe the spirit of the Traditions:</p> <p>That only sufficient operating funds, including an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle</p> <p>That no Conference member shall be placed in unqualified authority over other members;</p> <p>That all decisions be reached by discussion vote and whenever possible by [...] unanimity;</p> <p>That no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy;</p> <p>That though the Conference serves Al-Anon it shall never perform any act of government; and that like the fellowship of Al-Anon Family Groups which it serves, it shall always remain democratic in thought and action.</p>	<p>Twelve Concepts for NA Service</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 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. 2. The final responsibility and authority for NA services rests with the NA groups. 3. The NA groups delegate to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it. 4. Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants. 5. For each responsibility assigned to the service structure, a single point of decision and accountability should be clearly defined. 6. Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions. 7. 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 processes. 8. Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications. 9. All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making processes. 10. Any member of a service body can petition that body for the redress of a personal grievance, without fear of reprisal. 11. NA funds are to be used to further our primary purpose, and must be managed responsibly. 12. In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous, our structure should always be one of service, never of government. 	<p>The Twelve Concepts of OA Service</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ultimate responsibility and authority for OA world services reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship. 2. The OA groups have delegated to World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority and effective conscience of OA as a whole. 3. The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible. 4. The right of participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process. 5. Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered. 6. The World Service Business Conference has entrusted the Board of Trustees with the primary responsibility for the administration of Overeaters Anonymous. 7. The Board of Trustees has legal rights and responsibilities accorded to them by OA Bylaws, Subpart A; the rights and responsibilities of the World Service Business Conference are accorded to it by Tradition and by OA Bylaws, Subpart B. 8. The Board of Trustees has delegated to its Executive Committee the responsibility to administer the OA World Service Office. 9. Able, trusted servants, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are indispensable for effective functioning at all service levels. 10. Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority; therefore, duplication of efforts is avoided. 11. Trustee administration of the World Service Office should always be assisted by the best standing committees, executives, staffs and consultants. 12. The spiritual foundation for OA service ensures that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) No OA committee or service body shall ever become the seat of perilous wealth or power; (b) Sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, shall be OA's prudent financial principle; (c) No OA member shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority; (d) All important decisions shall be reached by discussion, vote and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; (e) No service action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; and (f) No OA service committee or service board shall ever perform any acts of government, and each [...] shall always remain democratic in thought and action. 	<p>Gamblers Anonymous Guidance Code</p> <p>Gamblers Anonymous uses a Guidance Code which replaces the Twelve Concepts of Service used by AA. It contains many similar principles, but it is unique to Gamblers Anonymous.</p> <p>"The Guidance Code of Gamblers Anonymous is not to be construed as a legal document. The Guidance Code is a statement of aims, purpose and service structure of the Fellowship."</p> <p>See the <i>Gamblers Anonymous Guidance Code</i> for the complete text of the code.</p>	<p>The Twelve Concepts for DA World Service</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ultimate responsibility and authority for Debtors Anonymous World Services should always remain with the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship as expressed through the DA groups. 2. The D.A. groups have delegated complete administrative and operational authority to General Service Board. The groups have made the Conference the voice and conscience for the whole Fellowship, excepting for any change in the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and in Article 10, the General Warranties, of the Conference Charter. 3. As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relationship between the groups, the World Service Conference, and the Debtors Anonymous General Service Board, it is suggested that we endow these elements of world service with a traditional "Right of Decision" in order to ensure effective leadership. 4. Throughout our Conference structure, we maintain at all levels a traditional "Right of Participation," ensuring a voting representation. 5. The traditional Rights of Appeal and Petition protect the minority opinion and ensure the consideration of personal grievances. 6. The Conference acknowledges the primary administrative responsibility of the Debtors Anonymous General Service Board. 7. The Conference recognizes that the Charter and the Bylaws of the Debtors Anonymous General Service Board serve as governing documents and that the Trustees have legal rights, while the rights of the Conference are spiritual, rooted in the Twelve Traditions. The Concepts are not legal instruments. 8. The Debtors Anonymous General Service Board of Trustees assumes primary leadership for larger matters of overall policy, finance, and custodial oversight, and delegates authority for routine management of the General Service Office. 9. Good leaders, together with appropriate methods for choosing them at all levels, are necessary. At the world service level, the Board of Trustees assumes primary leadership for DA as a whole. 10. Every DA service responsibility should be equal to its service authority as defined by tradition, resolution, or DA's Charter. 11. While the Trustees hold final authority for DA World Service administration, they will be assisted by the best possible staff members and consultants. Therefore, serious care and consideration will always be given to the compensation, selection, induction to service, rotation, and assignments for special rights and duties for all staff with a proper basis for determining financial compensation. 12. The Conference of Debtors Anonymous will observe the spirit of the Traditions, taking care not to become powerful and wealthy; having sufficient operating funds with a prudent reserve; having no authority over any other members; making important decisions by discussing and voting on issues wherever possible by substantial unanimity; not acting in a punitive way; not inciting public controversy; never performing any acts of government; and finally, always remaining democratic in thought and action.