

# THE STAND

Official Newsletter of SWTA 68, District 12

13 Aug 2023

- From your DCM
- Tradition Eight: Paid Staff Help Make 12 Step Work Possible, Tradition 8 Short and Long Form
- Tradition 8 Step - Tradition parallel
- Tradition 8 Checklist:
- SWTA 68 Events
- Group Events



*"Whenever anyone anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there, and for that, I am responsible" ·*

Greetings District 12 Family!

I first want to express my gratitude for the support and prayers these last couple of months while I have been away. I have missed you all very much, but it was such a relief to know that District 12 was in good hands and that everything carried on smoothly in my absence. Thank you to those of you who have reached out and to those of you who have kept me informed.

I was able to make it to the Summer Workshop in Brownwood and had a wonderful time as usual. I paid extra close attention to the Delegate Report so that I could get caught up with the rest of you from when Barbara gave the report from the General Service Conference at our district meeting last month. I was reminded of just how blessed our area is to be served by a delegate who is so transparent with us, well-informed, and actively practices spiritual principles! Other highlights of the assembly included a Spirit of Rotation workshop and as a group we took our area inventory and openly discussed what we feel we are doing well as an area and what we could improve on.

I am already looking very forward to the upcoming Southwest Regional Forum in El Paso September 29 – October 1 and the Fall Area Assembly in Temple October 20 – 22. As always, I encourage each and every GSR to make every attempt to attend the Fall Area as this is our final area assembly for Panel 72 and the voting conference in which we will elect our new area officers for Panel 74. It is exciting to realize that by the time of both of these upcoming events, we will have voted in our new DCM for the next panel! I am excited to pass along my knowledge and experience to that person, but it is also bittersweet as my term as DCM went by so quickly! Voting for all district positions will take place at our next district meeting on September 10, 2023. I have asked Donita S., our area registrar, to come facilitate the elections. Please spread the word to your groups!

In the meantime, please email me at [district12@aa-swta.org](mailto:district12@aa-swta.org) if you have any questions or comments for me. I love and appreciate you all.

In love & service,

Courtney L.

## **Tradition Eight**

### **Paid Staff Help Make 12 Step Work Possible**

The eighth tradition makes it clear that A.A. may employ professional secretaries and other professional staff members. Their job is not to DO Twelve Step work; but to make Twelve Step work possible. "Our Twelfth Step is never paid for, but those who labor in service for us are worthy of their hire." (12×12, Page 171)

There is a difference between doing twelve step work for pay and working for a master's degree as a counselor in the field of alcoholism and being of service in a hospital where more and more newcomers first find sobriety. Professional counselors do their counseling job and THEN go to A.A. meetings and carry the message "for free and for fun" just like the rest of us. Their job is not a substitute for working an A.A. program.

We must always remember that we cannot do the work of carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic if we don't have people in our various service centers assisting us in the logistics of US carrying out our primary purpose. We see that our few paid workers are performing only those service tasks that our volunteers cannot consistently handle. Primarily these folks are not doing Twelfth Step work. They are just making more and better Twelfth Step work possible.

We give freely what has been given freely to us.

#### **Short Form:**

"Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers."

#### **Long Form:**

"Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional. We define professionalism as the occupation of counseling alcoholics for fees or hire. But we may employ alcoholics where they are going to perform those services for which we might otherwise have to engage nonalcoholics. Such special services may be well recompensed. But our usual A.A. Twelfth Step work is never to be paid for."

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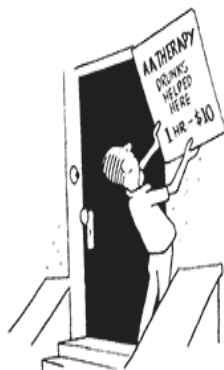
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## Step-Tradition Parallel

The spiritual principle behind the eighth step is “willingness and love” to work the steps. The eighth tradition takes that idea one step further and teaches me that to have good relationships with other people, I must be “zealous” in carrying the message. Otherwise my message is suspect. In our meditation, let us examine the state of our “zeal” in our relationships with God, A.A., mates and work. Let us begin with the state of our “zeal” in carrying the message to the sick and suffering alcoholic.

### The Eighth Tradition

*Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.*



Spiritual as it is, A.A. remains very much of this world. The Eighth Tradition, like the Seventh, focuses on a vulgar five-letter word that isn't actually mentioned in either: money. Many of us have had to explain to some cynical prospect, “No, I'm not a social worker. I don't get paid for talking with you. I'm doing it because it's the best way to stay sober myself.”

This does not mean, of course, that the idea of turning professional has never entered any A.A.'s mind. In the lean years, Bill W. did think of becoming a lay therapist to earn money through his experience in helping alcoholics. But, with a strong nudge from the group conscience, he soon realized that he could never hang out a shingle reading “Bill W., A.A. Therapist, \$10 an Hour.” It became clear to the early members that no A.A. should ever ask or accept payment for “carrying this message to somebody else, person to person and face to face.”



But new questions arose as membership grew and the word of hope spread, sending thousands of alcoholics in search of A.A. The first intergroups or central offices were usually manned by A.A. volunteers; now, most such offices are so busy that full-time employees are needed as well. Naturally, A.A.'s are better suited to such jobs than are nonmembers—but these A.A.'s then being paid for doing Twelfth Step work? No. In the office, they are just paving the way for this work. Arranging to get a sick drunk into a hospital, telling a shaky newcomer where the nearest meeting is tonight, they are helping to make it possible for that alcoholic to hear the message “person to person and face to face.”

A similar development has taken place at the Fellowship's “headquarters.” Once a tiny office for one co-founder (Bill) and one secretary, it has grown into the present General Service Office, fully staffed, with a big mailroom keeping the lines of communication open throughout A.A. worldwide. The employees, both A.A. and nonalcoholic, are paid on a scale comparable to that in profit-making enterprises, so that the office force can function dependably. And the A.A. staff members are in exactly the same position as the A.A. intergroup employees. Suppose you drop in at G.S.O. one day when you're in New York. Staff members who pause to chat with you may have been working on next year's Conference or corresponding with a group in your home area, helping it to carry the message more effectively. For that, they are paid biweekly checks. But you may also hear them mention to other staff members plans for taking a newcomer to a meeting in the evening or for giving an A.A. talk to a neighborhood group the next week. For that, they are paid only with their own continuing sobriety.

In these office jobs and in other assignments, members are actually paid for their business and professional skills. Working at a G.S.O. desk, on Conference-approved books and pamphlets, or on the Grapevine, these A.A.'s use their abilities as correspondents, managers, writers, editors, artists, proofreaders—as well as their understanding of A.A. from the inside. On occasion, volunteers have given their time and talent to all these services, and their contributions are deeply appreciated. But what if the Fellowship decided that all such assignments should be handled *only* by unpaid volunteers? In present-day A.A., there's too great a volume of work to be done in spare hours here and there, and only the rich or the retired could afford to work full-time. If we tried to find in this limited group people qualified for particular tasks, obviously the field would be narrowed down—too often, down to nobody at all.



There would be another problem in using volunteers alone: It seems ungrateful—or, at least, it's socially awkward—to criticize or reject a job done for free. But paid jobs for A.A. get quite a going-over! Take our literature, for instance (like this pamphlet). Whatever the subject, we want to be sure that each piece expresses as clearly as possible the view of the group conscience of A.A. as a whole. So any new project must first be approved by the Conference. Once it is in process, the Literature Committee of the General Service Board keeps a careful eye on it at every stage. Frequently, drastic changes are required. The “finished” product then must be okayed both by that committee and by the Conference Literature Committee, and further revisions are often—

“Now wait a minute!” some old-timer may interrupt. “What's going on here? Didn't Dr. Bob say, ‘Let's keep it simple?’...”

## Traditions Checklist

***These questions \* were originally published in Grapevine in conjunction with a series of articles on the Twelve Traditions that ran from November 1969 to September 1971. While they were originally intended as suggestions for individual use, many AA groups have since adopted them and use them as a basis for wider discussion.***

### Tradition Eight Checklist

1. Is my own behavior accurately described by the Traditions? If not, what needs changing?
2. When I chafe about any particular Tradition, do I realize how it affects others?
3. Do I sometimes try to get some reward—even if not money—for my personal AA efforts?
4. Do I try to sound in AA like an expert on alcoholism? On recovery? On medicine? On sociology? On AA itself? On psychology? On spiritual matters? Or, heaven help me, even on humility?
5. Do I make an effort to understand what AA employees do? What workers in other alcoholism agencies do? Can I distinguish clearly among them?
6. In my own AA life, have I any experiences, which illustrate the wisdom of this Tradition?

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## **Southwest Texas Area 68 Events**

### **2023 SW Regional Forum**

September 29, 2023 @ 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Radisson El Paso Airport Hotel El Paso, TX

Stay tuned for more details!

### **2023 Fall Conference & Voting Assembly**

October 20 - October 22

Hosted by District 5

Hilton Garden Inn Temple Medical Center

## Group Events.

### **The 2211 Group has:**

- Speaker Meetings the second Sat. of the month at 6:00 PM
- Beginners Meetings Tuesdays at 8:00 pm
- Men's Meetings Wednesdays at 7:00 pm
- Woman's Meetings Thursdays at 5:30 pm
- Group Conscience the last Saturday of the month at 11:15 AM
- Birthday Night the last Saturday of the month with a pot luck dinner at 7:00 and birthday meeting at 8:00pm
- Big Book Studies Sundays at 8:00 pm

### **Bandera Group has:**

- Speaker Meeting, second Sat. of the month, 7:00-9:00 pm
- Open discussion meetings at Noon, Monday—Saturday
- 12 and 12 Meeting Monday 8:00 pm
- Grapevine Meeting Tuesday 8:00 pm
- Big Book Meeting Wednesday 8:00 pm
- NA Meeting 6 Thursday 6:30 pm
- Open Discussion Meeting Thursday 8:00 pm
- Open All Woman's Meeting Friday 6:30 pm
- Popsicle Stick Meeting Friday 8:00 pm
- Open Discussion Meeting Saturday 8:00 pm
- Open Discussion Meeting Sunday at 8:00 pm