

5th Tradition

Short form

“Each Group has but one primary purpose to carry its message to the Alcoholic who still suffers”

Long form

Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose- that of carrying its message to the Alcoholic who still suffers.

“Shoemaker, stick to thy last... better do one thing supremely well than many badly. That is the central theme of this tradition. Around it our society gathers in unity. The very life of our fellowship requires the perseverance of this principal. (12 and 12 pg 150)

Often unthinking enthusiasm puts a group off the main track. One for instance, offered an “expanded AA. Program” that included helping newcomers to find jobs. Tradition Five doesn’t frown on the individual AA. Who tells another about a good opening. But when the group turns itself into an employment agency, newcomers may get confused about their primary purpose. AA.’s function is to help them get sober- then they can find work for themselves. (The Twelve Traditions Illustrated)

We keenly realize that any fundamental disunity among us could instantly disillusion tens of thousands who would again turn their faces to the wall. Hence those disruptions common to great wealth, power, or controversy, ought never be for us. Too many of the “million who don’t know” would surely die. So long as we remain grateful for what has befallen us, and for so long as this Tradition of high and single purpose is indelibly emblazoned on our hearts, our destiny will be assured. We shall be worthy of God’s Providence. (The Language of The Heart pg 116)

Our group’s single purpose is to carry the message. Ask ourselves: What can we do about our solitary purpose? What is our responsibility to A.A.? What can I do as an individual and What can my home group do to carry this out? How can we carry a unified message of Recovery from the disease of Alcoholism?