

## Tradition VIII

**SHORT FORM: 'ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS SHOULD REMAIN FOREVER NON-PROFESSIONAL, BUT OUR SERVICE CENTRES MAY EMPLOY SPECIAL WORKERS.'**

**LONG FORM: 'ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS SHOULD REMAIN FOREVER NON-PROFESSIONAL. WE DEFINE PROFESSIONALISM AS THE OCCUPATION OF COUNSELLING ALCOHOLICS FOR FEES OR HIRE. BUT WE MAY EMPLOY ALCOHOLICS WHERE THEY ARE GOING TO PERFORM THOSE SERVICES FOR WHICH WE MAY OTHERWISE HAVE TO ENGAGE NON-ALCOHOLICS. SUCH SPECIAL SERVICES MAY BE WELL RECOMPENSED. BUT OUR USUAL A.A. '12 STEP' WORK IS NEVER TO BE PAID FOR.'**

Make a list of areas of your life, e.g.

Home  
Work  
AA  
Friends  
Other

Ask, with each of these areas (where relevant):

- Do I give for fun and for free expecting nothing in return?
- Do I talk down or across to people?
- Do I share more than I tell?
- Do I think and act like a professional in an amateur setting?
- Do I try and handle everything myself or do I engage others when it makes more sense?
- Do I separate Twelfth-Step work from other alcoholism-related activities?
- Do I carry my AA experience into all I do?
- Do I resist any payment or return for outside activities that stray into Twelfth-Step work?
- Do I refuse gifts or reimbursement of costs by people I am trying to carry the message to?

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There are four bases on which I can take action

- Reward (professionalism—giving to get)
- Emotion (doing what you want to do, when you want to do it)
- Obedience (acting on principle not emotion)
- Enthusiasm (being fired by God within)

Questions:

- What is my experience of living based on these motivations?
- When I live based on reward, what happens when I do not get the reward?
- When I live based on emotion, what happens when my emotions change?
- How reliable are emotions as a guide to what is in the best interests of all?
- Am I guilty of complying but not surrendering?
- In what areas am I holding back from surrendering? Why?

## **Tradition VIII ideas and quotations**

Acting based on reward imprisons me. Acting based on emotion makes me volatile, unreliable, and guilty. Acting based on enthusiasm is my aim. Acting based on obedience is my safety net when enthusiasm is absent.

'Freely ye have received; freely give.' (Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions)

To act based on enthusiasm means to act whilst conscious of God within.

'Joy is the infallible sign of the presence of God' (Teilhard de Chardin)

But God is always within! For me to be aware of God within, that which blocks my consciousness of God must be removed.

My attitude towards God is either one of gratitude or blame.

'For all that has been—thanks! For all that shall be—yes!' (prayer by Dag Hammarskjöld)

'If it's not good, it's not God' (Ed M.)