



Checklist of Relapse Symptoms

1. *Exhaustion* - Allowing oneself to become overly tired; usually associated with work addiction as an excuse for not facing personal frustrations.
2. *Dishonesty* - Begins with pattern of little lies; escalated to self-delusion and making excuses for not doing what's called for.
3. *Impatience* - I want what I want NOW. Others aren't doing what I think they should or living the way I know is right.
4. *Argumentative* - No point is too small or insignificant not to be debated to the point of anger and submission.
5. *Depression* - All unreasonable, unaccountable despair should be exposed and discussed, not repressed: what is the "exact nature" of those feelings?
6. *Frustration* - Controlled anger/resentment when things don't go according to our plans. Lack of acceptance. See #3.
7. *Self-pity* - Feeling victimized, put-upon, used unappreciated: convinced we are being singled out for bad luck.
8. *Cockiness* - Got it made. Know all there is to know. Can go anywhere, including bars, carry outs, boozy parties.
9. *Complacency* - Like #8, no longer sees value of daily program, meetings, contact with other alcoholics, (especially sponsor!), feels healthy, on top of the world, things are going well. Heck, may even be cured!
10. *Expecting too much of others* - Why can't they read my mind? I've changed, what's holding them up? If they just do what I know is best for them? Leads to feeling misunderstood, unappreciated. See #6.
11. *Letting up on disciplines* - Allowing established habits of recovery - meditations, prayer, spiritual reading, AA contact, daily inventory, meetings - to slip out of our routines; allowing recovery to get boring and no longer stimulating for growth. Why bother?!
12. *Using mood-altering chemicals* - May have a valid medical reason, but misused to help avoid the real problems of impending alcoholic relapse.
13. *Wanting too much* - Setting unrealistic goals: not providing for short-term successes; placing too much value on material success, not enough on value of spiritual growth.
14. *Forgetting gratitude* - Because of several listed above, may lose sight of the abundant blessings in our everyday lives (too focused on # 13.)
15. *"It can't happen to me..." attitude* - Feeling immune; forgetting what we know about the disease of alcoholism and its progressive nature.
16. *Omnipotence* - A combination of several attitudes listed above; leads to ignoring danger signs, disregarding warnings and advice from fellow members.

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9 Nine IX

STEP

“Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.”

After taking this preliminary trial at making amends, we may enjoy such a sense of relief that we conclude our task is finished. We will want to rest on our laurels. The temptation to skip the more humiliating and dreaded meetings that still remain may be great. We will often manufacture plausible excuses for dodging these issues entirely. Or we may just procrastinate, telling ourselves the time is not yet, when in reality we have already passed up many a fine chance to right a serious wrong. Let's not talk prudence while practicing evasion.

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TRADITION

“AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”

1. Do I still try to boss things in AA?
2. Do I resist formal aspects of AA because I fear them as authoritative?
3. Am I mature enough to understand and use all elements of the AA program—even if no one makes me do so with a sense of personal responsibility?
4. Do I exercise patience and humility in any AA job I take?
5. Am I aware of all those to whom I am responsible in any AA job?
6. Why doesn't every AA group need a constitution and bylaws?
7. Have I learned to step out of an AA job gracefully—and profit thereby—when the time comes?
8. What has rotation to do with anonymity? With humility?

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CONCEPT

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.

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TREATMENT: GROUP COMMITMENTS

ALCOHOPE

Meeting Open to AA Community
5925 37th St, Vero Beach, FL 32966
778-7215

CENTER FOR EMOTIONAL & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

CEBH - Meeting Closed to Public
1190 37th St, Vero Beach, FL 32960
563-4666

TUESDAYS

SATURDAYS

Royal Palm	Sept 7	Indian River Women's	Sept 11
Serenity House	Sept 14	King's Highway	Sept 18
South Vero	Sept 21	Midnight Oil	Sept 25
Candlelight	Sept 28	New Awakening	Oct 2
Early Risers	Oct 5	Noontime Recovery	Oct 9
Easy Does It	Oct 12	ODAAT	Oct 16
Free & Easy	Oct 19	Sebastian Freedom	Oct 23
Friday Young People	Oct 26	South Vero	Oct 30

MONDAYS

South Vero	Sept 13	Safe Harbor	Oct 18
Friday Young People	Sept 20	South Vero	Oct 25
Indian River Thursday	Sept 27	Friday Young People	Nov 1
Indian River Women's	Oct 4	Indian River Thursday	Nov 8
Noontime Recovery	Oct 11	Indian River Women's	Nov 15

Alcohope and CEBH meetings are sponsored by the Treatment Committee of the Indian River Central Office of Alcoholics Anonymous and should be conducted in keeping with AA guidelines.

If your group would like to participate in the rotating commitment for carrying the AA message into these facilities, please contact the Treatment Committee Chair, Judy W. at 778-4044.

CEBH is a speaker/discussion meeting. Our format (as with Alcohope) is for two people to go to the facility, a meeting leader and a speaker. Unlike Alcohope, however, this is NOT a public meeting. A copy of the AA *Preamble* and *How It Works* are at the front desk. Please return them after the meeting. Once the leader opens the meeting in the usual way, the speaker will share his/her experience, strength and hope as it pertains to alcoholism., making sure to leave adequate time for questions and answers. The meeting is closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Group commitments are currently needed for the CEBH meeting on Mondays at 7PM.

Don't Tell Us What to Do!

Tradition 9 – "AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."

ONE OF MY lifelong hostilities used to be directed squarely at fraternal associations, societies, and all other kind of organizations. It seems to have stemmed from the fact that I could not bear being told what to do or how to do it. Besides that, drinking or not, I never understood what was going on. When people talked about purposes and goals, my mind would go blank.

When I had my last drink, in 1960, and began attending meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, I came in contact with so many people that I was sure AA would turn out to be just another big organization. If so, that meant bosses, competition, and favoritism, a troika I had never been able to deal with successfully. I feared that my newfound sobriety would be short-lived.

But if AA was organized, I could not account for the absence of pressures that are regularly built into organizational structures. For example, nobody approached me with a membership application blank. Nobody told me which group to join or that I had to join any group. Once I had joined, there was no arm-twisting as to how

to vote at group elections.

My first awareness of any structure in AA was in my own home group. It came at a time when we were obliged to look for new quarters. What a lot of planning was required. It was just like hunting for an apartment or a house. What part of town did we want to be in? What was the minimum space requirement? How high a rent or contribution were we able to pay?

Once we were reestablished, the group's activities got under way again. On meeting night, the door had to be unlocked and the AA sign hung out. The hospitality chairman had to see to refreshments, setting up the room, and greeting members. All the other officers at group level had their jobs to do: the group chairman, the secretary, the treasurer, and the program chairman, who booked the speakers. Officers beyond the group level had their jobs, as well: the local intergroup delegate, the institutions representative, the Grapevine representative, and the general service representative.

That's quite a lot of organizing, calling for organizational know-how! Yet I cannot imagine my group's functioning for long without it or something very much like it.

Does that mean that my group is flouting the Ninth Tradition? I don't think so. The Tradition's reference is to

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the organizing of AA as a whole in a hierarchical, or governmental, sense. It has been my observation that groups practicing the principle of rotation usually have no trouble with the Ninth Tradition.

Rotation, one of the blessed safeguards of our Fellowship, applies not only to groups but to central offices and intergroups, committees, and boards. It provides for limited terms of office, thus assuring the next person the same chance at recovery that we had. It is also designed to help us keep the emphasis on principles before personalities by avoiding the trap of thinking we are the only ones who can do a given job. Rotation is also applied to staff assignments at GSO (the AA General Service Office). In that way, no one staff member becomes the expert on a given subject; the whole staff becomes that much more familiar with our Society's problems and their solutions; and our Fellowship gains in the end.

Rotation applies throughout our general service structure. The levels of structure start with the group and move by stages to the General Service Conference. From there, they move back to the group, the solid basis from which all general or worldwide service proceeds. A capsule picture of this structure might be in order here.

If a group wants to have representation at the Conference, it elects a GSR (general service representative).

GSRs in a given district elect a DCM (district committee member). The DCMs from a given area form the area committee, where, among other activities, problems affecting the membership are gathered to be brought to the Conference. Once every two years, the GSRs and the DCMs come together in an area assembly to elect an area delegate. The delegate brings his or her area problems to the Conference but is not there solely to represent one area. Each delegate's actions and voting will be directed toward the best interests of AA as a whole.

The General Service Conference meets annually in New York. Groups in the United States and Canada send 91 delegates, via area assemblies, to discuss AA business. Conference discussion and its resulting Advisory Actions cover an extraordinarily wide range of subjects. Other

members of the Conference are the General Service Board (trustees), the GSO and Grapevine staffs, and the boards of AA World Services, Inc., and The AA Grapevine, Inc.

Here is a very important note about the Conference. In The AA Service Manual, Bill W. wrote that "while the Conference can issue orders to the General Service Office, it can never mandate or govern the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves. The Conference represents us, but cannot rule us."

GSO is located in New York. One of the multitude of services it provides is to coordinate and arrange for the annual Conference. A trip to GSO is a memorable occasion for AAs visiting New York from all parts of the world.

Some of us (and I used to be one) have trouble with the facts that The AA Grapevine, which publishes our monthly magazine, is incorporated and AA World Services, which publishes our Conference-approved literature, is also incorporated. I used to cite those two organizations as proof positive that AA was indeed organized. With time, I came to recognize that we AAs do not exist in a vacuum--that we are subject to local and state laws. By complying with those laws incorporating as legal entities, both the Grapevine AAWS vastly improved their capability of serving us, which is the only reason for their existence in the first place.

The Ninth Tradition is concerned primarily with our Fellowship as a whole. But it does have a personal application, too. I must have order in my personal life, and I am willing to go to any length to secure it. The achievement of one of my paramount desires, peace of mind, seems to come about as the direct result of discipline (self-organization) in my thinking, in my emotional views, and in my spiritual outlook. My sobriety depends on the well-being and the good, orderly direction of those several aspects of my makeup.

I gained a fresh view of the Tradition one evening when I was scheduled to speak at an AA meeting. Because I had not planned my time carefully, I had to rush, and my thoughts were scattered when I arrived at the group. I heard myself say to the chairman, "Please give me a minute to get myself organized."

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DIRECT, di-rect', *adjective*

1. Proceeding without interruption in a straight course or line; not deviating or swerving
2. Straightforward and candid; frank: *a direct route*
3. To cause to move in or follow a straight course
4. Lacking compromising or mitigating elements; absolute

AMENDS, uh-mends', *verb (action)*

1. To change for the better; improve
2. To remove the faults or errors in; *correct*. See synonyms of correct.
3. To alter formally by adding, deleting, or rephrasing.
4. To better one's conduct, i.e. *reform*.



On the 9th Step...

"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."

This one sounds simple. And, true, it does not involve some of the more complicated mental probing required by several of the other Steps.

Having already made a list, in applying the 8th Step, *"of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all,"* the path is clearly defined with all stops plainly marked. All we have to do now is start doing.

But the "doing" is not easy. It takes considerable courage to confess a wrong, even in private, and much more courage to confess it to the person against whom the wrong was committed.

The list very likely includes one or two previous employers whom we deceived in one way or another; friends whose friendship we abused; relatives whose sense of blood obligations we exploited; the mate whose trust, patience and persistent hopes we flouted. To each we owe a debt, large or small, and merely saying "we're sorry" does not discharge the debt.

In fact, we actually do not have the right to the inward ointment that comes from saying we're sorry, unless we also have within us a sincere willingness to repay in full, whatever effort this may cost, and an equally sincere determination not to repeat the wrongs against anyone.

Most of us, by the time we reach A.A., have been going

around for a great many years saying "we're sorry" after each wrong and lightly thinking that these words made everything all right again. We've been annoyed if someone did not seem to accept our apologies as meaning much. How many can hark back and hear himself saying, petulantly, "What's the matter with him? I said I was sorry, didn't I?"

The 8th and the 9th Steps call for something more substantial, more tangible, more meaningful than words spoken casually. If it's money that is owed, it has to be paid back to the limit of ability to pay. If it's a debt of meanness, it has to be paid off with kindness. If it's neglect, as it is so often of one's family, then it can be balanced only by consideration and thoughtfulness. And let's not forget that debts of this kind--of neglect, thoughtlessness, mistreatment--have been piling up for years. They can't be paid off in two weeks.

The qualifying phrase, *"except when to do so would injure them or others,"* should prevent anyone from being righteously bullheaded, or stupidly "noble" about this. We are scarcely making amends if we dig something out of the past in which we had a part that will hurt someone else. The privilege of confession does not extend that far.

A helpful guide in the application of the 9th Step is the reminder that by making amends, where we can, we are doing no one else a favor; a favor is done us if those we have wronged accept our offer.

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Number Nine

Like others of the Steps, Number Nine is closely related to Number Three --"to turn our will and our lives over to God as we understood Him." If we have accomplished this step to any measurable degree, we have attained at least a small measure of humility and a realization of our dependence on Him.

Having prepared a list of all people we have harmed and brought ourselves to the point where we are willing to make amends to them, our Ninth Step is one calling for positive action. There is a world of difference between being willing to do a thing and actually doing it. How many times in the pre-A.A. state have we said "I am sorry, I won't do it again" and felt that that constituted complete amends.

A sincere apology, with a true explanation to the person harmed, of what we believe to be the reason for our past actions can quite frequently readjust personal relations --but the A.A. realizes that this cannot take care of the ones we have really hurt and invariably these are the ones we should and do love most.

Most of us had at least a few years of real pathological drinking behind us when we first learned of the Twelve Steps. Those terrible years are the ones that become repulsive to us as we progress in our new-found life program for order and happiness--years in which our

every action was influenced by alcoholic thinking, with all its implications. It naturally follows that whatever our state in life may be, those close to us bore the brunt of our outrageous behaviour. How can one make amends to a dear wife, son or daughter or parent who through no fault of their own truly suffered physically and financially and more important, mentally, the humiliation and embarrassment of going through life with a drunkard? A simple "I am sorry; it won't happen again" is not enough. It is not enough for us and it is not enough for the aggrieved person.

Direct amends, by all means, is a must, in restoring physical property to the rightful owner, paying debts willingly within our ability to do so and retracting the lie that hurt a reputation; but the real amends are made in scrutinizing our day-in and day-out conduct and keeping that conduct "on the beam." The loved ones whom we have hurt don't want their "pound of flesh." Whether they are still in daily contact with us or not, amends are best made to them by restoring the love and confidence and respect they once had for us by the action of right living. With that thought clearly in our minds that "first drink" is an improbability, even an impossibility and the well-rounded, good life we all yearn for becomes readily visible to us.

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HOW



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PLACE
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