

TWELVE TRADITIONS PLAY

Unity – Service - Recovery

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.

There is no set script or set cast for this play. Like everything else in A.A., it is very "loosely" organized. Ideally, there should be seven (7) players: this version is set up for six (6) players and a NARRATOR or theme setter, who opens and closes the play.

CAST

NARRATOR Opens and closes the play; can double as EAGER BEAVER if six (6) people do the play.

FOUNDER (OLD TIMER): A die-hard type; positive he is right and everyone else should do it his way. He was the first local member, after that, he "drank only on weekends", finally got real sick, got sober, and "founded" the Middletown Group - he makes all the rules. Has been sober about 5 years

MONEYBAGS (*Can be man or woman*) This is the "Chairman" type, who backs up the FOUNDER in everything. They are very friendly. The FOUNDER is in awe of MONEYBAGS' dough and finds it useful. MONEYBAGS is jealous of FOUNDER'S prestige, and would like to run the Group himself. Has been sober about 3 years

EAGER BEAVER (*Young woman*) Is greatly in awe of FOUNDER, who in turn squelches her every time she opens her mouth. However, she went to a meeting in another city while on vacation and now has more than an inkling that all AA Groups are not run like the Middletown Group. Has been sober about two years.

POLITICIAN This is a "know-it-all" cigar-smoking type who disagrees with both FOUNDER and MONEYBAGS. He ridicules them

both constantly. He is a "fixer", publicity-hound, gambler, and ladies' man. He regularly objects to all suggestions and wants to throw the FOUNDER out and take over himself. Has been sober a little less than one year.

DELEGATE Is driving back to Southern California from the General Service Conference and has stopped over to attend the Middletown "Recovery" meeting. (Got the address from the AA World Directory.) The DELEGATE also happens to have brought a Traditions pamphlet which is referred to often as the play goes along.

NEWCOMER Has been referred to the Group by a judge, is still pretty shaky and confused.

NOTE: In the following pages, the general action is described and the dialogue is similar to that used when the play has been given elsewhere. Ad Lib changes can be made anywhere; but, the points the play brings out, are key to specific Traditions, and are the ones that should be EMPHASIZED!

MONEYBAGS is sitting in a large chair at the center of table.... The chair "belongs" to FOUNDER who hasn't arrived yet. On his left is an empty chair and in next chair to the left is EAGER BEAVER.

NARRATOR: Good evening, friends. Tonight, we are presenting the local version of the TWELVE TRADITIONS PLAY. Our play tells the story of the Middletown, U.S.A. Group. About five years old, the group, at first, had a very rapid growth and, at one time, had about 150 members. For the past two years, however, it has been steadily falling off and there are only about eight or ten members left. The play opens with a special business meeting - called in an attempt to remedy this situation.

Most groups, new or old, from time to time, have had problems similar to Middletown's. They have suffered from "PROMOTERS", "BLEEDING DEACONS", "LITTLE RED RIDING HOODS", "HE-ING and SHE-ING triangles", "POLITICIANS", and so forth. However, since A.A. began, we have never been permanently divided by a major controversial issue! When the chips are down, the Group Conscience takes over!

Now, the play.....

MONEYBAGS: You know, EAGER BEAVER, I was sure surprised when FOUNDER agreed to this meeting tonight. I didn't think he'd ever go for it at all!!

E BEAVER: Well, he didn't guess we planned to get here early. You know POLITICIAN is supposed to meet us here so we can try to get something worked out before FOUNDER arrives.

MONEYBAGS: I hope he gets here before FOUNDER, so maybe we can cook up something to knock him off his throne, or at least rock it a little

E BEAVER: Well, you know what the trouble is....he's just a dictator and he doesn't want anyone else to do anything! Now, when I was on my vacation and went to that meeting in Dallas, I heard them talking about elections and rotating leaders and the group paying it's own way, and a lot of stuff like that; but all FOUNDER does is hold on like grim death! He just won't let anybody do anything!!

MONEYBAGS: Well, maybe it is all right, after all, he IS the FOUNDER, and he does know all about AA. I never heard of any of this stuff you bumped into over there, but I sure know our Group has gone to pot!

E BEAVER: I certainly hope, when POLITICIAN gets here, we can think of something.

MONEYBAGS: We have to do something! If he should die, I'd have to take over and I need to establish my authority ahead of time! (*Pompously*) I'm next in seniority, you know.

E BEAVER: I don't care so much about that... I just don't like the way FOUNDER does things! It just doesn't seem right. Here's POLITICIAN now! Hi, POLITICIAN!!

POLITICIAN: (*Enters and sits in chair to right of MONEYBAGS*)

MONEYBAGS: Hiya, POLITICIAN!! We're just talking the situation over. Listen to li'l EAGER BEAVER!

E BEAVER: We've just been talking about FOUNDER, and the way he

holds on to everything with an iron hand. I was just talking about when I went on my vacation and went to that meeting in Dallas. They don't do it the way we do here at all, and you know that, too, MONEYBAGS!!

MONEYBAGS: Well, all I know is what you told me. But, you had started to say something about some kind of elections. What was that all about?

E BEAVER: The Groups there elect different leaders and they have group Secretaries and Committees, and they invite groups from other places to put on meetings, and all kinds of things! They have dances, and everything. Stuff we never even heard of around here!

MONEYBAGS: *(to POLITICIAN)* Well, look POLITICIAN, I'm only the financial brains around here. You're the Politician! What do you think about elections, and how could we hold one? How would we do it?

POLITICIAN: HAH!! You and your money ought to be able to figure that one out! The question is, how're you going to handle FOUNDER?

MONEYBAGS: Don't worry about that. I'll handle him! You tell me how to handle an election and we'll get something done!

E BEAVER: Yes, we should start by having an election. But who's going to tell him? I'd be scared to! He might throw me out of A.A.!

MONEYBAGS: Well, I'm not afraid of him! In fact, I'll tell him!

E BEAVER: You've got your opportunity, 'cause here's ole Napoleon, now!!

FOUNDER: What on earth is going on here? I'm sure I'm not late, so you all must be early. You weren't talking about me, I hope.
(to MONEYBAGS) Hey! What's the big idea? Who gave you permission to sit in MY chair?

MONEYBAGS: I paid for it. I don't see why I can't sit in it once in a

while when you aren't here. (*Moves to FOUNDERS left*)

FOUNDER: (*Makes a production of getting into center chair*)
It's **MY** chair! After all, I am the Founder, and I get to have the biggest chair! Well, let's get going. We have to do something to get people back to meetings again, real quick!

POLITICIAN: Why don't you and Moneybags pay 'em to come? A dollar a head and we could probably fill the room.

FOUNDERS: Stop interrupting! I have lots of plans. Actually, I already have everything all lined up. First of all, we're going to have a TV program with Ed - "Choo-Choo Ed", that is, and I'm going to be interviewed about all the good I've done. I'll tell 'em how we're going to get Ed's backing and I'll mention some of the big-shots who have come to our meetings, like Banker Tom and Musician Melanie. Secondly, I'm making a deal with the Judge to sit on the bench with him. We can comb over the likely looking ones, and if they look like the kind I want for my Group, I'll screen them and accept their application to AA. Then the Judge can sentence them to AA.

E BEAVER: Isn't anyone supposed to be in A.A. if they want to?

FOUNDER: Now, now, little girl, you listen to me. You're way too new to know about these things. You know, I've been sober five years and I know what's best. The rest of you just have to be loyal to me. After all, I started AA here.

(*DELEGATE enters, FOUNDER looks at him/her*)

FOUNDER: Who are you and what do you want?

DELEGATE: I'm _____ and I'm an alcoholic and a member of AA from California. I happen to be the present Delegate from Area 51 to the General Service Conference and I'm returning from the New York Conference. I looked in the World Directory and

found your Group listed, so I thought I would visit your meeting.

E BEAVER: *(to MONEYBAGS)* He sounds like those people did in Dallas! Remember what I told you?

(to DELEGATE) What's a Conference?

POLITICIAN: What's General Service?

MONEYBAGS: What World Directory?

FOUNDER: Awwwwww, don't pay any mind to that stuff! It's a lot of rules and regulations they have in New York City.

ALL TOGETHER: NEW YORK CITY ?!
except DELEGATE

FOUNDER: That stuff wouldn't ever work in Middletown, and we don't need 'em, anyhow! *(to DELEGATE)* We have a great little group here. Yep! I started it and old MONEYBAGS is my right hand man! I've been sober five years and I straightened him up about three years ago. Li'l EAGER BEAVER here's been around a couple of years, but she's still pretty wet behind the ears.....always gettin' ideas about doing things different! My pal POLITICIAN is a new addition, but, hey, he sure knows how to get things done around City Hall! He's only been off the stuff about ten months. *(to DELEGATE)* By the way, "Bub", how long did you say you've been in this outfit?

DELEGATE: *(Modestly)* Well, I've been sober nearly fifteen years now.....one day at a time.

FOUNDER: *(Startled!!)* FIFTEEN YEARS!!!

E BEAVER: *(Reverently)* Fifteen years!

MONEYBAGS: Fifteen years????

POLITICIAN: *(Sarcastically to FOUNDER)* DAMN!! Maybe you'd better move over, too, and give him YOUR Chair!!!

FOUNDER: *(Loudly, to MONEYBAGS)* Move over, you! I'm going to give MY chair to this Oldtimer!

MONEYBAGS: *(to POLITICIAN)* Move over, can't you?

(POLITICIAN moves one chair to right, MONEYBAGS takes chair he vacated, FOUNDER takes chair to left of center and installs DELEGATE in center chair with a flourish).

FOUNDER: Here you are, Oldtimer! Sit right down in MY chair right here in the center! Well, let's get the show on the road. You've heard some of my plans about getting these people back that have been staying away.

E BEAVER: That's all he ever does...TALK about what he's going to do, but doesn't do it! And he won't let anyone else! He just holds on like grim death! He calls the group his garden – I guess we're just his "little weeds"!

POLITICIAN: We need to weed HIM OUT!! He thinks just because he's the FOUNDER and has more sobriety, that none of our ideas are any good! I've got some good ideas on how to run this Group, but he's going to make us wait until he dies before I can put my plans into effect! Anyhow, if we had an election, I bet I'd win...been fixing those things for years around town here.

MONEYBAGS: Now listen, you! Show more respect for him in front of this Oldtimer!

FOUNDER: That's right! What a way to talk! And in front of a stranger, too! After all I've done - pulling people off bar stools, giving all my time and effort, and all those trips I made to Chicago to find out how to operate.

MONEYBAGS: Huh! He tells these stories about making all these trips to Chicago to find out how AA. works, but that wasn't it at all! He was going up there, all right, but he was just playing footsies with the Program, and what's more, he just couldn't stay sober! So, he came back down here. And when he talks about pulling people off barstools, he's talking about me! If it hadn't been for me and MY money, he wouldn't have a thing!

I got him a job, started him in business and all. And when he says he started this group, he didn't have any choice! He just couldn't stay sober in Chicago and couldn't stay sober here on his own.

E BEAVER: *(to DELEGATE)* They just squabble all the time. They won't tell you what's wrong, but I will! All our members are staying away and some of them are getting drunk, 'cause FOUNDER won't let anyone but himself have a word to say about anything!

FOUNDER: Now, now, little girl. I've got everything under control and things are going to be different.

DELEGATE: Just how do you run your meetings?

POLITICIAN: *(to FOUNDER)* Just for laughs, tell him!

FOUNDER: Well, I sort'a open the meeting by telling how I went to Chicago, and about what a tough time I had getting them all to come at first. Then I tell 'em how I run my group and how I screen the new ones. Then MONEYBAGS tells them how much he's done for the town by helping me run the group. Sometimes then some of the others talk and I always wind up with a real strong AA pitch!

POLITICIAN: That *is* a laugh! Let me tell you how he really does it. He gets up and spouts off about how he founded the Group and has a right to run it his own way. He keeps this up for about 20 minutes and then his partner, Mr. Bucks, gets up and tells us what a great guy he is and how much he puts out. Then he lets his pal take over again and he explains what he's been talking about. Then 'ole Father Time tells us not to take a drink before the next meeting, tells us again what a good Joe he is and then closes the meeting. Ask the others, they'll tell you the same thing.

(to FOUNDER) Hey, FOUNDER, what about all that money you've been getting for the Group? Those rich friends of yours in town, the charity drives and all? Tell the DELGATE about that!

FOUNDER: Don't worry about that! I've got it all in my head.

POLITICIAN: You got those figures in your head, but where's the loot?
You got that up there too?

FOUNDER: No ... I mean YES! Oh shut up and listen to this
DELEGATE.

POLITICIAN: YOU – LISTEN? That'll be a switch!

DELEGATE: I just happen to have this pamphlet in my pocket
*(Hands pamphlet to FOUNDER who glances at it and tosses
it to EAGER BEAVER)*

FOUNDER: Twelve What?

DELEGATE: It's something we arrived at from the past experience of
all the Groups. You really should have a copy here. The
General Service Conference, from which I am returning, is
the Guardian of our Traditions and is based on Unity,
Service, and Recovery. Tradition One says our common
welfare should come first, personal recovery depends on
AA unity. Our only authority is a loving God, as we
understand Him, and our leaders are but trusted servants.
They do not govern.

FOUNDER: *(Standing in disbelief)* No bosses!?

DELEGATE: Tradition Nine states that AA, as such, ought never be
organized. It's better to create committees directly
responsible to those they serve.

E BEAVER: What did I tell you! That's what they said in Dallas!

POLITICIAN: It's just what I'VE been saying all along. If you guys'd let me
talk, I could say stuff like that.

DELEGATE: By the way, how many groups do you have in Middletown?

MONEYBAGS: I can answer that one! Another bunch around here tried to
start a group a while back, but the way it was shaping up, I
figured I'd have to put a stop to that kind of nonsense! We

couldn't have TWO groups--they were getting as big as us. So I had the police raid the joint where they were meeting; but they must have paid someone off, because nothing happened and they kept on meeting. Some guy from Jersey had come here and thought he was pretty smart and didn't want to do it our way. So, when they didn't get closed up - couldn't find anything wrong they said - I took matters into my own hands! I just bought the building, turned off the utilities, and put them out of business. After all, (*LOUDLY*) it was either we wipe them out or they wipe us out!

E BEAVER: You thought you were pretty smart, but I'd like to see another group here. We could visit back and forth and exchange ideas and help each other. You and the Boss just don't want any competition, that's all!

DELEGATE: Our past experience proves that every Group has a right to be self-governing, provided they do not hurt some other Group or AA as a whole, which is in Tradition Four. And no Group should have a right to interfere with another, as long as it is operating in accordance with the principles of AA. Inside the cover of our World Directory it clearly states that any two or more people, gathered together for sobriety, can call themselves an AA Group, provided they are self-supporting and have no other affiliations.

FOUNDER: Well, I dunno. It sounds OK, and it might work in other places, but it would never work here. These people depend on me, because they know that I know the score.

POLITICIAN: (*to EAGER BEAVER*) You know, I almost didn't come tonight. Moneybags was getting pretty nasty about that poker debt, and I've been trying to borrow the money to pay him back. After all, it is an AA poker debt.

DELEGATE: May I ask what AA poker is?

FOUNDER: Oh, it's just a little idea I dreamed up. We were getting tired of just sitting around here listening to each other night after night, and some of the spouses were getting kind of jumpy, too. So I decided that one night a month we'd have a potluck, and then go into the back room and

have a poker game instead of a meeting. Just a friendly little "no-limit" game.

POLITICIAN: Friendly?!? No limit, cut-throat, and you have to play.

E BEAVER: And Founder even chases people away who happen to show up if it's poker night!

FOUNDER: We just tell them to come back next week. What's wrong with that?

E BEAVER: Plenty!

DELEGATE: Tradition Five says that each Group has but one primary purpose: to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Without new members we would surely die.

NEWCOMER: *(Enters)* Is this the A.A.A.A.??

FOUNDER: This is AA, but right now, we're very busy in a special meeting. Come back the day after tomorrow. That's our regular meeting night.

NEWCOMER: The judge told me you people in this place could help me.

E BEAVER: *(Looking sympathetically at NEWCOMER)*
We want to - if we can.

POLITICIAN: Didn't you hear the man? We're too busy now!

MONEYBAGS: *(to FOUNDER)* Hey, wait a minute! Let's show this Oldtimer how we screen new people with your system.

FOUNDER: *(to DELEGATE)* Watch this, now. You'll see how careful we are! At first, we had a lot of trouble with all kinds of people trying to get in. So, I set up a screening committee and made some rules. When the others didn't agree with me, I

screened THEM OUT! I pass on all new applications and we just keep the pure albies.

POLITICIAN: Pure, WOW!!!

FOUNDER: And I personally pass on all new applicants.

NEWCOMER: *(Still Standing)* Are you sure I'm in the right place?

FOUNDER: *(Producing long sheets of paper)* I just happen to have one of our application forms with me.

FOUNDER: *(to NEWCOMER)* What's your name?

NEWCOMER: *(Stuttering)* _____

FOUNDER: What's your correct age?

NEWCOMER: *(Counts on fingers)* It beats the hell out of me!

FOUNDER: What kind of work do you do?

NEWCOMER: I'm not working now. I just got fired. They said I was drinking on the job.

FOUNDER: What's your religion?

NEWCOMER: Catholic.

(ALL, but DELEGATE, shake heads slowly in disagreement)

FOUNDER: Well..I.., I don't know. We don't ever have much luck with Catholics. What's your political affiliation?

NEWCOMER: Huh?

FOUNDER: What's your party registration?

NEWCOMER: I like to party! Where do I register?

FOUNDER: Oh, never mind! Who did you vote for in the last election?

NEWCOMER: I always vote the straight "Probation Ticket"....
I mean, Prohibition ticket.

POLITICIAN: What a bunch of CRACKPOTS!

FOUNDER: *(continues questioning NEWCOMER)*
What's your formal education?

NEWCOMER: I left school in the 8th grade; but, later I was a Trustee.

FOUNDER: What school could that be?

NEWCOMER: Graybar Reformatory.

FOUNDER: Tch! Tch! Tch! Were you ever in jail?

NEWCOMER: Sure, I just got out. That's why the Judge sent me over here.

FOUNDERS: Were you ever in on a morals offense?

NEWCOMER: Only for drinkin' and they framed me! I only had two beers!

FOUNDER: Been drinking today?

NEWCOMER: Only two beers, so help me!

FOUNDER: What's the matter with you? Can't you stay sober long enough to come down here?

NEWCOMER: If I could stay sober, I'd never have come down here.

FOUNDER: *(Hands NEWCOMER long application form)* Here's one of our application forms. Go over there and sit down next to EAGER BEAVER and fill it out. And keep quiet! We're busy.

NEWCOMER: Can I ask a question?

FOUNDER: NOT NOW !!! Just go over there and sit down! You're here to be seen and not heard!

FOUNDER: *(to DELEGATE)* So -what do you think of that? It'll give you an idea of how careful we are in our screening. Why, -you could bring your wife or sister, or your maiden aunt here, and they'd never find any riff-raff around.

POLITICIAN: Har! Har! Har! Only those "pure" alcoholics he was talking about before!

FOUNDER: Right! I've screened out all the riff-raff, undesirables, man handlers, con men, troublemakers, and all "phoney-balonies."

POLITICIAN: Hey! Tell him about the fallen women!

FOUNDER: What d'ya mean? I don't know what you're talking about? You're nuts!!

POLITICIAN: Oh yes, you do, too.....last winter when those gals.....

FOUNDER: *(Sheepishly)* Oh, that! That was nothing. Hee Hee!

POLITICIAN: Well, go on.....,tell the DELEGATE about them.

FOUNDER: Oh, it wasn't anything! One night last winter, a couple of babes tried to come in here, but I'm pretty hep and I recognized the type right away! I knew something had to be done right off, so I just told them plainly they could not come in here and contaminate my group. So I escorted them to the door."

POLITICIAN: *(LOUDLY)* To the door and Through the door and Out the door, and we didn't see HIM again for Three Weeks! Ha! Ha!

FOUNDER: Now wait...it wasn't exactly like that...it was only two weeks....*(blustering)* Dammit! Why don't you mind your own business?

POLITICIAN: Well, it certainly proved you knew your 13th Step!

(NEWCOMER raises hand)

MONEYBAGS: Shut up, you!

DELEGATE: *(Jumps...thinks MONEYBAGS is talking to him)*
How many do you think have been eliminated from this group through your screening method?

FOUNDER: Oh, I'd say we managed to get rid of a couple of hundred in the last year or so.

DELEGATE: I wonder where they are?

E BEAVER: Well, DELEGATE, I know two of them that died.
(FOUNDER acts astonished) They were both girls that went to school with me.
(EAGER BEAVER slips NEWCOMER some AA literature, and continues to do this intermittently as the play progresses)

DELEGATE: You know, in the early days of AA, this screening problem came up. The members had to agree that even if a new prospect had problems in addition to alcohol, or would not accept God right away, or was controversial, it was best for AA - if they were alcoholics - to accept them. Many of them remained to become good AA members. That is why Tradition Three states that the only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.

FOUNDER: Maybe you're right. *(to OTHERS)* We could try it, and if it didn't work out we could always go back to screening them.

DELEGATE: Another thing. Is your Group self-supporting?

MONEYBAGS: Self-supporting? What a joke! This gang wouldn't support anything. I support them. Nobody else will. I own this building, so I let them have free rent. I own part of the café down the street, so I provide free refreshments, and I own the furniture store, so I gave them all this furniture. I get the money for FOUNDER

from a lot of my friends. And I always put a twenty in the basket!

POLITICIAN: It isn't the twenties I mind. It's the way he waves them in the air before he finally puts them in the basket. I still think we should move to the back room of Allen's Furniture store and pay him \$20 a night for it. Then we could all kick in the way DELEGATE wants us to.

DELEGATE: You have a wonderful idea there. It's better for every Group to be self-supporting, declining outside contributions, according to Tradition Seven.

MONEYBAGS: Declining money?!? And, what else? Oh, brother!

POLITICIAN: Hey, don't let such crazy ideas louse up the deal I made with OBAMA to get him elected, and don't forget the deal FOUNDER made to be on TV with him. (*MONEYBAGS becomes furious as the significance of this statement dawns on him*) We need OBAMA. He's a big help to us. He gets the Judge to order 'em into AA for us, or take 'em out for us.

MONEYBAGS: (*to FOUNDER*) Of all the dirty double-crosses I ever heard! You told me the Group would go along with my man, BILLARY, and I promised him we would. BILLARY'S a mover and a shaker. He's going to be President some day and I promised to finance his campaign.

POLITICIAN: Baloney!!! OBAMA's the best man. And I promised him that the Group would support him.

E BEAVER: I like OBAMA – he's DREAMY...

FOUNDER: (*Stands*) Yeah, I know. OBAMA's a good guy, but if MONEYBAGS thinks he can get BILLARY elected President, maybe we'd better reconsider.

POLITICIAN: What a lousy trick! I've already promised OBAMA. And don't forget, he also promised to set up the deal with ol' Doc to change the name of the hospital to "AA Memorial

Hospital" and to put AA's in charge of the drunks.

MONEYBAGS: BILLARY can do that just as well as OBAMA!

FOUNDER: Well, we sure do need the hospital in AA's name. I'm spending too much time running around screening new people. If we had our own hospital, we could charge plenty, make some dough and at the same time, Doc can get 'em sobered up for us. He can give 'em lots of tranquilizers to calm 'em down and then I can screen them. (*Sits*)

E BEAVER: What if they don't have enough money for the hospital?

FOUNDER: Tough.

MONEYBAGS: I guess they will just have to do without it, but this hospital idea is a good one. Hey, it would all be tax-exempt if we put in a free case once-in-a-while. You know, ol' Doc's a drunk himself, so he knows how to handle them.

POLITICIAN: (*Angrily*) OBAMA's the one who can make it happen.

MONEYBAGS: (*to POLITICIAN*) You rat!!

POLITICIAN: (*to MONEYBAGS*) You're a rat!!
You want to go outside and "CAUCAS"?

FOUNDER: Now, now, you two. Calm down. We have company, you know....(*Muses*) But, if we do back BILLARY, and he gets to be President, I hear he's in favor of lots of grants for alcoholism treatment.

E BEAVER: (*to DELEGATE*) Isn't this terrible?
(*to OTHERS*) That's what's the matter with this Group. All this politics and stuff. That's why the other groups started. You wanted them to vote for your man, and they didn't want to get involved in politics. But they felt like they had to, because of all of you, so they started their own group.

NEWCOMER: *(Mutters and raises his hand again)*

FOUNDER: Shut up!

MONEYBAGS: Yeah, shut up!

DELEGATE: You know, everything you are talking about is covered in our Twelve Traditions. For instance, Tradition Seven says we should be self-supporting from our own voluntary contributions, and Tradition Ten warns us to stay out of politics and public controversy. Over a hundred years ago, a society named the Washingtonians almost had an answer to alcoholism. Abraham Lincoln praised them and talked at their meetings. But then they got involved in politics and in fighting against slavery and for making alcohol illegal and so forth. They forgot their primary purpose. They fought for so many causes that they became divided among themselves and died. It's fine to be a good citizen, but politics has no place in AA, if we are to survive ourselves. And about this hospital; the early AA's tried that, too, and many other things. They were even going to scoop up all the derelicts from skid rows and start AA farms run by AA's and financed by the sale of AA books. We did not sell enough books, fortunately, so that idea fell through. Later we learned that we shouldn't try to act like professionals because we are not professionals; and we should never be paid for our Twelfth Step work. Also, it is not advisable to lend the AA name to any outside enterprise. We should stick to our own business, which is carrying the message, not the alcoholic. Also, any Group funds, collected from the members, should only be used for AA purposes and should never be diverted to outside agencies, no matter how worthwhile the cause may be. Many of these agencies do help the alcoholic, and while we cooperate with them, AA should never go so far as affiliation or endorsement, actual or implied.

NEWCOMER: *(Mutters and raises his hand again)*

FOUNDER, POLITICIAN, & MONEYBAGS: *(Wearily)* Oh, shut up.

MONEYBAGS: At least we can go through with our TV show.

(to DELEGATE) I own half the TV station and I promised BILLARY to put the Group on with him. That way we can put in a plug for BILLARY and get recruits for the Group at the same time.

POLITICIAN: I demand equal time for OBAMA!

E BEAVER: How is that being anonymous? Suppose someone who needed help and did want to join saw that show. They could get scared off because they thought they'd have to go on a TV show if they joined AA.

FOUNDER: *(to E BEAVER)* You'll understand these things better when you've been around as long as I have.

E BEAVER: I hope not!

MONEYBAGS: I can't see that it would do any harm this one time. I can't let BILLARY down.

POLITICIAN: And I can't let OBAMA down.

DELEGATE: *(Opening Traditions pamphlet)* Why don't we see what it says here in this pamphlet? Tradition Eleven says that our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion. You really don't need a political TV show to attract new members. In fact, the Traditions say we need always maintain anonymity at the public level. You see, AA is a spiritual program and Tradition Twelve tells us that anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions. Look here, I have a thought. Why don't I, or better still, FOUNDER, read our Traditions straight through and see if applying them might make a big change in the problems of your Group. *(Hands pamphlet to FOUNDER)*

E BEAVER: DELEGATE, are the Twelve Traditions in our Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous?

DELEGATE: Yes, they are - page 564 of our Big Book.

E BEAVER: FOUNDER, you never told us that!

FOUNDER: I never knew that. (*FOUNDER reads the Traditions. All comment from time to time extemporaneously*)

FOUNDER: Well, it sure does look like we've been making every mistake in the book. (*to OTHERS*) Shall we go along with DELEGATE on this? (*OTHERS nod approval*)

MONEYBAGS: I'm all for that. I'll just write a check right now.

ALL TOGETHER: No! No! No! We pay our own way, remember?

POLITICIAN: I'm all for it. It's just what I've been talking about all along.

FOUNDER: I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll order some of these pamphlets right away. I'll eliminate the screening committee, myself, that is, and.....(*Grudgingly*) we'll have an election.

E BEAVER: Woo Hoo! And I nominate FOUNDER for our first elected leader. I certainly think DELEGATE was guided here by a Higher Power today. I think we knew all along we were on the wrong track, but we didn't know just where we were wrong.

DELEGATE: Actually, every single one of our Traditions is based on mistakes the early members of AA made.

NEWCOMER: (*Raises hand*)

FOUNDER: And just to show my good faith, here's this new man, a brand new man, sitting here all evening with a question. I'll even start him off without an application. (*to NEWCOMER*) Stand up and ask your question, fellow!

NEWCOMER: (*Voice quavering*) I've only got one question.

FOUNDER: Quiet, everyone.

(Everyone falls silent and bends intently to hear NEWCOMER's question)

NEWCOMER: Where's the BATHROOM ?!

(Everyone points offstage and NEWCOMER shakily exits)

NARRATOR: Thank you ladies and gentlemen. You have seen how the Middletown Group found the solution to its problems. We hope that our little play has pointed the way, should your Group need guidance. The Traditions show the way, and your local Area Assembly or the General Service Office are always available should your Group need special advice. If you would like to have the Twelve Traditions Play for a special AA function, please see one of the Traditions Players or your Group's General Service Representative.

The Players were:

FOUNDER: _____

MONEYBAGS: _____

EAGER BEAVER: _____

POLITICIAN: _____

DELEGATE: _____

NEWCOMER: _____

NARRATOR: _____

The End