

The Slippery Slope of Reinterpreting Our Traditions & The Cunning of Justification Short Version

What it looks like when the architect of the NA service structure writes about Tradition Nine and administrative structures without pay and of his own free will...

Another point of confusion is the term organized, which 8
has several meanings. Our Steps and Traditions are uniform 9
and set in a specific order. They are numbered; they are 10
not random and unstructured. Certainly they are organized, 11
but this is not the organization of our Ninth Tradition. 12
For the purpose of this Tradition, organized means having 13
an administrative structure, and this implies management 14
and control. On this basis, the meaning of Tradition Nine 15
is clear. N.A. should never be run by bureaucracy or 16
management nor controlled by individuals within an admini- 17
strative structure. If we were to allow this, N.A. would 18
surely lose the best it has to offer and choke to death on 19
our insanities. 20

Even without this Tradition, organization such as this 21
would be in opposition to our spiritual principles. A 22
loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience 23
would find no place within an administrative structure. 24
How could a trusted servant manage and control? Service 25
and management are contradictory. Government implies control, 26
but our leaders do not govern. How could autonomy exist in 27
an administrative structure? Specialization and profession- 28
alism are the basis of any management scheme. Any admini- 29
strative structure, by its very nature, eliminated the 30
possibility of autonomy. An organized N.A. is a contra- 31
diction in terms and any attempt to force organization on 32
us would destroy us. 33

What it looks like when an administrative structure that thinks it is part of the Fellowship pays a professional writer to tell us what our Traditions mean...

We understand that "ought never be organized" doesn't mean that we do what we do without any planning or predictability. Our meetings are at regular times and places; we create and maintain meeting schedules, websites, and phone lines. In order for us to grow and recover, we need some structure. Administration is not the same as governance, and the structures we create in service are not the kind of organization this Tradition addresses. We absolutely organize our service efforts, our meeting schedules, and our event calendars. What is never organized is the part that matters most: one addict helping another, reaching out and sharing from heart to heart. The wordless language of empathy is what makes NA work. Without that, the rest of what we do would be meaningless.