

TRADITION FOUR

*Each group should be autonomous
except in matters affecting other groups
or MA as a whole.*

Tradition Four is a specific application of the general principles outlined in Traditions One and Two. Tradition Four states that every group has the right of self-government undertaken without outside control. Every group can manage itself exactly as it pleases, except where MA as a whole is affected. This means that MA has the courage and faith to allow each group to make its own decisions. In essence, each group is its own individual entity, relying on the group conscience as guided by a loving God to direct its actions.

Groups have a right to make their own mistakes. There are only two boundaries that any group must not cross: 1) A group must not do anything that would affect other groups or MA as a whole; and 2) A group cannot affiliate itself with anything or anybody else. In all other respects the groups have complete autonomy.

The group may make any decisions or adopt any format it likes. No district service committee should challenge this privilege even though a group may act in complete opposition to the district's desires. In other words, every group has the right to set its own course.

Healthy trial and error, guided by spiritual principles, often results in a newer and better way to do things. In many cases, allowing groups liberty and freedom helps keep MA from being stuck in the rut of practices and customs that have become obsolete.

Tradition Four**Life With Hope**

A group should consult with other groups, the district service committee, or World Services if there is any question that their actions may affect another group or MA as a whole. Each group should take special care that its actions fall within the bounds of our traditions, and that they do not dictate or force anything upon other groups. The purpose of autonomy is to give each group the freedom to establish an atmosphere of recovery that will best serve its members, and to fulfill the primary purpose stated in Tradition Five.