

TWELVE TRADITIONS PLAY

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

CAST

NARRATOR: Opens and closes play; can double as EAGER BEAVER if only six people do the play.

FOUNDER: (Oldtimer) 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 weekends," finally got real sick, got sober, and "founded" the Middletown Group. It is "his" Group and he makes all the rules. He has been sober about five years.

MONEYBAGS: (Can be man or woman) This is a "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 (herself). Has been sober about three years.

EAGER BEAVER: (Young woman) Is generally in awe of Founder who in turn squelches her every time she opens her mouth. However, she went to a meeting in another area while on vacation and has more than inkling that all groups are not run like Middletown. Has been sober about two years.

POLITICIAN: This is a know-it-all, cigar smoking type who disagrees with both Founder and Moneybags, and ridicules them consistently. 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 meeting. (He got the address from the World A.A. Directory.) He "happens" to have a Traditions pamphlet in his pocket, to which he refers as the play goes along.

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

In the following pages the general action is described and the dialogue is similar to that used when the play had been given elsewhere. Ad lib changes can be made anywhere, but the points the play brings out, are keyed to specific Traditions and are ones that should be emphasized.

NARRATOR _____ opens the play by telling the story of the Middletown, USA, Group. About five years old, the Group at first grew rapidly and once had about 150 members. For the past two years these have been steadily falling off, and there are about eight left. This is a special meeting called to discuss the Group's problems. EAGER BEAVER and POLITICIAN are anxious to end the "rule" of FOUNDER, but MONEYBAGS thinks little of this idea unless he can "succeed" FOUNDER. NARRATOR explains the kind of problems that beset both old and new Groups and the play points up the importance of the Traditions in solving these.

SCRIPT

NARRATOR: Good evening, friends. For many years, November has been designated as "Traditions Month" and tonight we are presenting the local version of the Twelve Traditions Play. Our play tells the story of the Middletown, USA, 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 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, "Heing and Sheing" triangles, politicians and so forth. However, since A.A. began, we have never been divided by a major controversial issue—when the chips are down, the Group conscience takes over. Now the play.

The play begins with MONEYBAGS sitting in a large chair at the center of the table. The chair "belongs" to FOUNDER who hasn't arrived yet. On his left is an empty chair and in the next left chair is EAGER BEAVER (______). They are discussing the Group's problems and scheming to end the "rule" of Founder and elect leaders on a rotating basis.

MONEYBAGS: You know, _____, I was sure surprised when Founder, _____, agreed to this meeting tonight. I didn't think he'd go for it at all.

EAGER 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.

EAGER B.: 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 Bigtown, I heard them talking about elections and rotating leaders, and the group paying its own way....and a lot of stuff like that. But all (FOUNDER) _____ does is hold on like grim death. He just won’t let anyone else do anything.

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

EAGER B.: 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. I’m the next seniority, you know.

EAGER B.: I don’t care much about that. I just don’t like the way he does things—it just doesn’t seem right. Here’s Politician_____ now. Hi_____.

POLITICIAN ENTERS AND SITS IN CHAIR TO THE RIGHT OF MONEYBAGS.

MONEYBAGS: Hi ya_____We’re just talking the situation over—listen to Lil’ Eager B._____.

EAGER B.: 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 Bigtown. They don’t do it the way we do here at all, and you know that too (referring MONEY B.)_____.

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?

EAGER B.: 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, _____, 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 you money ought to be able to figure that one out—the question is, how are 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!

EAGER B.: 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. I'll tell him.

EAGER B.: You've got your opportunity, cause here's ole Napoleon now.

FOUNDER: What's going on here? I can't be late so you must have been early. Weren't talking about Pop I hope. (*Genial tone of voice—stands behind MBGS for a minute*) What's the idea? Move over, who said YOU could sit in MY chair?

MONEYBAGS: I PAID for it—can't see why I can't sit in it once in awhile when you're not here. (*Moves to FOUNDER'S left*)

FOUNDER: (Makes a big deal of getting into the 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 get these people back to the meeting again—real quick!

POLITICIAN: Why don't you and (MONEYBAGS) _____ pay 'em to come?

FOUNDER: Stop interrupting! I got lots of plans. I know what they need and everything's all lined up. We're going to have a TV program with O'Brien, Sheriff O'Brien, that is, and I'M going to be interviewed about all the good we've done people. I'll tell 'em how we're going to get O'Brien's backing, and I'll mention some of the outstanding big shots in town who have been to our past meetings: like Bunker Jones and the Mayor's cousin. And I'm making a deal with Judge Jay to sit on the bench with him—we can comb over the likely-looking ones, and then I'll screen 'em. If they look like the kind I want, I'll screen 'em and accept their applications for A.A., and the Judge can sentence them to A.A.

EAGER B.: Isn't anyone supposed to be in A.A., if they want to?

FOUNDER: Now, little girl, listen to me! You're too new to know about all these things. I've been sober for five years, and I know what's best, and the rest of you have to be loyal to me. After all, I started....Just a minute....

DELEGATE _____ ENTERS

FOUNDER: Who are you and what do you want?

DELEGATE: I'm _____, and I'm an alcoholic, and a member of A.A. from San Diego, California. I happen to be the present Delegate to General Service, and I'm driving back home from the Conference. I looked in the World Directory and found your Group listed, so I thought I'd visit you.

EAGER B.: (To *MONEYBAGS*) He sounds like those people did in Bigtown.... Remember what I told you?

(To *DELEGATE*) What's a Conference?

POLITICIAN: What's General Service?

MONEYBAGS: What World Directory?

FOUNDER: Aw, don't pay attention to that stuff—it's a lot of rules and regulations they have back in New York. 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. Lil' (EAGER B.) _____ here has 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 newer addition, but boy, he sure knows how to get things done around City Hall. He's only been off the stuff about ten months. 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!

EAGER B.: Fifteen years?

POLITICIAN: Hah! (To *FOUNDER*) Maybe you'd better move over too and give him YOUR chair!

FOUNDER: (Loudly, to *MONEY B.*) Move over, you. I'm going to give MY chair to this Old-timer.

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

POLITICIAN MOVES ONE CHAIR TO RIGHT. MONEY B. TAKES CHAIR HE VACATED. FOUNDER TAKES CHAIR TO LEFT OF CENTER AND INSTALLS DELEGATE IN CENTER CHAIR WITH FLOURISH.

FOUNDER: Here you are, Oldtimer—sit right down in my chair—right here in the center—well I....I..., 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....

EAGER B.: That's all he ever does—TALKS about what he's going to do, but he doesn't do it, and he won't let anyone else either—He just holds on like grim death. He calls the Group his garden—I guess we're his little weeds!

POLITICIAN: We need to weed HIM out—he thinks just because HE'S THE founder and has more sobriety than 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—I've been fixing those things for 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 my time and efforts—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 A.A. works but that wasn't it at all. He was going up there all right, but he was just playing footsie 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. But, 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 his Group—he didn't have any choice—He couldn't stay sober in Chicago, and he couldn't stay sober here on his own!

EAGER B.: (*To DELEGATE*) Those two 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: Just for laughs, tell him!

FOUNDER: Well, I sorta 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 (MONEY B.)_____ tells them how much he's done for the town helping me run the Group; then some of the others talk and I wind up with a real strong 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 way. He keeps this up for about twenty-five minutes and then his buddy gets up and tells us what a great guy HE is and how much dough he put out; then he lets his pal take over again and he explains what (MONEY B.)_____ has been talking about. Then old 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, _____, and what about all that money you've been getting for the group—those rich friends of yours in town and the charity drives and all, tell the man about that!

FOUNDER:

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

POLITICIAN:

You got the 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 California man.

POLITICIAN:

YOU LISTEN, That'll be a switch!

DELEGATE:

I just happen to have this pamphlet in my pocket (The 12 Traditions). 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 which I have just been to is the guardian of our Traditions and is based on Unity, Service, and Recovery. Our 1st Tradition says our common welfare should come first, personal recovery depends upon A.A. Unity. The 2nd Tradition explains that there are no "bosses" in A.A.—our only authority is a loving God, as we understand Him—and our leaders are but trusted servants. They do not govern. The 9th Tradition states that A.A., as such, ought never to be organized—it's better to create committees directly responsible to the members.

EAGER B.:

What did I tell you? That's what they said in Bigtown.

POLITICIAN:

It's just what I'VE been saying all along.

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 awhile 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 but as us! So what I did, 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 had come here from Jersey 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 say—I took matters into my own hands. I just bought the building, turned off the heat and water, and put them out of business.

(Loudly) After all, it was either we wipe them out or they'd wipe us out!

EAGER B.:

You thought that 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 Box just don't want any competition, that's all!

DELEGATE:

Our past experience proves that every group has a right to be self-governing, providing they don't hurt some other group or all of A.A., which is the 4th Tradition. And no Group should have a right to interfere with another, as long as it is operating in accordance with the principles of A.A. The cover of our World-Wide Directory clearly states that any two or more people, gathered together for sobriety can call themselves an A.A. Group providing they are self-supporting and have no other affiliations.

FOUNDER:

Well, I dunno. It sounded okay, and it might work in some other places, but it would never do here. These people depend on me because they know I know the score.

POLITICIAN:

(Aside to EAGER B.) I almost didn't come tonight—that (MONEY B.) _____ was pretty nasty about that poker debt and I've been trying to borrow the money. After all, it is an A.A. poker debt and I have to pay it.

DELEGATE:

(Curiously) May I ask what A.A. poker is?

FOUNDER:

Oh, just a little idea I dreamed up. We were getting sort of tired just sitting around here listening to each other every week, and some of the wives were getting kind of jumpy about it, so I decided that one meeting a month, we'd let the wives cook up a potluck and then us boys would adjourn and have a poker game instead of a meeting—just a friendly little "no-limit" game.

POLITICIAN:

Friendly!

EAGER B.:

Yes, and he even chases away new people who happen to show up if it's poker night.

FOUNDER:

We just tell 'em to come back next week—what's wrong with that?

DELEGATE: Tradition 5 reads, "Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers." Without new members we would all die.

NEWCOMER ENTERS

NEWCOMER: Is this the A.A.A.A.?

FOUNDER: This is A.A., but right now we're very busy in a 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.

EAGER B.: (*Looking sympathetically at NEWCOMER*) We want to if we can.

POLITICAIAN: 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 alkies....

POLITICIAN: Pure—WOW!

FOUNDER: And I personally pass on all new applicants.

NEWCOMER: (*Still standing*) Are you sure this is the right place?

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

TO NEWCOMER

FOUNDER: What's your name?

FOUNDER: What's your correct age?

31

FOUNDER: What kind of work do you do?

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

FOUNDER: What's your religion?
NEWCOMER: Catholic.

ALL BUT DELEGATE SHAKE HEADS SLOWLY

FOUNDER: Well-ll-ll, I don't know. We don't ever have too much luck with these Catholics. What's your political affiliation?
NEWCOMER: Huh?

FOUNDER: What's our political affil....oh, never mind. Who did you vote for in the last election?
NEWCOMER: I always vote the straight probation, I, mean, Prohibition ticket.

POLITICIAN: What a bunch of crackpots.

FOUNDER: *CONTINUES QUESTIONING NEWCOMER*

FOUNDER: What's your formal education?
NEWCOMER: I left school in the 8th grade—but later I was a trustee.

FOUNDER: What school would that be?
NEWCOMER: Craybar Reformatory.

FOUNDER: Tch, tch. Were you ever in jail?
NEWCOMER: Sure I just got out. That's why the Judge sent me over here.

FOUNDER: Were you ever in on a moral's 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 to come down here.

FOUNDER: Here—I'll have you fill in one of our application forms. Go over there and sit down and fill it out. And keep quiet—we're busy.
NEWCOMER: Can I ask a question?

FOUNDER: NO! Just go over there and sit down. You're here to be seen and not heard!

FOUNDER: (*To DELEGATE*) 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 of your maiden aunt here and they'd never find any riff-raff around.

POLITICIAN: Har—har—har—ha! Only those “pure” alcoholics he was talking about before.

FOUNDER: Right! I’ve weened out all the riff-raff, undesirables, pan-handles, con men, trouble-makers and all phoney-balonies....

POLITICIAN: Hey, tell him about the fallen women.

FOUNDER: Wad d’ya mean? I don’t know what your talking about....You’re nuts!

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

FOUNDER: (*Sheepishly*) Oh that. That was nothing—ha, ha.

POLITICIAN: Well, go on—tell him.

FOUNDER: Oh, it wasn’t anything. One night last winter, a couple of babes tried to come in here, but I’m pretty hip, 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 here and contaminate my Group—so I escorted them to the door.

POLITICIAN: (*Loudly*) Ha, ha, ha! To the door and OUT the door and we didn’t see HIM again for three weeks!

FOUNDER: Now wait—it wasn’t’ exactly like that—it was only two! (*Blustering*) 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 MONEY B. 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 past year or so.

DELEGATE: I wonder where they are now.

EAGER B.: Well, I know of two of them that died. They were both girls I went to school with.

DELEGATE: You know, in the early days of A.A., this screening problem came up, and the members had to agree that even if a new prospect had other problems than alcohol, or would not accept God right away, or was controversial, it was best for A.A., if they were alcoholics, to accept

them. Many of these remained to become good A.A. members. That is why the 3rd Tradition states that the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking.

FOUNDER: Maybe you're right. We could try it and if it didn't work 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—support them. Nobody else will. I own this building so I let 'em have free rent. I own part of the café down the street so I provide free refreshments; and my wife owns a furniture store and I give 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 after the meeting.

POLITICIAN: It isn't those 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 into the back room at Shapiro's furniture store and pay him \$2.00 a night for it. Then we could all kick in the way (EAGER B.)_____ 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 the 7th Tradition.

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

POLITICIAN: Hey, don't let such crazy ideas louse up the deal I made with O'Brien to get him re-elected Sheriff, and the deal with (FOUNDER)_____ to go on TV with him. We need O'Brien! He's a big help to us—he gets the Judge to put 'em in for us or to take 'em out for us.

MONEYBAGS: Of all the dirty double crossed I ever heard. You told me the Group would go along with my man Olsen to get him elected instead of O'Brien, and I've promised him we would. Olsen's a coming man—he's going to be Governor some day, and I've promised to finance his campaign.

POLITICIAN: Baloney—O'Brien's the best man! And I promised HIM the Group would support him.

FOUNDER: Yes, I know—O'Brien's a good guy, but if (MONEY B.)_____ thinks he can put over Olsen, maybe we'd better reconsider.

POLITICIAN: What a lousy tick. I've already promised O'Brien and don't forget, he also promised to set up the deal with old Doc—to change the name of

the hospital Doc has, to the "A.A. Hospital" and to put us A.A.'s in charge.

MONEYBAGS: Olsen can do that just as well as O'Brien.

POLITICIAN: O'Brien's the one who can do us the most good.

MONEYBAGS: HE isn't. Olsen's the one.

FOUNDER: Well—we certainly need the hospital in A.A.'s name—I'm spending too much time and money running around to screen prospects. With a hospital, we could charge plenty and make some dough, and at the same time, Doc could get 'em sobered up for us. We can give them a lot of tranquilizers to calm them down and then I can screen them....

EAGER B.: What if they don't have any money for the hospital?

MONEYBAGS: I guess they'd just have to do without the hospital—but this hospital deal is a good one. All those things are tax-exempt if we put a free case in now and then—you know, ole Doc's a drunk himself and he knows how to handle 'em.

POLITICIAN: O'Brien's the one who can put it over.

MONEYBAGS: He is NOT—Olsen's the one.

POLITICIAN: You want to go outside and make something of it?

FOUNDER: Now, now boys. We have company you know. But, if we do back Olsen and he gets to be Governor, then he can do a lot of things for us.

POLITICIAN: I always knew you were a rat.

MONEYBAGS: You're a rat-fink yourself.

EAGER B.: (To *DELEGATE*) Isn't this just terrible?

(To *FOUNDER* and others) That's what's the matter with this Group. All this politics and stuff—that's why the other Group started. You wanted them to vote for your man, and they didn't want to get into politics, but they had to because of you, so they started a Group.

POLITICIAN: O'Brien's the best man for A.A.

MONEYBAGS: Olsen's better.

FOUNDER: Maybe Olsen IS going to be Governor some day—hmmmm.

NEWCOMER RAISES HAND AGAIN

FOUNDER: Shut up.

MONEYBAGS: Yeah—shut up.

DELEGATE: ME? Oh, you know everything you're talking about is covered on our Traditions. For instance, Tradition Seven, says should be self-supporting and the Tenth Tradition warns us to stay out of politics and public controversy. 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 making alcohol illegal, and so forth. They fought for so many causes they became divided among themselves and so died. It's fine to be a good citizen, but politics have no place in A.A., if WE are to survive ourselves. And about this hospital. The early A.A.'s tried that too. And many other things. They were even going to scoop up all the derelicts on Skid Rows, start A.A. farms run by A.A.'s and financed by the sale of A.A. books. We didn't sell enough books, fortunately, so the idea fell through. Later, we learned we shouldn't try to act like professionals because we aren't, and we should never be paid for out 12th Step work. Also, it is not advisable to lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise. We should try to 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 A.A. purposes and should never be diverted to outside agencies, no matter how worthwhile. Many, many of these agencies do help the alcoholic, and while we cooperate with them, A.A. should never go as far as affiliation or endorsement, actual or implied.

NEWCOMER RAISES HAND

FOUNDER, POLITICIAN, MONEYBAGS TOGETHER: 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 Olsen to put the Group on with him. That way we can get in a plug for Olsen and get recruits for the Group at the same time.

POLITICIAN: I want equal time for O'Brien.

EAGER B.: IS that being anonymous? Supposing someone who did want to join and needed help saw the show and got scared off because they thought they'd have to go on TV if they joined A.A.

FOUNDER: You'll understand these things better when you've been around as long as I have.

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

POLITICIAN: I can't let O'Brien down.

DELEGATE: (*Opening pamphlet*) Why don't we see what it says about it here? Tradition Eleven says 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, A.A. IS a spiritual program and Tradition 12 states that anonymity IS the spiritual foundation of A.A. 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 not make a big change in the problems of your group? (Hands the pamphlet to Founder)

FOUNDER: (*READS TRADITIONS*) It sure does look like we've been making every mistake in the book.

(*To Others*) Shall we go along with (Delegate)_____?

OTHERS NOD

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

ALL: NO! NO! NO! We pay our own way, remember?

POLITICIAN: I'm all for just what I've been talking about right 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 we'll have an election....

EAGER B.: Good. I nominate (FOUNDER)_____ for our first elected leader. I certainly think (DELEGATE)_____ was guided here by a Higher Power tonight. I think we knew all along we were on the wrong track, but we didn't know where we were wrong.

DELEGATE: Actually, every one of our Traditions is based on mistakes the early members of A.A. 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 his application.

(TO NEWCOMER) Stand up and ask your question, fellow.

NEWCOMER: I've only got one question....

FOUNDER: Quiet everyone—and let this man ask his question.

NEWCOMER: Where's the rest room?

EVERYONE POINTS OFF STAGE AND NEWCOMER RUNS OFF FAST

NARRATOR: Thank you ladies and gentlemen. You have seen how the Middletown Group found the solution to its problems. We hope that our play has pointed the way, should your Group ever need guidance. The Traditions show the way, and your local Area Assembly or the General Service Office in New York are always available should your Group need special advice. The Bar X Players of the Sober Swingers Dance Committee have presented this play tonight. The players were:

FOUNDER: _____

MONEYBAGS: _____

EAGER BEAVER: _____

POLITICIAN: _____

DELEGATE: _____

NEWCOMER: _____

NARRATOR: _____

PROPS NEEDED:

Table

5 chairs

1 good chair (formal)

Twelve Traditions Pamphlet

Paper and Pen or Pencil (Newcomer's Application)