

Third Tradition Session Profile

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.

Session materials: Third Tradition Notes Sheets (with BT essay on the flip side), Ground Rules, Brainstorming Guidelines, Facilitator's Instructions, Traditions and Concepts sheets, post-It sheets, markers, copies of IWHW on tables.

Purpose of Session

- ◆ Heighten awareness of the principles in the Third Tradition and how to put them into practice
- ◆ Identify issues that may challenge us as members to welcome all addicts
- ◆ Identify resources/tools that may help groups practice the Third Tradition
- ◆ Model the sort of discussion that could take place at a group support forum

Session Outline

Set-up of Session	15 minutes
Large Group Ice Breaker	15 minutes
Small Group Discussion	30 minutes
Small Group Feedback	15 minutes
Large Group Brainstorm & Wrap-up	15 minutes

Set-up of Session

15 minutes

Facilitators introduce themselves and provide an overview of the session and the goals.

- ◆ Explain why the Third Tradition is important to the wellbeing of groups and NA. [Note to facilitator: You may want to reread the Third Tradition Essays in *IWHW* and the BT and pull some of your favorite passages or quotes like the ones below to read during the introduction to the session.]
 - *"The Third Tradition helps NA to grow by encouraging us to welcome others."* Third Tradition Essay IWHW
- ◆ Discuss how we may welcome and how we have heard that we are not welcoming. *It Works How and Why* explains:
 - *"Any addict who walks into a meeting, even a using addict, displays a level of willingness that cannot be discounted."* Third Tradition Essay IWHW
- ◆ Yet, other addicts and those who refer addicts to NA let us know that we don't always do a good job welcoming all addicts. [Note to facilitator: Feel free to add your own thoughts to this list or elaborate on these ideas. These are just a few examples.]
 - Sometimes meetings that are overwhelmed with addicts who are court-ordered to NA have a difficult time making those addicts feel welcome.
 - Addicts on drug replacement who have a desire to get clean don't always get a warm reception at our meetings. Professionals who refer addicts to meetings will often refer drt clients or clients

on mental health medication to other twelve-step fellowships because NA has a reputation of being unwelcoming.

- Younger or older addicts, professionals . . . these are populations that we sometimes struggle to be welcoming to. Sometimes we can send the message that they are not “real” addicts because they didn’t use the way we used.

◇ Consider for a moment (imagine) what NA might look like without the Third Tradition. Of course, NA has no membership committees or requirements for membership. The Third Tradition Essay in the Basic Text explains:

- *“Desire is our only requirement. Addiction does not discriminate. This tradition is to ensure that any addict, regardless of drugs used, race, religious beliefs, sex, sexual preference, or financial condition is free to practice the NA way of life. With “...a desire to stop using” as the only requirement for membership, one addict is never superior to another. . . This tradition guarantees our freedom to recover.”* Third Tradition Essay BT

Large Group Ice Breaker

15 minutes

And now let’s spend a little time talking about how we’ve personally felt the effects of the Third Tradition.

Go around the room taking turns reading from the Third Tradition essay up to the “Applying Spiritual Principles” section from *IWHW*

- *Facilitator First—share your experience with the Third Tradition as a newcomer or returning NA member. How has the fact that we have no requirement for membership other than desire helped you to stay in NA.*
- *Question for large group: How did the Third Tradition help me to remain in NA? (capture responses on post it sheets)*

Thank members for their participation.

Small Group Discussion

30 minutes

Inform participants that they will have roughly fifteen minutes per question and to write their responses on the post-it sheets. Let them know you will collect the post-it sheets so they should write legibly.

Let groups know they should choose a facilitator who will help the discussion to move and ensure that no one person dominates the conversation. Choose a recorder who will capture the ideas on a large post-it. [Note: the answers to these two questions may overlap. That’s fine. The important thing is to have a thought-provoking discussion about putting the Third Tradition into practice.]

Facilitator: Give a personal example for question one and question two.

- *Question 1: What gets in my way of practicing the principles in the Third Tradition as an individual member? Are there certain times it is more difficult for me to practice the principles?*
- *Question 2: What gets in the way of practicing the principles of the Third Tradition within a meeting (home group) setting?*

Small Group Feedback

15 minutes

Let participants know you will have about fifteen minutes to hear back from a few groups

Call on as many groups as you can in the time allowed and have them put up their post-it(s) and share their ideas on one of the questions.

If you have a lot of tables and not enough time you may want to ask tables to share only two or three points that haven't been shared yet so that you can call on more tables.

Large Group Brainstorm and Wrap-up

15 minutes

- ◆ We have briefly heard of challenges with the practice of principles from a member's perspective and from a group perspective. Now we're going to talk briefly about resources and tools.
 - Large Group Question/Brainstorm: What resources/tools would help your group/meeting to welcome any addict who walks in?

Capture points on post-it sheets. Encourage members to share any additional resource/tool thoughts with NAWS, worldboard@na.org

Note to facilitator: Please send any input on these Issue Discussion Topic questions to worldboard@na.org. Session profiles and resources are available at www.na.org/IDT.

Encourage members to consider having a Third Tradition workshop locally

Remember: *"The group is not the jury of desire. No addict should be denied the opportunity to stay long enough to develop that desire. We can nurture that desire with loving acceptance."* Third Tradition Essay IWHW