

# Tradition Ten and Discussions of Race

---

Statement by the D.A. General Service Board

The D.A. General Service Board feels strongly that the Twelve Traditions, as written, protect and support us in our mutual recovery. However, interpretation of Traditions can differ widely, as most members who attend meetings will attest. The Board believes that learning about, considering, and interpreting the Traditions is a helpful activity for the Fellowship to engage in. We perceive the Twelve Traditions as living principles beyond any limited perspectives.

When it comes to the Traditions and underserved and underrepresented populations (determined by race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ability, etc.), the Board wholly supports diversity, inclusivity, and fairness to all as administrative values and constant goals, and believes this stance is backed up by Tradition One (unity) and Tradition Three (no requirement for membership other than a desire to stop incurring unsecured debt). We do not believe Tradition Ten (outside issues) conflicts with supporting diversity, inclusivity, and fairness to all in Debtors Anonymous. Some members have described a use of Tradition Ten to halt personal shares discussing race. While meetings are autonomous, the Board group conscience does not interpret Tradition Ten as a license to attempt to silence members while sharing through the lens of their personal experience. Sharing helps other members in the room to identify with debting behaviors and our recovery from them, and to feel safe and welcome..

Tradition Ten also teaches us to be mindful not to create controversy. D.A. and A.A. literature discourages discussion of political affiliation, religious affiliation, names of outside organizations, outside teachings, places of employment, impressions of any outside affiliation, and breaking our anonymity at the meeting level (The Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of Debtors Anonymous).

Approved March 2021, Re-Approved July 2025.