

A Suggested Group Inventory for A.R.T.S. Anonymous

Our 5th tradition says that “Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the artist who still suffers.” Sharing our Experience, Strength, and Hope is the message of recovery, as is sharing what our life was like before A.R.T.S., and what it is like now. The message can be attractive to newcomers and welcoming them renews the purpose of the meeting.

Many groups periodically hold a “group inventory meeting” to evaluate how well they are fulfilling the primary purpose of carrying the message to the artist who still suffers. Some groups take inventory to assess how the group adheres to the principles of each Tradition. Groups interested in taking regular inventory often find the words of Step Ten helpful: *Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.* Alcoholics Anonymous created the “Group Inventory.” The following text is adapted from A.A.’s Group Inventory, and may be useful in arriving at an informed group conscience. Groups might want to add questions of their own.

1. The primary purpose is to is to “reach the artist who still suffers.” This includes artists who haven’t heard of A.R.T.S. Anonymous, newcomers, and members. How does the group “carry the message” to serve the “primary purpose”?
2. How can group members utilize service opportunities within A.R.T.S. Anonymous to help “carry the message?”
3. Tradition 3 reminds us “the only requirement for membership is a desire to identify and express our creativity.” How does the group share this message to include all members, including newcomers?
4. Tradition 1 and personal recovery comes from working the A.R.T.S. program. One meaningful way to work the A.R.T.S. program is through Sponsorship. How does your group communicate availability for sponsors and sponsees to make contact?
5. Tradition 12 reminds us that anonymity is our spiritual foundation. As “our common welfare should come first,” how does anonymity support and protect the member, and A.R.T.S. as a whole? What steps does the group take to safeguard what is shared at meetings and between members?
6. How are members invited to participate in the meeting and other group activities in a way that safeguards unity, recovery, safety and respect? Does the group provide guidelines for sharing in the meeting?
7. A.R.T.S. could not exist without the service of its members. How does the group meet the needs of the meeting through service opportunities such as collecting money, keeping records, making announcements, leading the meeting, electing officers and selecting Meeting Delegates (GSR’s)?
8. Meeting service positions are not only a responsibility, but can also inspire further recovery. Does the group hold regular business meetings where members can be

elected to serve? Does the group practice service rotation so that all members may grow in their recovery?

9. How does the group regularly apply the Twelve Traditions to take care of the health and well-being of the meeting?
10. How does the group support and respect the three pillars of our fellowship: Recovery with the Steps, Unity with the Traditions, and Service with the guidance of the Concepts of Service?
11. How does the group attract the interest of professionals, such as therapists, educators, physicians, clergy and others, who are often the first to see blocked artists in need of help?
12. Is the group self-supporting in accordance with the 7th Tradition? Does the group make regular financial contributions to the meeting? Is the meeting able to donate a regular amount to A.R.T.S. World Services in support of A.R.T.S. as a whole.
13. Engaging in romantic or commercial relationships can cause disunity, diversions from the primary purpose and risks putting personalities before principles. Does the meeting take care to protect the newcomer from inappropriate relationships with other members?
14. Some members, particularly those who have been a part of A.R.T.S. for a long time, may believe that their experience and decisions are the only right ones for the group. Remembering that the ultimate authority is a loving God, how might "Oldtimers" contribute as trusted servants in resolving group dilemmas? What does the group do to ensure that it remains open to all voices and recovering by principles, not personalities?

Almost every group problem has a resolution, which usually can be reached through an informed group conscience. Practicing trust, patience, courtesy and a willingness to listen and wait have been found to be far more effective than argument or accusation. A sense of humor and fairness can also be encouraged. Above all "a loving God as He may express himself" is "the ultimate authority" (Tradition 2) for the group conscience.