

# How to Rotate Well

Setting up Future Trusted Servants for Success

Presented by

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Panel 72, Area 46

Alternate Delegate



# Why We Serve

- Every single hour we spend in general service is for one reason – **to make Twelfth Step Work possible.**
- We work to create environments where one alcoholic can talk to another.
- There is so much hope and healing to be found by one alcoholic sharing their experience, strength and hope with another.

**This is why we serve!**

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# Why We Should Rotate

- “None of the Conference members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others.”

*~Concept 12, Warranty Three*

- “...the Conference itself [AA] will always remain democratic in action and in spirit.”

*~Concept 12, Warranty Six*

- “...Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”

*~Tradition Two*

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# Consider This...


- If you stay in your position past rotation you might rob someone else the blessing of service in that role.
- If you stay in your position past rotation others might not step up to serve.
- If you stay in your position past rotation you will rob *yourself* of the blessing of another service role.
- You are *needed elsewhere* in A.A. service. Take what you have learned and serve somewhere else to help carry the message.



# Our Greatest Trusted Errand

“Everybody in a certain sense is a leader in this society. Everybody who carries the language of the heart to the man or gal still suffering: this is the supreme leadership. **This is the greatest trusted errand.**”

*Our Great Responsibility* by Bill W., Section 5: Service,  
Message Title: Standing Alone, page 161-162






# Why We Should Rotate Well

“But there are those of us who find ourselves cast into assignments of service leadership, and this is nothing but a specialty in which we are supposed to become expert and dedicated to the task of making the primary leadership possible. If the light is to be carried to the newcomer, he has to be brought within reach of it. This is our business here. It is the business of every Intergroup association, every group committee. And we who man these special enterprises are commonly called trusted servants, and this implies leadership of the highest order, minus its usual implications.”

*Our Great Responsibility* by Bill W., Section 5: Service,  
Message Title: Standing Alone, page 161-162

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# From The A.A. Group (pamphlet):

Traditionally, rotation ensures that group tasks, like nearly everything else in A.A., are passed around for all to share.

Many groups have alternates to each trusted servant who can step into the service positions if needed.

To step out of an A.A. office you love can be hard. If you have been doing a good job, if you honestly don't see anyone else around willing, qualified, or with the time to do it, and if your friends agree, it's especially tough. But it can be a real step forward in growth — a step into the humility that is, for some people, the spiritual essence of anonymity.

Among other things, anonymity in the Fellowship means that we forgo personal prestige for any A.A. work we do to help alcoholics. And, in the spirit of Tradition Twelve, it ever reminds us “to place principles before personalities.”

Many outgoing service position holders find it rewarding to take time to share their experience with the incoming person. Rotation helps to bring us spiritual rewards far more enduring than any fame. With no A.A. “status” at stake, we needn't compete for titles or praise — we have complete freedom to serve as we are needed.



Sometimes,  
you just  
have to  
let go ...



It is time to let go



# Rotation Defined

Rotation — The spiritual principle of sharing the responsibility for A.A. through changing leadership.

AA Service Manual, Page 87



# The Principle of Rotation

The principle of rotation flows from Tradition Two:

“For our group purpose, there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”

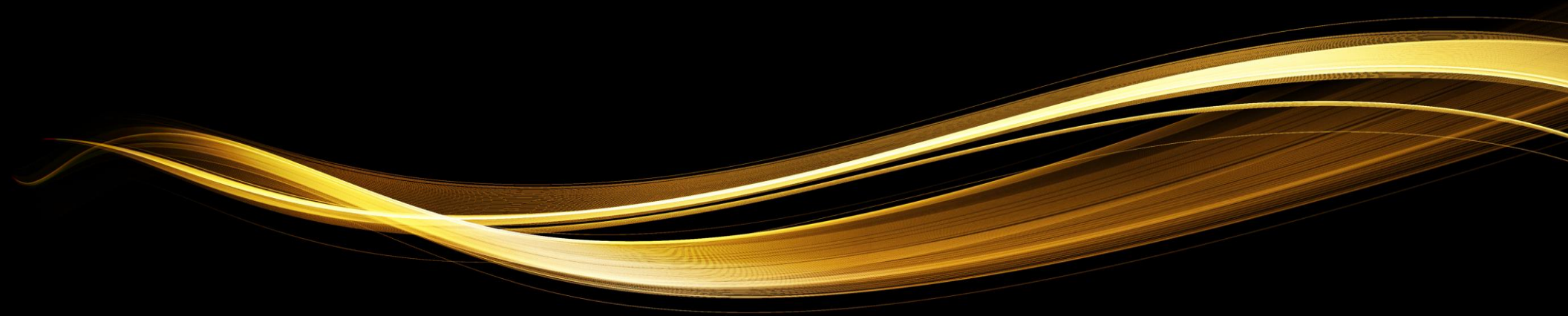
In addition, Concepts IX and XI reference the principle of rotation in General Service.

# Rotation is Spiritual

- Tradition 9: “A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”

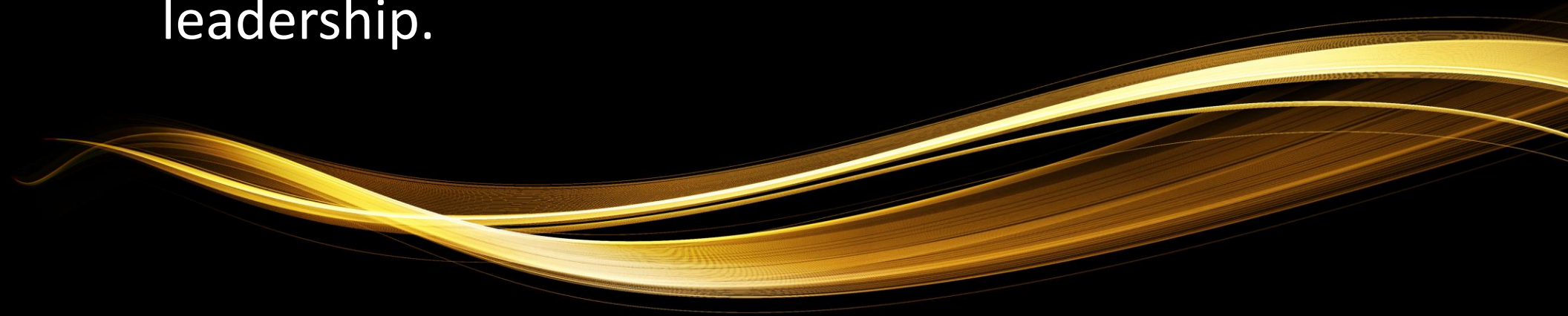
We are directly responsible to those we serve.

This includes the servants who take our service position after we rotate on.



# Rotation is Spiritual

- Leadership in AA is Servant Leadership
- Part of being a servant leader is replacing yourself
- Set up new leaders for success
- The better we help prepare those who take our position after us, the more work gets done to carry the message.
- THIS is leadership development; this is servant leadership.

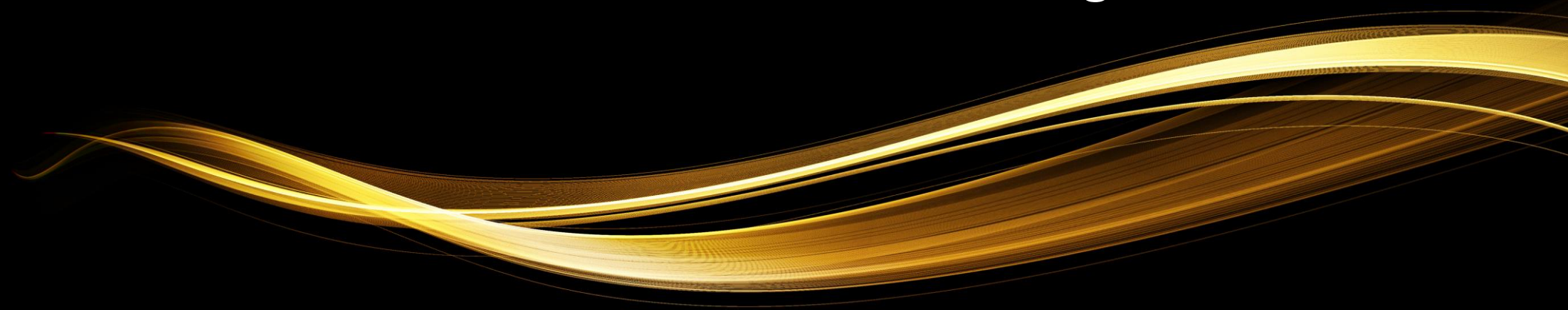




# Rotation is Practical

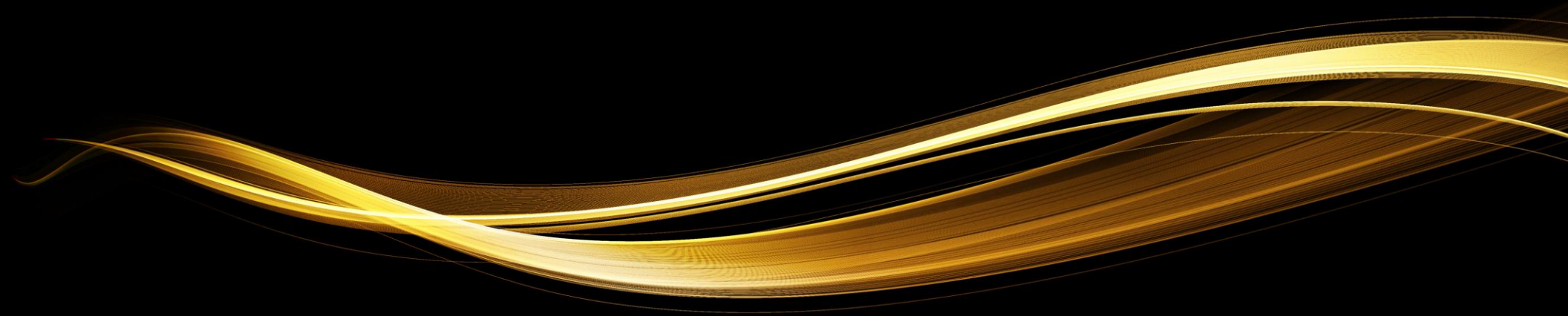
- Share your experience, strength and hope
- Share your files!
- Share your presentations!
  - If they do not use yours, don't bleed...
- Have a transition meeting!
- Share Lessons Learned

More elder statesmen and less bleeding deacons!



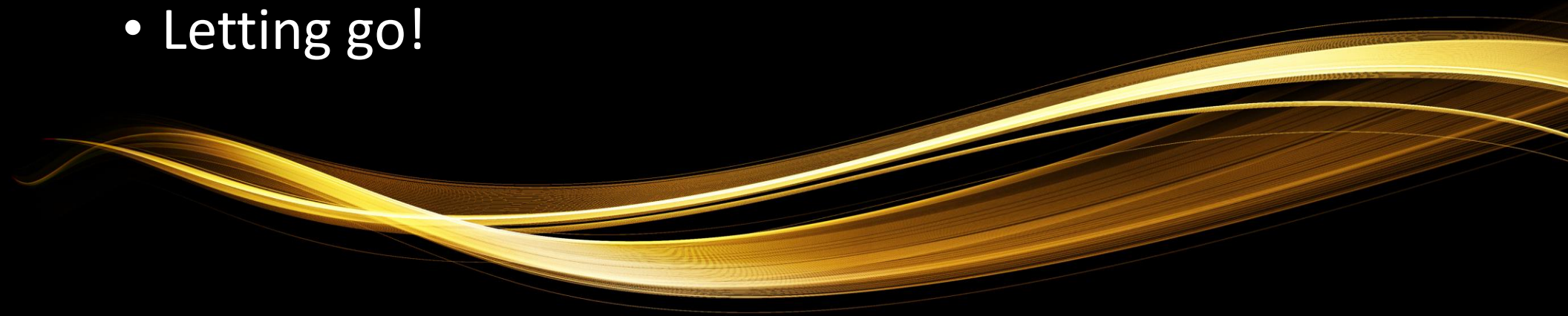
# Essentials to Rotate Well

- Ask Yourself
  - What would have helped you when you started in this role?
- Stay Humble
  - No, you are NOT the greatest trusted servant in the history of A.A.
  - Let this position go and rotate on
  - Help the trusted servant who comes after you
- Use Your Tools!!!



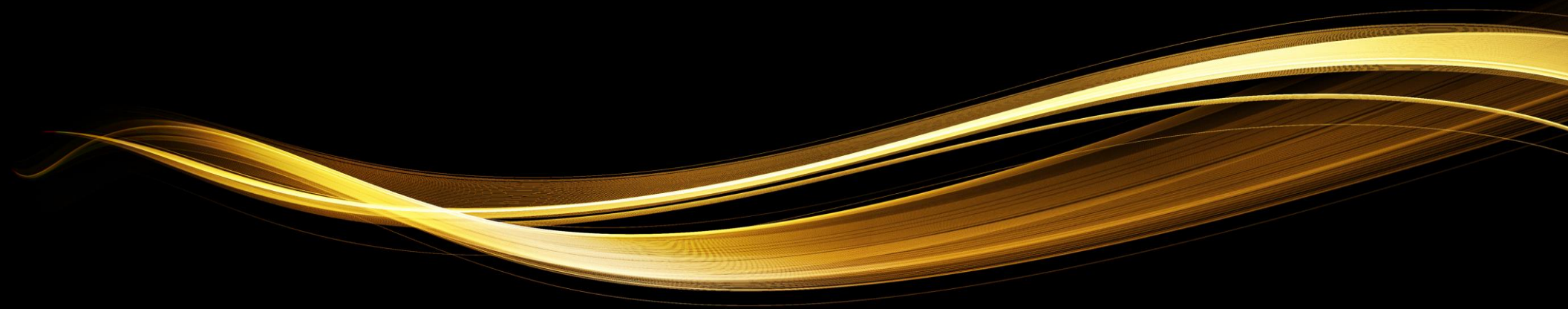
# Tools Needed to Rotate Well

- Higher Power
- Humility
- Service Sponsor
- Communication (with your successor & committee)
- Checklists to Rotate Well
  - Rotation Checklist
  - Rotation Handoff Meeting Checklist
- Encouragement for your successor
- Letting go!



# Rotation Handoff Meeting

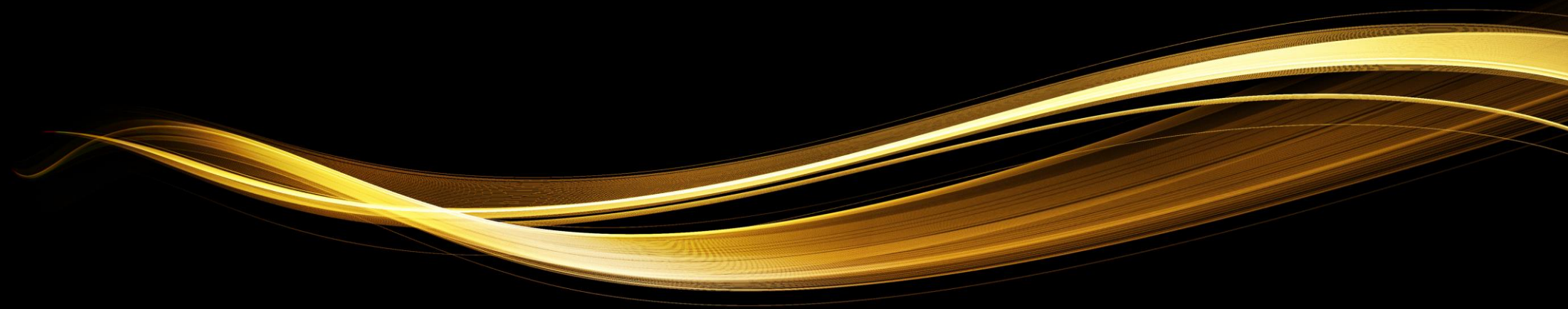
1. SUCCESSES
2. CHALLENGES
3. TOOLS & RESOURCES
4. INTERDEPENDENCIES
5. TEAM PLAYERS
6. PROJECTS & VISION
7. DOCUMENTATION





# Handoff: My Biggest Successes

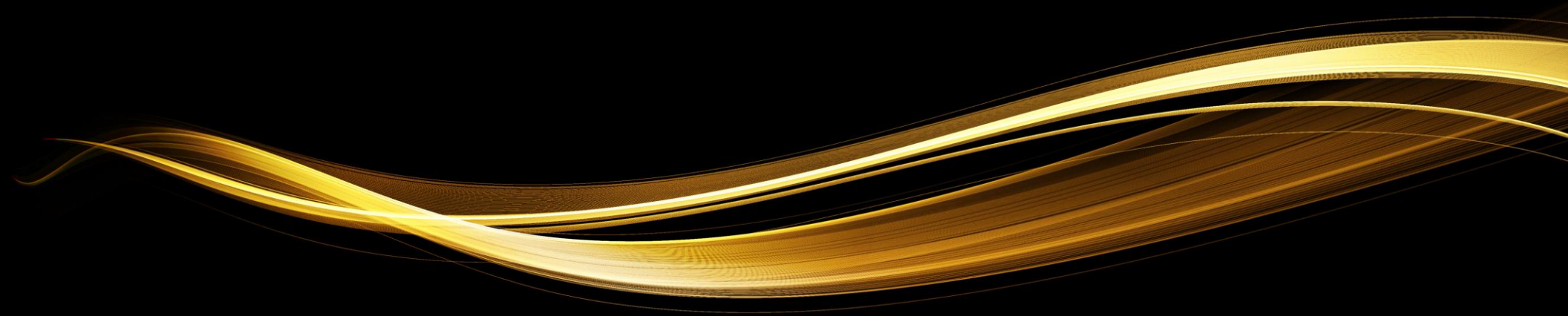
- Share your biggest successes
- Share WHY they were successes
- Share HOW you made them successful
- Lessons learned



# Handoff: My Biggest Challenges

- Share your biggest challenges
- Share WHY they were challenges for you
- Share any hindsight you have gained
- Lessons learned

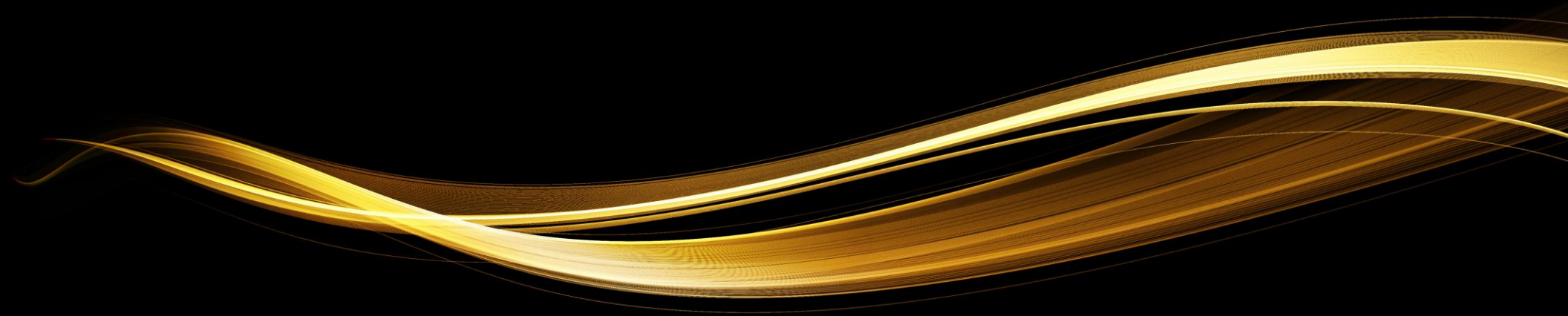
If I knew then what I know now...



# Handoff: Tools & Resources

The tools and resources I used to help me be better do my job were:

- Resources on Area 46 Service Site
- Links to the appropriate servant page on the Area 46 website
- Links to appropriate resources on AA.org
  - Describe what tools were most useful and why
- Other tools I used...



# Handoff: Interdependencies

The trusted servants, committees and other outside sources that were instrumental in my success were:

- Encourage members of your committee to stay on the committee
  - At least for the first few months
- List everyone who helped you
- List people in your district or on your committee that can help your successor

**Knock down those information silos!**

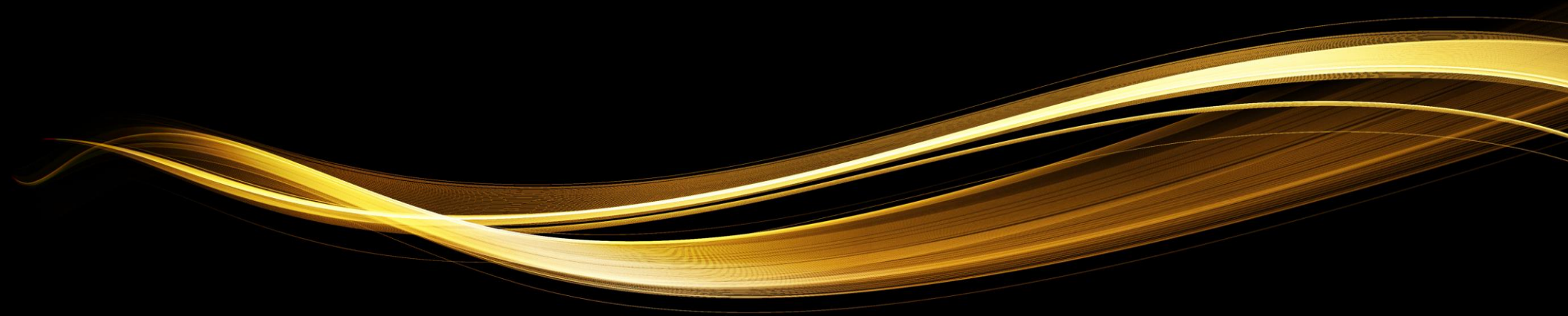
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# Handoff: Team Players

The two members of my committee I counted on the most were:

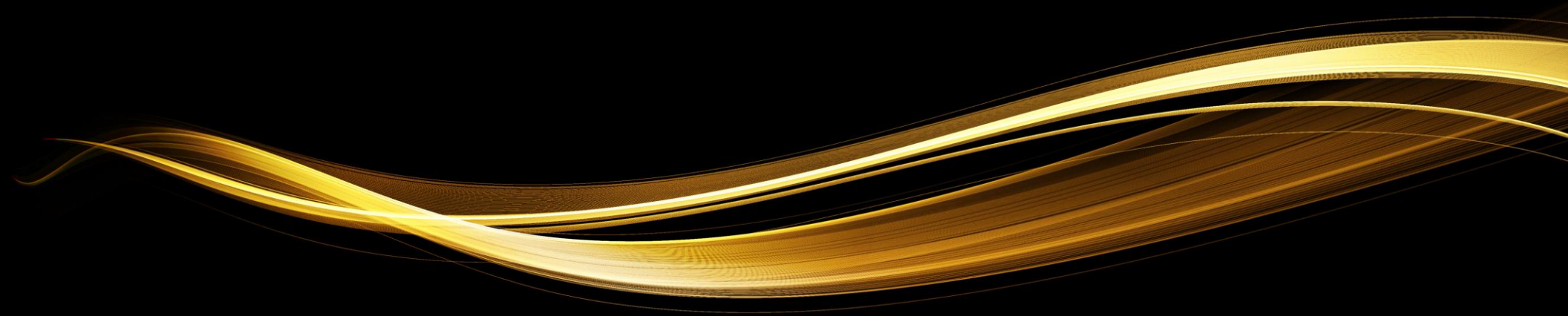
1. Abc
2. Xyz



# Handoff: Projects and Vision


These are projects my committee/district worked on:

- Project A
  - Status: Complete, Not Complete or In Process
- Project B
  - Status: Complete, Not Complete or In Process
- Project C
  - Status: Complete, Not Complete or In Process



# Handoff: Documentation

These are the documents I think you will find most useful:

- Job Description
  - Historical documents
    - Ongoing logs
    - Past Minutes/Agendas
  - Resources created by your committee
    - Info documents
    - Presentations
  - Projects started but not completed
- 

# Rotation Checklist

- Have your successor shadow you
  - Where appropriate
- Talk to your committee about staying on the committee
- Set up Rotation Handoff Meeting
- Prepare Documents for Transfer
  - Determine best method to transfer documents
    - Jump Drive
    - Google Account
    - Email (not recommended for multiple files)
- Clean out your email account
  - Where appropriate

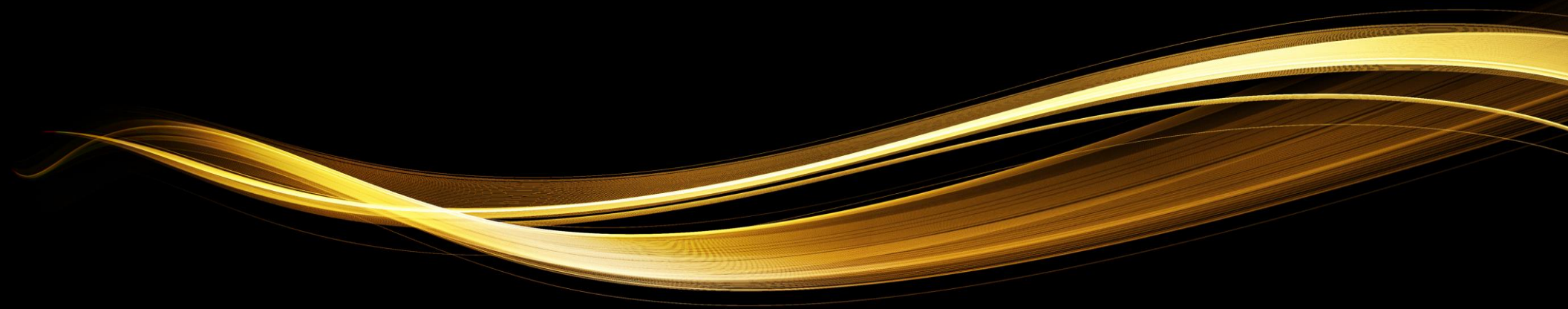


# Checklist for Rotating On

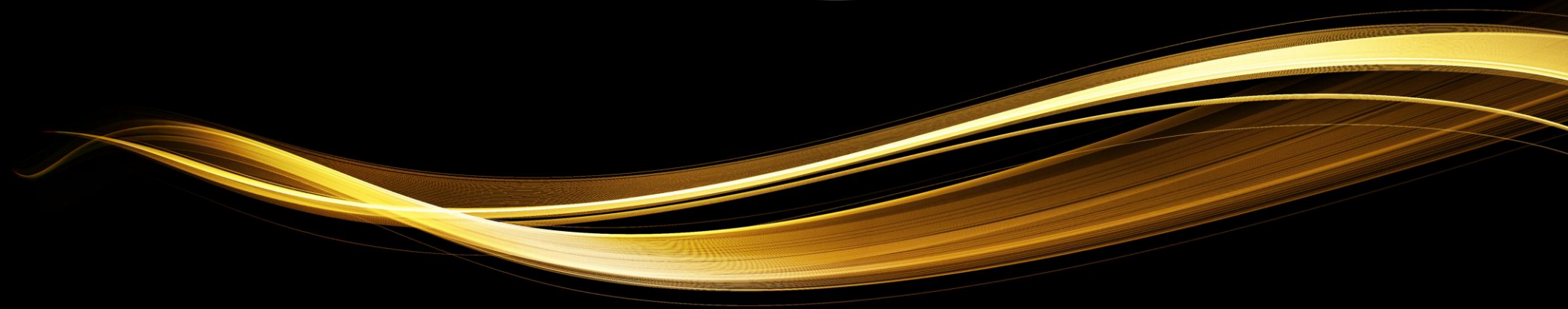
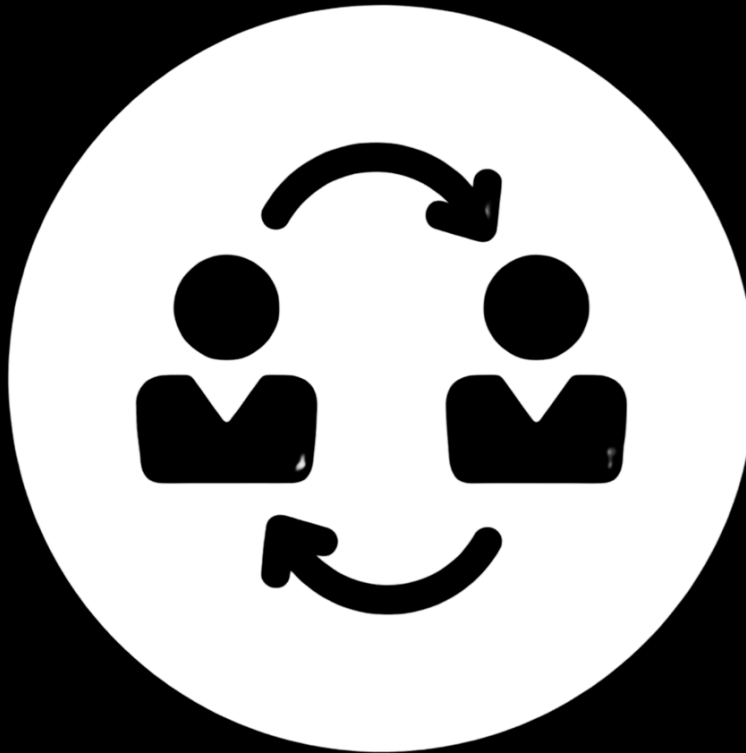
- Interview the current trusted servant in the role
  - Ask about their biggest successes and challenges in the role.
  - Ask what they would do differently if starting in the role today.
  - Ask about any projects that may rollover into next rotation.
  - Ask about their committee and who might stay on for the next rotation.
  - Ask to shadow (if possible) them to gain perspective about the role.
- Talk to your service sponsor about the role you want

# Gifts of Rotating Well

- Growth
- Humility
- Gratitude
- Opportunity for a new service experience
- Blessing to see what you started grow and reach farther to carry the message



# Rotation Checklists



# Discussion

Thank you!

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## ***Rotation: A Step Forward in Growth***

**Grapevine: December 1999, By: Diane O. | Cupertino, California**

I will never forget my first experience with rotation. I'd been the secretary for my group, and I believed I'd piloted my little women's group with perfection for six months. "They have never had it so good!" I thought. But they did not seem to think so. They kept asking me when we were going to hold elections for a new secretary. After all, my six month term was almost up, and I had not once mentioned holding elections. Secretly, I was hoping they would tell me that, since I had done such a great job, they wanted me to continue. Certainly they could see that no one could possibly improve upon what I had been doing. I even fantasized how they would implore me to continue and then give me a standing ovation. It didn't happen. They elected someone new, and I was devastated. But I learned, and I have grown through many more rotations. Rotation is one of the most beautiful spiritual principles that we observe in Alcoholics Anonymous.

All of us trusted servants will rotate from the jobs we are doing, and other people will come in to take our places. One door closes and another one always opens if we are spiritually on track, keeping our recovery programs strong and practicing the principles of love and service in all our affairs. Rotation allows us to grow in God's grace as we move on to other opportunities and permit others to share in the joys of service in Alcoholics Anonymous. It prevents us from becoming the experts that we once thought we were and from being so entrenched in a job that we get stale and unenthusiastic. Problems based on personalities are prevented; no power or prestige gets built up; no individual gets taken advantage of and imposed upon; and the great blessings of giving service are shared by more and more members.

Stepping out of an AA office that you love very much can be a real step forward in growth--a step into the humility which is the spiritual essence of anonymity. Spiritual anonymity in AA means that we forgo personal prestige for any AA work that we do in order to help other alcoholics. Rotation helps to bring us spiritual rewards far more enduring than any fame. With no AA status at stake, we have complete freedom to serve as we are needed, and we don't have to compete for any titles or praise. AA jobs aren't arranged upward like rungs on a ladder; they are all on the same level, the base of which is service to others--the foundation stone of our recovery through God's grace.

Service is to be shared willingly and gladly with others, but sometimes people do need help in learning to really step down. We remember that these people were often great servants; and whatever they did, they did out of love and devotion to the Fellowship. We should not forget our gratitude to them but should pry them loose gently if we can. And gently or not, we pry them loose anyway! This is a service that we owe to Alcoholics Anonymous. Each year, I believe more absolutely in the spirit of democratic idealism which shines throughout our Fellowship, and I realize that an important way to sustain this shining spirit is to pass on the torch of service to other hands.

Rotation is a catalyst for personal growth, a chance to learn again to surrender, with grace, to the wishes of our Fellowship. It symbolizes our Twelfth Tradition's reminder to always place principles before personalities, thus ensuring that the circles of love and service in Alcoholics Anonymous are ever widening.

# An Inactive GSR/DCM/Trusted Servant

- Sometimes a trusted servant who has been elected or appointed to serve the Fellowship may find that their life circumstances change or the service workload becomes unwieldy.
- If there is an alternate for the position, that person may be able to help, but difficult decisions may need to be made in order to ensure continuity of the Fellowship voice in the service structure.
- Each service entity has autonomy regarding what constitutes an “inactive” trusted servant, whether it be a GSR, DCM or other service position.
- Experience in the Fellowship suggests that the trusted servant be asked to resign if it appears they are unable to carry out the responsibilities of the position.
- The service entity involved is then free to elect a new trusted servant to the position.