

‡According to the Fourth Tradition, each group is autonomous except in matters affecting CMA as a whole. Therefore, it's up to each group to decide how to use its money, but many CMA meetings follow these suggested guidelines:

- Groups in areas with three levels of service structure typically give 50 percent to their District or Intergroup, 30 percent to their Area, and 20 percent to the GSO.
- Groups in areas with two levels of service structure usually send 75 percent to their Area or Intergroup and 25 percent to the GSO.
- Groups in areas with one level of service structure just give 100 percent to the GSO.

Members may also contribute directly to CMA General Services through the website, [www.crystalmeth.org](http://www.crystalmeth.org). Member contributions to Crystal Meth Anonymous are limited to \$3,000 per year and are fully tax deductible to the amount allowed by law; receipts are available upon request. Contributions from non-members or any outside organization cannot be accepted under any circumstances and respectfully will be returned.



**CMA Interim Approved Literature**

*The General Service Committee has approved this literature to be used widely by the fellowship, and encourages feedback and comment so that it may be considered in the future for approval by the General Service Conference.*

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# WHAT IS THE SEVENTH TRADITION?

EVERY CMA GROUP OUGHT TO BE FULLY SELF-SUPPORTING, DECLINING OUTSIDE CONTRIBUTIONS.

Crystal Meth Anonymous

When we are new to Crystal Meth Anonymous, many of us are confused by questions about money and membership. At many meetings a basket is passed to collect funds which are used to pay expenses and help support the work of the CMA service structure; we call this “observing the Seventh Tradition.” Do we have to give anything when the basket gets passed to us? Our Third Tradition is very clear on this point: *“The only requirement for CMA membership is a desire to stop using.”* You are not obligated to contribute any money to be a member of Crystal Meth Anonymous.

### Shared Purpose

Most members who are able to contribute practice the Seventh Tradition. So what is the money for? The primary purpose of CMA is to carry the message of recovery to the crystal meth addict who still suffers. We are not a traditional organization—we don’t seek to make a profit or to stockpile money. However, we have to pay our expenses so that when someone needs help, there is a place to meet, a telephone number to call, literature to read, and a newcomer chip to give. The Seventh Tradition collection keeps the fellowship functioning financially; these donations are essential for CMA to survive and thrive.

For an individual group, paying rent is generally the first priority, to ensure a safe space to meet. Other expenses may include things like literature, chips, and refreshments. Most groups keep a “prudent reserve,” a sum of money equal to a few months’ expenses, to help manage unexpected changes such as the sudden loss of a meeting space.

Our experience shows that keeping large sums of money can be dangerous for a group and distracts it from its primary

purpose. After groups meet their regular expenses, most donate the funds beyond a prudent reserve to their local service structures, intergroups and the CMA General Services Office to help with their expenses.† Such expenses include producing recovery literature and chips; operating a telephone hotline and website; and helping host conferences. These contributions also assist with supporting meetings worldwide, providing public information and outreach, and carrying the message to those in hospitals and institutions.

### Autonomy

Why not get government help or solicit charitable donations? The Seventh Tradition says we decline outside contributions—our autonomy depends on us being self-supporting. Gifts from other sources, whether cash or non-cash, may carry stated or unstated obligations, and could invite controversy. We can’t allow our message to be diluted by an outside interest, whether it’s a hospital, a religious organization, or an individual. Being self-supporting through our members’ contributions helps maintain our integrity and our autonomy.

This works the other way, too. Our Sixth Tradition states, *“A CMA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the CMA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.”* Therefore, CMA groups don’t contribute to treatment centers, recovery homes, clubhouses, events not sanctioned by CMA, or any other outside enterprise. We’re an autonomous fellowship. The Sixth and Seventh Traditions keep us self-supporting and independent, protecting the integrity of our message.

### Integrity

When we first come into the rooms, a lot of us aren’t in a position to give anything towards the Seventh Tradition. That’s okay—there’s no shame in seeking relief from addiction when our wreckage prevents us from contributing financially. We as recovering addicts are much more important to each other than our money. On the other hand, we are equally pleased when we see a person who recovers and achieves financial security, and can lovingly contribute more when the basket is passed.

Our Twelve Steps teach us that sober living requires us to grow up. Paying our own way whenever we can is a sign of our developing maturity. The Seventh Tradition basket, when it comes around, reminds us that we’re learning to take care of ourselves. For some of us, practicing the Seventh Tradition is a personal expression of gratitude for the gift of recovery. For others, contributing to the Seventh Tradition is their way of ensuring that our fellowship remains self-supporting and autonomous.

Ultimately, being self-supporting has a profound spiritual meaning for us as individuals. In meeting our own needs, we make a break from dependence. When we were using, many of us paid for our addiction with our dignity and self-respect. We were dependent on others, only taking what we could from life, and in our selfish pursuits, lost our integrity and gained nothing. In sobriety, we no longer live that way. Taking responsibility for ourselves is how we grow in recovery. Observing the Seventh Tradition is how our fellowship pays its own way. And in doing so, we fulfill our primary purpose and ensure that CMA is always there for the newcomer and for the addict who still suffers.