

# Aspirations of an Altrusan

From *The National Altrusan*, April 1926; written by Mamie L. Bass for her own club bulletin, the *Indianapolis Altrusan*.

Let me be always open-minded, that I may recognize good for Altrusa wherever it may be. Let me be ready always to put aside my personal opinions for the greater good, for the greater number. Let me see principles and not personalities, and, discerning them, let me serve them wholeheartedly through every cloud of doubt and discouragement.

Let me have faith still that the voice of the majority is the voice of good, and let me lend myself to the working out sincerely of what the majority chooses. Knowing that the organization is but the individual multiplied by many and that the organization reflects not only the constructive good, but also the mistaken ideals, the short-sightedness, the failures of the individual, let me still adhere to the will of the majority, knowing that time will reveal the better way and lead our footsteps aright if we tread with purer motives and unselfish hearts.

Let me be conscious of the shortcomings, the mistakes, the failures of myself and my associates, only that I may learn to correct them, and let me rather see with uplifted face and stalwart soul the unblemished beauty, the high ideal, of the spirit of Altrusa, who lives upon the earth to uplift women to higher things, to make real in business and in our daily lives the things of the spirit. Let me not dream and write and talk of noble things, but give me rather the strength to live them in the smallest act wherein it is mine to serve.

Let me be patient in defeat and humble in success. Let me seek not for rewards, for appreciation, or even for understanding, but let me seek rather to do the work that lies before me, and to find in the right doing of that work the joy and satisfaction that passes understanding, until too I may say, "I know what pleasure is, for I have done good work."

## Adventuring in Friendship

Altrusa is an adventure in friendship as well as in service. This is the real meaning and purpose of our membership. Every one of us attending Altrusa meetings at one time or another might think the food is just so-so or that the programs are too long or not very good. But, somehow, that never seems to make much difference when, beside us or across the table from us, there is always someone we might not otherwise have known, someone whose business or hobbies or interests are different from our own, someone trying to place service above self, someone adventuring in friendship as well as service.

This is Altrusa. Share it with others.

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# Principles of Altrusa

Written by Mamie L. Bass, 1921

1. Altrusa is a builder of women.
2. Altrusa is an expression of the search for the best in character, in business, and in citizenship.
3. Election to Altrusa is an evidence of confidence which imposes upon the recipient the obligation to strive to be true to the highest standards of life in her personal and business relations.
4. Altrusa, in the very derivation of its name, is committed to the philosophy of unselfishness, the joy of giving rather than getting, and to the search for that happiness which is based upon spiritual worthiness.
5. Altrusa is a practical idealism. Its service consists not in saying great things, but in daily earnest practice of its principles.
6. Altrusa commends to its members an active interest in public affairs, realizing that the State is but the individual writ large.
7. Altrusa develops true leadership, concerned with accomplishment and not with recognition.
8. Membership carries with it no obligation to transact business with other members. It makes no promise of returns in any commercial specie. Its rewards are in proportion to the loyalty, unselfishness, and character of the member herself.
9. Altrusa expresses goodwill for all mankind. It emphasizes the good and lets the evil sink into the oblivion it merits.
10. Altrusa is democratic; it knows no class, no favorites, but is founded on merit alone.
11. Altrusa believes that the way to progress lies not in emphasizing the faults of men and their failure to give proper recognition, at times, to women in business, but rather in arousing women to their responsibilities and their possibilities so that their accomplishments will blaze the trail for greater things.
12. Altrusa believes it is not enough to be good; Altrusans must be good for something. Each member must be doing the piece of work that is hers in a way that puts her in the front ranks of accomplishment.

# Responsibilities of Membership

A member who freely shares knowledge, experience and talent in Altrusa finds the dimensions of life richly expanded. The rewards of Altrusa membership are derived from the open acceptance and practice of the following membership responsibilities.

1. Expect the most from membership by making a firm commitment to it.
2. Make every effort to know and practice the ideals, principles, and objectives of Altrusa.
3. Know the bylaws and policies necessary to meaningful participation and keep informed on the organization by reading all Altrusa publications.
4. Attend meetings regularly and take an active part. It is the fellowship experienced at meetings and the working together in service that brings full value to Altrusa membership.
5. Accept committee assignments and be willing to assume top leadership roles in the Club, District, and International when invited.
6. Be concerned with Club problems and participate in seeking their solutions.
7. Pay dues promptly.
8. Experience the total scope of membership by attending District Conferences and workshops and International Conventions and by supporting the International programs of the Foundation and the association.
9. Be supportive of Club officers and committee chairs so that they can fulfill their required assignments.
10. Be aware of Club progress toward its goals and be ready to join in whatever action is needed at each stage of the way.
11. Develop new ideas for the Club that can add to the impact of a program meeting; recruit members; expand a service project; and, in general, achieve satisfaction in being an Altrusan.
12. Enjoy being a member and don't hesitate to share a sense of humor. It makes membership a relaxing, enjoyable activity.



# The Value of a Member

Ten little members standing in a line,  
One disliked the president, and then there were nine.

Nine ambitious members offered to work late.  
One forgot her promise, and then there were eight.

Eight creative members had ideas as good as heaven.  
One lost enthusiasm, and then there were seven.

Seven loyal members got into a fix.  
They quarreled over programs, and then there were six.

Six members remained with spirit and drive.  
One moved away, and then there were five.

Five steadfast members wished there were more.  
One became indifferent, and then there were four.

Four cheerful members who never disagreed,  
'Til one complained, and then there were three.

Three eager members! What do they do?  
One got discouraged, and then there were two.

Two earnest members, each enrolled one more,  
Doubling their number, and then there were four.

Four determined members just could not wait  
'Til each won another, and then there were eight.

Eight excited members signed up sixteen more;  
In another six verses, there'll be a thousand twenty-four!

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# **YOU Are Important to Altrusa**

## **Were you there ...**

... to experience the fellowship at club meetings so you could feel the radiation effect of Altrusa membership?

## **Were you there ...**

... to help give direction on important service project decisions?

## **Were you there ...**

... to encourage your club to take on exciting fund-raising projects?

## **Were you there ...**

... to support the officers and chairmen who are giving of their time and leadership?

## **Were you there ...**

... to vote on vital club issues?

## **Were you there ...**

... to give of your talent and energy to help achieve your club's goals?

## **If you were NOT there ...**

... you have missed the full value of your Altrusa membership.

## **If you WERE there ...**

... you made the difference. Without you, Altrusa would not be a meaningful service club.

As a member, your regular attendance at meetings is important as you are the vital link in Altrusa's success. Regular attendance stimulates interest and participation. As a member, you must have knowledge of what is going on in your club. Without this knowledge, there is no desire to participate. Through participation comes accomplishment. Through accomplishment comes pride in membership.

*Florence M. Callagy  
1983-1985 District Eleven Governor  
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# Were You There or Detoured?

Meetings are the starting point on the highway to Altrusaland. Down that highway, road markers read “Purpose,” “Information,” “Projects,” “Commitment,” “Activity.” When the journey is broken by absence, we take a detour. Too often it leads to “Not-Interested-Land” or “I-Resign-Land.”

Good, strong highways are laid on firm foundations. Complete plans, excellent material, good working conditions, and close supervision are essential. Once built, constant maintenance and repair are required. In spite of all precautions, stress and strain cause even the best to crack or develop ruts. Wise maintenance requires quick repair to small



problems before the whole highway gives way. If detours are necessary, a fast, good route is provided for a return to the highway. Only when absolutely necessary are stops permitted along the way. They are dangerous to other traffic.

Where does this analogy lead? It suggests that if meetings are well-planned, well-timed, well-executed, interesting, thought-provoking, challenging, pleasurable, and fun, then members will find the experience too good to miss.

Altrusa is a builder of women. As builders, we must diligently provide any and all materials possible. Good meetings, well-attended, are the best equipment to get the job done and maintain and grow in membership.

Let's remove all road blocks and detours.

Let's build superhighways maintained by super Altrusans.

Let's begin with firm foundations of first-class meetings with maximum attendance. Full crews are needed for maintenance and are a must for new construction!

*Betty Burns  
Past Governor, District Twelve  
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# Time to Give Thanks

It's time for giving thanks for what we are and what we do,  
Through Altrusa we have found the means to reach horizons new.  
We are given an opportunity to service our fellow man,  
With effective contributions to the nation's civic plan.  
We cultivate friendly relationships and mutual understanding.  
In all professional conduct, ethical standards we're demanding.  
Professionals cooperating in business, work, and play,  
With altruistic motivation, effectively lead the way.  
Educational and cultural training with participation in public affairs  
Are just a few of the activities in which an Altrusan shares.  
Yes, it's time for giving thanks for this Altrusan motivation,  
And for the privilege of being citizens of the world's greatest nation.

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# All I Need to Know About Altrusa I Learned From Noah's Ark

1. Don't miss the boat! Attend all meetings and support events.
2. Remember that we are all in the same boat. Avoid pettiness; leave your ego at the door.
3. Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark. Promote new membership or face the inevitable.
4. Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone might ask you to do something really big!
5. Don't listen to critics, just get the job done right. It is easier to receive forgiveness than permission.
6. Build your future on high ground. Promote and maintain a high profile in the community by being a class act.
7. For safety's sake, travel in pairs. Support other community events and organizations while displaying your affiliation with Altrusa—wear your pin and name badge.
8. Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs! Look at the pros and cons of a project before making a commitment.
9. When you're stressed, float a while. Don't volunteer for more than you can handle.
10. Remember: The ark was built by amateurs, the Titanic by professionals. This Altrusa club will stay afloat if we amateurs keep our focus on what needs to be done.

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# The Importance of Planning

Planning is a funny thing. Some people think they're planning when in reality they're really winging it. Planning with purpose is really a multistep process. Planning with purpose starts with identifying and prioritizing objectives. Goals need to be clearly defined. Then, because sometimes not all goals can be accomplished, it has to be established which are the most important and which can be put on the back burner if necessary.

The next phase of planning is to gather information. What do we currently have in place to help us reach our goals? What have we done before? What are estimated expenses? Are there any specific criteria that we'll need for this goal?

Once we've gathered our information, it's time to analyze it. This is the part where we often need to do the math. We look and see if the steps we'd like to take put us where we'd like to end up. We evaluate whether we are using our resources and talents efficiently. Sometimes here, as a result of our analysis, it makes sense to reprioritize our goals. Sometimes our analysis shows us that our goals, and our plans to get to them, are good but could use small adjustments.

This brings us to the phase of planning where we propose our recommendations. This is essentially where we are today. This evening, our various committees will share with you the plans they have for the coming year. They will tell you about the various goals they have established for their groups and how they believe is best to achieve these goals. Tonight we hear how our club will move forward this year and how our committees propose we make these moves.

Next, we take action. This is what all the work thus far has led to, and the reason why we're all here. This is where we implement our plans. This step is crucial. To fall short on this part of the planning process is to negate all of the work done so far. Here is where we must be diligent to complete all of our tasks, do what we said we were going to do, and truly "work our plan."

One may think that implementation of the plan represents completion on the plan, but there is one more important step. We need to track our ongoing process. We need to regularly review and make adjustments to make sure we remain on the path to our goals.

Our club has worked very hard on this planning process. We have created our goals for the coming club year and steps to accomplish these goals. After this evening when the plans are proposed to all our members, we will forge forward to make things happen.

*Deborah Hecht  
Altrusa International Inc. of Dallas, Texas*



# There's Strength in Our Diversity

I have been thinking about how Altrusans often just take up where another has left off. Things need to get done, and we as a group find ways to do it. This is how we accomplish the things we accomplish, we work together, we do what we say we're going to do, and we pass the baton when necessary.

I believe the reason we're able to do all we do is because of all the separate and distinct talents we each bring to the group. Our strengths, passions, and unique abilities are precious assets. Recognizing these complementary strengths and then utilizing them allows us to present a strong, cohesive, complete organization to our community and the world.



I'll share an example. You may not know this, but my attention to detail is lacking. Each month I produce the newsletter for this club, but here's a little secret, without our friend Ellen Heffner, it would be riddled with errors. Each month, I send to Ellen what I think is a finished product and she reviews it with what must be some sort of laser vision and returns it to me with a long list of corrections to make. The first month I was a little embarrassed I had missed so many mistakes, but now, instead of beating myself up for what I can't do well, I am grateful for Ellen, her skill, and her gracious help.

Within Altrusa, I have seen numerous examples of coordinated efforts and leveraging of strengths. We have come to recognize what our peers are good at and we go to them for help when we need it. We know if we need a creative and beautiful way to commemorate an event, Angela or Lili will make a card. If we need information regarding proper procedure, we ask Frances, Betty, or Phyllis. About club finances, we can go to Susie. When it's time to call in the troops and motivate people, ask Anne; she'll get people going. For club history, we ask Sandra, Carolyn, or Betty. Need an idea, give Beth a call.

Look around the room, ladies. Many skills and talents surround you. As I look at this group, I am grateful for these talents and grateful to the women who have so graciously shared their talents with me. Together, working to leverage our varied and complementary strengths we can be stronger. Together, we not only serve our community, but we serve one another as well.

*Deborah Hecht  
Altrusa International Inc. of Dallas, Texas*

# What Is an Altrusa Member?

The Altrusa member today is the only one who says it CAN be done. She has suffered losses and defeats—yet she tries again. She is the one who is so bold to make a past to remember and a future to mold. So here is to Altrusa and all her members who continue to say “I CAN.”

The Altrusan today is:

A—Active and alert  
L—Learned and loyal  
T—Thinking and thorough  
R—Receptive and responsive  
U—Unassuming and unbeatable  
S—Scintillating and selective  
A—Accepted and accomplished

The Altrusan today is true to herself—to her fellow man, to her community, and to her country. She is the one who will continue to say “I CAN AND I WILL.”

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## Team Attendance

Think of Altrusa as a team, striving to meet a goal of humanitarianism in the game of altruism. All members are needed to win the game, just as a soccer team has to have all its members in attendance to win the big game.



Active  
Teamwork  
Today  
Encourages  
New  
Dimensions,  
Assures  
Notable  
Club  
Endeavors

*Betty Jones, Past District Twelve Governor  
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# Instructions for Altrusa Spring Planting

First, plant four rows of PEAS:

- Perseverance.
- Presence.
- Preparation.
- Promptness.

Next, plant three rows of SQUASH:

- Squash gossip.
- Squash criticism.
- Squash indifference.

Then, add four rows of LETTUCE:

- Let us be faithful to duty.
- Let us be unselfish and loyal.
- Let us be true to our obligations.
- Let us love one another.

No garden is complete without TURNIPS:

- Turn up for meetings.
- Turn up with a smile.
- Turn up with new ideas.
- Turn up with determination to make everything count for something good and worthwhile.



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## Are You a Good Altrusan?

Are you an active member, full of pep and vim,  
Working hard and making friends, proud to wear your pin?  
Do you go to all the meetings and remember all you hear  
That you may help another for the balance of the year?  
Do you do the job you're asked to do, with honest effort, strong and true?  
Then you're a real Altrusan, and a good one I must say.  
For you'll get a lot and give a lot as you go along your way.

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# Altrusa's Image

What will Altrusa's image be 15 years from now?

Through new members and the continued efforts of our present members, we can enlarge our image as a service organization. We can be the best-known and most actively involved service organization, but this can happen only if we pledge to live Altrusa each day. As concerned women, we must always want the opportunity to serve. Altrusa offers that opportunity along with personal growth and leadership development. As we grow, so Altrusa's image grows.

YOU are Altrusa.  
Look back and give thanks.  
Look forward and take courage.  
Let's make our dream a reality.

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# Back to Basics

All clubs can enjoy health, vigor, and strength. They will exhibit life and enjoy success if there is a desire strong enough to apply basic growth principles.

Clubs that want to grow do. Their leaders and members study the principles of growth. They learn everything possible about the club—its history, other members, the community, programs, and possibilities.

A growing club will have five P's in its pod. That pod is the total life of the organization.

The first P is **PRODUCT**. We have the finest product available. It has passed the test of time, experience, service, and success. We can be proud of Altrusa International. Our product is quality.

The second P is **PROGRAM**. The program of a local club can be, and should be, equal to or better than that of any organization in the community. We have programs that build and strengthen vocational needs, health needs, educational, recreational—a full program of service.

The third P is **PLAN**. A healthy, growing club has a plan—and works its plan. The goals are defined and the plans are accepted and understood by the members.

The fourth P is **PERSONNEL**. Altrusa members are community leaders. We



represent the professions, education, business, and industry. We are the meeting and melting place for achievers and winners. We have the opportunity for distinctive service as we “pay our community service taxes.”

The fifth P is **PERSISTENCE**. The secret ingredient of success is attitude. If we think of growth, want it badly enough, talk about it, study it, and dedicate ourselves to achieving growth, we will grow. The only quality that is needed to glue all the others together is persistence. An Altrusan never gives up. They are always there when the going is difficult. They are there early and late. They are always going. They are persistent.

Put these five P's in your club hopper and shell them. They will come out spelling **GROWTH**.

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# Introspection

There's a very special person  
Who's in our group today,  
With goals and aspirations  
For Altrusa to display.

This woman is resourceful,  
Creative, sharp, and bright,  
She always works hard in her club  
With Altrusa goals in sight.

She can be depended on  
To collaborate and plan,  
Her optimism shining though  
For her motto is "I CAN."

She gives tirelessly to her community  
With projects she can do,  
No matter what the challenge,  
She always follows through.

A person quite professional,  
A friend through thick and thin,  
Who believes in helping others  
Leaving goodness where she's been.

This very special person  
With pride wears colors true,  
She's a blessing to Altrusa  
Because, of course, she's YOU!



*Linda Kinnert*  
*Altrusa International Inc. of New Castle, Indiana, District Six*

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