

The Principles of Altrusa

(The Principles were written by Mamie L. Bass in 1921
and adopted by Altrusa International, Inc.)

- 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, of the joy of giving rather than getting, and to the search for that happiness which is based upon spiritual worthiness.
- 5) Altrusa is 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, the 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 upon 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.