

Knowledge-Based Decision-Making Process to Reach an Informed Group Conscience

In a Knowledge-Based Decision-Making (KBDM) culture, full discussion of an idea takes place (with background information introduced to frame the topic) before a motion is presented. Sometimes these discussions go on over long periods of time before any decision for a motion or action is made.

KBDM requires a lot of research and information gathering before and possibly even during the discussion. At the end of a discussion, further information and knowledge may be necessary to come to an informed group conscience. A motion need not be made after every discussion. Premature action (e.g., making or amending motions early in the discussion or hastily calling the question) can divert attention from the subject at hand, thus confusing and/or delaying District or Assembly business.

With KBDM, the decision reached is usually one that most AI-Anon members can support since everyone had access to the same information and the minority voice was heard during the discussion.

There are five key elements to the Knowledge-Based Decision-Making process to reach an informed group conscience.

- Open communication between leadership and membership
- Dialogue before deliberation
- All decision-makers have common access to full information
- Existence in a culture of trust
- Confidence in the competency of our partners

The decision-making process aligns with our spiritual principles:

- **Equality** - gives equal weight to everyone's opinions and distributes information equally before the discussion.
- **Trust** - allows thorough examination of all information by encouraging us to keep an open mind.
- **Unity** - promotes unity when we work together toward a common goal.
- **Humility** - allows for decisions to be more important than who makes the decisions.
- **Respect** - allows for a conversation and often a conversation is enough - a motion may not be necessary.

Knowledge-Based Decision-Making Process

I. Information Exchange

The purpose of information exchange is to ensure that “All decision-makers have common access to full information.” This demonstrates the spiritual principle of mutual respect. Historical perspectives, motions that are related, etc. are shared with everyone. We value our archives for the wealth of information that is housed there.

It is recommended that the background information includes a frame of the topic. Frequently, the five KBDM questions are answered by a sub-committee to facilitate the facts, beliefs, concerns, etc. The questions can be modified specific to the issue to be discussed.

Question 1: What do we know about our members’ or prospective members’ wants, needs, or preferences that are relevant to this discussion?

Question 2: What do we know about the capacity and strategic position of the organization relative to this issue?

Question 3: What do we know about the current realities and evolving dynamics that are relevant to this discussion?

Question 4: What are the ethical implications of our choices (pros and cons)? This includes consideration of how the Legacies apply.

Pros:

Cons:

Question 5: What do we wish we knew, but don’t?

II. Background Discussion

It is important that everyone understands the facts related to the issue(s) before discussion. Therefore, the following steps must be taken in sequence:

1. **Question and Answer:** this ensures equal understanding. This is not timed since it is important that all questions are answered clearly and fully. No opinions are allowed during this step.
2. **Summation:** this is an opportunity to clarify what was heard and ensure full understanding of the facts.
3. **Discussion:** it is important to follow the procedures of the service arm (Ex.2 minutes at microphone, do not repeat what another has already stated, etc.). It is during the discussion that particular aspects of a potential motion are identified.

III. Decision Making

Once the discussion has concluded, it becomes clearer about the next step. There are three options:

- Motion (follow District/Assembly Voting Procedures)
- Return issue to a sub-committee to gain further information to be brought back to the District/Assembly
- Make no decision because the discussion made it clear that no action is needed