

ASK-IT-BASKET QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Can an AA/Al-Anon member hold office in the AIS Office?

Answer; Yes an Al-Anon member who is also a member of Alcoholics Anonymous can do service in the AIS Office. This member cannot be a liaison to the Area. He or she can serve as chairperson, vice chairperson, treasurer or secretary. This allows the person to serve Al-Anon without the possibility of a conflict of interest at Assembly. This is described on page 82 of the Service Manual.

2. How do you treat someone who falls out of a specific group designation? (Men's ACOA, etc.) Do you have to accommodate those that are disabled, such as a candlelight meeting or a place that is not wheelchair accessible? Do you turn them away or is that considered discrimination?

Answer; We must "Presume Good Will". Answer is found on pg. 101 of the Service Manual- Autonomy of Groups; In keeping with the Traditions and Warranty Five of Concept Twelve (see Concept Twelve in "Al-Anon's Twelve Concepts of Service"), local Area, or WSO service entities have no authority to close a group or engage in other punitive actions against a group because they disapprove of the manner in which a group practices the Al-Anon Program.

3. How come a Bid for Committee 2015 was able to be presented at the Business Meeting when this was not even an Agenda Item? Does this not set a precedent when other Districts were not given the same opportunity? Also are Bids for Committee not supposed to be presented at Committee Meetings?

Answer; Note; the Chair is new to the position. The draft Agenda and Pertinent Topics did not go out early enough to groups. The Chair, Diane, apologized. The Bids information on Committee Meetings should have been listed under "Other Information". There was no call for bids on the original Agenda, so I, Diane, did not call for a vote on any of the Committee Meeting Bids. There is still opportunity for other districts to bid on any of the upcoming meetings at September 2014 Committee Meeting. Group Reps now have all the information. The Chair has given all the information she has. The only past Motion the Secretary and the Chair could find on presenting Committee Bids at Committee meetings was **Motion 13/11**; That Sask. AWSC present and approve bids for Committee Meeting and the Assembly present and approve the bids for Assembly Meetings. This Motion was **Defeated**. The Chair asked for the recollection of the Committee members who indicated that the motion was passed. The Chair could have called for a vote, but decided to go with the will of the assembly.

4. At the end of our meeting, some people like to do the "chant"- "it works if you work it and your worth it". Is this approved by Al-Anon? There have been a few discussions for nay and yay.

Answer; Refer to page 22 of the Service Manual- "It is suggested that groups close in a manner that is agreeable to the group conscience. Many groups say the Al-Anon Declaration after their closing".

5. How can the Chairperson bring questions to the floor of the Business Meeting? I thought the Chair has no voice. This person is supposed to be keeping on track, not creating confusion.

Answer; Please refer to the Voting Procedure inside your Assembly Folders. Who has voice? All GR's, all DR's, all Table Officers (which includes the chairperson), and all Coordinators. The Chairperson does have voice at Assembly, but no vote. If the topic needs clarification, the chair may direct the Assembly floor in order to continue with the business meeting.

6. Does "Area" donate to WSO?

Answer; The simple answer is no our Area does not donate to WSO. However, page 96 of the Service Manual states "District, Al-Anon Information Services (intergroups), Literature Distribution Centers, **Areas**, General Service Offices, and other Al-Anon Service Entities may also contribute directly to WSO without limit.

7. Open letter to Doctor's Office from "Pebble in the Pond" (out of print) can it be changed slightly to focus on larger area an submitted as a 'letter to the editor' in local paper or would that be considered promotion?

Answer; The short answer is No. Conference Approved Literature (CAL) is copyright material. Page 107 of the Service Manual under Requests to Reprint- "Permission to reprint from our publications extensively is not granted in the United States or Canada to any individuals, within or outside our membership, or to any outside agency.

8. Can I use the Podcasts from WSO to chair a meeting – to play the actual podcast at the meeting?

Answer; The members attending Ask-it-Basket thought it was ok, but unclear. Literature Coordinator, Ruth S. will email WSO and provide an answer.

This is the answer Ruth received from Pat Q. at WSO, Associate Director of Communications. Thank you for writing to the WSO with your question about podcasts in Al-Anon Meetings. I can respond to the first part of the question that includes the "First Steps to Al-Anon Recovery" series of podcasts on the WSO Public Outreach Web site-www.al-anon.alateen.org. These are Public Outreach messages that are intended to reach families and friends of alcoholics who have no yet attended a local Al-Anon meeting. It would be inappropriate to play them in an Al-Anon meeting, because the audience is already in a meeting and **the Podcasts are not Conference Approved Literature**. I will ask someone in the Group Services department to address playing service tool podcasts that are posted on the Member's Website. As a courtesy, I am sending a copy of this message to your Area Public Outreach Coordinator and Delegate.

This is the information Ruth received from Sharon B. Group Services Assistant at WSO;

As Pat Q. Previously mentioned, the podcasts are Public Outreach messages and are focused on providing a "brief" overview of the Al-Anon program. They are aimed at professionals and others who are seeking information about Al-Anon and are not intended as a substitute for an Al-Anon meeting or for group use as they are not Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature (CAL).

Al-Anon is a sharing program, and members are encouraged to share their experience, strength and hope at meetings. While there is no rigid formula for an Al-Anon meeting, experience suggests more can be accomplished when members share on a single topic during the meeting and all members have the opportunity to share. In the "Groups at Work"

section of the 2014-2017 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (p – 24/27), podcasts are not listed in the section “Meeting Ideas”. (The Service Manual is posted on the Al-Anon Member’s website www.al-anon.org/members. When promoted for a password, enter your group name followed by the letters AFG, e.g. Easy Does It AFG or mondayafg.)

A series of podcasts for Al-Anon members and groups are posted on the Al-Anon members website under “Group Resources”. They are intended to provide information to groups and members based on mutual sharing and could be used to stimulate the discussion of topics in group and district meetings.

9. Is it okay for a Newcomer to make a donation to the Tradition 7 basket at their first Al-Anon Meeting?

Answer; Page 9 in the Service Manual states- “The Chairperson lets the group know that AL-Anon has no dues or fees, but according to the Seventh Tradition, Al-Anon/Alateen groups ought to be fully self-supporting through member’s voluntary contributions. The basket is passed to cover group expenses, including rent, purchase of literature, and support of trusted servants and Al-Anon’s service arms. Members and Newcomers are encouraged to contribute in gratitude for what Al-Anon/Alateen has given them. The amount is not important; what is important is that they give whatever they can.

10. Why can we not mention God or anything to do with God- when in many books, both Al-Anon and AA mention God all the time in the books?

Answer; Step 3 states “Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him. Also in the Service Manual page 24 under “The Three Obstacles to Success in Al-Anon” 1) Discussion of Religion; Al-Anon is not allied with any sect or denomination. It is a spiritual program, based on no particular form of religion. Everyone is welcome, no matter what affiliation or none. Let us not defeat our purpose by entering into discussions concerning specific religious beliefs.

11. Is there available another format other than “a meeting on wheels” that can be used for Al-Anon Information Sessions?

Answer; If you go to the Member’s Website under the “Best of public Outreach”, there are many suggestions including DVD’s, Podcasts, etc.

There were also a few “comments” in the Ask-it-Basket, but because they were not questions they were not addressed. The Chair of Ask-it-Basket invited whoever made the comments to come see her for clarification.