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Workshop for resolving conflict in the District

Purpose/Goal:

The purpose of this workshop is to provide trusted servants (District Officers and Group Representatives) and interested members with a short skit and a format to discuss, in small groups, the service tools found in *Using Al-Anon Principles to Resolve Conflicts* Kit (K-70). The goal is to become aware of this kit as a resource to use when faced with conflict.

Spiritual Principle—Tradition Twelve –by keeping principles above personalities, members are reminded to keep the focus on what unites and avoid personality-related conflicts.

Resources:

- **Workshop leader role**

1. Explains the procedure of the workshop to the audience.
2. Introduces the skit (reads script).
3. Moderates the reportbacks (five-minute maximum per report) from the small discussion group recorders, the general comments sessions, and concludes the workshop.

- **District meeting skit cast (five members)** –Each participant is provided with a script and any props of their choosing.

1. Narrator
2. District Representative (DR)
3. Group Representatives (GRs) # 1, # 2, and #3

- **Timekeeper** –Times the component sessions of the workshop. These are:

1. 10-minute skit
2. 30-minute breakout session for three small discussion groups
3. 15-minute reportback session from the three small group recorders
4. 10-minute general comment session from all attendees

(Note: The member portraying the DR in the skit can be the timekeeper.)

- **Small group discussion facilitators** –The three GRs in the skit can also be the moderators. Prior to the workshop, they should receive copies of the:

1. Skit script
2. Instructions and the handouts for the small group
3. *Using the Al-Anon Principles to Resolve Conflicts* Kit (K-70)
4. Handouts with questions for the small discussion groups (10 members per group are suggested) for completion:

- **Group #1**– *Loving Interchange to Resolve Conflict* (S-71) wallet card.
- **Group #2**– (S-72) card set.
- **Group #3**– *Talk to Each Other – Resolving Conflicts within Al-Anon* (S-73) booklet.

The Process:

- **Give the audience an overview of the workshop agenda, which includes:**
 1. Skit (10 minutes)
 2. Breakout into small discussion groups (30 minutes)
 3. Comments from audience (15 minutes)
 4. Closing
- **Explain how the audience will participate:**
 1. Observe the skit.
 2. Share ideas for responses to questions in small discussion groups by answering questions utilizing one of the service tools included in the *Using Al-Anon Principles to Resolve Conflicts* (K-70) Kit.
 3. Comment on discussion group reportbacks.

Skit: In and out of a district's "Al-Anon Conflict Zone" meeting

Workshop leader's overview of the skit: The characters are exaggerated to help the audience see pitfalls that can cause conflict when there is a lack of communication between trusted servants. The skit demonstrates that a productive discussion is nearly impossible when conflict occurs and personalities prevail over principles. This district meeting reminds us that we need to talk to each other in a safe, helpful, and friendly environment in order to arrive at a group conscience decision. The tools in the *Using Al-Anon Principles to Resolve Conflicts* Kit (K-70) are anchored in a process that reflects Al-Anon principles.

Any resemblance to District and Group Representatives is purely coincidental. No names of trusted servants or the location of this district meeting are cited to protect the innocent and to avoid discouraging members from attending and participating in district meetings.

Narrator (addresses the audience): Everyone experiences conflict. It is a fact of life, whether it is a disagreement within a family, with a friend, a neighbor, a co-worker, or an Al-Anon member. Today, we are taking a peek into a district meeting where (**says dramatically**) the District Representative and the Group Representatives have fallen into the 'Al-Anon Conflict Zone!' ”

DR (addresses the GRs and district trusted servants): Let's get started with our meeting. I want to forget the Coordinators reports since none of them are here. GRs, I am also asking you to turn in your written notes since there are only three of you present out of the 15 groups in our district. The only item I have put on the agenda is to discuss the Treasurer's report. I want to know about our expenses and our budget for the last quarter. I also want to talk about a new budget for the next quarter. But to do that, we need to find out if our expenses are up to date and what expenses are coming up. Now, let's start off with a moment of silence and the Serenity Prayer.

The GRs (look at each other in a bewildered manner and then observe a moment of silence): All recite the Serenity Prayer in unison.

DR: Since there are only three GRs present, just say your names and the group you represent so that our Secretary can report your attendance in the minutes. Oh, I forgot our Secretary called and advised she was quitting! You (**points to GR #1**) are new! This is a good way to get your feet wet. Why don't you take the minutes? (**GR #1 riffles through handouts to find a pen to take notes.**)

GR #1 (hesitates before speaking): “Okay” **(in a hesitant manner)**. Do you want me to say my name and the name of the group I represent? Do you want me to call myself the “Acting Secretary” in the minutes?

DR: Yes. Okay **(says impatiently)**. Let’s move this discussion along.

GR #1: Hi, I’m **(your name and the name of your group)**

GR #2: My name is **(your name and the name of your group)**

GR #3: My name is **(your name and the name of your group)**

DR: Let’s see, who **isn’t** here. Hmmm, no District Literature Coordinator, no Public Outreach Coordinator. Ah, our Alateen Coordinator is not here either. Good thing because he may have wanted some money. (Laughs)

GR #2: Shouldn’t we postpone this meeting? I’d like to have the Coordinators’ reports to share with my group.

DR (ignores the comment): Okay. Now, this is how I’m conducting the discussion of our budget. First, we’ll start with the Treasurer’s report of our expenses for the year to date. Next, we’ll review and approve the Treasurer’s report for our expenses for this quarter. Then, we can talk about the proposed new budget for the next quarter for five minutes. After our discussion, we’ll take a vote on the new budget and then, we’re done. It should only take us about ten minutes. We’ll all be able to go home or out for coffee. You better believe I’m your District “Go to/Get it done” Representative. A first rate parliamentarian **(points to GR# 1)**. Put that comment in your notes!

GR #3 (raises his/her hand).

DR (speaks gruffly): Okay, okay. What is your question?

GR #3: I agree with GR #2 **(says name)**. I’d like to have those reports too. This meeting is making me **very (with emphasis)** uncomfortable! It feels like you are trying to manipulate us!

DR (speaks in a loud voice and points a finger at GR # 2: Well, that is not my intent! I thought that since none of the Coordinators are here, discussing and deciding about the budget could be our focus for this meeting. My style of leadership is to solve a problem right now! I was elected as your District Representative and I think that dealing with money matters is important!

If the district officers and coordinators, and a lot of the GRs aren’t here, so be it. We’ll just have to go on without them. They can read the minutes. Let’s hope they understand our discussion because I don’t have time to explain the minutes to each one of them, let alone visit 15 groups.

Narrator: There is a word that describes what you have just witnessed... It’s called **CONTROL!** Let’s listen in to what these trusted servants decide to do to begin resolving this conflict.

GR #1: Didn’t we just get some information at our last Assembly on conflict resolution? **(DR starts digging through his/her papers)**

DR: Yes, we did **(starts searching through papers and finds the K-70 Kit and holds it up)**. Here it is. The Kit is called *Using Al-Anon Principles to Resolve Conflicts!* **(Opens the envelope)** There are three items with this kit (holds each item up to the audience). Hummm, maybe this Kit will help us re-group and prepare to discuss our budget. Where should we start?

GR #1, GR #2, and GR #3 (all speak at the same time): How about all three! **(smiling)**. Now that is something we are all in favor of doing. We need to use Al-Anon principles to resolve conflict right now **BEFORE** we talk about the budget.

Narrator (to the audience):

Well, I am sure you will agree this was quite a meeting! It is now time for us to join these trusted servants (**points to the three GRs**) to insure we will be prepared if we ever find ourselves in the “Al-Anon Conflict Zone.”

Workshop leader: Let's divide into three groups for our discussions. Each group will use one of the three components in the *Using Al-Anon Principles to Resolve Conflicts* Kit (K-70) to respond to the questions. **The groups have 30 minutes to respond to their questions.**

- Each of the GRs in the cast of the skit are the facilitators of a small group.
- One member from each group is needed to volunteer to record the group's responses to the questions on the handout.
- Either the recorder or another member can be asked to give a five minute (**maximum**) reportback when we re-convene as a large group.

DR (or another member who has volunteered to be the timekeeper): Announces that time (30 minutes) is up for the small group discussion portion of the workshop.

Workshop leader:

- Reconvenes the attendees as a large audience
- Asks the recorders from each of the discussion groups to give a reportback. (**15 minutes**)
- Invites members to comment about the next steps that the DR and the three GRs could take to escape from the “Al-Anon Conflict Zone.” (**15 minutes**)/li>
- Closes the workshop.