ASK-IT-BASKET QUESTIONS & ANSWERS FALL ASSEMBLY 2015

1. Question; Why does the past Delegate not have voice at the Business Meeting?

Answer; We agree the past delegate probably should have voice. He/she is a valuable resource. We will take this to the next Committee Meeting, March 2016.

2. (a) Question; How do you know where to look up a situation in the Service Book?

Answer; The Table of Contents are at the beginning of each section. You can look for the key word there or in the index. If you are unable to find the answer, look in broader terms or look in another heading. If you are still unable to find the answer, ask your DR or Delegate if they can find the answer for you.

(b) Question; What is a nice way to stop “cross talk” in meetings?

Answer; Service Manual pg 54, paragraphs 2-3. “Al-Anon and Alateen members expect a safe and pleasant environment when they attend a meeting, and when one member causes unrest due to inappropriate or intimidating behavior, the entire group could be affected. Groups are within their autonomy to establish group behavioral guidelines in a manner that reflects their group conscience and abides by the Traditions. When the behavior of any member impacts the group, members apply the Traditions to the problem, and determine how best to approach the individual(s) involved, to ask the member to change the behavior in question. This can be an exercise in applying Al-Anon principles so that the message is not a personal attack, but rather a request based on what is best for the Al-Anon group. Service tools on conflict resolution are available.”

Some groups have found that having a message read at the beginning of the meeting works as a preventive measure to avoid this issue. One example of such a message is:

“Our group is a safe place for voluntary sharing. As such, we have adopted a format that does not allow cross talk. This means we do not interrupt or argue, give advice, criticize anyone, or comment on anyone’s sharing. Please be mindful of the time when sharing, so that everyone in the group gets a chance to speak. If anyone has to leave before the end of the meeting, please feel free to do so.”

In most cases, the nicest way is to pull the individual aside after the meeting. Approach them with two Al-Anon members and explain why “cross talk” is not allowed and what cross talk is. Most of the time when something is explained and fully understood, it stops.

If that doesn’t work, then you may choose to have a group inventory or a group conscience meeting. In some cases, the best way is to step in and support the member being interrupted. It is up to the discretion of the group as to whether it is nicest to deal with immediately or after the meeting.

(c) Question; Hard to find Al-Anon in P.E.I. Is there none there? (Had a hard time finding on the internet.)
Answer;

Choose either the link in top right corner or the tab (find a meeting)

Click in blank circle to select. You can fill in a specific city if you like. Choose province- click on drop-down arrow. Do not fill in the postal code. It’s too specific for the search. Click on Search button.

Your search will generate a list like this partial screen shot.
I also Googled Prince Edward Island Al-Anon. The following is a snippet of the search page:

I clicked on the second link and got the following web page. I then clicked on the Area Map link which generated the page below. Each numbered district on the map takes you to a list of meetings in that district. As you can see PEI is split into two districts – 3 and 10. The links for each district below the map takes you to the same information.
**3(a)Question:** Our group is wondering if any other groups are still using the newcomer’s welcome that WSO sent out a number of years ago. We heard a little while ago that WSO no longer want us to use it, but haven’t heard why or if they plan on replacing it. Our group still reads this to newcomers and we wonder if we still should be?

**Answer:** Service Manual page 23 – Optional Readings. “The selections that follow are offered as suggestions for meeting topics or as optional readings in the group meeting format, as determined by the group conscience.”

The binder, which my home group uses on occasion was sent out from WSO in 1997 and the reading in question is reprinted from the April/May 1990 issue of Inside Al-Anon (submitted by the First Step AFG, Glens Falls, NY).

Our Delegate, Jenny B. sent a letter to Barbara O., Director of Member Services at WSO. This is what she replied in answer to this question:

The Group Services Committee, comprised of Delegates, WSO Volunteers, and staff discussed members’ communications about the Newcomer Welcome and decided to remove it from the Group Binder. Comments about the Newcomer Welcome included that it could be interpreted as directive and that it told potential members how they felt, which could be a roadblock for some potential members. The Group Services Committee encouraged groups to discuss how to welcome newcomers and determine their own way of welcoming which could include writing their own welcome, asking members to share about Al-Anon, etc. It is up to the autonomy of the group to decide how to welcome newcomers as long as the group abides by the Traditions. Groups can use the old Newcomer Welcome however I would encourage groups to have a discussion about the purpose of a welcome and consider if
their group’s welcome meets that purpose so they can make an informed decision about using it versus just hanging on to something that is familiar. Please also note that at each printing the WSO sends all groups a complimentary copy of *Groups at Work* (P-24) which has the meeting format, opening, closing, Legacies, and optional readings for meetings. The idea of printing P-24 as a separate booklet again was to encourage members to have this inexpensive resource to use at the group meetings so that all would be included. The group binders were discontinued several years ago. Currently three packets are sent to each new group during their first year, the first packet contains P-24.

I hope this information is useful to you, good luck and thanks for your service.

Barbara

*(b)Question;* One of our members have started to introduce themselves with saying that they are “coda” behind them saying who they are. This is bothering one of our duel members from AA as they say that they do not say they are a member of AA in an Al-Anon meeting and they say they are a member of Al-Anon instead because that’s the meeting they are attending. Is it our group autonomy to deal with this? Do any other groups deal with this too and if so how do you address this?

**Answer;** Service Manual page 11- Following the suggested welcome, “the chairperson may say if the group meeting has a special format, has a specific routine for calling on members, asks members of other anonymous fellowships to remain anonymous and focus on the Al-Anon program...”

Service Manual page 40 (bottom of page under “Sharing in Al-Anon/Alateen Meetings”. Refers to Tradition One. “Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity.” We concentrate on our own feelings and attitudes, rather than on the details of our situation. Members leave other affiliations (such as other Twelve Step programs or professional resources) outside our meeting rooms.”

**4. Question;** If an Alternate GR has been doing and attending most of the GR duties, can they/are they eligible to move to the DR position if no one else is coming forward?

**Answer;** The answer is found on page 157 of the Service Manual. “The DR is elected from among the incoming, outgoing, or active past GR’s in his home district prior to Assembly...”