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Note: Black vertical lines in outer margins indicate where changes were made to the content v1 and v2; orange vertical lines indicate changes made to v3.

## Introduction

These policy statements grew out of questions and experiences from the Al-Anon fellowship worldwide. They are interpretations of our basic guides, the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts of Service.

The questions and shared experiences came from many sources—Al-Anon and Alateen members, regional and national conferences, Delegates to the World Service Conference—and from all over the United States, Canada, and many other countries.

When an individual or a group seeks clarification of any matter relating to the Al-Anon fellowship, it is the responsibility of the World Service Office (WSO) Policy Committee to make statements that interpret and encourage use of the Traditions and Concepts. After approval by the Board of Trustees and the World Service Conference, these statements are set forth in the Policy Digest. To arrive at answers that are consistent, loving, and helpful takes time and patience, both on the part of the individual or unit seeking the clarification and on the part of the WSO Policy Committee.

As our fellowship grows, and many more ideas and questions are raised, let us strive to live with, and by, what we have here; secure in the knowledge that changes and additions will be made as circumstances and our growth require.

## Channel for Arriving at Policies

The WSO Policy Committee is composed of a Chairperson, all members of the Board of Trustees, members of the Executive Committee, and the Conference members of the WSO administrative Staff.

The WSO Policy Committee is often asked to help when there is confusion about how a specific Tradition applies to a new or controversial situation in Al-Anon or Alateen. The Committee meets regularly during the year to review and discuss each problem or issue in light of the Traditions and determines an appropriate policy recommendation. The proposed policies are then brought to the Board of Trustees for consideration.

The Chairperson of the Policy Committee reports the interim policies passed by the Board of Trustees to the World Service Conference

## Conventions

Among common Al-Anon/Alateen events are Area conventions, bringing together members from across the Area to celebrate recovery, often for a weekend. Conventions hosted by Areas for Alateen are often referred to as conferences. (See the guidelines *Al-Anon/Alateen Area Conventions* [G-20] and *Alateen Conferences* [G-16] for more specific suggestions on selecting organizers, planning the program, finances, etc.)

## Workshops

An Area, District, Al-Anon Information Service (AIS)/Intergroup, or one or more registered Al-Anon or Alateen groups may host a weekend, day, or evening of workshops and meetings, luncheons, or banquets. These activities are planned in keeping with the spiritual principles of the Twelve Traditions to address various topics of interest to members or for public outreach purposes. Weekend events often combine workshops and speaker meetings.

## Alateen Participation

Alateen is part of the Al-Anon fellowship. Alateen members are to be included in Al-Anon activities wherever possible at the Area and local levels. It is within the autonomy of the Planning Committee to make the decision whether or not the Alateen members have a separate agenda. All events that include Alateen must be in compliance with the Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements of the Area in which the event is held. (See “Alateen”: “Events with Alateen Participation.”)

### A.A. Events with Al-Anon/Alateen Participation

Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) may invite Al-Anon/Alateen to participate in conventions or conferences at the Area or local level. It is within the autonomy of the Area/local service arm to participate or not. (See the guideline *Al-Anon/Alateen Participation in an Area A.A. Convention* [G-7].) An A.A. event must have Al-Anon participation in order to have Alateen participation.

### Al-Anon/Alateen Events with A.A. Participation

Al-Anon service arms may invite A.A. to participate in an Al-Anon hosted event. (See the guideline *Cooperation between Al-Anon and A.A.* [G-3].)

## Distribution of Proceeds

Excess funds are often used to establish the next convention’s “seed” fund. Since accumulating large sums of money is discouraged, in keeping with Al-Anon’s Traditions and Concepts, excess funds over and above a seed fund for the next event can be donated to the District, Al-Anon Information Service (AIS), Area, or the WSO.

## Videos

Sometimes videos are shown at events for entertainment and education. Because of the Sixth Tradition of non-endorsement, only Conference Approved videos are shown.

## Maintaining Anonymity at Events

### Video Recording or Filming

Video recording or filming on any format does not occur at conventions, workshops, or other events since it is a violation of Tradition Eleven in safeguarding anonymity. (See “Anonymity.”)

## Announcing Events

Various types of events are held for Al-Anon and Alateen members to gather for fun and fellowship, to celebrate recovery and enhance their understanding of the Al-Anon/Alateen program.

It may be helpful for members to consider the following spiritual principles when announcing these events:

- Cooperation
- Participation
- Responsibility
- Singleness of Purpose
- Unity or Common Welfare

Al-Anon/Alateen recovery and service events cultivate a sense of community. Recognizing this spiritual need to belong, the principle of participation links the membership to these events.

### At Meetings

Members often wonder if a particular event is appropriate to announce. The following should be considered when deciding what to announce at meetings:

- Events hosted by or connected to the WSO, an Area, District, Al-Anon Information Service (AIS)/Intergroup, or one or more

Al-Anon or Alateen group can be announced at meetings. These events bring members together to connect through experiences and discussions.

- Al-Anon is often invited by A.A. to participate in recovery events. Almost from its beginning, Al-Anon has taken part in these events. Such participation often led to the growth of Al-Anon and an enhanced spirit of cooperation between both fellowships. When Al-Anon participates through one of its service arms or a registered group in an A.A. event with speakers or workshops, these events may be announced at meetings.

#### **At the WSO**

The WSO posts on its calendars:

- Al-Anon events hosted by the WSO or Al-Anon service arms.
- Only A.A. events with Al-Anon participation through its Al-Anon service arms. A representative of the Al-Anon service arm brings that event to the attention of the WSO for potential posting.

#### **Outside the Fellowship**

Al-Anon does not affiliate with other organizations; and neither endorses nor opposes any other philosophies, therapies, or spiritual programs. Our experience suggests that confusion arises when such events are announced in Area newsletters, Al-Anon/Alateen local bulletins, on Al-Anon websites, and at group meetings.

The Al-Anon/Alateen name, therefore, cannot properly be used to identify or publicize any retreats, events, or activities sponsored by others. This applies when most, or even all, of the participants are members of Al-Anon/Alateen. Otherwise, there could be a misunderstanding of Al-Anon's purpose and function. In order to avoid any appearance of Al-Anon/Alateen affiliation, it is important to keep promotion of such events outside of Al-Anon/Alateen meetings and meeting locations.

#### **Autonomy of Service Arms When Announcing Events**

Whether to announce a particular event is a matter of autonomy, keeping in mind other groups, the District, or the Area may have different criteria. For example, an Area may choose to only make announcements at Assemblies for events sponsored by Al-Anon service arms.

Just as we have no opinion on outside literature, we have no

form of press, radio, films, TV, internet, or other evolving public media, members use only their first names and last initial or pseudonyms. Members can also speak without identifying themselves or sign articles "Anonymous."

Photographs, video, film, or web postings in published or broadcast media should not reveal full face images of those identified as members.

On any website accessible to the public, whether an Al-Anon site or not, full names, phone numbers, or other identifying information are not posted, if they are identified as belonging to an Al-Anon/Alateen member. (See "Anonymity": "Anonymity Within Al-Anon/Alateen": "Anonymity in Al-Anon/Alateen Publications.")

#### **Anonymity and Professionals**

It is important to make Al-Anon/Alateen known through our public outreach work with the many types of professionals who come into contact with families suffering from the effects of someone else's drinking. When working with professionals, Al-Anon and Alateen members are more credible and effective when they give their full names and contact information. While personal anonymity is not required in outreach to professionals, it is helpful to inform the professionals of the importance of anonymity and confidentiality in Al-Anon/Alateen.

Note: Alateen members must comply with local laws and their Area Alateen requirements regarding personal anonymity in all public outreach work.

#### **Electronic Communication Outside of Al-Anon**

Email provides a quick and easy way to communicate the Al-Anon/Alateen message to the media and professionals. Members' business email addresses should not be used for Al-Anon/Alateen outreach, as they could imply affiliation and may not be confidential to the member.

Web-based communication, such as online audio/visual materials (e.g., webcasts or podcasts), social media posts, and blogs, provides members with easy access to distribute information about Al Anon/Alateen recovery to a large audience. In keeping with Tradition Eleven ("Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the

were advised by a committee of representatives of neighboring Al-Anon groups who met occasionally. After the incorporation of Headquarters late in 1954, its Board of Trustees administered the World Service Office. Seven to eleven in number, the Trustees were meeting monthly and appointed a large committee of volunteers to advise them. This Advisory Committee included all the Trustees and convened every three months. Any recommendations or resolutions proposed by the Advisory Committee had to be ratified by the Board of Trustees.

In 1957, the Advisory Committee was further formalized by a Charter and given a new name—the Advisory Board. It was the authorized custodian of overall Al-Anon policy and finance. In the Charter the hope was expressed that a permanent conference of Delegates from the various states and provinces would eventually take the place of the Advisory Board. The day-to-day administration of the office, however, was still in the hands of the Trustees.

After three years' trial, in 1964, the World Service Conference came into being as the permanent guardian of Al-Anon's Traditions and services, replacing the Advisory Board.

By this time, however, the business of Al-Anon's Headquarters had grown so large that it became unwieldy for the Board of Trustees to handle the routine administration of the office. Our Trustees realized they could no longer be concerned, as a body, with the endless details that arose daily, weekly, and monthly in the routine conduct of the World Service Office. They also realized the need to devote themselves to the more serious questions of policy, leadership, finance, group, and public relations.

Therefore, the Board decided to assign its administrative function to a more constantly available eight-member Executive Committee, possessing the power to manage the affairs of the World Service Office on behalf of the Board of Trustees in the intervals between meetings of the Board of Trustees. This Executive Committee is composed of three Al-Anon members, preferably not Trustees, elected by the Board; the Executive Director; one voting member of the administrative Staff of the World Service Office; the Chairpersons of both the Finance and Policy Committees; and the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, who serves as an ex-officio member. The Chairperson of this Executive Committee is elected by the Board of Trustees.

This Committee considers all project proposals and project approvals from committees and Staff that fall within budget and existing poli-