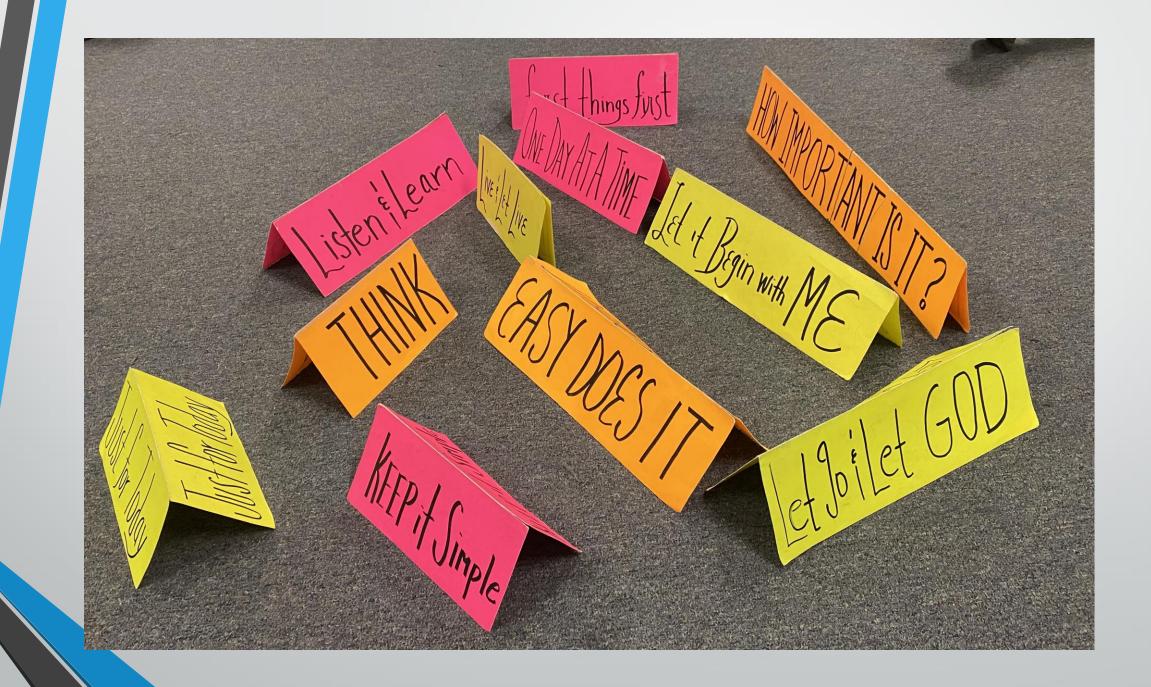
# Welcome to GR 101

Provided By VA Area

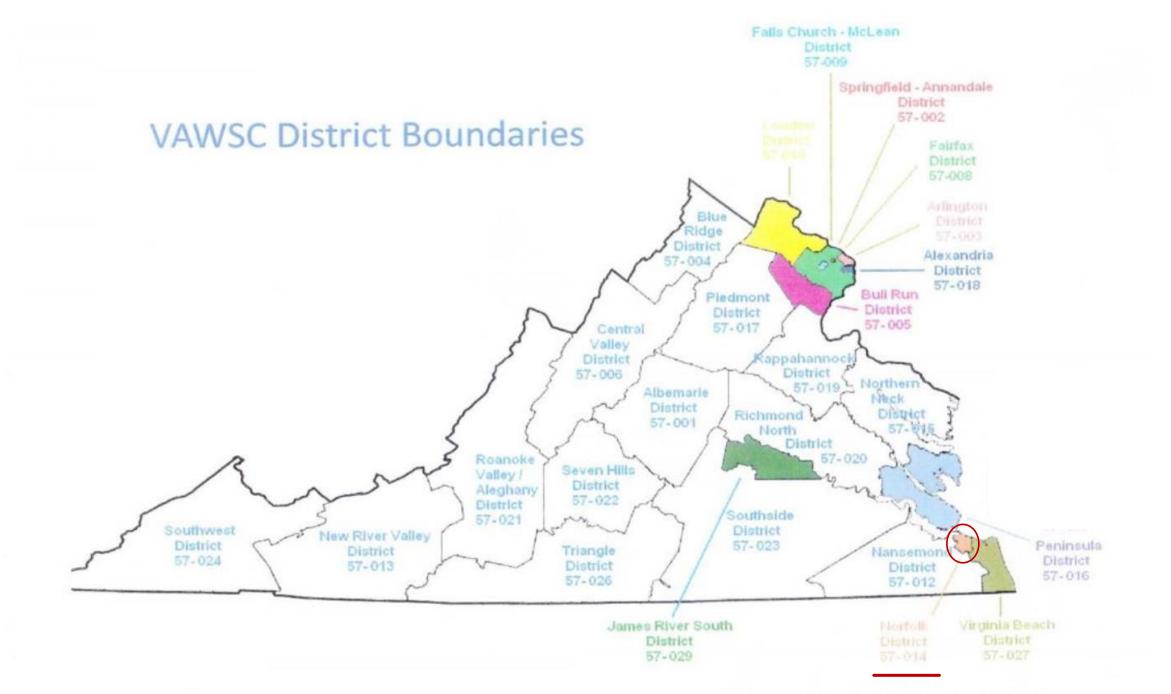




# GRATITUDE



# What gifts have you received from-Anon?



Current as of November 3, 2008

GR 101-III



# READ

# HOPE FOR TODAY – MARCH 26

GR 101-III

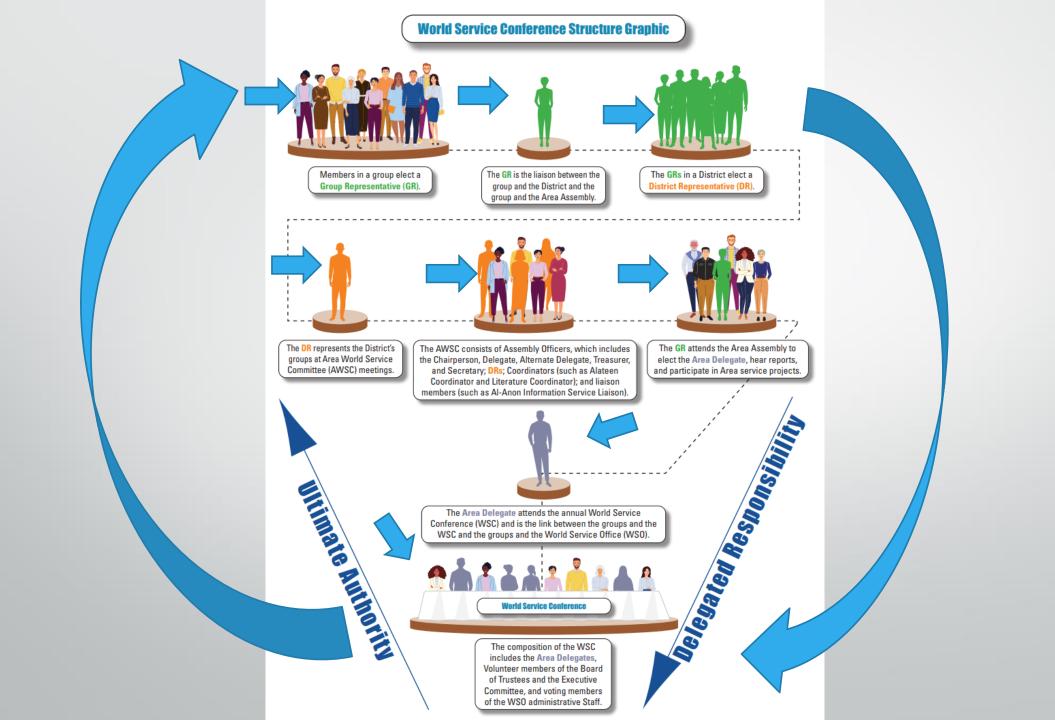
# **ullmill**

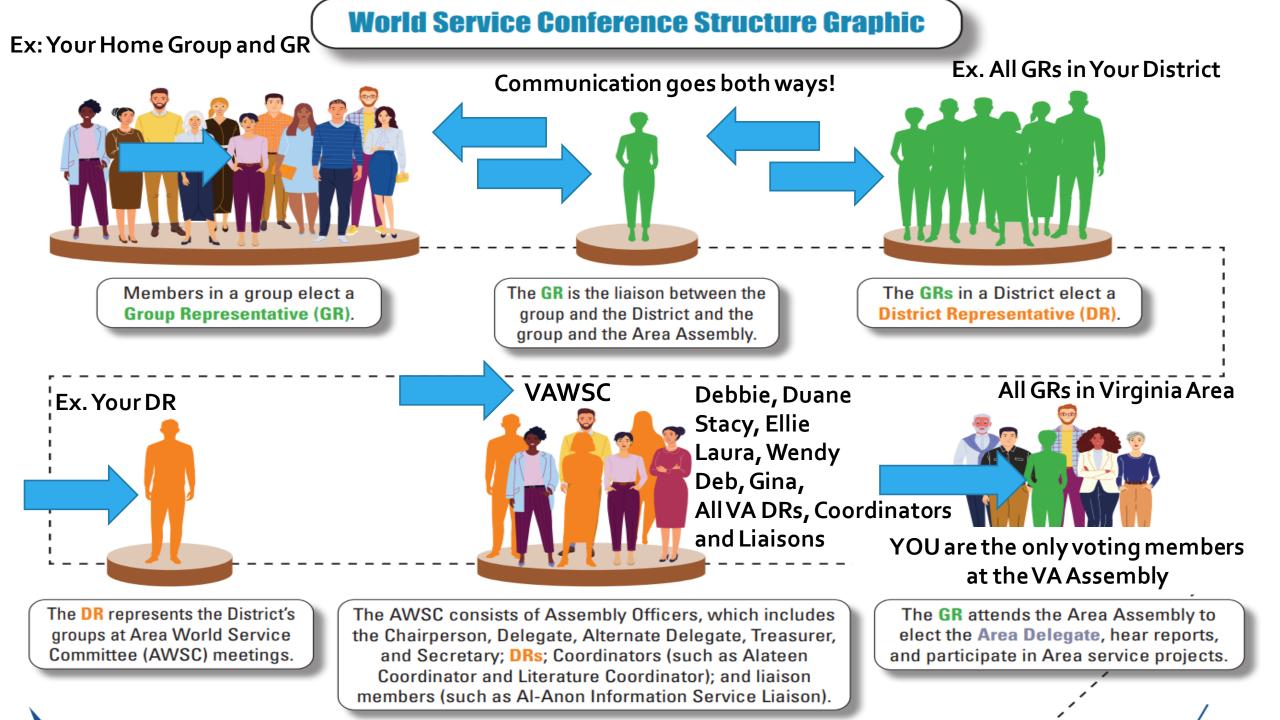


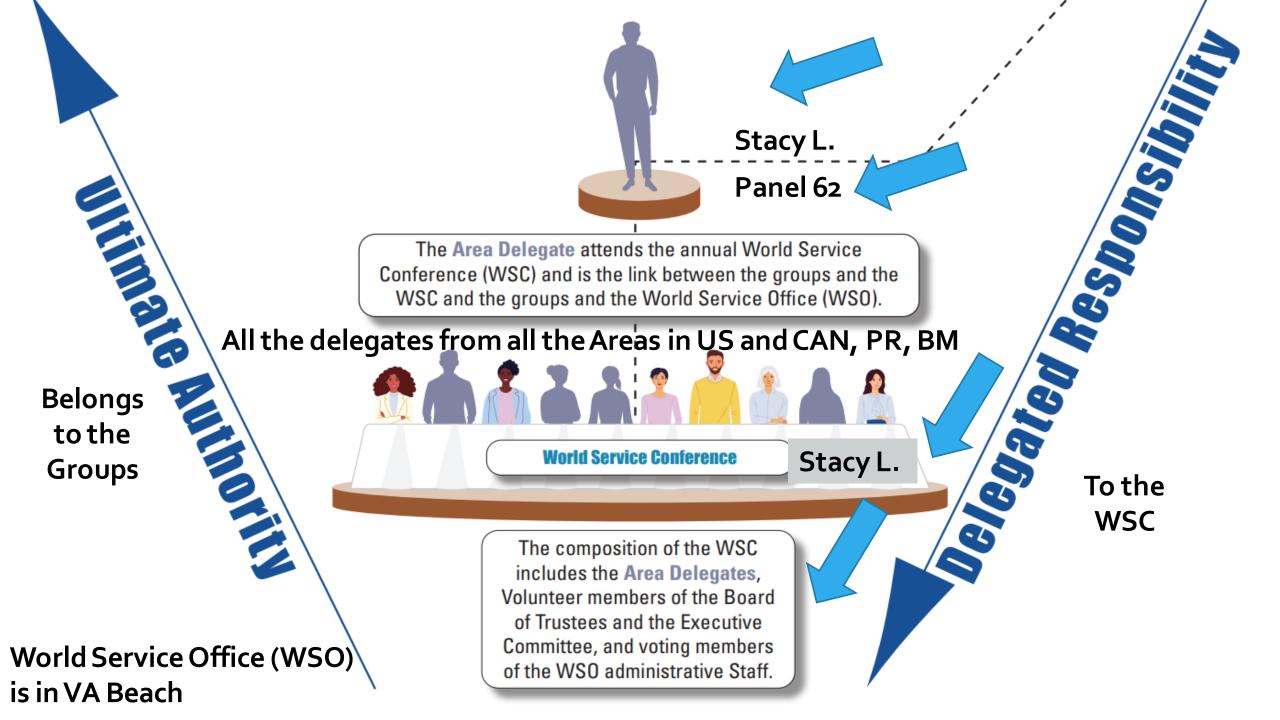
# **STRUCTURE**

# CHART

# **TERMS OF SERVICE**







## Group Representative (GR)

The term of office for a Group Representative is recommended to be three years. Service is a vital part of recovery, and it benefits both the Group Representative and the Group if a full three-year term is served. In our Area, where the terms of office begin on January 1, only the outgoing GRs vote for an incoming Delegate and the officers—from among the outgoing DRs and others eligible according to Area autonomy. At the District level, the election of the DR and Alternate DR from among the incoming, outgoing, or active Past GRs, none of whom are members of A.A., takes place in the fall of the year after the election of GRs and before election of Area officers.

This term of office is three years, coinciding with those of Area officers and Delegate.

# **QUESTIONS FOR YOU**



# ASAGR:

What is the most important duty you perform?

What is your favorite duty?

What is your least favorite duty?

# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES GROUP, DISTRICT AND AREA

# **GROUP REPRESENTATIVE**



# RESOURCES SERVICE MANUAL!

Group Level Business p. 46
GR Duties, p. District Level P. 64
GR Duties, p. Area Level p. 67

### **Alateen Personal Sponsors**

Just as Al-Anon members sponsor each other, Alateens sponsor each other. Alateen personal Sponsors are fellow Alateen members who can discuss personal problems or questions with those they sponsor. Personal Sponsors willingly share the experience, strength, and hope of the Alateen program. Al-Anon members do not sponsor individual Alateens.

### **Group Business**

### **Group Records**

Keeping group information up-to-date is vital to assuring that the most accurate meeting information is provided to persons seeking help in the Al-Anon and Alateen fellowship. Accurate records also keep communication flowing between the group and the WSO, and the group and local service arms. It is essential that groups promptly report changes in their meeting location, meeting day, time, Current Mailing Address (CMA), Group Representative (GR), or phone contacts to their Area Group Records Coordinator. Group members can contact their District Representative (DR) to inquire about their Area's procedure to submit group changes. The Area Group Records Coordinator can provide group reports to verify that the information on file is current. The WSO can be informed by the Area or the group.

### **Group Business Meetings and Group Conscience**

### **Tradition Two**

For our group purpose there is but one authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants—they do not govern.

Group business meetings are held to share information and to include all group members in the activities and concerns of the group. Decisions a group makes are determined by an informed group conscience.

### **Group Business Meetings**

### Warranty Three

that all decisions be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible by unanimity;

The group business meeting is an opportunity for members to share their ideas to increase group membership, express concerns, plan special meetings or projects, and discuss other group business—such as changing the group name, Current Mailing Address (CMA), group Phone Contacts, the meeting time and place, finances, meeting format, meeting designation, District and Area matters, and other topics suggested by members of the group.

Business meetings are also an opportunity to identify and discuss solutions to group problems such as: gossip; dominance; the need for additional group service positions; rotation of leadership; inappropriate behavior of a member, and any other matter that affects group unity. The guiding principles for business meetings are the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts of Service.

Groups are within their autonomy to determine how to conduct their group business and how to reach an informed group conscience.

The manner in which a group business meeting is conducted, and how to keep track of the group conscience decisions, is as varied as the groups themselves.

### **Scheduling the Meeting**

Some groups schedule business meetings on a regular basis (monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly) and others hold them as needed. Business meetings can be held before, after, or during the group meeting.

### **Planning the Meeting**

It is beneficial to the group when members are aware of how to bring up their concerns or ideas to discuss at a business meeting. Announcing the date and time of the business meeting and the agenda topics, and distributing pertinent information two or three weeks prior to the discussion and voting, gives members of the group the opportunity to be informed, helps the group make better decisions, and promotes group unity. Anon

Alate

en

G

roups

at Work

# Al-Anon and Alateen Groups at Work

### **Conducting the Meeting**

The group conscience decides who chairs the business meeting. The format for a group business meeting includes but is not limited to:

- an agenda
- length of time for discussion of each topic
- what percentage of the vote will reflect unanimity and/or a majority
- how the group conscience decisions will be recorded, etc.

### Discussion of the topic(s)

Having a thorough discussion of the topic(s) in a principle-based manner, allowing all who choose to participate in the discussion to be heard, and applying the Traditions and Concepts to each topic, helps groups reach informed group conscience decisions.

- If unanimity is not reached in the allotted timeframe of the meeting, discussions may continue at another time.
- Many groups use the guideline Taking a Group Inventory (G-8a & G-8b), the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27), and the Using Al-Anon Principles to Resolve Conflicts Kit (K-70) as resources when conducting a business meeting.

### Voting at the meeting

Many groups request that only members who regularly attend the meeting vote at the group business meeting. Members who regularly attend more than one group may want to consider at which group to vote on District or Area matters, keeping in mind that our principles are spiritual and voting on an issue more than once could be viewed as trying to control or dominate the outcome.

Some larger meetings have a business or steering committee that meets separately to prepare an agenda for the business meeting.

### **Group Conscience**

The group conscience is the result of the group's business meeting discussions. The group conscience is the will of the group. The guiding principles for the group conscience are always the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts of Service. It may be helpful for the group to review these principles prior to any group discussions. Some simple group decisions may be decided quickly; however, others may take time. It is by taking the time necessary to hear from all members who want to participate that a group conscience evolves.

In order to make an informed group conscience decision, members need access to all the information about the issue they are being asked to discuss, they need clarity on what their discussions hope to accomplish, and they are asked to trust each other's motives and capabilities. By sharing information as equals, taking time for discussion, and maintaining principles above personalities during the discussions, groups are often able to reach unanimity in their decisions. If unanimity is not reached in the allotted timeframe of the meeting, discussions may continue at another time. Once a group conscience decision is made, the entire group supports the decision.

Concept Five tells us that members have the right of appeal. If a member disagrees with the outcome of a group conscience decision, they have the right to submit an appeal for reconsideration back to the body that made the decision. After an appeal is heard, regardless of whether the decision is maintained or altered, the individual accepts the group conscience.

### **Group Inventory**

Taking an inventory of the group helps to keep it healthy and invigorated. Groups are encouraged to make a periodic review using the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service as the guiding principles for the inventory. Members can use the inventory to discuss new service opportunities and address minor or major concerns before the group's unity is disrupted. The guideline *Taking a Group Inventory* (G-8a & G-8b) is a useful service tool that can aid in this process. (All Al-Anon guidelines are available under the Members menu at al-anon.org.)

### **Group Problems and Solutions**

The "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies" section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) is a compilation of the World Service Conference's group conscience on how to resolve many group questions or problems.

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, as long as they do not impact another group, Al-Anon, or A.A. as a whole.

Some members may discuss specific religious tenets, forgetting that membership is open to all. One or two members may dominate the group, ignoring the principles of rotation in leadership. Some members may talk about what they hear in meetings, violating our principles of anonymity and confidentiality. The spiritual principle of anonymity suggests that each member should be able to feel confident that nothing said in the meeting will be repeated, by a Sponsor or other members\*\*—that every Al-Anon/Alateen member feels bound to keep in strict confidence any personal matter heard at a meeting or from an individual.

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. The *Using Al-Anon Principles to Resolve Conflicts Kit* (K-70) is a service tool designed to aid members and groups to resolve conflict in a principle-based manner. The "Three Obstacles to Success in Al-Anon" are: discussion of religion, gossip, and dominance. Study of this passage from the pamphlet *Alcoholism, the Family Disease* (P-4) has helped many groups deal with these group problems. (The passage is reprinted under "Optional Readings" in the "Suggested Meeting Outline.")

The books Al-Anon's Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions (B-8), How Al-Anon Works for Families & Friends of Alcoholics (B-32), and Paths to Recovery—Al-Anon's Steps, Traditions, and Concepts (B-24), give detailed suggestions on the application of the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service to solve group problems.

Lack of money may handicap the group, or its excess cause disagreements. See the pamphlet *Seventh Tradition* (S-21) and the *Reserve Fund* guideline (G-41) for suggestions about handling group funds. Both are posted under the Members menu at al-anon.org.

Taking a group inventory, rededicating the group to its primary purpose; studying the Traditions and Concepts of Service as they apply to the problem at hand; and seeking the experience, strength, and hope of other local groups, perhaps at District meetings, are all good methods of overcoming group difficulties. (See the *Taking a Group Inventory* guideline [G-8a & G-8b] that is posted under the Members menu at al-anon.org.)

Participation of members in group activities is important. This creates real involvement with the group and solidifies the relationship of the individual member to the group. Since each group has only a limited number of officers, it is best to have a policy of rotation, rather than have one member hold office for long periods of time. Other assignments may involve public outreach, greeting newcomers, setting up, and cleaning up. Reimbursement for refreshments from group funds is made by the Treasurer. The more service opportunities available, the more members will participate and feel themselves to be an integral and important part of the group. Concept Four reminds us that "Participation is the key to harmony."

### **Group Reports and Announcements**

### **Trusted Servants' Reports**

The Chairperson may call on the Secretary or another trusted servant to read announcements from other Al-Anon service arms, including those sent to the group's CMA (Current Mailing Address) from the WSO. The Treasurer or another trusted servant is asked to read the WSO Quarterly Appeal to Members and give the group a report on income and expenditures.

Periodically, the Group Representative (GR) can update the group about District or Assembly meetings; however, at each meeting, the GR can share an item of interest from *The Forum* or *In the Loop*. The GR can also keep the group informed about Al-Anon worldwide with interesting items from the *World Service Conference Summary* (P-46)\*. The *Conference Summary* can be ordered from the Online Store at al-anon.org or downloaded/viewed under the Members

<sup>\*</sup> See the document "Let's Talk about Safety in Al-Anon Meetings!" on al-anon.org for more information.

<sup>\*\*</sup> It is important to remember that Al-Anon/Alateen meetings are not above the law. Members need to exercise care in sharing information that could require outside reporting to local, state, provincial, and national authorities.

<sup>\*</sup> Currently available in English only.

menu at al-anon.org. The Information Service Representative (ISR) can also report the activities of the local AIS or Intergroup back to the group.

### **Other Group Announcements**

### **Tradition Six**

Groups at Work

Al-Anon and Alateen

Our Family Groups ought never endorse, finance or lend our name to any outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim. Although a separate entity, we should always co-operate with Alcoholics Anonymous.

Generally, those events put on by or connected to Al-Anon service arms, are announced at meetings, in our newsletters, and on local websites.

At an Al-Anon or Alateen meeting or meeting location, groups do not announce, publicize, or discuss activities of other Twelve Step programs, as this could create an appearance of affiliation or endorsement, even if the event or activity is composed primarily of Al-Anon or Alateen members.

While we remain a separate entity from A.A., we cooperate whenever possible as a reflection of our special relationship with Alcoholics Anonymous. When Al-Anon participates in an A.A. event with speakers or workshops, these events may be announced at Al-Anon and Alateen meetings. (See "Announcing Events" in the "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies" section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* [P-24/27].)

Note that in order to use the name "Alateen," any event with Alateen participation must have a connection to the Al-Anon Area in which it is held and have event requirements that meet or exceed the Area's Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements.

### **Group Finances/Budget**

### **Tradition Seven**

Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

In keeping with Tradition Seven, a group's membership is the source of its funds. Assistance from sources outside of Al-Anon or Alateen violates this Tradition. There are no dues or fees to attend Al-Anon or Alateen meetings. Supporting Al-Anon and Alateen groups financially is a way for members to express their gratitude for the help they have received from the program, thus ensuring that Al-Anon and Alateen will be available when someone seeks recovery from living with the effects of alcoholism.

Group funds are used to support Al-Anon's purpose of carrying its message of help and hope to those who still suffer. Group contributions support all levels of Al-Anon service including the District, the local Al-Anon Information Service (AIS/Intergroup), the Area, and the World Service Office (WSO).

Groups are within their autonomy to create a financial budget to plan for the purchase of literature, refreshments, the group's trusted servants' expenses to attend business meetings; purchase of *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* as a public outreach project; and contributions to the service arms. Some groups take additional collections for special local projects within the District or Area. If necessary, groups can add to the voluntary contributions by having fundraising events. (See "Financial Matters" in the "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies" section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*.)

### Warranty One

### That only sufficient operating funds, including an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle.

The spiritual principle of prudence suggests that groups avoid accumulating money beyond current needs and a small but ample reserve, with just enough funds to pay the Group Representative (GR) expenses to Assembly and group expenses for a couple of months. This can be decided by making an informed group conscience decision. (See the *Reserve Fund* guideline [G-41].)

Group expenses may include:

- Rent (may include insurance) or platform fees for a meeting location.
- Group Representative's expenses to attend and participate at District and Area Assembly meetings.
- Al-Anon Information Service (AIS/Intergroup) Representative's (ISR) expenses to attend and participate at AIS meetings.
- Conference Approved Literature, including Al-Anon and Alateen books and pamphlets, for sale to members. Most

53

The Group Representative<sup>\*</sup> (GR), an officer as well, is elected for a three-year term and represents the group's concerns and wishes at the District and Area, as well as informing the group of what is happening in Al-Anon in the District, Area, and worldwide. GRs are entrusted with the Right of Decision to vote on behalf of the group according to their conscience and the good of Al-Anon as a whole. (See the "Al-Anon's Twelve Concepts of Service" section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* and the guideline *Group Representatives* [G-11].) GRs and other officers are leaders and trusted servants who perform their duties in keeping with the Traditions and Concepts of Service, yet they have no authority over the group. Their functions are described under the heading of "Suggested Duties of Group Officers/Leaders."

There are two major lines of communication between the individual group and Al-Anon and Alateen as a whole. The first is the World Service Conference that directly serves Al-Anon and Alateen groups in the US (including Puerto Rico), Bermuda, and Canada, as well as non-geographically based groupings, and groups and structures in other countries (whose voice is heard through the International Coordination Committee). The second is the clearinghouse known as the World Service Office (WSO), headquarters of the Al-Anon Family Groups, which acts as the service center for groups throughout the world and is the link with other national General Service Offices (GSO), several of which have their own Conferences.

### Districts

Work

đ

Alateen Groups

Al-Anon and

The District is the first link from the groups to the Area, the WSO, and the World Service Conference. Districts are comprised of a number of groups within a geographical or non-geographical part of an Area that meet as needed. The Group Representatives (GRs) from the groups in the District, attend the District meetings to represent their group. An Overlay District is a collection of groups typically aligned by a commonality, such as language or non-geographic location. Groups may belong to either the District or Overlay District based on their group conscience. Decisions may be made on hold-

ing local functions, doing local outreach, and news will be disseminated to and from the groups.

Each District elects a District Representative (DR), who may visit the groups and represents their voice at Area World Service Committee meetings. Each District may have officers and coordinators to help the District carry the message. The District and its officers are a resource to their groups and may be called upon to resolve questions or problems. For more information on Districts and District meetings, see the "World Service Handbook" section of the Al-Anon/ Alateen Service Manual.

### Al-Anon Information Service (AIS/Intergroups)

An Al-Anon Information Service, also known as an Intergroup, is a local service established and maintained by one or more Districts or by groups located close enough geographically or connected by language to one another for easy access and communication. Geographical boundaries need not be observed unless one Information Service conflicts with another nearby, in which case a geographical division is set by mutual agreement.

An Al-Anon Information Service usually performs the following functions:

- Maintains a listing in the local phone directory so that those seeking information about Al-Anon and Alateen can easily find it.
- Maintains a PO Box or an office address for listing with the World Service Office.
- Receives postal mail, email, and phone inquiries, and forwards them to the appropriate group for response or follow-up.
- In cooperation with the Area Group Records Coordinator, may update, publish, and distribute lists of group meetings in their local area.
- Plans and conducts program-exchange meetings where the groups' Chairpersons or Program Chairpersons exchange teams of speakers for a scheduled period.
- Serves as an avenue for local public outreach service, which is channeled through the Districts whenever possible.
- May maintain a stock of Conference Approved Literature (CAL),

<sup>\*</sup> Al-Anon and Alateen members who are also members of A.A. may not serve as GR or Alternate GR. See "Membership and Group Meetings/Conventions": "Membership and Groups": "Service Participation by Members of Al-Anon Family Groups Who Are Also Members of Alcoholics Anonymous" in the "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies" section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*.

when also registered with the WSO as a Literature Distribution Center (LDC) to sell CAL.\*

- May maintain a website that is linked to their Area website.
- Holds periodic meetings attended by all the Information Service Representatives where activity reports, including a financial update, are made and matters regarding the groups are discussed.
- Publishes and distributes its own newsletter of local Al-Anon/ Alateen activities for the groups that support it.

AlS contact information is published in local directories, meeting lists, and on websites. In keeping with Tradition Eleven, AlSs do not use personal phone numbers or addresses of any Al-Anon member. In this way, potential members may be referred without revealing the name, address, or phone number of any Al-Anon or Alateen member and personal anonymity is maintained.

Any local Al-Anon or Alateen group may agree to support an Information Service but joining is purely voluntary. The Information Service is supported by the groups it serves within its determined boundaries; it should not seek or accept support outside that area. Contributions are voluntary and are not a condition of membership.

The guidelines Al-Anon Information Services (G-4), Literature Distribution Centers (G-18), and Al-Anon Service Arm Websites (G-40) are posted under the Members menu at al-anon.org.

### **Al-Anon Information Service Representation**

Experience has shown that the Information Service can be a function of Districts, providing a network of communication. It is suggested that the Alternate Group Representative\*\* serve as the Information Service Representative (ISR) and the GR\*\* serve as the Alternate Information Service Representative. In addition, the Alternate District Representative may be a member of the AIS board, and the DR generally serves as the Alternate Information Service Board

member. AlSs are connected to the links in the chain of service through their representative, called an Al-Anon Information Service Liaison (AISL), who attends Area World Service Committee and Assembly meetings.

### Areas

Areas are comprised of groups and Districts in a determined location that can be geographically or non-geographically defined. Every group in the Area has a voice and a vote in Area business through their Group Representative (GR). Each Area in the World Service Conference Structure (US [including Puerto Rico], Bermuda, Canada, and non-geographically based groupings) is represented at the annual World Service Conference by an Area Delegate, elected every three years by the GRs. Other Area officers include an Alternate Delegate, Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer. Area Coordinators serve as a link between the WSO and local trusted servants. Area Coordinators may include: Alateen; Archives; Public Outreach; Literature; Area Newsletter; Area Alateen Process Person; *The Forum*, *Al-Anon y Alateen en acción*, or *Le lien*; Web; and Group Records. All Area officers and coordinators are important links in the chain of service, and a resource to the groups and Districts in their Area.

### **Area Assembly**

The Area Assembly is the business meeting where the groups send their representatives to express a voice and vote on behalf of the group. During an Assembly, the Delegate reports the activities of the World Service Conference. An Assembly can meet at least one or two times a year, or a minimum of once every three years. Many meet more often.

### **Area World Service Committee**

In between Assemblies, Area World Service Committee (AWSC) meetings are held, attended by the Assembly officers, all District Representatives, Al-Anon Information Service Liaisons, and the Area Coordinators of special services. At these meetings, the Assembly agenda is planned, information and reports are conveyed, and decisions may be made that cannot wait until the next Assembly.

Work

đ

and Alateen Groups

Al-Anon

<sup>\*</sup>The WSO will also register LDCs that operate separately from the local Information Service.

<sup>\*\*</sup> Al-Anon and Alateen members who are also members of A.A. may not serve as GR or Alternate GR. See "Membership and Group Meetings/Conventions": "Membership and Groups": "Service Participation by Members of Al-Anon Family Groups Who Are Also Members of Alcoholics Anonymous" in the "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies" section of the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual.



# **GRGUIDELINES** G11

**GR GUIDE TO ASSEMBLY** 



# **Group Records**

Attend and participate in AFG Meeting Attend and participate in AFG Business Mtg **Attend and participate in District Meetings** Attend and participate in Assembly **Attend and participate with Information Center** Communicate



# HYBRID ASSEMBLY

# GRS ARE THE ONLY VOTING MEMBERS AT ASSEMBLY – YOU ARE IMPORTANT!

# **REGISTER!!!**



# GRs Responsibility at Assembly Be Prepared! Read the documents! Be Present for discussion and votes!!!! https://www.vaalanon.org/



- 1. What are some characteristics that you believe Healthy Groups have in common?
- 2. What is the GRs responsibility to ensure that a group is healthy?



- 1. The Groups follow suggested meeting format ().
- 2. They welcome Newcomers ().
- 3. They mention Sponsorship as part of the readings ().

4. They conduct Business Meetings and/or Group Conscience Meetings ( )

5. They located next to a successful AA meeting when they started ()



6. They have MANY service positions ().

7. The meeting uses a discussion meeting format with a STRONG CAL focus – the topic is accompanied with a reading from CAL ().

8. The Group conducts a Group Inventory Annually ().

9. The Group encourages Sponsorship().

10. The Group does public outreach ().

11. The Group conducts a Business Meeting every 4 to 6 weeks ().



12. The Group handles announcements according to the Suggested Meeting Format ().

13. The Group uses a bank account for its finances, receives a financial report at the business meetings and gives to the links of service ().

14. The Group has a supply of literature on hand – both books and pamphlets. They give away the group's copy of The Forum ().

15. The GR attends District Meetings and Assemblies ().

16. Group practices Rotation of Leadership ().



# **Closing with Concept Nine**

Good personal leadership at all service levels is a necessity. In the field of world service the Board of Trustees assumes the primary leadership.

**Reading from How Al-Anon Works** 





# **Confidence** Flexibility

Judgment

Vision

# Tolerance

Stability

# Dependability

Wisdom



When anyone anywhere reaches out for help, let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always be there. And let it begin with me!

