

## AFG Area 9 Florida North Fall Assembly Delegates Report October 2015

Dear Members,

My first year as Delegate is almost complete. Already I can feel the changes that this service position has brought to me. Being Delegate for me is a very humbling and spiritual experience, you see, I have been affected by the *Family Disease of Alcoholism*. I learned in the rooms of Al-Anon I needed Al-Anon way before I met my first problem drinker. Problem drinkers and alcoholics may come and go in my life but the *Family Disease of Alcoholism* remains whether there is drinking or not and it is my responsibility to seek my own recovery using the Steps, Traditions and Legacies. Service has always been a huge part of my recovery and I feel truly blessed that I have the opportunity to be your Delegate.

I am so proud today when I see the spiritual principles in practice here at our own Assembly just as they are at Conference. This is in my opinion the outcome of practicing and living our Legacies. We can and do all have different opinions and ideas. As a Group, District and Area using our spiritual principles of respect, trust and courtesy and presuming goodwill we can discuss many ideas and challenges and come to a solution and a group conscience. As our literature states, respect for each individual, dedication of all to a common goal, cooperation and unity in achieving this purpose will bring harmony.

I am so excited to share more ideas and strategies from Conference with you! We will be talking about the below items at Assembly:

[Welcoming New Practices- This is about CHANGE!!](#)

[Al-Anon Principles in Service- Using the Principles in our Service work](#)

[The Spiritual Principle of Abundance and Giving- Connecting Finances to our Spiritual Principles](#)

### **Welcoming New Practices**

This is about looking at what scares us about change and thinking about how we can welcome it! In Al-Anon, change is often slow and incremental. Sometimes, however, it is sudden and quick. And sometimes, it can feel messy, like spilt ink.

The charge of this task force was to Identify the difficulties that keep the membership from considering, and perhaps embracing, new ideas and create strategies that could help the membership welcome new trends into the fellowship.

### **Strategies**

## **1. Create communications/workshops**

- Structure a workshop/meeting on literature that focuses on/addresses change and being open to new practices (e.g., the epilogue of *Many Voices, One Journey* (B-31); the daily readers using the index to find “change,” etc.)
- A district workshop to “brainstorm” on a specific topic relating to change/new practices – the purpose to include more voices and to gather fresh ideas from the membership. As part of the workshop, each GR be given in writing background information and/or talking points to share with their group. All having the same information in writing would help the GRs to pass on what was actually discussed. Sometimes an individual’s interpretation of a topic or idea can cause resistance from those that were not present during the conversation.
- Create tools/messages/presentations/workshops on the history of Al-Anon to help members visualize change, understand the difference between “tradition” and the Twelve Traditions, and put change into context through a timeline/historical representation or visual (like an infographic) of some sort. The graphic would demonstrate the evolution of the program in relation to new approaches/practices.
- Presentation using different technologies, demonstrating how they can be used for intergroup/member communication, or business meetings – demonstrate how texting can be used, or Skype, or apps – but without endorsing any of the companies or technologies.

## **2. Encourage discussions about change**

- Encourage discussions/workshops/meetings on change – changing attitudes, changing technologies, changing face of Al-Anon – to explore what makes change easy and what makes it harder, and how we can work on our own attitudes about change in order to be as welcoming as possible to people and to new practices that can benefit the program.
- Consider ways to encourage groups to think about and discuss other options for meeting locations to avoid the perception of affiliation and make it more clear that Al-Anon is for people of every ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, etc., and not limited to a perceived type of person (which a religious meeting place can imply even if it’s not true)
- Highlight changes and new practices that Al-Anon has embraced in the past that have strengthened the fellowship (e.g., use of electronic literature).
- Suggest a sharing sheet/workshop to have a group use the topic of “change” as a meeting discussion.
- Encourage use of service tools that help members address resistance to change and embrace new practices (e.g., conflict resolution tool kit, sponsorship).

### **3. Explore technology as a means of introducing/encouraging change**

- Encourage use of technology (e.g., at Area or world service level) to keep members up-to-date on emerging issues and new practices. Have workshops at district or Area level. Do an online presentation on where and how to find this information. Encourage weekly viewing of Members' Web site once a week and sharing it with other members.
- Take advantage of emerging practices, be proactively open to new ideas (e.g., developing our own app or using social networks)
- Encourage members who don't have access to consider gaining access to technology (e.g., expand the ebuddy idea, take a friend to an Internet café and introduce them to e-mail, social media, etc.)

### **4. Encourage innovative thinking**

- Encourage expansive brainstorming at all levels
- Offer methods for withholding judgment during discussion
- Create an environment and atmosphere of dreaming big, envisioning Al-Anon's future without limited thinking

### **Al-Anon Principles in Service- Using the Principles in our Service Work**

Delegation, Trust, Vision, we will be discussing these and other principles using P-57

'The Concepts' Al-Anon's best kept secret at the Group Representative Break-Out Friday evening.

### **The Spiritual Principle of Abundance and Giving- Connecting Finances to our Spiritual Principles**

One of the Thought Forces at Conference was "The importance of abundance and spirituality in money discussions". We will be seeing a presentation followed by discussion at Assembly.

Below are some barriers and strategies from the Thought Force

#### **BARRIERS**

- Our members may have a lack of understanding about the use of contributions and the cost of WSO services, including the cost of changes to literature.
- Our members may be unaccustomed to discussion regarding spirituality and finances, thus promoting an atmosphere of uncertainty and fear when this topic is introduced for discussion.
- It takes time in Al-Anon recovery to move from a feeling of deprivation and loss to an expression of gratitude and abundance, and be able to speak about it.
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#### **STRATEGIES:**

- Encourage members to share their experiences of gratitude, giving, and abundance in financially based discussions at all levels of our service structure.
- Acknowledge a spiritual link of abundance to our Higher Power.

- Discuss financial challenges using Al-Anon’s spiritual principles and Legacies.
- Lead meetings and convention workshops on gratitude, abundance, and spirituality, and how our thinking has evolved on those topics.
- Create a pamphlet that describes and defines the spiritual principles and relates them to the discussions of financial matters.
- Create skits which demonstrate typical financial discussions versus spiritually-grounded financial discussions.
- Create a one-page glossary that describes the words and phrases that indicate spiritually-based and non-spiritually-based financial discussions.
- Use social media to spread the message linking spiritual principles and financial matters.
- Since repetition is essential in getting the message across, propose rewording of the Service Manual (page 9) regarding passing the basket, emphasizing a spiritual link to abundance.

Statement: Through the KBDM process we became aware that discussions of money are often done with little mention of abundance or spirituality. We hope that as members deepen their understanding of the connection between gratitude, abundance, and spirituality in discussions of financial matters that this relationship will allow them to talk openly about it with other members.

### [Chairperson of The Board Letter](#)

Each quarter the Chairperson of the Board of Trustee’s writes a letter addressed to Al-Anon and Alateen members. There is news of happenings at World Service and Policy and Finance updates. I encourage you to take a look. The letter is posted on the Delegates Corner.

[Delegate's Corner on Area 9 Website](#)

### [Memos From WSO](#)

The WSO was asked at the 2006 WSC to send a copy of questions it receives from Conference members and our responses to all Conference members so that they can share leadership by responding to recurring questions in their Areas. Memos about different topics of concern to the fellowship can be found on the Delegates Corner under “Memos”.

[Memos on Area 9 Website](#)



AFG Connects will be viable to all members; the general membership will be able to subscribe to "Announcements--WSO Structure" on AFG Connects. The announcements will include information regarding Group e-News, Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism, new/updated literature, to name a few.

### **AFG North Florida Research Project**

*Dear Members,*

*Our Area has been asked to participate in a research project whose outcome could benefit Al-Anon in our Public Outreach projects. Participating is completely voluntary. Please read the note below from WSO and then the email from the researcher herself. Please contact Daniella Jackson (Researcher) at the number in her email if interested in participating. District Representatives please pass this along to all your GR's and member groups. Let me know if you have questions.*

*Hugs & Love,*

*Wendy*

Greetings from the WSO! A Task Force of the World Service Office's Policy Committee has approved a request for Al-Anon's cooperation by a researcher in the Florida North area.

As per our policy, as stated in the "Public Outreach" section of the Service Manual, Al-Anon cooperates with professionals for the purpose of public outreach, to make Al-Anon's hope and help available to all who need it, but we do not affiliate with them or endorse their work. Al-Anon is not involved in this research in any way, and does not sponsor or fund it. For more information, please see pages 109-110 in the *2010-2014 Al-Anon Alateen Service Manual*. A copy of Al-Anon's detailed Collaboration with Researchers Policy is attached.

Our process protects the privacy and anonymity of all Al-Anon members. We do not share any Al-Anon contact information with any outside entity. Instead, we ask that the Al-Anon service structure share information about this project with members, who then have the opportunity to make a personal choice about whether they wish to cooperate on this research project or not. If they choose to participate, then they will share their own contact information with the researcher, who will then proceed in a manner that continues to protect their privacy and anonymity. Those who choose to participate do so as private individuals, on their own time.

Daniella Jackson, a researcher from Capella University, is engaged in an anonymous study called, "The Positive Experience of Adult Children of Alcoholics after Long-Term Attendance in Al-Anon: A Multiple Case Study." As per the attached Al-Anon Collaboration with Researchers policy, the request was approved.

It is appropriate to share information about this project at a group business meeting or at a meeting of the service structure, including Area conventions, Assemblies, and district meetings. It is also okay to mention it briefly among other announcements at an Al-Anon meeting, but this

research project is not the proper subject for discussion at an Al-Anon meeting, which should always, retains its traditional focus on helping the friends and families of alcoholics.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this public outreach project.

*Dear Al-Anon Members,*

*My name is Daniella Jackson, and I am a doctoral student in General Psychology at Capella University. I am writing to invite you to participate in my research study. The purpose of this case study is to describe the positive experiences for adult children of alcoholics (ACOAs) after long-term attendance in Al-Anon.*

*Participants must meet the following criteria: 1) must be 18 years-old or older, 2) shall be willing to participate in the study, 3) must have one or two alcoholic parents (e.g., alcoholic parent may be adopted, biological, deceased or in recovery), 4) must be an active member of Al-Anon and must have attended the program for at least five years, 5) must not have any alcohol or narcotics dependence present as self-reported or diagnosed currently or in the past 3 years, 6) must be able to verbally articulate their experience after long-term attendance in Al-Anon.*

*If you decide to participate in this study, you will be interviewed by me at a local public library or via Skype. The interview will last approximately 1 to 2 hours. I would like to audio record your interview. I will also be conducting a follow-up phone call with you after the interview to clarify any information from the interview and to make sure that I understood what you told me. Then, I will use the information for my published dissertation. Your name or any identifying information will not appear on the dissertation. You will be receiving a \$10.00 gift certificate to Dunkin' Donuts for participating in this study.*

*This is completely voluntary. You can choose to be in the study or not. If you would like to participate or have any questions about the study, please contact me at [\(727\) 247-5495](tel:7272475495).*

*Thank you very much.*

*Sincerely,*

*Daniella Jackson*

## **2016 World Service Conference**

2016 World Service Conference Theme:

### ***Realizing Our Spiritual Potential***

Reconociendo nuestro potencial espiritual

Reconnaître notre potentiel spirituel

The dates for the WSC 2016 are Monday **April 11 thru Friday April 15**. There will also be a 60th Birthday Bash following the Conference, more to come on that.

## Love Gifts

Love gifts are items made by groups or districts that can be distributed to the delegates at conference. The Love gifts are mailed to the hotel (below) and distributed among the delegates. It was wonderful to arrive at my first Conference and receive cards and love gifts from all of you!

Love gifts may be sent care of me Wendy Roth to the Hotel (address below)

**\*\*\*Packages will not be accepted by the Hotel before April 7, 2016\*\*\***

**Wendy R (Hold for WSC April 11-15, 2015)  
Wyndham Virginia Beach Oceanfront  
5700 Atlantic Avenue  
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23451**

**Please put my name and address in the return address section in the event mail delivery is delayed. This can be found on the CMA.**

With Joy and Gratitude in Service,

Wendy R

P55 Delegate