

Policy Committee Update

Judy K., Outgoing Chairperson
John M., Incoming Chairperson

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The purpose of the update sent each quarter by the Chair of the Policy Committee is to provide information and report progress regarding the following:

- Topics discussed by the Policy Committee that are generated by the fellowship and need clarification or interpretation in light of the Tradition and Concepts
- Policy motions presented to the 2017 World Service Conference (WSC)
- Policy motions approved by the WSC

The Board of Trustees approved of the Policy Committee's updates and revisions of two Motions to the 2017 WSC. A summary of the contents of the Motions is provided in this update rather than the full text due to their length:

- ❖ Motion Six: To amend the text on pages 95-99 in the "Financial Matters" section in the "Digest of Al- Anon and Alateen Policies" section of the *2014-2017 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27)*

The motion to accept the amended text was carried (92 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain, 1 Void). This "Financial Matters" revision (cited above) incorporates core spiritual principles that are the foundation of Al-Anon's financial practices. It also clarifies how Al-Anon's principles of giving and receiving reflect a spiritual approach to *all* financial matters. Although Tradition Seven identifies the responsibility of being self-supporting, members also give out of gratitude and personal abundance for help they have received in Al-Anon.

- ❖ Motion Seven: To amend the text on pages 85-86 and 123-124 in the "Membership and Group Meetings/Conventions" section in the Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies section of the *2014-2017 Al Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27)*.

The motion to accept this amended text was carried (86 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain, 4 Void). Although 92 WSC members passed the first policy motion, only 90 members voted on this motion. This amended section about "Conventions and Announcements" also incorporates the core spiritual principles that characterize Al-Anon and/or Alateen events, including criteria by which these conventions, workshops, and other events can more easily be recognized and identified as Al-Anon. The revised text identifies principles in Al-Anon's Twelve Traditions that distinguish events as Al-Anon, and those to announce at our meetings. The autonomy of Al-Anon's service arms is a key aspect of decision-making regarding announcements at meetings.

Look for the revised texts of these two Motions to be posted in the *2014-2017*

Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual on the WSO Members website. They will also be included in the new *2018-2020 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27)*.

At the Open Policy Meeting, the Policy Committee discussed two topics pertinent to the worldwide fellowship. The first subject was “Autonomy of Groups as it relates to Tradition Four and Warranty Four.” This discussion centered on what spiritual principles to consider when we feel the need, desire, or even responsibility to govern an Al-Anon group whose practices fall outside of our Traditions. A key element of that discussion was also how we can effectively communicate the idea that freedom implies responsibility and that the groups themselves are responsible for upholding Al-Anon’s Twelve Traditions.

The second topic was “Electronic Meetings.” This discussion focused on how Al-Anon can extend the spirit of Tradition One to the thousands of Al-Anon and Alateen members who practice our program using new and evolving communications methods, i.e., phone meetings and virtual (online) meetings. In the spirit of Concept Four, how can we welcome these members into our service structure? This topic initiated a new conversation about Al-Anon as a whole upholding its Traditions while unifying and supporting members around the world.

As always, members of Al-Anon are encouraged to submit questions or shared experiences to the Policy Committee for more interpretation according to our basic guides, i.e., the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts of Service. Consider how this issue might affect worldwide Al-Anon as a whole, remembering that Al-Anon policies are simply interpretations according to principles and not rigid rules.