

Ask It Basket Questions from Fall 2023 Assembly

1. Can a member be AIS (Al-Anon Information Services) Representative for one group and Group Representative for another Group?

From bottom of page 66 and top of 67 in 2022 - 2025 Service Manual

"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. AISs 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.

2. Can someone who is no longer an "active" member of AA, but has been active in Al-Anon for several years serve as a Group Representative or alternate Group Representative?

From the World Service Conference Summary, 2005, Page 65, Question #66: What can we do when someone who used to be in AA says he/she is no longer an alcoholic and wants to be a Group Representative?

Members need to have a discussion at the group level.

Whether an AA member can serve beyond the group level is not within the group's autonomy, since the group conscience of Al-Anon, through the Conference, has set that policy in exercising its autonomy, a group comes to a decision on whether that person should serve, not whether or not the person is a member of AA.

3. Our meeting was running hybrid. We recently had a business meeting and decided to change to face-to-face only according to World Service Office records. We have closed our zoom to outsiders; to only be used for group members. We were told that this doesn't align with World Service Office but can group autonomy overrule that? Some feel as if that violates Al-Anon's mission statement. What does Area believe in this situation?

Tradition 4 – page 14 of the 2022-2025 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual - Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or AA as a whole.

- The group is registered as a physical meeting. Adding hybrid form for members only is still just one meeting.
- WSO does recognize that members cannot travel to a physical meeting in winter conditions.

Tradition 5 – page 14 of the Service Manual - Each Al-Anon family group has but one purpose, to help the families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of AA ourselves by encouraging and understanding our alcoholic relatives and by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics.

Concept 1 – Page 16 of the 2022-2025 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual - The ultimate responsibility and authority for Al-Anon world services belong to the Al-Anon groups.

Concept 4 – Participation is the key to harmony.

- 4. Today, I heard that we would need to look at Diversity, Inclusivity, etc. Why would we need to do this when Tradition 3 looks after this very well. Why would we start naming groups when anyone coming to Al-Anon is a PERSON who is hurting and needs our help. Seems to me using these terms would create a division by singling out specific people under the terms mentioned above.**

This question comes from my Delegate's Conversation yesterday. I, Mary C., reported that a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion workshop was held at the Conference in April. This was an initiative from the Board of Trustees. The World Service Office recognizes that biases occur at all levels of Al-Anon; often without realizing we have them. Tradition Three certainly tells us that all are welcome, but the fact is that people don't always feel welcome, for whatever reason. World Service shared the presentation with the Delegates and I share this information with you, as a reminder to all of us to raise our awareness of how welcoming our groups, and each of us as individuals are, to someone we see as different from us in some way.

- 5. Why do some groups have sign up sheets at a meeting? Is this contradicting anonymity?**

From the 2022-2025 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual

Anonymity – Tradition Twelve (page 38)

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities.

Tradition Eleven (page 40)

"The assurance of anonymity is essential to our efforts to help other families of alcoholics, and our Tradition of anonymity reminds us to place Al-Anon and Alateen principles above personalities."

Meeting Ideas (page 40)

There is no rigid formula for an Al-Anon or Alateen meeting.

Anonymity and the Media (page 98-99)

When speaking or writing as an Al-Anon/Alateen member in any 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."

Anonymity in Our Personal Growth (page 102)

Our spiritual growth has its roots in the principle of anonymity. Each member has the right of decision regarding personal anonymity within the fellowship, which we respect whether the member is attending meetings, not attending meetings, or deceased. (See "Public Outreach.")