Digital Notebook For Group Representative Assembly Success

Dear Group Representatives,

Welcome to the Nevada Area Assembly! The Area Officers and Coordinators of Nevada Al-Anon are excited to have you with us. You are the first and most vital link between your group, the Nevada Area, and the World Service Office.

As the voice of your Al-Anon/Alateen group at the Area Assembly, you have the opportunity to speak and vote on your group's behalf. And in turn, our Delegate has the ability to carry your message forward, as part of the Assembly's voice, to the World Service Conference.

Share information from our Assembly to your group. You can take back flyers for future Assemblies, summarize reports from the Area Officers and Coordinators and pass on all pertinent information to your group.

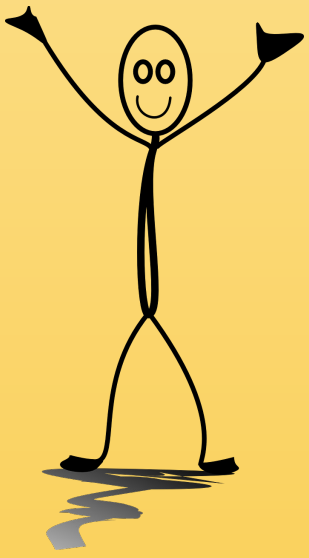
If you have not already done so, we encourage you to acquire a Service Sponsor to help guide you with both Assembly proceedings and, of course, your individual service growth.

Please don't hesitate to ask any questions or express any concerns you may have at any time. You are a trusted servant and an essential component in the service structure of the fellowship at the Assembly level and we are here to assist.

Sincerely,

Your Area Officers and Trusted Servants

See the AWSC Confidential List on the Nevada Area Website



Tools for Your Journey as the Group Representative

It all begins with your Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, reference Group Representative (GR) and Assembly in the index. Please read all about your duties as a GR in the Nevada Area Handbook and the Service Manual. Additionally, you may want to bring your Area Handbook and Service Manual to the Assemblies, a printed copy or electronic. These are important tools, especially Guideline #7 with details for Service Committees, Guideline #10 regarding the Area Raffle and Guideline #15 regarding Assembly Procedures.

If you have questions — Ask! We have all been there with our own questions and will gladly help. The best way to prepare for an Assembly is to regularly attend your District meetings and to obtain information from your District Representative. This is practicing the links of service. :)

PROCEDURES AT THE ASSEMBLY

1. Being present at roll call is important so there is an accurate count when voting. Your District Representative (DR), will distribute voting cards prior to the first Assembly Vote.

2. The Area World Service Committee (AWSC) can make recommendations to the GRs and as GRs you can make a choice to act on them or not.

3. Motions must be made from a GR. If for any reason the GR cannot attend the Assembly, the Alternate GR, or a person chosen by the group to represent them at the Assembly, may do this. (Al-Anon members who are also members of AA may not vote at the Assembly).

4. A motion slip (may be in the GR packet provided by the Area Chair) must be submitted to the Chair at the time the motion is made. The motion slip enables the Chair to repeat the motion to the Assembly and then call for a second.

5. Discussion

- **a. One time at the microphone per topic**
- **b. Limit yourself to two (2) minutes if you wish to speak on the motion. (Please do not stand to repeat what someone else has already stated).**
- **c. Address your comments to the Chair, per Tradition 12, "to place principles above personalities."**

6. Voting on issues by a show of hands (majority or 2/3rds vote needed, as determined by number of GRs at the beginning of discussion). Motions must be passed to change or create Nevada Area policy, guidelines, and financial status. (Approval of the proposed Area Budget requires passage of a written motion). (See Nevada Area Guideline #15 for motions and voting procedures).

7. Voting for Nevada Area Elections by written motion. Nominees are to leave the room for discussion and election. If the nominee is a voting member, they are to cast their vote before leaving the room.
(Refer to Nevada Area Guideline #5 in the Nevada Area Handbook on the website for more information on elections).

Please understand that this is your Assembly. You are the Voice and Vote of the group you represent; the Area Officers and Coordinators are simply facilitators.

Tips for the Nevada Area Assembly

- Do participate.
- Remember to breathe.
- Read over the Nevada Area Handbook and the Service Manual before coming to Assembly.
- Introduce yourself to others. Fellowship is an important part of Assembly.
- Listen to others with an open mind.
- Be respectful. If you need to communicate with your neighbor, write it down instead and pass the note.
- Be considerate. Don't applaud or make noises after someone has shared at the microphone. Respect the right of the minority to be heard.
- Take care of yourself. Take a break when you need one.
- Ask questions about the topic; use the "Ask-it-Basket" form for any other questions.
- Represent your group's conscience, but "Keep an Open Mind" as additional information may change your mind.
- Remember our Higher Power is in charge and is expressed through our "informed" group conscience.
- "How Important Is It?" We are not perfect, it's okay to make mistakes. We can always recognize mistakes and change our mind later.
- We are all here doing our best for the common good, but may have different approaches on how to achieve those goals.
- Keep in mind "Principles above Personalities" meaning that someone else's opinion may not necessarily be wrong. Recognize if you find yourself reacting to a given topic, see if you can listen to the discussion with an open mind before making an informed decision.
- Respond to what someone else has said with courtesy and love.
- Give yourself a pat on the back for being here! You are Al-Anon in Action!

KNOWLEDGE-BASED DECISION-MAKING

(Excerpts from the Delegate's 2006 World Service Conference Information package)

In the traditional way of doing business, we tend to deliberate a motion without the understanding of the why behind it that led to the motion. In the traditional way, when we had a discussion, it was with an end in mind. For example, a motion was presented – we chose our position whether pro or con and each side would gather evidence to support their position – so the discussion always took place with the intended end in mind – either for or against. In other words, we operated out of reaction not pro-action. With our knowledge-based governance value system, we now enter a dialogue on a particular subject with an open mind rather than a closed mind. In other words, we engage in "open dialogue before deliberation or decision making."

There are five key elements to the Knowledge-Based Decision-Making process to reach an informed group conscience:

"Just as many of us find a Power greater than ourselves in the collective wisdom of our Al-Anon group, we seek spiritual guidance for our groups in the same collective wisdom. We call this a 'group conscience,' the voice of the majority of members. We believe it represents the greatest good for the greatest number." (*How Al-Anon Works*, p. 110)

1. **Open communication between leadership and membership (Equality)**

"We need only contribute our personal experience, strength, and hope honestly; listen to each other respectfully; refer to the Traditions; and trust a Higher Power with our groups as we have learned to trust a Higher Power in our personal lives." (*Paths to Recovery*, p. 133)

2. **All decision-makers have common access to full information (Honesty and Generosity)**

"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." (*Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual 2018-2021*, p. 51)

3. **Dialogue before deliberation (Patience)**

"I must consider all of the facts and examine the possible consequences. I have to learn to take time and think things through." (*Paths to Recovery*, p. 151)

4. **We exist in a culture of trust (Understanding and Trust)**

"We start by trusting a High Power and continue by learning to trust each other." (*Paths to Recovery*, p. 145)

5. **Confidence in the competency of our partners (Acceptance and Trust)**

"We share as equals and presume goodwill. Everyone involved has Al-Anon's best interests in mind, even though their opinions may differ." (*Talk to Each Other: Resolving Conflicts within Al-Anon)*

"Concept Five contains the spiritual principle that all opinions must be heard in order to have an informed group conscience. It tells us that even though we might not have unanimity at all times, we agree to listen to everyone's opinion respectfully—especially when there is a minority of only one or a few. It assures us that we have a right to voice our opinions, even if it's the minority opinion. In return, members with a minority viewpoint agree that, having been heard respectfully, they agree to respectfully accept the decision of the group conscience and let go." (*Reaching for Personal Freedom* (P-92), p. 139)

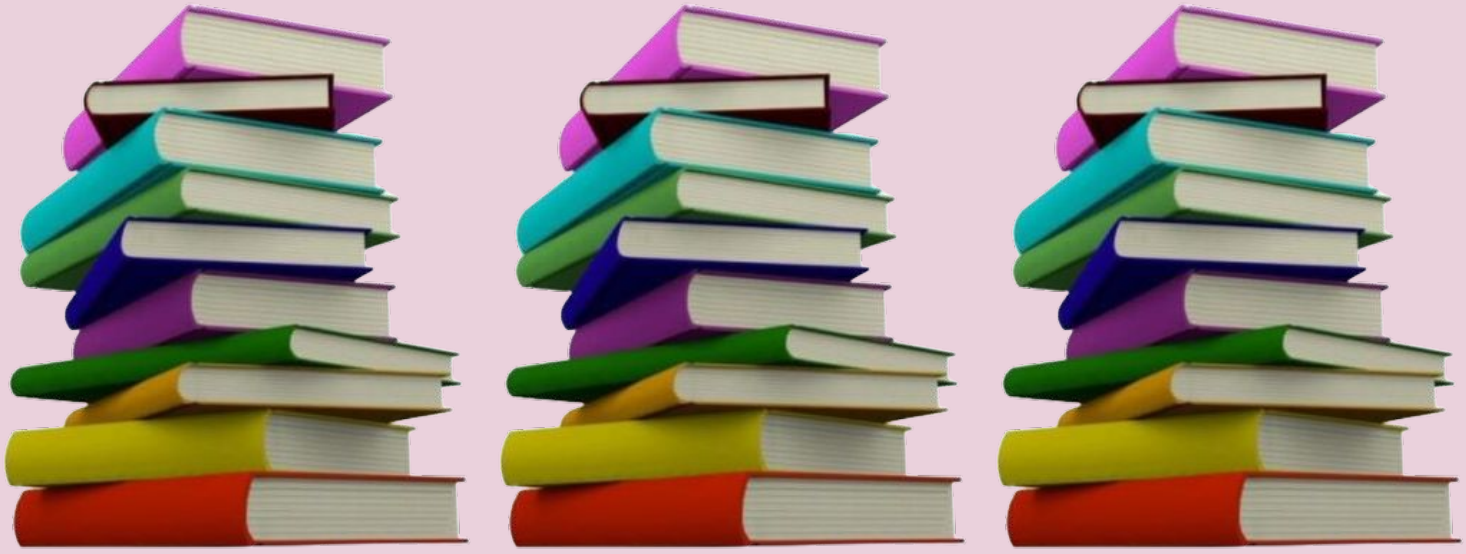
Questions for Knowledge Based Decision Making

***KBDM Question 1*:** What do we know about our members' or prospective members' needs that are relevant to this discussion? What do we wish we knew, but don't?

KBDM Question 2: What do we know about the resources and our vision for the organization that is relevant to this discussion? What do we wish we knew, but don't?

KBDM Question 3: What do we know about the current realities and evolving dynamics of the world and our fellowship that is relevant to this discussion? What are the Pros and Cons? What do we wish we knew, but don't?

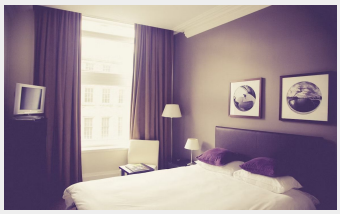
KBDM Question 4: What are the ethical implications of our choices? In other words, will our decision be consistent with our spiritual principles? What do we wish we knew, but don't?



Additional Tidbits for Your Travel to the Nevada Area Assembly!!!

(See Group Representative responsibilities in the Nevada Area Handbook)

- ❏ Note: Your group generally pays for all expenses to Assembly, i.e., hotel, food, gas and registration.
- ❏ Carpooling and finding someone to share a room with can help save your group money.
- ❏ Hotel options are on the website under the Assembly tab.
- ❏ First night of Assembly is a potluck. See flyer for more info posted on the website under the Assembly tab on what your district contributes to the potluck.
- ❏ Often there are Al-Anon meetings before and after Assembly adjourns.
- ❏ There is a raffle at both spring and fall assemblies. It's a great way to support the area Assembly. Your group can contribute a basket and in return, you're welcome to share the basket with your group. (Nevada Area Guideline #10 has all the info regarding raffles).



Top 10 Things New GRs Need to Know

1. Group Name and Number (al-anon.org)

2. District Number and District Representative (DR) Name and Contact Information (email/phone number)

3. Nevada Area Website (www.nevadaal-anon.org)
    a. (See Group Representative Resources Tab)

4. Al-Anon World Service Office Website (https://al-anon.org)

5. Current Service Manual - Digital version available on the WSO website (keep it close and handy, the answers are in there)

6. Al-Anon Guidelines (available on the al-anon.org website)

7. Acronyms (see below)

8. Don't Reinvent the Wheel
(this is your digital binder with pertinent information)

9. Ask for Help! We don't do this alone. Make a contact list of past GRs, bring concerns at District Meetings and share your experience with others.

10. Have Fun! When you Get Busy, You Get Better!

Al-Anon and Alateen Abbreviations/ Acronyms

AAPP	Area Alateen Process Person
AFG	Al-Anon Family Group
AIS	Al-Anon Information Service
AISL	Al-Anon Information Service Liaison
Alt. DR	Alternate District Representative
Alt. GR	Alternate Group Representative
AMIAS	Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service
AWSC	Area Word Service Committee
BOT	Board of Trustees
CAL	Conference Approved Literature
CMA	Current Mailing Address
COB	Chairman of the Board
CPC	Cooperating with the Professional Community
DR	District Representative
GR	Group Representative
GSO	General Service Office
IAGSM	International Al-Anon General Services Meeting
ISR	Information Service Representative
KBDM	Knowledge Based Decision Making
LDC	Literature Distribution Center
PI	Public Information
PO	Public Outreach
PSA	Public Service Announcement
RSS	Regional Service Seminar
RT	Regional Trustee
SWRDM	Southwest Regional Delegates' Meeting
TAL	Trustee at Large
WSC	World Service Conference
WSO	Word Service Office

World Service Conference Structure Graphic

Members in a group elect a **Group Representative (GR)**.

The **GR** is the liaison between the group and the District and the group and the Area Assembly.

The **GRs** in a District elect a **District Representative (DR)**.

The **DR** represents the District's groups at Area World Service Committee (AWSC) meetings.

The AWSC consists of Assembly Officers, which includes the Chairperson, Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Treasurer, and Secretary; **DRs**; Coordinators (such as Alateen Coordinator and Literature Coordinator); and liaison members (such as Al-Anon Information Service Liaison).

The **GR** attends the Area Assembly to elect the **Area Delegate**, hear reports, and participate in Area service projects.

Ultimate Authority

Delegated Responsibility

The **Area Delegate** attends the annual World Service Conference (WSC) and is the link between the groups and the WSC and the groups and the World Service Office (WSO).

The composition of the WSC includes the **Area Delegates**, Volunteer members of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee, and voting members of the WSO administrative Staff.