

Proposed Motion for Slide Sponsor Campaign during November & December 2023 and January 2024

Proposed Motion

That District 25 contribute to an outreach project for a 3-month “Slide Sponsor” campaign at the Pickford Film Center in Bellingham for the months of November & December 2023 and January 2024. Total cost \$600 being utilized from District 25’s Special Projects funds.

Background

2022/2025 AI-Anon/Alateen Service Manual provides direct guidance and suggestions regarding public outreach in the community.

- Informing the public about AI-Anon and Alateen is vital to the growth of the fellowship. (See **Service Manual**, Public Outreach in the Community, page 44.)
- Much of the direction for AI-Anon’s public outreach has been based on the 1966 WSC statement on public relations that has long been a part of the “Digest of AI-Anon and Alateen Policies.” (See **Service Manual**, “Digest,” page 119.)

The 1966 WSC Statement on Public Relations (**Service Manual**, “Digest,” pages 120-121) Our Traditions state that our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion. For clarification, the sixth World Service Conference (1966) adopted the following statement, which was reaffirmed at the 1971 WSC.

It is the consensus of the sixth World Service Conference that if AI-Anon is to continue to exist, it must continue to grow. . . .to fulfill its primary purpose of reaching millions who need AI-Anon’s help but who are not yet aware of the existence of our fellowship. We will fulfill this primary purpose most effectively by attraction and cooperation — not promotion or affiliation. For the guidance of our fellowship here are authoritative definitions of these sometimes controversial terms:

to attract: draw by other than physical influence; to invite; to draw to; to cause to approach

to promote: to push forward; to further advance, as in business venture (implies “hard sell,” advancement for profit)

cooperation: joint operation or action (implies coming together of two or more people to work together for a common gain or benefit or on a common problem)

affiliation: association or close connection; a uniting (implies lending one’s name, endorsement, legal or financial association)

A-Anon is attracting when it tells people why we are, what we are, what we do and how; we let them know that we are available if and when help is needed. We state the facts which are communicated via the press, radio, TV and films. . . .

- Members and local service arms may pay for local advertisements, for example: billboards, screen ads at movie theaters, and transit signs. (See **Service Manual**, “Digest,” “Paid Advertisement,” page 122.)

- In the dynamic world in which we live, we need always consider broadening our outreach efforts so that those needing our help may easily find us. This means that there is no end to the possibilities for carrying our message locally, nationally, and internationally.
(See **Service Manual**, “Digest,” “Members Continually Broaden the Way They Carry the Message by Using New and Innovative Forms of Communication,” page 126.)
- Al-Anon fulfills its primary purpose most effectively by cooperating with others and creating goodwill in the media and in the professional community. Al-Anon is cooperating when it works with others, rather than alone. In working with others, our scope and contacts are broadened, and we reach many more of those in need.
(See **Service Manual**, “Digest,” “Cooperation and Goodwill Strengthen Public Outreach,” page 126.)

Al-Anon Guidelines (G-10) (What is the Purpose of Outreach to the Public/Media?)

- To get information directly to the public about Al-Anon/ Alateen as a resource.
- To build awareness in the community of what Al-Anon/ Alateen is.
- To inform the media of how Al-Anon/Alateen can help families and friends of alcoholics.

Tradition 11

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV and films. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all AA members.

Knowledge Based Decision Making (KBDM) Questions/Responses

1. **What do we know about our members’ (and prospective members’) needs, wants, and preferences that relate to this issue? (What purpose would this serve? Is it necessary? Is it helpful?)**
 - a. Al-Anon group members donate money to their Groups, Districts, Areas, and WSO to support our spiritual mission.
 - b. At Fall Assembly October 2021, Group Representatives voted to spend \$4,500 from November 2021 – January 2022 for a digital campaign, using Area excess funds, and the results were very positive.
 - c. Happy Hour group is active in public outreach. This group and the District Outreach Committee cooperated in carrying the message in a 2022/23 bus ad campaign.
 - d. The District Outreach Committee members support this project.
 - e. Al-Anon has but one purpose: to help friends and families of alcoholics. The Public Outreach goal is to find ways to reach those in the community who are not yet aware of our fellowship, raising awareness and hope.
 - f. Members would see tangible use of their donations via a partnership with a local organization, i.e. cooperating with others.
 - g. As a self-supporting organization, we take care of ourselves first, which includes offering support to all those affected by alcoholism in our *local* community.

2. **What do we know about our resources and our vision for Al-Anon and our meetings that are relevant to this issue? (What are our resources? Can we afford it? Do we have enough volunteers to make it happen? Do we have any background information in our archives to help answer this question?)**
- a. We know that the District has special project funds set aside for use. Rather than a single group's outreach attempts, joint use of both group and District 25 special project funds maximizes and strengthens the quality of outreach.
 - b. Happy Hour is considering using Excess Funds for a similar campaign.
 - c. We have volunteers from individual groups and the District Outreach Committees to carry out the project.
 - d. Following the agreed upon process for district use of excess funds for special projects, a decision would have to be agreed upon at the September business meeting.
3. **What do we know about our "culture" and "environment" that is relevant to this discussion? What are the implications of our choices: pros and cons? (How would this affect our meeting?/ our fellowship?/ newcomers?/ Al-Anon (and AA) as a whole? The advantages might be . . . The disadvantages might be . . .)**

Our Culture and Environment

- a. In support of the Primary Purpose of Al-Anon/Alateen to help families and friends of alcoholics, the need for a coordinated outreach effort is never greater.
- b. Sustainability of the Fellowship and carrying the message is based on outreach projects. An example of outreach efforts: April is "National Alcoholism Awareness Month" and September is designated as "National Recovery Month." Al-Anon members are encouraged at all levels to participate in a major community outreach campaign.
- c. Other organizations and businesses within Bellingham/Whatcom County find it worthwhile to invest in bus advertising.

Pros/Advantages

- a. Conducting a wide-scale community project demonstrates to our members that the District prioritizes Tradition 5 (our primary purpose) and Step 12 (carry the message), as well as, serves to inspire/energize more members to get involved in carrying the message.
- b. The PFC is seen by many as a good civic partner and is demonstrating that by offering Al-Anon a non-profit rate
- c. The District will attract newcomers for the groups.
- d. Groups will gain new members and remain vital.
- e. Utilizing some of District's excess funds **now** supports attracting more people to Al-Anon **locally**.
- f. Having the campaign during the months of November, December and January reaches many people during especially stressful times and can offer help and hope.
- g. Having the campaign during the months of November, December and January is a period of both inclement weather and holidays; this likely increases movie-going,
- i. Our example may attract other Districts/Areas to consider this outreach project also.

Cons

- a. Other special projects may not be met.

4. **What are the ethical implications of our choices? Would we be practicing our “principles in all our affairs”? (Is our decision legal? Will our decision help us fulfill our primary purpose? If we decide to take an action, will it be the “right” thing to do?)**
- a. The District would demonstrate Step 12 and Tradition 5 of spreading the message and giving comfort to families and friends of alcoholics.
 - b. We would get information directly to the public and build awareness about Al-Anon/Alateen as a resource..
 - c. The Slide Sponsor campaign in 12 weeks would yield approximately 15,070 views from the public, based on research conducted by the Pickford Film Center.
 - d. Concept 3: “The right of decision makes effective leadership possible.” When our officer, GR or other trusted servant gains more facts or instruction than is present at the group level, the “right of decision” gives the “trusted servant” the freedom to act according to her/his own conscience.
 - e. Concept 9: “Good personal leadership at all service levels is a necessity.” There are Al-Anon members in the District who are passionate about developing and carrying out ideas for public outreach. Lois W, Al-Anon co-founder, wrote in the book, **Lois Remembers**, “We believe that Al-Anon leadership should initiate ideas, offer choices, and perhaps emphasize aspects but leave it up to the fellowship to make the decisions.”
 - e. “If . . . Al-Anon groups do not let the public know of our presence, . . . we block ourselves off from those in need.” (**Lois Remembers**, page 194)

5. **What do we wish we knew, but don’t?**

- a. How many people suffering from the disease of alcoholism will be attracted enough to become members.
- b. The answer to that is out of our control. However, we know that PFC estimates approximately 15,070 views of our ads for 12 weeks; which provides a lot of opportunity for attraction.

Conclusion:

A large scale public outreach campaign using Slide Sponsor advertising would bring Al-Anon to the attention of many more people in our local community, who are suffering or who know someone who is suffering from the family disease of alcoholism. **The goal of public outreach is to attract people to the Fellowship, to let them know who we are, what we do and how.** There is no way of knowing how many new members the campaign would bring to our groups. We know that people come to the program only when they are desperate enough and ready for help. Our job is to carry the message to those suffering, let them know we are here to help, and then turn over the results to our Higher Power.