

RED LIGHT / GREEN LIGHT QUESTION:

***WHEN DOES ASSISTANCE BECOME DOUBLE-HEADED
MANAGEMENT AND HOW DO YOU RESOLVE IT?***

Concept 10: Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority and double-headed management is avoided.

On page 233 of *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* it is stated, although Al-Anon had its roots in AA, by 1968 the Al-Anon World Service Conference unanimously approved the development of Al-Anon's separate Concept of Service, based on the Al-Anon experience. During 1969, Lois W. chaired a committee that produced a proposed text. These Concepts were well considered before the World Service Conference of 1970 affirmed them as guidelines for service.

In *Many Voices, One Journey*, page 159-160, Lois spoke about the Twelve Concepts of Service to the 1971 World Service Conference: "The Concepts provide the groups with a blueprint by which they can conduct their affairs: they show how minorities can be heard, why no person should have responsibility without a corresponding degree of authority, how all service arms can be balanced so no one arm, or person, sits in judgment over others, and why neither money nor power should be concentrated into one place.

Paths to Recovery, pages 309-311, says in all areas of our lives, we need to be clear about what our responsibilities are. Limits to one's power should be clearly spelled out in the description of a job. With an organization composed of many people, there must also be a clear understanding of who has the final "Service Authority". Double-headed management can happen when no one is in charge or when two people or two groups are charged with overlapping responsibility and authority.

Reaching for Personal Freedom, page 159 tells us double-headed management can occur when responsibility and authority are not clearly defined, and more than one person or group is given the same task or job to complete. When we are given a specific responsibility or delegate a task to someone else, it is important that everyone understand their responsibility and authority, there is defined accountability and any conflicts can be minimized.

If we want to work with others effectively, it is important to write clear job descriptions. But this is not enough. It is equally important to take time to discuss each task so that everyone involved has a clear understanding of what is expected, as well as what will constitute successful completion of the task.

Concept Ten stated that responsibility and authority should be balanced. The principle within this Concept can be used in our homes, workplaces, or personal relationships. We become empowered when we are given the responsibility to do a job, as well as the authority needed to complete it.

Paths to Recovery, pages 309-311 states, In practicing Concept Ten, we set clear goals and trust each other to accomplish them. We recognize that there are many ways to do a job. When we accept responsibility and are willing to be held accountable for the tasks we have agreed to undertake, we are empowered. We know that ultimate authority will not be exercised unfairly.

The last paragraph on page 258 of the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual on Concept 10 sums it all up: All of this is fully implied in Al-Anon's Tradition Two. Here we see the "group conscience" as the ultimate authority and the "trusted servant" as the delegated authority. One cannot function without the other. We well know that only by means of careful definitions and mutual respect can we constantly maintain a harmonious working balance.

By clearly defining the job and who has the final say at each level of operation, our trusted servants are free to create the best solutions and still be accountable to the organization for the outcome.

Researched By District 6
Sue P., Gwen S., Pam B.