

## Thought Force Topic: Area Events – Service Workshop

**Background Information on the Thought Force** – This thought force is convened to gather information from our current AWSC panel on our collective knowledge about our Area Service Workshop. Please answer these questions individually and also feel free to discuss the topic at your table. Make sure that you do not try to reach a consensus answer – a wide variety of perspectives is being sought. We need your thoughts on this event, whatever they are.

**Historical Info:** I'm providing three Service Workshop Reports for your historical information. If you participated in any of these conventions, please make notes on the back and give your thoughts – good and bad.

**Financial Impact:** So far the Area has been able to afford putting in about \$2000 per year toward the Service Workshop – in the last few years to accommodate the travel and expenses of the entire AWSC Panel. There is some concern about being able to sustain this type of travel expense. Otherwise, this event has been fairly self-supporting and it is not thought to be too much of a financial burden to the Districts at this time. If you know something different, please discuss it here.

**Charge:** Discuss your experiences with, and thoughts about, our Area Service Workshop. As an event. Do not try to reach a consensus answer to any question – but listen to each other, and allow yourself to communicate thoughts, experiences, ideas, suggestions, concerns. If you would like to be involved in future Task Forces regarding this Event, be sure to include your name and email somewhere on this paper.

### Five KBDM Questions

1. What are my needs, wants and preferences relevant to our Area Service Workshop? Do we want to continue this Event?
  - gives me a glimpse of what the service position entails
  - allows me to ask questions
  - helps me decide if I want to do a particular service position
  - YES! Continue the event – just get more members to attend (24)
  - Learning about service in a fun environment is a great thing
  - I wish the calendars could be more coordinated - our District DOW was the same weekend last time
  - Not enough information provided to make a decision
  - Great for newcomers to service
  - I think this Event should focus on The Concepts
  - I think Service Workshops are best done in Districts, not Areas
  - Educational and inspiring
  - Helps me know I'm not alone
  - I think a Service Workshop would be beneficial for me (3)
  - Very informative and helpful for my own service journey
  - No, I don't think we should continue this event (9)
  - I think it should be more of a "how-to time"
  - My needs: I want to know who attends, what is shared, what do people expect?
  - Can you include the Service Workshop in Assembly (on Sunday?) when you already have attendance?
  - We focus more on what to do rather than why. I'm not sure we do a good job of spiritual growth.
  - I like it, but location is critical.
  - Haven't been to one (11)
  - I think it is good to learn more about Traditions and Concepts

- I like having it in the Spring
  - I never thought of discontinuing this Event
  - More people attend if there is participation from WSO (my experience)
  - Don't make it a mini-convention.
  - Make sure there is a flavor of the hosting District
2. What do I know about our resources (finances, member participation, etc) around the Area Service Workshop?
- some Districts are very competitive and bring in celebrity speakers, but not all Districts can afford that
  - Should be centrally located if you want members from all over to come (21)
  - Events in the edges (Jacksonville, Sarasota, Tallahassee) are too far for some
  - I don't know anything about this Event, it is never discussed in my District
  - I wish there was more participation (25)
  - Service Workshops can promote personal healing/recovery as well as the health of Al-Anon as a whole
  - Large, wealthy Districts can put these major Events on.
  - The first Area Service Workshop I attended was a TEAM event and the workshops on Leadership, Communication and Spiritual Growth are still with me!
  - It's good to know the member participation, expenses and income. Reports should be short, simple and give information not a daily diary of the process.
  - There should be a more clear understanding of who pays for travel expenses if the Area panel participates. Is this like an AWSC meeting (Area pays) or is it like Convention (individual pays)?
  - I needed overnight accommodations, and without them I could not attend
  - 2014 seemed like they had good participation, not sure if it was local or Area-wide
  - As long as it makes money we should keep it
  - It seems to mostly draw attendance from local District
  - It seems to mostly draw attendance from people already in service (12)
  - Member participation is low. Workshops are boring.
  - It's in the budget (2)
  - Districts take turns
  - Why don't people go anymore? (5)
  - Why don't we drive our sponsees?
  - I know about the finances. I do not know why people don't attend
  - How can we appeal to a wider group?
  - How come there are no Alateens at these Events?

3. What do I know about the current realities (membership, culture, etc) and our fellowship's environment (technology, geography, demographic, etc) that may impact Area Service Workshop?
  - current format lets members interact with current panel
  - attendees should have the opportunity to meet the current panel
  - it's not a job fair
  - Hosting District should pick one focus: Concepts, Technology, Sponsorship, The Service Manual ... just examples
  - Should we alternate "northern" and "southern" Districts to facilitate attendance?
  - Not very much
  - We used to open our homes to traveling Al-Anon members, and it helped cut expenses as well as provide opportunities to get to know others
  - If people have more information they will travel, PR needs to advertise the event more
  - It seems a more central location would help attendance (29)
  - Can you make more information about it available at Assembly?
  - What does the fellowship want/need that would be a draw to the Event?
  - It seems to be for people who are already in service (6)
  - Make it a one day event – make the start time so that people can drive in that day. Market the event to other Districts (3)
  - I think we all need more service support
  - If you're not in service you may not know how valuable it is to attend
  - I wonder if burn out is a problem in service?
  - It's a good alternative for Districts that can't host a Convention
  - These Events are an investment in our growth as an Area
  - We need to help overcome the idea that Service is boring or hard
  - People like humor. People like Speakers. People like skits (3)
  - I'm not sure this Event is viewed as a growth opportunity. Perhaps we could organize it across the Panel (certain activities in year 1, 2 and 3). (6)
  - I don't think the Area can or should pay for all the Officers and Coordinators to attend. It should not be another required meeting.
  
4. What are the pros and cons about our Area Service Workshop? Are our decisions consistent with our spiritual principles?
  - making it a huge production increases the costs, not sure if the payoff is worth it
  - competition in Area events is limiting the people/districts who can participate
  - Pro: service knowledge is shared, great fellowship
  - Con: tough to get Area wide participation
  - Pro: Good educational opportunity

- Con: Too much like a “Job Fair”
  - 2014 was a big effort and a very successful Event
  - Pro: promotes service (16)
  - Cons: low attendance
  - These events provide an opportunity for growth and recovery
  - Working on these events helps me learn to put spiritual principles into practice
  - Distance is a problem for people, and should be taken into consideration
  - I’ve heard that it can be too large of an undertaking, like a mini-convention.
  - Pro: very interesting IF you are interested
  - Con: Traveling 3 hours for a one day event is ridiculous
  - Con: It must be centrally located
  - We work hard to get people to fill jobs. People seem bored with the Concepts.
  - Pro: fun, fellowship, great learning experience
  - Pro: learning about our program, focusing on spiritual principles
  - Pro: service education
  - Con: travel
  - Pro: activities with my “family” outside of meetings
5. What do I wish I knew, but don’t? (use the back if necessary)
- from beginning to end I wish I had more complete information
  - how do we communicate to members the value to themselves personally and to the Area as a whole
  - I wish I knew the thoughts of other members
  - Clarification of the \$2,000 travel expenses
  - What do other Areas do that is successful?
  - We need more explanation and description on the Area Website. Especially about TEAM events.
  - What does the fellowship consider to be the most successful aspect of the previous Service workshops?
  - What is the average number of attendees in the last 3 years?
  - Does location impact attendees?
  - Can it be held in a central location like AWSC and Assembly?
  - Do Districts volunteer to host?
  - I do not know the difference between Service Workshop and TEAM
  - I have not attended – is this a Job Fair?
  - I don’t know what I don’t know
  - How is the District chosen to host this? Is it always attended by the Officers & Coordinators?
  - How do we attract members to service? (11)
  - What is the purpose?

- Help in encouraging participation (19)
- How do we get the word out better?
- Can we combine this Event with a meeting (AWSC or Assembly)? (3)