

Dear Al-Anon Friends,

The purpose of this report is to share with you some of the information about the focus of our work and is a companion to the report that will be given at our Spring Assembly. The written report will be supplemented after assembly with the items that are shared there and the updated and complete text will be posted on the Public Outreach Coordinator page on the Area 9 website.

First, like many of the other trusted servants of the Area have expressed, I feel privileged to be in this service position. I feel a passion for stewardship in using our resources in an effective way for making sure that those who could benefit from our program are aware that we are here.

My first activity was to identify and recruit a team. My thoughts were that I wanted a balance of experience and fresh ideas, long time members, middle time members and new time members. I also wanted a balance, as much as possible, of different viewpoints. In other service positions that I have had at the Area level, I knew that having a team would make the efforts more enjoyable and provide a regular pattern of accountability on my part that would make a difference in our progress.

The Team:

Heath was the Public Outreach Coordinator at the District level of a prior Panel. I saw him give presentations, motivate a district and share with heart of his own Al-Anon journey. I was lucky he said yes.

Charon has held positions at both the District and Area level. She has a body of knowledge and experience of historical decisions at both levels that I knew would be key in learning from prior activities. I was lucky she said yes.

Mike is a relative newcomer who has embraced and grown in his program visibly. He serves at the Group level and has implemented District Public Outreach projects personally. I was lucky he said yes.

While the groundwork for activity is mine to do, we meet monthly as a group and affectionately call ourselves PORB (Public Outreach Review Board). My idea for our work together was that we would jointly set priorities and goal and reason things out as we utilize the Knowledge Based Decision Making process in choosing and implementing Public Outreach efforts for Area 9.

Guiding Principles: Our guiding principles are a gift to all Al-Anon members because they come from the literature and program itself. Some speak specifically to our efforts and they are:

Step 12: “Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.”

Tradition 3: “The relatives of alcoholics, when gathered together for mutual aid, may call themselves an Al-Anon Family Group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend.”

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, films, and TV. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all A.A. members.”

Concept 5, Warrantee 5: “that though the (World Service) conference serves Al-Anon it shall never perform any act of government; and that like the fellowship of Al-Anon Family Groups which it serves, it shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

Many other steps, traditions, concepts and slogans are used in our team to assist and guide us, as well.

Priorities

Since we all had had direct experiences with Public Outreach, the first thing we did was choose and prioritize our goals. These items would be evaluated for each project that we investigated and priority would be given to the project that most fit within those goals. The goals we chose for the Area Public Outreach project, in priority order, are:

- Project can be done within the Area Budget
- Enhances our membership diversity
- Reaches underserved communities
- Is not complicated and difficult; it is simple
- Exciting and engaging
- Outside of our comfort zone
- Sustainable and can be passed on
- Different from what we have done before (last 3 panels)

Process

We use the knowledge based decision making process. This has allowed us to gather information first, evaluate and discuss (ensuring that minority opinions are honored) and, to date, achieve unanimity in our decisions. We recognize that this is a time consuming effort but one that yields harmony among our team and hopefully a richer outcome.

The principles we follow are:

- Open communication exists between leadership and membership
- Dialogue before deliberation
- All team members have common access to full information
- We exist in a culture of trust
- We have confidence in the competency of our partners

The questions we work with are:

- What do we know about our members' wants, needs or preferences regarding this issue?
- What do we know about the capacity and strategic position of the Area relative to this discussion?
- What do we know about the current realities or evolving dynamics that are relevant to this issue?
- What are the ethical implications? Will we be in line with our spiritual principles? This includes how the Legacies apply. Identify both Pros and Cons.
- What do we wish we knew, but don't?

I look forward to sharing more at the appointed time during our Spring Assembly. There I will discuss the projects themselves and the journey we have had in our investigation of them.

Yours in Service,

Diane M.

Public Outreach Coordinator

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