

2024 Convention Chair – Final Report

I'd like to start by saying that this experience has enriched my life in many ways – both personally and in my relations with other Al-Anons, and at home. The phrase that says that “service work is like sprinkling water on our character defects and watching them grow” rings true for me. No regrets despite the times when I was experiencing my ‘growing pains’.

The first thing I learned was that in this position, I was tasked with becoming a delegator, not a do-er. I saw my position's focus as being primarily to:

provide a vision,

act as a guide to the sub-committee chairs,

adjust the tempo as we went along,

and remove resistance or road blocks to the natural flow of things.

First, I had to get to know all my Committee Chairs and discern what their needs from me were: Did they need more or less guidance? Were they able to ask for help if they needed it? What was my role with regard to their positions and autonomy? At our first meeting, I told them that our guiding principle was to be found in our modification of Tradition 4 to: “Each *sub-committee* should be autonomous, except in matters affecting *Convention* as a whole.” This became my filter for conflict resolution.

As things went along, I found my biggest personal challenge was in balancing Concepts 10 and 3. I came to understand what double headed management means: where two people were trying to resolve the same issue or cover the same ground as each other. In other words, a lack of clarity about responsibility. Within this framework, I learned that there are legitimate times when a leader has to practice the right of decision and override some decisions that simply aren't in the best interest of the whole. A slippery slope at its worst – and a great growth opportunity at its best.

My experience led me to make these suggestions:

1. Get a Service Sponsor sooner rather than later.
2. Listen loudly and always, with an open mind.
3. Watch the budget with frequent reminders that this is an Area fundraiser for the good of Al-Anon as a whole.
4. Allow space for other Committee members to grow in their positions, while also watching that the decisions being made are in alignment with our Traditions, Concepts, and Warranties.
5. Pick your battles – my filter was “will this break Convention?”

6. Remember that our collective HP is in charge and will put things in perfect order, so try new things if they make sense for your Convention or our Area.
7. Talk Convention up at every opportunity – in the rooms as well as outside of them. We never really know who’s listening that we might reach.
8. Take your messes to your Service Sponsor and your messages to your fellow Committee members.
9. Laugh often – mostly at yourself.
10. Enjoy the ride and have fun !! It’ll shine through.

The thing that helped me the most to stay on track was a Timeline Document given to me by my Service Sponsor. Ours is included in these turnover documents for consideration.

What’s important for all Convention Committee Members:

The hotel contractual obligations – use our Conference Resource’s experiences as a guide.

The Al-Anon and Area Convention Guidelines.

Communicate, communicate, communicate! In all directions...

Stay focused on solutions.

Presume goodwill.

Learn from those that have come before us.

The details matter – they are a reflection of us.

Ask for help when needed – it’s a WE program.

Area Archives

2024 Convention Committee Chairs 2 Words describing their Convention Experience

At our last meeting, just after Convention ended, I asked my Committee Chairs to summarize their experience in 2 words. Here’s what they said:

Relief, Teamwork	Grateful, Exhaustion	Grateful, Fellowship	Walking, Bliss	Gratitude, Spirituality
Happy, Thankful	Enlightened, Love	Appreciation, Respect	Serenity, Grateful, blisters from wearing high heels	Living Fully
Sharing, Joy	Hard work, Rewarding	Teamwork, Tired	Exciting, Fun	Gratitude, Fulfilled

Resources:

Best Value Copy for cheap color copies. <https://www.bestvaluecopy.com/>

T-shirts

B&B Sports & T-shirts (from 2023 convention)

813-238-2542

Area Tax Exempt certificate

Hugs,

Patricia L.

2024 Convention Chair

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