

AFG Area 9 – Florida North
Thought Force Process Form

NOVEMBER 1-2/2024

Thought Force Topic/Charge

Is the celebration of membership anniversaries in Al-Anon a violation of Warranty Two and Tradition 12?

Thought Force Members

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Background/Historical Information

Al-Anon grew from the A.A. program. This practice may have carried over to Al-Anon since it is widely practiced in A.A.

Financial Impact

Funds are necessary to and must be voted on in groups to provide coins. Approximate coin costs range from \$.50-\$14.00 according to online marketplaces. Storage of coins and record keeping incurs minimal cost to groups practicing this tradition.

Five KBDM Questions

1. What do we know about our membership's needs, wants and preferences that is relevant to this topic? ^{Tradition 4} Each group is autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or A.A. as a whole.
2. What do we know about our resources (finances, member participation, etc.) that is relevant to this topic? ^{Tradition 7} Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, dedicating outside contributions.
3. What do we know about the current realities (membership, culture, etc.) and our fellowship's environment (technology, geography, demographics, etc.) that is relevant to this topic? ^{Tradition 12} ^{Anonymity} is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities.
4. What are the ethical implications of our choices -what are the pros and cons? Will our decision be consistent with our spiritual principles? ^{Highlighting an individual's achievement rather than humility is a con.} The spiritual principle of anonymity is at risk of violation in this practice.
5. What do we wish we knew but don't? ^{Is this practice adding to Al-Anon as a whole, or, detracting from our core spiritual principles?}

Money is tight in our Area & Country.

Pro: A positive event to mark progress.

2nd draft 10/15/24

July 27, 2024

Red light / Green light Question: Is a 'coin ceremony' in line with Warranty 2 and Tradition 12? If so why or why not?

There is no specific reference found in CAL having to do with 'coin ceremony/celebrations' in any of the literature researched for this Red Light/Green Light Question. This topic appears to be a gap in the literature reviewed.

Warranty 2 states:

"That no Conference member shall be placed in unqualified authority over other members."

The spiritual foundation for Al Anon's world services is contained in the General Warranties of the Conference, Article 12 of the Charter. ...*Paths to Recovery* p. 324-325. Warranty 2 guides us away from seeking prestige and power over others and instead reminds us that the spiritual power of our fellowship is found in our group conscience process, not in any one individual.

Tradition 12 states:

"Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities." p. 235-36 *Paths to Recovery*

Why is anonymity the spiritual foundation of our whole program? ...Anonymity unifies our fellowship by removing individual status so we can listen to the message rather than the messenger. Being placed or put above others leaves us vulnerable to envy, criticism, and loneliness when we have challenges of our own and need supportive friends. ...practicing anonymity with humility within the group enhances recovery.

Historical Information on 'Coin Celebrations':

Al Anon "grew" from the AA program. This tradition may have carried over to Al Anon since it is practiced in AA groups.

[The practice of giving coins apparently began with Dr. Bob (cofounder of AA) and Sister Ignatia (the Angel of AA) who cared for alcoholics while they detoxed in the hospital. Sister Ignatia presented the men with a coin when they were discharged and reportedly told them if they ever felt they needed a drink, to bring her the coin back. "Sister Ignatia provided each patient who left her care with a Sacred Heart badge. She asked each recipient to promise that they would return the badge before they drank again." Retrieved from <https://www.aa.org/aa-archives-exhibits>, on 09/15/24.]

A list of CAL reviewed include:

How Al Anon Works

Service Manual

Paths to Recovery

12 Steps & 12 Traditions

One Day at a Time
A Little Time for Myself
Courage to Change
The Forum Magazine
Al Anon Archives

Discussion

The group opening & closing state that whom you see here, what you hear here, when you leave here, let it stay here; take what you like & leave the rest.

A variety of celebration formats exist in what groups may choose to do. Based on individual group conscience decision making process (KBDM) and vote, groups can choose this option if it does not conflict with the principles of the program.

Funds are needed to & must be voted on as a group to provide coins. The cost is variable from approximately \$0.50-\$14.00 according to online sources. Storage and record keeping incurs minimal cost to groups practicing this tradition.

Anonymity is always to be protected.

{The single mention of a 'coin' was found in the Forum referring to a member's alcoholic sister whom she was speaking of in the article (Forum Magazine January 2022 issue, *Loving my Alcoholic Sister-and Myself*. Retrieved online July 27, 2024 @al-anon.org). Her sister Kris had joined AA and received her coin from them (AA).}