

WSC Thought Force – Welcoming Potential Members Skit

Equipment Requested: five stools/chairs, four microphones

Actor (and Props):

1. CHAIRPERSON, **Cher the Enthusiastic Chair** (*oversized gavel or little love gift gavel from the International Convention*)
2. GR, **Notta Re Greta** (*hat or badge that says “GR”*)
3. ALANON POLICE, **Rigid Renee** (*baseball cap with a not-so-obvious police badge on it*)
4. WELCOMING MEMBER #1, **Lovely Linda**
5. WELCOMING MEMBER #2, **Compassionate Carmela**
6. WELCOMING MEMBER #3, **Trusting Too Dae**
7. NEWCOMER, **Newton the Newcomer**

- Also have a big Service Manual book (cover) as a prop

TUS=The Untold Story: *If the actor has a TUS or “The Untold Story,” that actor will stand up, look at the Conference members/Assembly, and then speak their TUS line. Keeping most of these lines simple enough to be said from memory so they can be heartfelt is the goal. Getting it perfect is not.*

Setting: *BUSINESS MEETING: The stools are set up in a semicircle pattern. Actors speak to each other for the main script.*

All: *(Standing in a semi-circle as meeting closes, holding hands)...and let it begin with me. (All sit down.)*

Chairperson (Cher the Enthusiastic Chair) *(Enthusiastically bangs the gavel.)*

Please stay for the business meeting, which starts right now. *(Turns to the members, then the newcomer for the last sentence.)* Everyone is welcome to stay. We would love to hear what makes you feel welcomed. *(Enthusiastically bangs the gavel.)*

GR (Notta Re Greta)

(Opens the business meeting.) Welcome, everyone, to our business meeting. This group decided to continue the conversation we started at a meeting a couple of weeks ago. To bring you up to speed, we have had a number of newcomers who have come in because their loved one is addicted to drugs. Some of our members felt uneasy and have asked that we talk about how we welcome all newcomers to our meeting while maintaining our primary purpose. Are there any more ideas or thoughts on this topic?

AIAnon Police (Rigid Renee)

The Third Tradition tells us that AIAAnon is for friends and family of alcoholics. I'm just not comfortable breaking that Tradition. I'm worried about AIAAnon's future and the health of this group. I'm not willing to let AIAAnon be diluted in this way.

TUS: The Untold Story is...I'm afraid if I don't protect our Traditions, AIAAnon will have no present or future. I feel I must insist we stay focused.

Welcoming Member #1 (Lovely Linda)

I understand what you're saying about the Traditions, including Tradition Five, which speaks to our primary purpose. But I hate the idea of turning people away at the door. It seems so unkind and against our principles of compassion, love, and unity to not welcome newcomers with other concerns. Especially since they haven't been coming long enough to know for sure whether they belong and whether they feel that they can benefit.

TUS: The Untold Story is...I really don't like conflict. I like to be inclusive. I think we need to give people a chance to see if they fit in. I'd hate to turn someone who needs this program away before they've decided if they belong.

AIAAnon Police (Rigid Renee)

(With lots of attitude.) I certainly don't want to hear a lot of drug talk or talk about addiction!

TUS: *(With more attitude.)* The Untold Story is...I have little tolerance for shares that are not related to living with an alcoholic. *(With gusto!)* I only want "100% pure" AIAAnon at my meetings!

Welcoming Member #2 (Compassionate Carmela)

When I first came to AIAAnon, I didn't know anything about our primary purpose. I was in too much pain. I did hear how the principles of this program could help us focus on ourselves, and that it didn't matter whose disease brought us to the doors of AIAAnon.

TUS: The Untold Story is...No one told me I had to pass a membership test to be in AIAAnon. I came and saw it and I thought I could benefit from it, so I stayed. If someone comes and they talk too much about the alcoholic or the addict, I think someone could lovingly talk to them, in private, about what AIAAnon is—and by that I mean we can say, "It's for me to get better and not for somebody I know to get better."

Welcoming Member #3 (Trusting Too Dae)

Right. We are here for ourselves. Does anyone have the 2018 Membership Survey results? I heard that the survey has some interesting statistics about our newcomers.

TUS: The Untold Story is...I'm grateful our GR encouraged us to participate in and read the results of the 2018 Survey. It has valuable information I otherwise would not have known.

GR (Notta Re Greta)

I'm glad you asked! Let's see... "Fifty percent of members indicated that the family member or friend who had led them to initially attend AIAAnon meetings had a history of drug use," and "35

percent of the members came specifically because of someone's use of drugs." Wow! That's higher than I remember.

Welcoming Member #2 (Compassionate Carmela)

And wasn't there something about children and drug use?

GR (Notta Re Greta)

Yes, that's on this same page of the survey: "While more members first joined AIAnon because of their spouse, members' children have a much higher likelihood of having a history of using drugs and of leading members to join AIAnon because of this drug use." It seems our children are more and more likely to use drugs and make many of us finally desperate enough to find a meeting. I've heard so often that you can divorce your spouse, but not your children. The survey also says, "while 35 percent of members first came to AIAnon because of a loved one's drug use, (*emphasize*) **65 percent** of those who came because of a drug addiction joined because of a child's addiction."

TUS: The Untold Story is...I remember reading the *AIAnon Spoken Here* pamphlet, which encourages members to gently bring the discussion back to the AIAnon focus should it stray towards outside issues during a meeting. I will never have a 100% "pure" AIAnon meeting, but I can and do play a part in keeping the focus on AIAnon principles.

Welcoming Member #1 (Lovely Linda)

So, the alcoholic ex-spouse didn't make them desperate enough, but dealing with the children was another story!

TUS: The Untold Story is...This group does not know that my daughter has a drug and alcohol addiction. They don't need to know. When I was new, all I wanted was to stop the pain. I was given time to decide for myself if AIAnon was for me. I'm grateful I kept coming back and we are addressing this topic.

Newcomer (Newton the Newcomer)

Is it okay if I talk? (*All heads nod.*) Before the meeting one of you was very kind and explained to me that this program is for us and it's not necessary to mention who or what brought us here, and that I might find my answers if I keep coming. I will come back again; I think I found something here I need. I was so scared coming this time but I won't worry so much next time. Thanks for being so accepting! Who knows what's in my family?! You all seem to have found something here.

Welcoming Member #3 (Trusting Too Dae)

(*Looking at the newcomer.*) I, for one, am glad you are here. I think whatever that member told you before the meeting should be a regular part of our way of greeting newcomers. (*Looking at everyone*) As a topic for our next business meeting, I suggest we review our format to ensure newcomers feel welcomed while we maintain our primary purpose. Maybe there is something in the Service Manual.

TUS: The Untold Story is....I appreciate the passage in How Al-Anon works that says, “Had anyone demanded that we justify our participation in an Al-Anon group, we probably couldn’t have done so. Fortunately, it is left to us to decide for ourselves in our own time whether or not we are qualified for membership. Thus, even if they feel uncertain about whether or not they are in the right place, newcomers are always welcome in Al-Anon.”

Welcoming Member #2 (Compassionate Carmela)

I agree. Let me read this passage in *Paths to Recovery* on Tradition Three. It says, “For all who come through the doors and claim by their presence that they have a problem, we extend our hand of fellowship. We offer them unconditional love and acceptance.” Wow! Unconditional love! That’s what makes me feel safe enough to be honest with myself and others. It does not say, “we extend our hand to those who have been affected by alcoholism.” We don’t know and newcomers may not know if they’ve been affected by alcoholism, but at least I can practice tolerance and keep my focus on how AlAnon has helped me, regardless of how I met the requirement for membership.

All: (*Nod heads and look to each other with expressions of agreement.*)

AlAnon Police (Rigid Renee)

I could go along with that. Perhaps we can discuss changing our group format to study one Tradition each month and maybe we can start a newcomers meeting so we can talk about how AlAnon works?

GR (Notta Re Greta)

Thanks for those ideas, Renee and Too Dae. We can discuss them at our next business meeting. Until then, there’s a lot to think about as we practice being welcoming yet focused.

Welcoming Member #3 (Trusting Too Dae)

I think that’s what we all want. We know the help is here. We just want to make sure the focus is on ourselves and we stay true to the program. We can’t afford to be turning these courageous, scared people away at the door, when in fact there may be undiscovered alcoholism in their lives, but we can keep AlAnon true to its principles.

Welcoming Member #1 (Lovely Linda)

I think we have a plan! Thank you everyone!

AlAnon Police (Rigid Renee)

Thank you for listening to my concerns. I’ll still be on the lookout for infractions. (*Smiles*)

All except Police. (*Smiling as they look at Rigid Renee and each other.*) “Keep Coming Back”!!