Applying the Traditions and Concepts to the Convention/Area Relationship – A Tool to Assist Group Discussion

As part of the work of the Convention/Area Relationship Task Force we were charged with looking at our legacies to see how they can help us answer the questions that have been raised. This document provides specific references from our Conference-Approved Literature (CAL) which members and groups may use as they talk to each and reason things out in discussing this issue. These references are simply a place to begin. Our CAL has many other readings you may find relevant to the conversation.

**Tradition 1:**  “Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends on unity.”

1. Do we want a convention?
2. What is the purpose of our convention?

Sharings from *Paths to Recovery, pages 135-144*:

- . . . “place our trust in a God of our understanding to lead us to decisions for our common good.”
- . . . “all of us must have a voice.”
- . . . “Unity means that we work together for our common goal.”

Sharings from *Reaching for Personal Freedom, pages 68-71*:

- . . . “value of working together for the greater good of everyone.”
- . . . “I am just one part, and the common good outweighs my individual desires.”
- . . . “look for opportunities to support common welfare as a way to achieve progress.”

**Tradition 4:**  “Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or AA as a whole.”

1. Does the Convention affect groups and districts in the Area, the Area itself, Al-Anon as a whole? If so, is it appropriate for the Convention to be autonomous?
2. Who takes responsibility if there is a problem (financial or organizational) with the Convention?
Sharings from *Paths to Recovery, pages 163-174*:

- “freedom in Al-Anon carries with it responsibility.”
- “charged with the responsibility to think about the possible effect of our decisions on Al-Anon.”
- “importance of being ourselves, but don’t need to impose our perceptions on everyone else.”
- “While this Tradition gives us freedom, it implies that there are limits.”

Sharings from *Reaching for Personal Freedom, pages 82-86*:

- “balance between personal autonomy and responsibility to others.”
- “integrity, thoughtfulness, and ethical conduct.”
- “respect, humility, and harmony.”

**Tradition 9:**

“Our groups, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”

1. Whom does the Convention serve?
2. If the Convention doesn’t serve the Area, whom does it serve?
3. If the Convention does serve the Area, does it follow that the Convention Committee would be created as a “service board” or “committee” of and responsible to the Area?

Sharings from *Paths to Recovery, pages 212-219*:

- “common sense, experience and loving Higher Power usually have managed to guide us. . . to Al-Anon principles.”
- “service boards and committees. . . serve us well through planning and organization but final authority still rests with the groups.”
- “trusted servants answer to the groups.”

Sharings from *Reaching for Personal Freedom, pages 103-106*:

- “Being aware of the abilities and strengths of others can encourage participation and balance responsibilities.”
- “Creating a strong spiritual foundation with mutual trust and willingness helps us to participate as equals, and share our opinions.”
- “My part is to do the best job that I can, and to be directly responsible to those I serve.”
Concept 1: “The ultimate responsibility and authority for Al-Anon world services belongs to the groups.”

1. Is the Convention directly responsible to Area groups? Should it be? If so, how?

Sharings from *Paths to Recovery, pages 249-254*:

- . . . “we follow the guidance of a Higher Power at every level of Al-Anon.”
- . . . “the primary unit of Al-Anon – the group – is responsible for becoming informed, discussing the matters at hand and relaying its decisions through its representatives. An informed group conscience is essential.”
- . . . “In Al-Anon ultimate responsibility is exercised with loving care and wisdom.”

Sharings from *Reaching for Personal Freedom, pages 124-126*:

- . . . “Our success and our serenity depend upon our ability to take responsibility for what is ours, and let go of the rest.”
- . . . “in healthy relationships, responsibility is shared and balanced.”

Concept 4: “Participation is the key to harmony.”

1. If the Convention is separate, are people (both the Convention Committee members and Area service members) losing the opportunity to grow in service?

Sharings from *Paths to Recovery, pages 270-277*:

- . . . “The harmony created by our active, willing participation encourages others to participate.”
- . . . “In Al-Anon, working together harmoniously requires that we have respect for one another.”
- . . . “We respect each other as we ourselves want to be respected – as equals and partners in a spiritual enterprise.”

Sharings from *Reaching for Personal Freedom, pages 136-138*:

- . . . “Concept Four addresses a deep spiritual need - belonging.”
- . . . “Our opinions do matter, and our participation is valuable to the overall success of the common goal.”
Additional references:

  
  Paragraph titled *Mini Conventions, Share-aThons, Workshops or other Get-Togethers.*

- *Al-Anon Guidelines G-20: Al-Anon/Alateen Area Conventions*