

Use of Material at Al-Anon Meetings

Background:

A member recently contacted the Southern California Area and WSO with a question about using typed copies to conduct their meetings. Their concern followed the Nov. 2018 Delegate's report which contained information on this topic from Sue Perez, WSO Associate Director-Group Services.

Email Reply from Sue Perez to the member and SCWS Delegate, Feb. 3, 2019

The policies that have been approved by the World Service Conference (WSC) speak to what materials can be used in Al-Anon meetings and the protection of the copyright of Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature (CAL). The World Service Conference serves as Al-Anon's largest group conscience. The WSO compiles those policies in the current *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) in order for all members to have it as a reference. The *Service Manual* can be purchased or viewed/downloaded from the al-anon.org website. [*al-anon.org > Members > Member Resources > Manuals and Guidelines] As the clearinghouse for information that relates to Al-Anon Family Groups, the WSO refers to these policies to respond to member questions and concerns.

The policy that begins on page 112 titled "Use of Material at Al-Anon Meetings" speaks to the importance of using only CAL in Al-Anon meetings and the policy on "Authorization to Publish and Reprint" on page 115 refers to permission to print limited excerpts of CAL. The WSO is aware that many Al-Anon groups use personal-typed copies of the "Suggested Al-Anon/Alateen Welcome" as well as typed copies of the Steps, Traditions and Concepts. We encourage groups to discard those copies as it violates this policy. It is no longer CAL when members re-type it onto paper.

A number of years ago, the WSO issued Group binders to every registered Al-Anon Family Group with this same information (the "Suggested Opening," Steps, Traditions, and Concepts). The exception is that the copies provided to groups by the WSO contained a notation on the bottom of the page clearly identifying "AFG, Inc" as the source. Personal typed copies that you reference violate the copyright because it is not a replica from the source. The WSO has created the online version of the *Service Manual* so that any/all members can have access to the meeting format. Members share with us that a printed copy of the opening can be created from the .pdf download of the *Service Manual* onto a word document to increase the font size for ease of reading. Members also tell us that additional copies of "Groups at Work" are purchased for group members to share and follow along in the meeting and become part of the meeting. Using the online *Service Manual* on any device in a meeting is also an acceptable alternative. All of these options preserve the written words and integrity of the "Suggested Al-Anon/Alateen Welcome" and the legacies.

The policy on "Authorization to Publish and Reprint" on page 115 tells us that written permission to use CAL is granted when used for the purpose of reprinting limited excerpts. This does not apply to the "Suggested Al-Anon/Alateen Welcome" as the entire content, not an excerpt of it, is being requested. The WSO has created these resources to be at the disposal of members in order to protect the Al-Anon name as well as the copyright of Conference Approved Literature. This is done in order to be obedient to the group conscience of your World Service Conference which is in keeping with Al-Anon principles and policies.

***NOTE:** After downloading the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, it's possible to select specific pages to copy and print, such as page 14, The Twelve Steps. It already prints out in a larger font size. However that copy can be enlarged further on a copy machine for easier reading.