

KBDM/Research Results for Motions made, but not acted upon,
at the May 22, 2021, WIUPMI Assembly regarding the
**Membership of the Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan (WIUPMI)
Area World Service Committee (AWSC) and the WIUPMI Policy Committee.**

Motions are as follows:

MOTION #1

NAME OF ORIGINATOR: Mary S

DATE: September 25, 2021

NAME OF SECOND: Jill C

MATTER UNDER CONSIDERATION: Membership of the Area World Service Committee (AWSC)

WORDING OF SPECIFIC MOTION TO BE MADE:

I make a motion to amend item number 3 under the heading **Area World Service Committee (AWSC)** on page 2 of the *Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan (WIUPMI) Al-Anon/Alateen Policy Manual, 2018 Edition, updated 1/21/2020* to read:

“OTHER MEMBERS are District Representatives (26), Liaisons, and the immediate Past Delegate. (9/2021)”

MOTION #2

NAME OF ORIGINATOR: Mary S

DATE: September 25, 2021

NAME OF SECOND: Reno G

MATTER UNDER CONSIDERATION: Membership of the WIUPMI Policy Committee

WORDING OF SPECIFIC MOTION TO BE MADE:

I make a motion to amend the first sentence under the heading **The Policy Committee** on page 1 of the *Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan (WIUPMI) Al-Anon/Alateen Policy Manual, 2018 Edition, updated 1/21/2020* to read:

“The Policy Committee is composed of all WIUPMI Officers (Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary), the Alateen Coordinator, and the Immediate Past Delegate. (9/2021)”

Purpose:

The motions serve to align the WIUPMI Policy with the:

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual 2018-2021 version 2^B
- Spiritual principles of Al-Anon through the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts in Al-Anon, pages 14-18^B
- **The Three Obstacles to Success in Al-Anon**, page 22^B Number 3, Dominance excerpt, "...Our program is based on suggestion, interchange of experience, and rotation of leadership..."

Does not:

Diminish the value placed on our Past Delegates' experience. Note: The Delegate and Alternate Delegate Job Descriptions online each include this statement: "Following your Term (or Panel), act as a mentor to your successor."^C Past Delegates may continue to volunteer on Committees, Task Forces or Thought Forces of interest, be service or personal sponsors, or stand for other Al-Anon service positions.

KBDM Research Results

1. The Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual^B specifies a maximum of two non-concurrent three-year terms as an Area Delegate. The Service Manual does not describe any role for Area Past Delegates.
2. The Service Manual^B does not grant any volunteer position lifetime membership/voting rights
3. According to the By-Laws of Al-Anon, our co-founders Lois W and Ann B were honorary lifetime members on the Board of Trustees until their deaths.^B (pages 168-169) *No* other level in our structure allows for lifetime status by any member.
4. Lifetime voice and vote on our AWSC/Policy Committee is one of the types of "dominance" described in **The Three Obstacles to Success in Al-Anon** on page 22.^B "Our program is based on suggestion, interchange of experience, and rotation of leadership."
5. In the October 1968 issue of *Al-Anon Family Groups Forum*, Lois W addressed the topic of "letting go" in Al-Anon service to longtime Al-Anon members. Lois W's letter is reprinted in *Many Voices, One Journey Al-Anon Family Groups*, pages 146-148.^D In part Lois wrote: "...if we try to dominate and do not give the newer members a chance to develop, we are stunting our groups and keeping newcomers away."
6. Seventy percent (70% or 12 of 17) of the Meeting Minutes for Assembly^E and AWSC^F meetings posted online since 2013 listed 4 or more Active Past Delegates in attendance. This issue is about both how long and how many can vote.
7. See also statements from Al-Anon members supporting Motions 1 and 2 as presented on pages 4 to the end.

Why:

Thirty years ago in May 1991, a Spring Assembly granted Active Past Delegates' lifetime AWSC membership. This policy contradicts the spiritual principles of Al-Anon and disregards the importance of rotation of leadership to avoid dominance in our service structure.

In 2018, Panel 56, the issue of Past Delegates' lifetime AWSC membership was identified as dominance during an update of the entire WIUPMI Policy Manual and during the AWSC Group Inventory conducted that same year.

The summary of the 2018 AWSC Group Inventory Results, prepared by four AWSC members, was submitted to the Area Chairperson for presentation to the August 2018 Policy Committee meeting. The Chairperson set the prepared summary report aside and replaced it with the document "WIUPMI AWSC Inventory Chair's Intro, dated 8-4-2018"^G The document did not include any reference to the Past Delegates' AWSC lifetime membership as an issue of dominance. The August 2018 Policy Committee tabled this issue to Panel 59.

The Panel 59 Policy Committee created a Task Force on the Role of Active Past Delegates. The Role of Active Past Delegates Task Force results were posted for the virtual Fall 2020 Assembly.^H The report did not address the Active Past Delegates AWSC Lifetime Policy because it was excluded from their charge according to the Chair of this Task Force. Therefore, they could neither discuss the issue nor did they make any recommendation specific to it in their final report.

Almost three years later, the Policy Committee has failed to bring the issue of AWSC Lifetime Membership of Active Past Delegates to the Group Representatives (GRs) for a discussion and vote during an Assembly business meeting.

KDBM Resources/Footnotes

- A. Area 61 (WIUPMI) Al-Anon/Alateen Policy Manual, 2018 Edition, Updated 1/21/20, available online at <https://area61afg.org/area-business/general-documents-forms/>
- B. Al-Anon/Alateen **Service Manual** 2018-2021, version two (2), available online at Al-Anon.org
- C. <https://area61afg.org/area-business/general-documents-forms/> Officers and Coordinators Job Descriptions
- D. *Many Voices, One Journey Al-Anon Family Groups* – B-31, pages 146-148
- E. Assembly online materials: <https://area61afg.org/area-business/assembly-materials/>
- F. AWSC online materials: <https://area61afg.org/area-business/awsc-materials/>
- G. Fall 2018 AWSC online materials: <http://www.area61afg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/AWSC-Inventory-Consolidated-Results-Comments-2018-08-04.pdf>
- H. Fall 2020 Assembly online materials: <https://www.area61afg.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Active-Past-Delegate-Task-Force-Report-2020-04-2.pdf>

Respectfully submitted September 4, 2021:

Mary S, Group Representative, District 7, Panel 59 – 2019-2021
Area Alateen Process Person (AAPP), Panel 56 – 2016-2018
Alateen Coordinator, Panel 56 – Fall 2018
District Representative, District 7, Panel 53 – 2015

WIUPMI Area Al-Anon Members' Statements Supporting Motions 1 and 2

I support the motions to maintain rotation of leadership. Thank you for bringing this to our attention and doing something to fix this problem.

Anonymous, Combined Locks, WI

Based on prior group conscience decisions and talks regarding these issues, I can say Saturday Morning Serenity Seekers Al-anon Meeting in Stevens Point is in favor of both motions.

We have voted to withhold donations to the Area until these matters are heard and we feel like the area is again serving the needs of the local groups and those that are still suffering in our communities.

Our program is based on principles that highlight that service should not be tied in anyway with power, prestige, staying in a position of authority after service terms have ended, nor should service positions receive perks or BENEFITS from past service or any service that is not considered a paid position.

For fun and for free are how we are told to do service.

My experience and observations from the last five assemblies and attempting to volunteer to put on the assembly are as such:

Not rotating leadership has shown up with policy's that do not work in real time situations like a worldwide pandemic. Trainings, inspiring speakers, and panels that used to be part of the Assembly apparently can't be done even by the volunteers doing the groundwork because of "policy and timelines."

Not rotating leadership also shows up in the stagnation of effective outreach that is with the times and up to speed on how humans are getting their information. Local radio, tv and the paper reaches only a certain demographic. We all know what quarantine means with those who suffer with alcoholism.

We can see the dissent in groups, the low attendance and the disintegration of the qualities of discussions at the Assemblies over the years yet we are barred from talking about how leadership and policy plays into this dynamic. This to me is an issue of Dominance and I personally support the motions.

Heather DB, Stevens Point, WI

The old guard says they keep running for office because no one else steps up. The younger, newer set says they don't run because the old guard doesn't step aside. Some of the latter set say they're afraid to speak up because of the seeming lock on position and power by the former.

I think the more discussion there is the better. It educates the newcomer and equips them to be of service. The more people see the Policy Committee in action, the more they'll wake up to what's going on.

GRs need to be educated from the start of their panels on their duties and on how things work at the Area level.

Overcoming dominance requires knowledge and action. I was encouraged to see the thought force present their case at the Policy Committee meeting. It was like the children of the family finally standing up to their parents and voicing their truth.

At any rate, I agree that there is dominance by an entrenched group. I don't think they see it. Maybe this latest expression of independence will help that. I think there is cracking at the foundations and things could change.

This isn't about singling out persons, it's about discovering the principles underlying the issue.

Past delegates would still be able to serve in advisory positions within the service structure.

Jay A, La Crosse, WI

WIUPMI Area Al-Anon Members' Statements Supporting Motions 1 and 2 (continued)

Despite the knowledge and skills of past delegates, it seems clear there is no basis in Al-Anon principles for them to maintain membership in the AWSC, or the Policy Committee, indefinitely. As the author of the article, *Choosing to Embrace Leadership* in the September 2021, *Forum*, page 33, states, *Leadership is encouraged in Al-Anon by the rotation of service positions in order to avoid dominance and to foster fresh ideas in service.*

Jill C, Neenah, WI

This statement is in support of motion 2. The rotation of leadership is a fundamental a principle that makes Al-Anon function smoothly. As Three Obstacles to Success quoted below states, the results are “disasterous” when we deviate from a rotation of leadership. Further, Tradition 2 clearly guides us that our leaders do not govern. Having past delegates in place for a lifetime creates (despite however unintentionally it may be) an obstacle to success without an opportunities for the “interchange of experience” also suggested in “Three Obstacles to Success”.

Dominance: Conference Approved Literature (CAL)

❖ Tradition Two: *For our group purpose there is but one authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.* (SM, p.16)

❖ Dominance: *No member of Al-Anon should direct, assume authority or give advice. Our program is based on suggestion, interchange of experience, and rotation of leadership. We progress in our own way and pace. Any attempt to manage or direct is likely to have disastrous consequences for group harmony.* (“Three Obstacles to Success,” SM, p.22)

Katie D, Middleton, WI

Let me open this email supporting the proposed motions with some pertinent quotes from our conference approved literature.

Rotation also helps to prevent a person from taking authority for a job. Pg. 216, first paragraph, Paths to Recovery.

If one person does a task too long, others can come to expect this person to do the job, and take him or her for granted. Pg. 216, last line of first paragraph in Paths to Recovery.

And most importantly, from the aptly titled THREE OBSTACLES TO SUCCESS IN AL-ANON: “
3. *Dominance: Our leaders are trusted servants; they do not govern. No member of Al-Anon should direct, assume authority, or give advice. Our program is based on suggestion, interchange of experience, and rotation of leadership.*”

Please accept this email as my strongest support for the motions being brought to the floor to address the dominance that has been increasingly problematic at the area level. It is critical that this issue be brought to a vote. The health of all of our individual and collective recoveries depends upon this opportunity to speak and be heard on this issue.

I would remind those considering whether or not to bring this to a vote of Concepts of Service, One and Five:
1. *The ultimate responsibility and authority for Al-Anon world services belongs to the Al-Anon groups,* and
5. *The rights of appeal and petition protect minorities and insure that they be heard.*

Michelle W, Appleton, WI

I realize, that in addition to other concerns mentioned that lifetime voting also creates a "we" and "them" situation that is contrary to the unity of our fellowship. I fully support the motions made regarding the lifetime voting of Past Delegates.

Renie M, Plover, WI

WIUPMI Area Al-Anon Members' Statements Supporting Motions 1 and 2 (continued)

I support the proposed motions to amend (Past) Delegate status. The rationale is well documented. The principle of rotating leadership is important in my mind. The absence of a lifetime status anywhere in the Al-Anon governance argues against this practice.
Stephen H, Green Bay, WI

Rotation of leadership is critical to keep Al-Anon's vital service structure healthy. Concept Nine says *Good personal leadership at all service levels is a necessity*. Each position of leadership has a clearly defined term length. During that term, we learn and share our knowledge with other members, and encourage them to become the next GR, DR, Officer, Coordinator or Delegate. We teach *good personal leadership* by rotating out of our position and welcoming the incoming members when our term ends. It is sometimes difficult to fully relinquish positions we have come to love, but in keeping Al-Anon healthy we're making sure it will be there for those who want and need it in the future.”

As I see myself aging, I also see more clearly why rotation of service is so critical. If new, younger people don't step up to serve now as we rotate out, there won't be anyone to chair Al-Anon's various events because Those who knew how will have died off.
Susan L, Appleton, WI

I am supporting Motion #1 and Motion #2 as presented on the attachment.
My respect and gratitude for those serving our fellowship in the past is tremendous. However, I feel we need these changes in our policies to encourage newer members taking responsibility for their recovery and service, to maintain rotation of leadership in our Area.
Timi H, Stevens Point, WI