

**S - ANON**  
*International*



*Family Groups*

# **S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual**

1 — Last update: 21 December 2023

S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc.

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# Preface

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***S-Anon is not an organization; it has no managers or bosses. It is a fellowship of equals, held together in close union by something called “obedience to the unenforceable.” This means that every group conducts S-Anon’s work according to the spiritual principles stated in our Traditions, which they accept and follow of their own free will, without being directed or compelled by anyone.***

***“But,” someone may say, “The Fourth Tradition says each group should be autonomous. Doesn’t that mean we can run our meetings any way we want to, use any kind of literature, and generally run things to suit ourselves?” The answer is that the autonomy granted by the Fourth Tradition is limited to what is good for the fellowship as a whole. If a group departs from the ideas and procedures that create the greatest good for the greatest number of S-Anon members, it takes on its shoulders the responsibility for damaging the fellowship to which all of us look for help. ...The health and unity of S-Anon depends on the cooperation of all groups.***

(Reprinted and adapted from *One Day at a Time* in Al-Anon, p. 305, Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., Virginia Beach, VA, 1973)

The *S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual* is the result of a growing body of experience among S-Anon and S-Ateen groups. **The term S-Anon includes S-Ateen; therefore this manual applies to all registered groups, including S-Ateen.** The *Manual* is also meant to serve as a resource, grounded in S-Anon’s Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service. Members have shown their interest in these Traditions-related issues by directing a large number of questions to the S-Anon International Family Groups World Service Office and to the members of the S-Anon Board of Trustees.

While this *Manual* is not meant to be a complete explanation of S-Anon Traditions and Concepts, we hope that it will be helpful to be aware of some of the experiences of other groups—what has worked well and what has not worked very well. In addition, we hope it will be useful to summarize in one document the service structure of S-Anon in the United States and Canada and how the group conscience of S-Anon as a whole functions at the local, regional, national, and international levels.

The *S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual* **replaces in its entirety and supersedes** the *S-Anon Group Handbook* published in 1993. The *Manual* incorporates all the material previously published in the *Group Handbook* that is still relevant to the S-Anon service structure as it exists today, and it includes a wealth of information not previously published. Since this is the case, we ask you to discard your *Group Handbook* and use this *Service Manual* as your reference guide for service-related questions. We intend to update this *Manual* regularly to reflect changes that may occur as a result of the experiences of our members and groups, or actions taken by the World Service Conference or Board of Trustees.

Please note that S-Anon groups do exist in countries outside of the U.S. and Canada, and we fully cooperate with those groups. In some cases, they have translated our literature and they are licensed to print and distribute that material. At the present time, however, it is not feasible to include groups outside of North America in our service structure. Parts 2 and 3 refer only to the service structure currently existing in North America.

This *Manual* explains how local S-Anon and S-Ateen groups work; describes our traditional and legal service structure; tells how fellowshipwide decision making occurs (including sections on the S-Anon World Service Conference and S-Anon Conference Approved Literature); and contains formats for S-Anon and S-Ateen meetings, including all the Conference Approved readings.

If your group has a different understanding of how the Traditions and Concepts should be applied in any area included in this *Manual*, ideas may be discussed with your Regional Trustee or Area Delegate. You might then decide to submit a motion for a structural or procedural change to the annual World Service Conference. If you have suggestions, additions, edits, or other general comments, please send them to the World Service Office. The WSO will forward your suggestions to the appropriate Trustee for consideration by the subcommittee of the Board of Trustees that will work on the next revision of the *Manual*.

In publishing this document, the Board of Trustees sincerely hopes that the *S-Anon / S-Ateen Service Manual* will act as catalyst for discussion and decision making in the groups, and that it will become an influence for unity in the S-Anon fellowship.

Updated December 2019

# S-Anon Twelve Traditions

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1. Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity.
2. 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.
3. The relatives of sexaholics, when gathered together for mutual aid, may call themselves an S-Anon Family Group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of sexaholism in a relative or friend.
4. Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or S-Anon or SA as a whole.
5. Each S-Anon Family Group has but one purpose: to help families of sexaholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of S-Anon, by encouraging and understanding our sexaholic relatives, and by welcoming and giving comfort to the families of sexaholics.
6. Our S-Anon Family Groups ought never endorse, finance, or lend our name to any outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim. Although a separate entity, we should always cooperate with Sexaholics Anonymous.
7. Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. S-Anon Twelfth-Step work should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. Our groups, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. The S-Anon Family Groups have no opinion on outside issues; hence our name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion, we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV, and films. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all S-Anon and SA members.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities.

(The Twelve Traditions reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Traditions does not mean that AA has approved the contents of this work, nor that AA agrees with the views expressed therein. AA is a program of recovery from alcoholism only. Use of the Twelve Traditions in connection with programs

which are patterned after AA but which address other problems does not imply otherwise.)

# S-Anon Twelve Concepts of Service

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1. The ultimate responsibility and authority for S-Anon world services belongs to the S-Anon groups.
2. The S-Anon Family Groups have delegated complete administrative and operational authority to their Conference and its service arms.
3. The Right of Decision makes effective leadership possible.
4. Participation is the key to harmony.
5. The Rights of Appeal and Petition protect minorities and assure that they be heard.
6. The Conference acknowledges the primary administrative responsibility of the trustees.
7. The trustees have legal rights while the rights of the Conference are traditional.
8. The Board of Trustees delegates full authority for routine management of the S-Anon Headquarters to its executive committees.
9. Good personal leadership at all service levels is a necessity. In the field of world service the Board of Trustees assumes the primary leadership.
10. Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority and double-headed management is avoided.
11. The World Service Office is composed of an executive director and staff members.
12. The spiritual foundation for S-Anon's world services is contained in the General Warranties of the Conference, Article 12 of the Charter.

## **XII. The General Warranties of the Conference**

- A. In all its proceedings the World Service Conference of S-Anon shall observe the spirit of the Traditions:
- i That only sufficient operating funds, including an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle;
  - ii That no Conference member shall be placed in unqualified authority over other members;
  - iii That all decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, by unanimity;
  - iv That no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy;
  - v That though the Conference serves S-Anon, it shall never perform any act of government; and like the



fellowship of S-Anon which it serves, it shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

(The Twelve Concepts of Service reprinted and adapted with permission of Al-Anon World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Concepts does not imply that Al-Anon is affiliated with this program. Al-Anon is a program of recovery from the effects of alcoholism. Use of this material in connection with programs which are patterned after Al-Anon, but which address other problems, does not imply otherwise.)

# Part 1. How S-Anon and S-Ateen Groups Work

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## Membership Eligibility

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The Third Tradition of S-Anon reads, in part, “The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of sexaholism in a relative or friend.” Thus, S-Anon group membership is open to all who feel their lives have been affected by a relationship with a sexaholic or who are troubled by the sexual behavior of another person. Individuals decide for themselves whether or not they qualify for membership.

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## Who Can Start a Group?

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For purposes of this *Service Manual*:

- A *group* is “an *entity* made up of individual members, considered together due to certain similarities.” That is, individual S-Anon members who come together at the same time every week, agree on a particular format, decide on a group name, etc. constitute an S-Anon group.
- A *meeting* is a “coming together, an assembly,” in other words, an *event*. An S-Anon group holds S-Anon *meetings*.

Although we sometimes use the words “group” and “meeting” interchangeably, S-Anon’s ultimate responsibility and authority belong to S-Anon *groups*, as described in S-Anon Concept One.

S-Anon groups are formed and conducted by the relatives and friends of sexaholics. S-Anon meetings are not “discussion groups.” They are specifically aimed at sharing recovery gained by using the principles of the Twelve Steps in our daily lives. Hearing the experience, strength, and hope of others gives us a basis upon which to begin to apply those principles in our own lives. Anyone may start a group. “Two or more members, when gathered together for mutual aid, may call themselves an S-Anon Family Group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation” (Tradition Three).

However, a group started and/or led by a religious leader, therapist or other professional *in a professional capacity* is not in accordance with our Third and Eighth Traditions and may **not** call itself an S-Anon Family Group. When all members of the group are attending as members of a particular religion or therapy group, it constitutes “another affiliation,” (Tradition Three). Further, S-Anon’s Eighth Tradition states, in part, “S-Anon Twelfth Step work should remain forever non-professional...” Professionals who want recovery for themselves are always welcome as S-Anon members provided they keep their professional identities outside the discussion. We are mindful that S-Anon members are engaged in various professions, occupations, and religions, or may be working other Twelve Step programs. However, when we come together as an S-Anon group, we leave our other identities outside the meeting (Traditions Two and Ten).

S-Anon groups are the most basic and important units of the S-Anon fellowship. Starting and growing an S-Anon group is a spiritual endeavor. It is a commitment that requires some time and patience, but no one has to do it alone. The World Service Office (WSO) will help you find experienced members of S-Anon who are available to offer guidance and support. The Higher Power of our understanding can also guide us. Starting an S-Anon group may be challenging initially, but it is worth the effort. S-Anon groups are safe and supportive places where we can share openly and honestly with others who understand as we learn to apply the S-Anon principles to our lives. S-Anon publication L-15, "Starting S-Anon Groups," gives helpful information and suggestions for starting a new S-Anon group. A download with a small fee is available at [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org).

If you learn there is no local S-Anon group, a helpful two-page S-Anon publication called "S-Anon Recovery When There's No Local Group" (L-16) is available for free download at [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org). It contains suggestions that S-Anon members found helpful in pursuing recovery even when there was no local S-Anon group.

S-Ateen is a fellowship of young people, ages 12 to 19, who have been affected by a problem of sexaholism in a relative or friend. For information about S-Ateen, see a dedicated section located TBD in the *Service Manual*

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## How Groups are Registered

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What is a Home Group?

It has been a helpful experience for S-Anon members to designate one group as their "home group." This is the group that they regularly attend and in which they accept service responsibilities at and beyond the group level. S-Anon members can attend as many different meetings as they choose, but their home group is the one that the member commits to, votes in, and is represented in.

With membership in S-Anon comes the right to participate in decisions that affect the groups they regularly attend. Each member may participate in group conscience decisions regarding group- or intergroup-specific issues in any or all the meetings they regularly attend. When registered S-Anon groups are involved in service or discussions that affect World Service Conference (WSC) members or decisions, such as discussing motions to the WSC or electing Area Delegates and Regional Trustees (who are WSC members), a member's voice and vote is appropriately represented only once, as a member of their registered home group.

The S-Anon World Service Office (WSO) will register any group designating itself as an S-Anon or S-Ateen Family Group, with the following understandings:

1. The group will abide by all of the Twelve Traditions of S-Anon and, in particular, that group meetings will be open to all who qualify for S-Anon (Tradition Three). It follows that a group that limits attendance in any way cannot be registered with the WSO, nor can it remain registered with the WSO, nor can it remain

registered if the group decides to limit attendance after they have registered the group.

2. To guard against the dilution of the S-Anon program (Tradition Four), the group will use S-Anon-published literature as the primary recovery tool. S-Anon literature is written by S-Anon members, addresses the S-Anon “problem” as experienced by the group conscience of S-Anon members, and addresses the S-Anon “solution” as experienced by S-Anon members using the S-Anon Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Service. We also ask that other S-Anon Conference Approved Literature be used in meetings only as a complement to S-Anon published literature.

It follows that a group that limits attendance in any way cannot be registered with the WSO, nor can it remain registered if the group decides to limit attendance after they have registered the group.

Registration with the WSO provides contact information for your group in order to make it possible for your group to be informed about S-Anon issues and activities, and ensures your group has a voice, through representation at an S-Anon World Service Conference, in issues affecting the fellowship as a whole. You are encouraged to register the group with the WSO as soon as the group has a set time and location and has begun meeting. To protect the anonymity of members who serve as contact persons (usually on a rotating basis), some groups find it helpful to set up a “generic” group email address and/or telephone information line for their use.

- **Helping Newcomers Find Your Group.** As part of registering, the WSO asks a member from the group to provide the WSO with contact information (email, telephone) so the group can receive information and updates from the WSO. Since the WSO does not give out specific locations of groups, they also ask for a member to serve as a contact person for inquirers who would like to attend the group closest to their location. The person who receives mailings and the person who serves as contact person for inquirers may be, but does not have to be the same person.

- **Becoming Informed About S-Anon Activities.** The group may also choose to allow the WSO to give out certain information to the Area Delegate for your state or province, the Intergroup (representatives from local groups), and/or the Regional Trustee so that you can stay informed of local events and issues that may affect your group. These S-Anon members may also be able to offer your group support and encouragement. (See Section TBD)

- **Group Voice in Fellowshipwide Group Conscience.** Only members of registered groups would be given the opportunity to participate in any fellowshipwide group conscience directed by the World Service Conference and carried out by the Board of Trustees. (See Section TBD)

Registration forms are available at [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org); the information may be sent by postal mail, or given to the WSO by telephone (800-210-8141). An online option also exists: fill out an editable PDF of the Group Registration Form online at [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org), and then e-mail the completed document to [sanon@sanon.org](mailto:sanon@sanon.org). Any time the group changes its contact person or location, please inform the WSO about the changes by e-mail, telephone, or postal mail so we can keep the group registration current.

The WSO updates group records annually. Along with every annual February Special Appeal package, a request is included to review the Group Registration Form and submit updates to the WSO. It is important

for groups to provide this information so that inquirers can be given current and complete information.

Currently, email is used for most of the WSO communication, but if your group prefers, postal correspondence from the WSO may be requested and comes without a specific return address to protect the anonymity of members. You might wish to obtain a post office box to use as the permanent group mailing address. Alternatively, the group mailing address might be that of a group member who anticipates keeping the same address for at least a year and who attends meetings regularly.

All registration and group contact information provided to the WSO is considered confidential. It is used only for official S-Anon World Service Office and Board of Trustees business and is provided to Delegates, inquirers, or local/regional S-Anon event organizers *if the group gives their permission*.

If the WSO, acting in accordance with and at the direction of the Board of Trustees [1] becomes aware that a group is not abiding by any of the Twelve Traditions of S-Anon, a letter is sent to the group contact person explaining the perceived non-observance of the Tradition(s) and asking if the group would like to reconsider its practices. If the group does not wish to reconsider, it can no longer be registered with the WSO, and newcomers will not be referred to the group. If the group at any time decides to reconsider the practices that do not follow the Traditions, the group can again be registered. The BOT, acting as guardians of the Twelve Traditions of S-Anon, has determined this policy best serves the S-Anon fellowship as a whole.

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[1] "The Board is the chief service arm of the Conference, which is guardian of S-Anon's Twelve Traditions. .... the Board has responsibility to determine policy and manage the business affairs of the WSO." World Service Conference Charter, VII.A

Last Updated May 2023

## **Where Groups/Meetings are Held**

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S-Anon and S-Ateen groups often meet in churches, libraries, health clinics, or other public buildings, paying rent for use of the space in keeping with S-Anon's Seventh Tradition. Although groups have started in a variety of venues, experience shows that finding a neutral place as a permanent location helps members stay focused on the meeting and not be distracted by other things. It may be helpful to seek out places that are already familiar with Twelve Step programs and already host meetings of other fellowships. Some S-Anon groups meet via telephone and/or virtual platform, or a hybrid format, where some people meet in person and others attend either by phone or videoconferencing. Each local group, through a group conscience, will need to decide what works in the best interest of the group as a whole. When selecting a name for the group, experience has shown it best to not use the name of the building or organization where the group meets, as this can cause confusion by implying that the group may be affiliated with the church, facility, or organization (Traditions Three and Six). Some groups have begun by meeting at the home of a member, however, home meetings sometimes become too social, present problems with anonymity, or come to depend too heavily on the member whose home is used. The experience of most groups is that it is best to hold meetings in a neutral location as soon as one can be found. Recently, groups have formed online and via conference calls. Please contact the WSO for more information on these types of meetings.

Last Updated October 2023

# Anonymity

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## Within the Fellowship

It is suggested that we introduce ourselves in meetings by first name only. When using the telephone, we do not leave messages for other members unless they have given their permission for us to do so. Disclosure of our full names, addresses, etc. may be done between members, and is usually necessary within the framework of S-Anon service work. The degree of anonymity a member wishes to maintain within the fellowship is strictly up to the individual. Regardless of how we feel about our own anonymity, we carefully guard the anonymity of all members of S-Anon and all sexaholics in our lives (Tradition Eleven).

Sharing at meetings is also protected by our observance of anonymity. We do not reveal to anyone, even to partners, relatives, friends, or other members not present, whom we see and what we hear at a meeting. Anonymity means that whatever we share will be respected and held in confidence. Anonymity also contributes to our personal growth by reminding us that we are all equal in the fellowship regardless of how long we have been working the program or what our outside status may be. In accordance with Tradition Twelve, "Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities."

## Outside the Fellowship

Outside the fellowship, the principle of anonymity assures us that only we, as individual S-Anon members, have the right to make our membership known to friends, associates, and others within our community. For example, we may wish to give our full names to interested doctors, therapists, or spiritual leaders who may come into contact with family members of sexaholics, but we would not provide the name of any other member without specific permission from that person. If we do reveal our S-Anon membership outside the fellowship, we clearly indicate that we do not represent S-Anon as a whole. Tradition Eleven reminds us that at the level of press, radio, film, television, or any other form of public media, such as the Internet, we never allow our last names or faces to be revealed once we identify ourselves as S-Anon members. This policy protects both the individual and the fellowship and provides reassurance to newcomers that their anonymity will be protected. The intention of Tradition Eleven is to keep us anonymous as individuals, not to keep the S-Anon program anonymous.

It is suggested that on any Web site accessible to the public, whether an S-Anon site or not, full names, phone numbers, or other identifying information not be posted if they are identified as belonging to an S-Anon member. Web-based social networking sites or blogs provide members with easy access to distribute information about S-Anon recovery to a large audience. However, in accordance with Tradition Eleven, members who use these communication tools need to maintain their own personal anonymity and "guard with special care" the anonymity of any S-Anon or SA members, as Internet social networking sites or blogs are forms of public media. Email addresses can also compromise anonymity. Members are encouraged to create generic email addresses that don't include their names or outside status.

Last Updated December 2017

# Group/Meeting Types

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S-Anon is a program solely for individual recovery from the effects upon us of another person's sexaholism (Tradition Three). This consideration remains vital when members participate in any type of S-Anon/S-Ateen group or meeting, closed or open. Our approved S-Anon meeting guidelines for sharing remind us to "leave our other identities outside the discussion," and to speak solely "about and from the S-Anon point of view." (Tradition Five) We share our experience, strength and hope gained from individual S-Anon recovery. This is the privilege and responsibility of each S-Anon member participating in an S-Anon meeting.

**Closed Meetings** – Registered S-Anon and S-Ateen meetings are considered "closed" meetings. "The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of sexaholism in a relative or friend." (Tradition Three) At a closed meeting, all those present are seeking S-Anon recovery for themselves.

**Open Meetings** – In keeping with Tradition Four, it is within the autonomy of each S-Anon group to hold "open" meetings, where attendance is open to other people in addition to S-Anon members. Open meetings may be held at local marathons and international conventions, where attendance is open to S-Anon members, members of other fellowships and outside professionals. Examples of open meetings include:

- Potlucks, gratitude meetings, or Speaker meetings that local groups may host, and are open to relatives and friends of S-Anon members.
- Meetings hosted by a local S-Anon/S-Ateen group that invite members of the local professional community to learn about S-Anon and S-Ateen in the community.
- A couples meeting, where members of other fellowships are invited.

In any case, open meetings are not considered registered S-Anon groups, and are recommended to not be a replacement for attendance at regular S-Anon/S-Ateen group meetings.

**Special Meetings** – S-Anon Special Meetings focus on recovery from the effects of specific sets of experiences or other special situations or conditions related to sexaholism. They are held as a complement to, not as a replacement for, regular group meetings. Some S-Anon members have found it helpful to participate in meetings that focus on specific topics common to members' shared experiences.

Special Meetings may include those for Men, Women, Gays & Lesbians, and any other special group that is in keeping with our Traditions (other than the specific Tradition Three membership requirements). Special Meetings may *not* be limited to members of a specific religious denomination, political group, organization, or institution, as that would not be in keeping with Traditions Three and Six.

Open Meetings and Special Meetings may not be *registered* as S-Anon groups, but they need to fill out a Listed Meeting Form at the WSO due to the S-Anon registered trademark, and permission to use the name is granted by the WSO only to the following:

- Closed meetings that complete a Group Registration Form

- Open and Special Meetings that complete a Listed Meeting Form

All Meetings are asked to complete either a Group Registration Form or Listed Meeting Form for the WSO's records.

Only *registered* S-Anon groups (Closed Meetings) and Special Meetings that agree to not limit attendance in any way can be posted on [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org), shared by the WSO to inquirers, and published on websites linked to [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org).

The S-Anon Special Meetings posted on [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org) are in keeping with all S-Anon Twelve Traditions, and welcome the attendance of all members of S-Anon. However, Special Meetings differ from regular registered group meetings, which focus on recovery topics applicable to all S-Anon members. Our common experience suggests that recovery does not depend on meeting with others who have had the same experiences or circumstances.

Updated 12/9/2022

A meeting limited to members of a specific religious denomination, political group, organization, or institution would not be in keeping with Traditions Three and Six, and would not be considered an S-Anon meeting.

It follows that “dual member” meetings, that is, meetings planned specifically to address the issues of members who qualify for both S-Anon and any other Twelve Step program and who attend both fellowships are also not considered S-Anon meetings (Tradition Five and Six).

### **Electronic S-Anon /S-Ateen Meetings**

While it is suggested that members attend face-to-face meetings if at all possible, members in areas with no local meetings may find electronic meetings helpful for their recovery. Some members who regularly attend face-to-face meetings use electronic meetings to complement their regular meetings, and members without a face-to-face meeting nearby may gain helpful information on starting an S-Anon Group. It is wise and prudent for members who participate in electronic meetings to consider the level of anonymity such meetings provide. It is the responsibility of participating members to take whatever measures they deem necessary to maintain the same anonymity in virtual meetings as they do in face-to-face meetings.

- **Phone Meetings** – S-Anon telephone group meetings are available at various times on most days of the week. A telephone number and pin number allow access to the conference-call meeting. The WSO can put members in touch with a contact person who can provide more information.

- **Online Platform Meetings** – Online video meetings are similar in format to telephone meetings, but allow members to have a more intimate forum in which they may see each other's faces. Note that Tradition Eleven prohibits showing of individual faces after identifying oneself as an S-Anon member at the *level of public media*. Online meetings and/or video meetings are *private* gatherings, so Tradition Eleven is being observed.

Please contact the WSO for the most current information regarding electronic meetings, as these contact names and numbers may change frequently.



## S-Anon/S-Ateen Special Events

S-Anon events held in cooperation with any outside entity are considered separate S-Anon events that take place simultaneously with the other entity's event. These events might be called marathons, mini-conventions, retreats (in the general sense of the word), or open speaker meetings. Typically the S-Anon portion of the event consists of S-Anon breakout meetings on particular topics, and/or meetings of all the participants where speakers address the group as a whole.

While S-Anon's Tradition Six instructs S-Anon to cooperate with Sexaholics Anonymous, S-Anon groups are not prohibited by this or any of our other Traditions from cooperating with other entities, including institutions, the professional community, or, by extension, other Twelve-Step groups, in furthering our primary purpose, i.e., to help families of sexaholics. It follows that the types of S-Anon events described below may sometimes be held in cooperation with any of a number of other entities. The motivation for our cooperation with any entity is to bring information on the S-Anon program of recovery to all who want it. S-Anon is not limited to cooperating exclusively with any particular Twelve Step group or outside entity.

If you are planning to host an S-Anon event and would like suggestions on how to proceed, the WSO can put you in touch with the International Conventions Committee or other members who have previously hosted such events.

It is important to note that the distinctions between "open" and "closed" meetings as explained above also apply to events. *If a meeting at an event is designated as being for "S-Anon," Tradition Three would apply, and the meeting would only be open to those who have registered for the S-Anon program or, in some cases, who recognize during the event that they qualify for S-Anon membership.* (Please check with the host committee about registering for S-Anon after the event has started.)

- **Local or regional gatherings** – These gatherings may be held either independently or in cooperation with SA or another entity. We encourage you not to schedule local or regional events that may conflict with the timing of the semi-annual international conventions described below. Convention dates are listed at [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org), and it is always a good idea to consult the S-Anon WSO calendar before scheduling a new event.

- **International Conventions** – Every six months S-Anon, traditionally in cooperation with SA, holds an international convention that starts on Friday afternoon and ends around noon on Sunday. The location is different for each gathering. S-Anon and S-Ateen members from the United States, Canada and all over the world attend to share their experience, strength and hope. These conventions are a wonderful opportunity to experience the strength and unity of S-Anon as an international fellowship. Conventions are open only to those affected by sexaholism and who have registered for S-Anon and/or S-Ateen.

During conventions, members make a special effort to help newcomers (those who have been in the program less than three months) feel welcome. There are always newcomers at conventions. Some may be attending their first S-Anon meetings the weekend of the convention. The convention agenda may list meetings considered especially helpful for newcomers and one-on-one sessions where temporary sponsors are available to talk to or answer questions. Other types of meetings held during the convention usually include:

- “Closed” S-Anon breakout meetings focusing on various topics (open only to those who have registered as S-Anon or S-Ateen members.)
- “Open” meetings where attendees from cooperating fellowships who have not registered as S-Anon members may attend.
- Panels consisting of members who share their experience, strength and hope on a planned recovery topic.
- Open joint speaker event where experienced S-Anon, S-Ateen and/or SA members share their recovery with the group.
- “Closed” S-Ateen breakout meetings for teenagers only (ages 12-19) who have been affected by sexaholism.

### **Professional Speakers at S-Anon/S-Ateen Meetings/Events**

S-Anon recovery events are one form of expression of our community’s Step 12 work, therefore, it is not recommended to invite an outside speaker, that is, a speaker who is not an S-Anon member, to participate in an S-Anon/S-Ateen event for the following reasons:

- While it may seem helpful to invite a speaker with professional expertise for a recovery event, Tradition 8 reminds us that we should keep our twelfth step work forever non-professional. Inviting an outside speaker implies there is someone who is more qualified than S-Anon members to speak about the effects of sexaholism. Any talk given by any professional would not be about or from the S-Anon point of view.
- The ideas expressed by a professional speaker may divert us from our primary spiritual aim and dilute the S-Anon/S-Ateen message of hope and recovery from the effects of another person’s sexual behavior. Our common welfare and unity would be affected if an outside speaker creates confusion or controversy.
- Working the S-Anon Program says on page 33, under Tradition Six,...”If we mentioned names of therapists, treatment centers, or self help books in our meetings or advertised them in S-Anon publications, we would seem to be endorsing them and associating the S-Anon name with them...” The same could be true of inviting outside speakers to participate in S-Anon events. The outside speaker may bring along promotional products, their own agenda, philosophy, etc which may imply endorsement and association. The S-Anon/S-Ateen WSO maintains a list of members willing to speak at events. This list, called the Speaker Pool, can be accessed by calling or emailing the WSO at [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org). If a group does decide to invite an outside or professional speaker to participate at an S-Anon/S-Ateen event, several guidelines should be carefully considered:
  - The person should be knowledgeable about S-Anon and S-Ateen.
  - The event or meeting would be considered an Open event or meeting, not a closed S-Anon event. Therefore, open to the public, open to anyone who wishes to attend, including those who do not qualify for S-Anon.
  - It is suggested that outside speakers be made aware of our Sixth Tradition in advance, “S-Anon/S-Ateen is not affiliated with any sect, denomination, political entity, organization or institution.” This would be the responsibility of the S-Anon event committee.

- It is suggested that a disclaimer be included in some form, such as published on the event flyer, within the event announcements, and/or repeated before the speaker begins. Suggested wording is as follows: “The opinions expressed here are those of the individual only, and do not reflect the message of recovery in S-Anon or S-Ateen.”

### **Regarding the use of the S-Anon/S-Ateen name.**

The S-Anon/S-Ateen name and logo are trademarked. The S-Anon WSO can grant permission to use the S-Anon/S-Ateen name, but the logo can only be used by the S-Anon WSO. The S-Anon/S-Ateen name cannot be used to identify or publicize retreats, marathons, meetings, professional speakers or activities sponsored by others, including any other 12 step group. This applies when most or even all of the participants are members of S-Anon/S-Ateen. In order to avoid any appearance of S-Anon/S-Ateen affiliation, it is important to keep promotion of such events outside of S-Anon/S-Ateen meetings and meeting locations, websites, email distribution lists, Inter group communications, social media blasts, announcements, flyers, etc. S-Anon/S-Ateen may cooperate with SA and other Twelve-Step fellowships as long as S-Anon/S-Ateen plans its own program and holds its own meetings.

Updated January 2020

**Traditions Considerations when Cooperating with Other Entities.** The Traditions considerations listed below can guide S-Anon planning committees when we are cooperating with an outside entity to carry the S-Anon message.

- **Tradition One:** The S-Anon portion of the event is entirely managed by S-Anon alone. As practiced in all S-Anon meetings, only S-Anon CAL and Service Literature is used, and the S-Anon meeting format, anonymity, and all S-Anon principles and guidelines are observed. Even in “open” S-Anon sessions at events, it is still an S-Anon meeting.
- **Traditions One, Two and Four:** To promote the unity of the local group(s), the decision to cooperate with another entity in this manner is best reached by substantial unanimity among the groups involved. Before the final decision is made to cooperate with another entity, S-Anon groups in the local area are consulted. S-Anon cooperation with any local entity, when conducted in accordance with S-Anon Traditions, does not affect “...S-Anon as a whole.”
- **Tradition Three:** S-Anon is a spiritual program, open to anyone who qualifies. The event itself, and/or the S-Anon portion of the event, must be open to all who have registered for the event as S-Anon members or who recognize during the event that they qualify for S-Anon. (Please check with the host committee about registering for S-Anon after the event has started.)
- **Tradition Five:** If S-Anon Traditions and Principles cannot be observed in the context of full participation in an event, it is suggested we not participate, but rather consider making S-Anon literature and/or the local or WSO contact phone number or website address available.
- **Tradition Six:** When considering S-Anon participation in an event, S-Anon groups can cooperate with other entities, including institutions, the professional community, or by extension, other Twelve Step groups,

in furthering our primary purpose, i.e., to help families of sexaholics.

- **Tradition Seven:** No S-Anon funds are used to support another entity, nor does S-Anon accept financial support from another entity. Separate Seventh Tradition collections are held, so that the S-Anon Seventh Tradition collection can be directed specifically to those who identify themselves as S-Anon members. It is important to hold a Tradition Seven collection at any event with S-Anon/S-Ateen participation to help support the local S-Anon community and the S-Anon WSO.

- **Tradition Eleven:** The fellowship of S-Anon is not meant to be anonymous. The reason S-Anon exists is to help the families of sexaholics.

Last Updated December 2017

## Meeting Format and Conference Approved Readings

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Here we discuss two elements involved in conducting our meetings. One is the Meeting Format, which suggests an orderly way to proceed through the different sections of an S-Anon meeting. The second element is the Conference Approved Readings we use during the meeting that explain the S-Anon approach to recovery.

A clear distinction must be made between these two elements, described below in more detail. In the first instance, as stated in our Fourth Tradition, groups may exercise their autonomy and choose to customize the Meeting Format, including the Meeting Guidelines section, to better serve their needs. Making changes to the Conference Approved Readings, however, presents an interpretation of how the program works that may be contrary to the collective experience of S-Anon members, even though this may not be the intention of those creating the substitutions. We have found that at any stage of recovery, some suggested ideas or principles may not resonate with us as individuals, but most of us come to understand and respect that other members have found them to be useful, and in time we may even come to understand the concept in a new way.

### Why We Suggest a Meeting Format

The Meeting Format contained in Part 4 is Conference Approved, which means that it has been developed and revised according to the experiences of members of S-Anon groups worldwide. We suggest that you try it and then adapt it, if desired, to suit the needs of your group.

A format is suggested because most groups find a general outline to be helpful. The meeting format outlines a step-by-step process for conducting an S-Anon meeting. An outline is especially helpful if the group includes members who have not previously attended S-Anon meetings or who are new to leading meetings.

Although it may seem repetitive or time-consuming to hear the same readings in the same order at every meeting before the individual sharing begins, it can be helpful for a number of reasons. One reason is that it gives information to newcomers. Another reason is that no matter how many times we may have heard a

particular piece read aloud, the next time we hear it may be the moment our growth in the program allows us to understand it in a new and helpful way. The readings also create a buffer between the outside world and the meeting, gently turning our thoughts from everyday concerns to our spiritual growth and recovery.

### **Customizing the Meeting Format**

Groups may exercise their autonomy and customize the format, as decided by group conscience, to better serve the needs of the individual group. However, Conference Approved Readings should not be altered in any way, nor should outside literature be incorporated into the format. Please try the Meeting Format as presented and then adapt it, as determined by group conscience, to suit the needs of the group. For example:

- When the Seventh Tradition basket is passed, some groups suggest a dollar amount to make members aware of the “per member” cost of supporting the group.
- For the benefit of newcomers and those looking for a sponsor, some groups have the meeting leader ask members who are willing to be sponsors to identify themselves by raising their hands. This could be done either during the Announcements section of the meeting or toward the end, before the Closing Reminder.
- In some larger groups, a sentence is added to the Closing Reminder to the effect that, “if you didn’t get a chance to share during the meeting, please find someone after the meeting with whom you may share.”
- Some groups make minor changes in timing, such as when (or if) the meeting leader qualifies, when introductions by first name are made, or when the Seventh Tradition basket is passed.
- Some groups vote to use a timer during the sharing portion of the meeting so everyone in attendance has a chance to share.

We have also found that individual groups often develop, by group conscience, additional suggestions to be added to the Meeting Guidelines section of the format and read at each meeting before sharing begins. These additions are usually considered by the members to be important to group unity and contribute to a feeling of safety in meetings, generally after one or more members of a group have acted or shared in ways that make others uncomfortable. There is a suggested meeting guideline on page 117 of the Working the S-Anon Program book. “Guidelines provide information to newcomers and serve as a reminder to all group members so that our meetings stay focused on recovery and provide a safe place to share feelings without having to explain or justify them. While all groups may not use these exact words, it is important that the guidelines you do use are supported by a group conscience of the members, and that a substantial majority of group members are committed to upholding them.” Here are some suggestions for additional Meeting Guidelines:

- Request that sharing focus on ourselves—not mentioning other group members by name or responding directly to a previous member’s share
- Request that intimate details be reserved for sharing with a sponsor or program friend outside the meeting
- Request all language be respectful
- Reminder to turn off cell phones and other electronic devices or place them on silent mode during the meeting. Request no texting during the meeting

- Request to step outside the meeting room if a page or call must be answered
- Request to enter the room quietly if arriving late

When a group is considering adding an additional “suggestion” to the Meeting Guidelines section, it can be helpful for the group to discuss how the perceived needs of group members for unity and safety in meetings can be balanced against the Ninth Tradition caution that “S-Anon, as such, ought never be organized...” Too many “guidelines” can seem like “rules” to newcomers, and can overwhelm the message of the Third Tradition, i.e., “The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of sexaholism in a relative or friend.” In addition, too much added structure, even when presented as “suggestions,” could have the effect of depriving an S-Anon meeting of flexibility and spontaneity.

### **Conference Approved Readings**

To keep S-Anon’s program of recovery in focus, it is suggested that only S-Anon/S-Ateen Conference Approved Literature (CAL) be displayed, distributed, sold, and used at S-Anon and S-Ateen meetings and events. CAL includes literature from S-Anon, AI-Anon, AA and SA. Service Literature produced by S-Anon may also be used distributed, displayed and sold.

We ask that you keep in mind that “adaptation” of the Meeting Format does not mean using readings from material that is not S-Anon Conference Approved Literature (Tradition One)., This policy dates from the time when S-Anon had very little literature of our own because our fellowship was so young. We now have much more S-Anon Conference Approved Literature that expresses the experience, strength, and hope that is uniquely ours as S-Anon members.

In addition, adaptation of the Meeting Format does not mean changing any words in the S-Anon or S-Ateen Conference Approved Readings. The readings are copyrighted and are to be used as written. The following readings are Conference Approved for use as written:

#### **S-ANON READINGS**

S-Anon Welcome

S-Anon Preamble

Twelve Traditions of S-Anon

S-Anon’s Twelve Concepts of Service

S-Anon Problem (short and long versions)

Keys to S-Anon Recovery (short and long)

Obstacles to Recovery in S-Anon

Gifts of the S-Anon Program

#### **S-ATEEN READINGS**

S-Ateen Welcome

S-Ateen Preamble to the Twelve Steps

Twelve Steps to S-Ateen

Twelve Traditions of S-Ateen

S-Ateen Problem

Experience has shown us several reasons for using only Conference Approved Literature and Service Literature during meetings:

- It provides a common base and speaks directly to our recovery from the effects of sexaholism, based upon the experiences of other S-Anon and S-Ateen members (Tradition Five)
- It focuses on the solution rather than the problem and explains the Twelve-Step approach to recovery
- It reflects an informed group conscience
- It helps us to avoid even the appearance of endorsing, directly or indirectly, any theory of sexual addiction or co-addiction, or particular therapeutic approach to recovery (Tradition Six)
- Service Literature reflects the S-Anon/S-Ateen service structure and the shared experiences of S-Anon and S-Ateen members

A full list of available S-Anon Conference Approved Literature and Service Literature can be found at [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org).

Last Updated December 2017

## Meeting Topics

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While members are free to share whatever they need to, experience shows that we promote the greatest good for the greatest number if we share on the topic so that all may benefit from the meeting. We allow members who may be in pain to share with the group regardless of the topic. Generally speaking, however, detailed discussion of problems and issues usually takes place with sponsors or in personal conversations between individuals before and after the meeting, and on the phone between meetings. During the meetings we suggest sharing in generalities instead of specifics. We do this in order to maintain a safe environment for all our members.

Some groups try to strike a balance by devoting one portion of the meeting to discussion of a topic or study of one of the Twelve Steps or Twelve Traditions and another portion to the sharing. Most groups find that sharing is most helpful when it centers on the experience, strength, and hope of the S-Anon program and the elements that have proven most useful to the members—focusing on the solution rather than the problem.

Regardless of meeting type, we concentrate on listening rather than responding. We recognize that each person must feel safe to share their feelings without having to explain or justify them. We avoid crosstalk by sharing with the group as a whole, rather than addressing comments or questions to individual members. We also refrain from gossip and criticism of one another or the sexaholic. We limit our sharing so everyone present has a chance to share. Some types of meetings that S-Anon members have found helpful are discussed below.

### Step Study

Most groups begin the Step Study portion of the meeting by reading Conference Approved material pertaining to a particular Step. A group member then gives a short “lead,” sharing their experience with working the Step or telling how they have applied the principles embodied in the Step to further their

recovery. The meeting is then opened for sharing from other group members.

### **Tradition or Concept of Study**

Some groups have found it very helpful to plan meetings where Conference Approved Literature from S-Anon, Al-Anon, or AA pertaining to the Twelve Traditions or Twelve Concepts is studied in the same way as the Twelve Steps. That is, material pertaining to a particular Tradition or Concept is read, a group member gives a short lead, and the meeting is opened for sharing from other members.

### **Topic Meetings**

Meeting topics can be found in S-Anon Conference Approved Literature and S-Anews articles. The leader of the meeting may choose a topic in advance or ask if one of the group members would like to suggest a topic. The leader or group member may share on the subject chosen and then open the meeting for sharing by the other members. A “writing meeting” format may be used, during which a member leads with a topic, the members spend a specified amount of time writing on the topic, and then members who wish to, may share what they have written with the group. Writing meetings allow members to practice the vital recovery tool of “writing,” and the material created can be submitted to the WSO for use in S-Anon literature under development.

### **Speaker Meeting**

A member of the group or an S-Anon member from another group might be asked to tell the story of their S-Anon recovery or to speak on a particular topic for a certain length of time. The meeting can then be opened for sharing.

### **Newcomer’s Meeting (Welcome Meeting)**

We welcome all those who have been affected by another’s person’s sexual behavior. Groups that attract and retain newcomers tend to thrive, as we need newcomers for the growth of S-Anon. Remembering what it was like for us at our very first meeting reminds us of the importance of welcoming newcomers. One of the best ways to welcome a new person is to introduce yourself.

Newcomers are often welcomed at a special meeting, i.e., either one meeting or a series of three to six meetings held prior to, or during the regular meeting. One or more experienced S-Anon members lead the Welcome Meetings. They explain sexaholism as a disease, introduce the Twelve Steps and Traditions, and acquaint newcomers with our literature and how our meetings are conducted. Other groups have adopted an abridged version of Newcomer Meetings. If a newcomer arrives at a meeting without any prior S-Anon experience, an experienced member may meet privately with the newcomer for a short time, making sure that the person is seeking help for themselves (Tradition Three) and explaining some of the principles of the S-Anon program. Newcomer meetings also offer a forum for newcomers to ask questions about S-Anon and for experienced members to more fully explain concepts such as anonymity and share some of their own story to help the newcomer feel more at home. Newcomers can be given group phone lists or phone numbers of individuals willing to receive calls. If the group finances allow it, some groups also give each newcomer a copy of the S-Anon Checklist and/or a Newcomer’s Booklet.



## First-Step Meeting

After sharing what is called a “First-Step Inventory” with a Sponsor, members may choose to share their First Step with other members of their home group. A First Step is not the same as a Fourth Step Inventory or a Fifth Step with a sponsor or spiritual advisor; it is not about our character defects. In a First Step meeting we share at a deep level the events of our lives related to sexaholism that created our powerlessness and unmanageability and that caused us anger, shame, and pain. Then we commit ourselves to ending the self-destructive behavior that this inventory has revealed. The usual guidelines for sharing should be observed at a First Step meeting; that is, if the person sharing their First Step wishes to receive feedback, it should be shared after the meeting, one to one.

## Group Conscience/Business Meeting

Groups usually hold regularly scheduled meetings to discuss matters that pertain to how the group operates. The meetings are typically short and are usually held either before or after the regular meeting. All members of the group are welcome and encouraged to attend and express their opinions and feelings. The section entitled “Group Decision-Making” includes guidelines for Group Conscience Business Meetings, and there is Service Literature titled “S-Anon Business Meetings and the Group Conscience Process” #L20 available for purchase and download from [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org).

Last Updated December 2017

# Group Finances

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In keeping with Tradition Seven, a group’s own membership is the source of its funds. Group expenses typically include rent, the cost of maintaining a supply of S-Anon Conference Approved Literature, and local Twelfth-Step outreach, such as the cost of a local S-Anon P.O. box and phone number or mailings of information to professionals in the area. (Some of these expenses, such as outreach or an Info Line may be handled by the local Intergroup, if there is one). It is important to remember that S-Anon has no dues or fees, so members may choose not to contribute. Group funds are not used for personal gifts or loans to members or for donations to any outside agency, activity, or program (Tradition Six).

The Seventh Tradition also implies that funds to support S-Anon-Twelfth Step work at the Intergroup (if there is one), Regional, and International levels are provided by the monthly donations of individual groups and the sale of S-Anon and S-Ateen Literature. Groups decide by group conscience how to distribute funds that remain after the group’s expenses have been paid. Some groups keep a prudent reserve, enough funds to cover the group’s expenses for a three month period. Once the prudent reserve is met, groups then send a portion of their Seventh Tradition collection to support the local Intergroup, (if there is one) and to the WSO to support our Fellowship’s expenses. Fellowship expenses may include rental of the WSO office, paid staff salaries, outreach, and production, printing, storage and mailing of literature. One typical formula suggests that 60 percent of the total Seventh Tradition be used for the group’s operating expenses, 30 percent be sent to the WSO, and 10 percent be allocated to support the local Intergroup, if there is one.

If your state or province has an Area Delegate, your group will want to put aside some money to help

support the Delegate in attending the annual World Service Conference (WSC), held every July. That is the time when the Delegate carries the voice of all the groups in their state or province to an annual meeting. Please reach out to your Delegate for more information. If you do not have a Delegate, or if you are not sure that your state or province has one, you can call the World Service Office (WSO) to find out more information. You can also download information about the Delegate position at [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org).

Tri-annually, the WSO sends out a Special Appeal letter requesting additional donations outside normal contributions made by individuals and groups. Special Appeal collections ensure that funds are available for the WSO to carry out its vital work. Your generous support is always greatly appreciated.

Please note that S-Anon is incorporated as a 501©(3) nonprofit organization and has been granted tax-exempt status; however, the S-Anon World Service Office Tax ID# is for WSO use only. Our corporate non-profit charter prohibits the use of this number by individual S-Anon groups or Information Services Groups (Intergroups). Appendix B contains an S-Anon Group Banking Information Summary.

Last Updated February 2018

## Ideas for Group Growth

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At first the group may grow slowly. One reason for slow growth may have to do with the shame and denial surrounding the disease from which we are recovering. Perhaps it is not surprising that some people come to one or several meetings but then do not return. When this happens, the reasons may have more to do with the readiness of a person to deal with very difficult issues than with the welcome they receive at meetings. Some people are grateful for an introduction to the S-Anon program and for the literature, but they are not yet ready to attend meetings or work our program of recovery.

Growing slowly has a number of benefits. Experience has shown that we cannot help newcomers before we ourselves have been helped. It may be wise to wait until the group has at least several members who are well grounded in the program before engaging in a Twelfth-Step outreach effort as suggested below. If newcomers outnumber members who are living in more sanity and serenity, it may be difficult for a meeting to stay healthy. Newcomers will arrive when they are ready and when the group is strong enough to receive them with sufficient experience and sponsor availability. Each individual's recovery strengthens the fellowship and naturally leads to demonstrating the principle of "attraction not promotion." Given time, the group will grow. Experience has shown that it is typical and normal for a group's growth to ebb and flow over time.

S-Anon groups have found the following suggestions might help the process:

**Encourage newcomers to attend at least six meetings** before they decide whether S-Anon is for them. Some groups sponsor Newcomer's Meetings, as described above. Some groups assign a temporary sponsor for each newcomer or ask for a volunteer to call newcomers during the week after their first meeting. The best way to encourage newcomers, however, is to let them know through our sharing that we all started from the same place and that in S-Anon we have found hope and recovery.

**Keep a supply of S-Anon Conference Approved Literature (CAL) on hand** as group finances allow for newcomers to purchase *if they wish*. Our literature can be a crucial tool for carrying the message to those in need of S-Anon's help. Even if a newcomer does not return to meetings right away, if they have purchased CAL, they are carrying with them the written experience, strength, and hope of hundreds of members and a clear statement of our program of recovery. CAL has been written, reviewed, and edited by members of S-Anon, and approved by a fellowshipwide sample of members; thus it is written about and from the S-Anon point of view (Tradition One). Using CAL in meetings helps to keep the meeting focused on recovery, and it can be an important source of help when another member cannot be contacted or when people cannot attend meetings regularly. Three times a year, the WSO produces a newsletter that provides updates, and helps us see that our fellowship is bigger than our individual group or region and keeps us informed about activities of the WSO and the Board of Trustees. There is also a blog on [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org) that might be helpful.

**Plan meetings in advance.** It is not always possible to plan ahead, but before the close of each meeting, it works well to arrange for the leader and/or the topic of the next meeting. Some groups use a sign-up sheet or group calendar for members to volunteer in advance. Other groups have a rotating Program Chairperson, who either takes the responsibility for leading the meeting every week for a certain agreed-upon period of time or arranges for another member to do so. Planning tends to reduce anxiety (especially for newcomers) and avoids the waste of time involved in trying to decide at the last minute who will lead the meeting. Sometimes plans fall through, but having a plan for the meeting promotes the safe and sane atmosphere we need for recovery. As the helpful AI-Anon writing "Just for Today" says, "Just for today I will have a plan; I may not follow it exactly, but I will have it. I will save myself from two pests: hurry and indecision."

**Focus on the solution**, not the problem. Concentrating on S-Anon literature can help you emphasize "experience, strength, and hope." Reporting every happening of the week, the sexaholic's acting out, or the negative mood of the moment does not give newcomers hope for their own recovery. Profanity, obscenities, and explicit sexual details instantly detract from a spiritual atmosphere. When a meeting is healthy, it can be the first place many new members experience "conscious contact with God." See the section below entitled "Dilution of the S-Anon Program" for additional suggestions on how to keep the meeting healthy and on track.

**Rotate service positions.** The group may consider frequent rotation of service positions and the assignment of service tasks like helping with the set up and clean up of the meeting area. The more service jobs there are, the more people participate and thus feel they are an integral and important part of the group (Tradition Nine). (The section in Part 2 entitled "Local Group Service Structure" includes additional information about service positions that might be created in a local S-Anon group.)

**Conduct Twelfth-Step work in the community.** [1] Each group might want to consider additional ways to attract newcomers. Twelfth-Step work is vital to our program and would make a good meeting topic from time to time. Some ideas and resources can be found at [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org) or by calling the WSO.

Some groups, Intergroups, and Regional Trustees maintain a telephone contact number, hotline number and/or a website for people seeking help or information on S-Anon. When an inquirer calls the telephone or hotline number, they hear a recorded message about S-Anon, and they are invited to leave a message with a telephone number where they can be contacted. Group members volunteer to take turns picking up the

messages received, returning calls, and talking to inquirers about the S-Anon program. If you have questions about how to set up a telephone contact number or hotline number, you can contact the WSO to be put in touch with groups who have used this tool in their community. A website contact page works in a similar manner. Someone leaves a message with contact information, or asks questions, and volunteers in the group receive the message and respond.

Another way to make information about your group meetings available to those who might be interested is for one or more members of your group to volunteer with the WSO to serve as a Local Contact person. To do this, you would complete the “Local Contact Person” form located in Appendix C and send it in to the WSO. Then, if the WSO receives a call from someone in or close to your local area who is either looking for a meeting or just looking for someone to talk with, information that you have indicated you are willing to share would be given to that inquirer. We ask you to complete a form because we need your written permission to give information to inquirers. Please note that the WSO uses confidential information only for official WSO and Board of Trustees business.

At first, members who are relatively new themselves may feel they do not know how to talk to an inquirer about the S-Anon program. The most important thing is to let the inquirer know that we understand how it feels to be reaching out for help because we have been there. Some additional suggestions for speaking with inquirers can be found in *Working the S-Anon Program*, p. 101-102.

Many groups do not publish (outside of the recovery community) the times or locations of the meetings to avoid attracting those who may simply be curious about the nature of the disease from which we are recovering. Groups who do publish announcements of the existence of their groups usually do so in conjunction with a plan to meet with newcomers (see Newcomers Welcome Meetings) before they attend a regular meeting. S-Anon Family Groups has a long history of cooperating with professionals who work with those affected by the sexual behavior of family members or friends. Local therapists, counselors, social workers, attorneys, institutions, doctors, clergy, employee assistance and human resources are just a few of the professions that can benefit from having basic information about S-Anon and S-Ateen. Letting them know that there is an S-Anon meeting in the area and providing them with the local contact telephone number may help them assist those who are affected. The pamphlet “Information for Professionals about S-Anon and S-Ateen Family Groups” (L-9) is available as a free download at [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org). There are also letters to professionals, and a suggested outreach kit.

**Conduct a group inventory.** Just as taking our own Fourth Step inventory enhances our individual recovery, taking a periodic group inventory can help to enhance the effectiveness of the group, keeping it healthy and invigorated. Members can use the inventory to discuss new service opportunities and address major or minor concerns related to the principles of S-Anon before the group's unity is disrupted. A pamphlet is available from AI-Anon, “Taking a Group Inventory,” that may be helpful if your group wishes to gather additional information. Groups who have used the AI-Anon Group Inventory report that it works well when there is total anonymity in taking the inventory to allow for more open, honest comments by group members.

1 Twelfth Step work is any individual or group effort to reach out to others who need the S-Anon program or help them to grow in their recovery. This includes everything from setting up chairs for meetings, to acting as a sponsor, to volunteering to respond to messages left on an S-Anon voicemail box, to serving as a

Regional Trustee.

Last Updated February 2018

## Dilution of the S-Anon Program

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*“...S-Anon is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization, or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to recover from the effects upon us of another person’s sexaholism, and to help families and friends of sexaholics.”*

Preamble to the **S-Anon Twelve Steps**

We are grateful for the growing awareness of sexaholism and its effects on families and friends, and many avenues of help are available outside the S-Anon program. We have found, however, that if we allow our meetings to drift into discussion of treatment theories, religious doctrine, other recovery literature, other Twelve Step programs, etc., no matter how helpful they may have been to individual members, our purpose becomes diluted (Tradition Six) and our unity is damaged (Tradition One). S-Anon is focused solely upon the Twelve Steps of S-Anon as a path toward recovery (Tradition Five), and when our meetings do not reflect that focus, newcomers and others may get a distorted picture of our objectives. We participate freely in many other activities as individuals and, outside of meetings, members freely share with each other helpful experiences that lie outside the realm of the S-Anon program. The guidelines below simply help to assure that our meetings present a strong and clear picture of S-Anon’s purpose and function.

### **Our Common Welfare**

S-Anon meetings are the one place where we can be assured that the focus is solely on our common goal of recovering from the effects of sexaholism. In order for this to be the case, it is important that we focus on what we have in common – the ways in which sexaholism has affected us and the solutions that we learn through our literature, our meetings, and by using our program of recovery. Particularly for the newcomer, but true for many of us, it is important to feel that we “belong” in S-Anon. For example, discussion of specific religions may give the impression that S-Anon only provides recovery for people of that faith tradition. Discussion of occupations may lead some members to believe or think that their level of education and/or career choice is not sufficient to qualify them for S-Anon. Discussion or mention of another Twelve Step fellowship, particularly a program to which the spouse or partner of an S-Anon member belongs, may give the impression that S-Anon is more suitable for those whose spouse or partner belongs to that other fellowship rather than being inclusive, welcoming, and relevant to a family member or friend of any sexaholic/sex addict/sexually-addicted person (Tradition Three). Our recovery is strengthened and our groups grow when we focus on the S-Anon solution and all that we have in common while leaving our other identities outside the meeting.

We speak about and from the S-Anon point of view for some very good reasons. Terms used in outside professions, such as “codependent,” “co-sexaholic,” etc. can be distracting from our unity because the precise meaning of these terms is uncertain and they may perpetuate the tendency to focus on others rather than ourselves. Our recovery in S-Anon is strengthened when we identify ourselves as S-Anon members and focus upon the similarities in our experiences. We use only Conference Approved Literature during our meetings for the same reasons, including:

- It speaks directly to our recovery from the effects of sexaholism, based upon the experiences of other S-Anon members (Tradition Five).
- It focuses on the solution rather than the problem and explains the S-Anon Twelve-Step approach to recovery.
- It helps us avoid even the appearance of endorsing directly, or indirectly, any theory of sexual addiction or co-addiction, or particular therapeutic approach to recovery (Tradition Six).

### **Religions/Philosophies**

S-Anon is a spiritual program. During S-Anon meetings we avoid mention or discussion of individuals or writings that are associated with particular religious traditions or denominations. Our meetings are open to all who have been deeply affected by sexaholism, whether or not they have any religious affiliation. We neither endorse nor oppose any other philosophies or spiritual programs. Therefore, the S-Anon name is not used to identify or publicize religious activities sponsored by others, such as “retreats” based in a specific religion, prayer groups, or meditation groups, even when most or even all of the participants are members of S-Anon. (This guideline does not apply to gatherings of S-Anons which may be labeled “retreats” in the general sense of the word, but which do not have a religious focus). Religious services and/or announcements of them are not appropriate as part of an S-Anon event.

### **Other Twelve Step Groups**

While all Twelve Step programs use the Twelve Steps, each program has a unique interpretation of how to apply them. S-Anon is a program solely for recovery from the effects upon us of another person's sexaholism (Tradition Three). For that reason, it is suggested that S-Anon members who are also members of other Twelve Step fellowships recognize that an S-Anon meeting is not the place to name another specific Twelve Step group or elaborate on other Twelve Step issues. Some groups ask those who are members of other Twelve Step programs not to break their anonymity in S-Anon meetings. In order to keep our focus clear and enhance the unity of the group, we speak about, and from the S-Anon point of view, telling how we have found help and hope by working the S-Anon program of recovery.

During our meetings we do not announce or discuss the activities of other Twelve Step programs. Similarly, S-Anon bulletin boards and newsletters should not be used for publicizing activities of other organizations or Twelve Step programs.

### **Therapy and Counseling**

We do not discuss specific professional therapies or counseling methods or mention names of therapists during our meetings so we may concentrate solely on the S-Anon principles of recovery. S-Anon encourages members to seek any professional therapy or counseling they find helpful; however, this policy helps us to avoid even the appearance of endorsing any particular therapeutic method, treatment program, or therapist, no matter how helpful they may have been to individual members. S-Anon is non-professional (Traditions Three and Eight); it is not a therapy group. It is a fellowship of individuals affected by sexaholism who gather together to support each other through the sharing of experience, strength, and hope.

### **Outside Literature and Other Media**

As mentioned previously, our meetings focus on the S-Anon approach to recovery. In the spirit of unity, during our meetings we avoid the mention of specific titles or authors, or discussion of any publications other than S-Anon Conference Approved Literature. This recommendation includes mention or discussion of specific television shows, movies, Web sites, books, magazines, articles, etc. Experience has shown us

several other reasons for using only Conference Approved Literature during meetings.

Many outside publications on sexaholism, co-addiction, religion, and philosophy appeal to S-Anon members as individuals. Members are encouraged to read whatever they find helpful, but S-Anon cannot assume the responsibility for evaluating or recommending reading matter other than S-Anon Conference Approved Literature. Understanding of Traditions One and Four leads us to avoid the promotion or sale of outside literature at our meetings.

Last Updated March 2018

## Group Decision Making

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### Group Decision Making

Most groups hold business meetings regularly because S-Anon group unity is enhanced when all, or most, members of the group participate in the decision-making process. Groups that hold business meetings regularly tend to remain healthy and vital because members feel a part of the process, rather than “apart from.” As Concept Four points out, “Participation is the key to harmony.” These groups also are observing the spirit of 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.” Thus, members are reminded to include a Higher Power as they discuss and vote on issues.

The terms “business meeting” and “group conscience” are sometimes used in-terchangeably because they are both forums for discussion and decision-making, but they have somewhat different meanings. See the “S-Anon Business Meetings and the Group Conscience Process” publication, number L-20, available as a free download from [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org), for a more detailed explanation of these processes.

### What is a Group Conscience?

Simply put, a group conscience asks for an expression of opinion by members of the group, but there is more to it than just a “majority rule” voting procedure. Together, the members seek to be guided by a Higher Power in reaching a decision that will be good for the group as a whole, rather than for any one member or small group of members. As stated in Tradition Two, “Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern,” and do not exercise personal power or authority. The Second Tradition of S-Anon indicates that important decisions within the group are made by means of what is called a “group conscience.”

When group members decide that a group conscience should be taken, we do our best to assure that the following criteria are met:

- All group members are well informed on the issue.
- All sides of the issue have been heard and thoroughly discussed.
- All members have had advance notice of the date for the upcoming group conscience meeting.
- A substantial majority supports the decision.

When these conditions have been met, we feel confident that a loving God has been expressed in our process. We guard against unintentional domination by any individual or small group by making sure that the group conscience process is carried out in a thoughtful and prayerful manner.

### **Guidelines for Group Conscience / Business Meetings**

Group Conscience meetings usually take place before or after a regular meeting. They are held on a regular basis to allow the group to make decisions about a variety of matters that do not specifically relate to personal recovery. Subjects that may come up for discussion include, but are not limited to: selection of group officers, service term limits, distribution of Seventh Tradition donations in excess of group financial needs, Twelfth-Step work in the area, local Information Service Group (Intergroup) activities, how the group wants to welcome newcomers, planning for a local event, and discussion of World Service Conference reports.

All members of an S-Anon group are invited to participate in these meetings, regardless of how long they have been in the program. If there is a very important issue to be decided, groups are encouraged to set a date in advance for the group conscience to be held, and make periodic announcements prior to that date.

When the issue to be decided seems to elicit strong feelings both pro and con, it may be helpful at the outset of the meeting to present the issue and allow each member to express his or her views without debate, comment, or crosstalk. A time limit can be set for the sharing so that the meeting can end at the specified time. Once everyone has had a chance to share, a vote or further discussion will be appropriate. A group may choose to use some form of Robert's Rules to structure the discussion. A suggested format for discussion of such an issue is shown below:

- Begin with the Serenity Prayer.
- State the issue in the form of a motion.
- Ask for someone to "second" the motion.
- Ask each member to share an opinion.
- Conduct further discussion, if any. Vote or decide to postpone the vote to the next meeting. If a vote is taken and it is not unanimous, allow for the minority opinion to be heard, possibly re- vote.
- Close with the Serenity Prayer.

The Group Conscience Meeting may be led by the Group Secretary or any group member who is willing to chair it. The Secretary may take minutes, which may be kept in a notebook that is available each week for reference. It is important to remember that while order and structure are good, we most benefit from an open and safe environment where healthy discussion of sometimes emotional issues leads the group to resolution.

### **HELP IN SOLVING GROUP PROBLEMS**

Most group problems can be solved by the methods suggested above – holding a group conscience meeting, or series of meetings, where the issue is examined in the light of the S-Anon Twelve Traditions and discussed thoroughly, with all members freely expressing their opinions. We can observe a Higher Power in action when we bring prayerful attention to the table, and in most cases, the solution becomes clear. Over



time, if this solution appears no longer viable, another group conscience meeting may be held, to revisit the issue.

Your Delegate, Regional Trustee, the WSO, or a representative from your local Intergroup might be able to offer experience, strength, and hope if you desire further information about Group Conscience meetings. They may offer a perspective that has not yet been considered. These individuals can be contacted through the local Intergroup, or the WSO at [sanon@sanon.org](mailto:sanon@sanon.org).

Each group is autonomous, and is empowered to solve their problems as a Higher Power may direct through the group conscience (Traditions Four and Two).

Last Updated April 2018

## Help Solving Group Problems

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If questions or problems arise that cannot be resolved at the group level by using this *Service Manual*, a copy of *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Al-Anon*, or AA's *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, the group is encouraged to take one or more of the following actions:

- Review the Board of Trustee responses to questions posed by other groups and individuals. (See Appendix D.) Many groups experience similar challenges, and the answers other groups have received from members of the Board of Trustees may help to resolve the issue.
- Ask for the help of other S-Anon members in your local area.
- Ask the group's Information Services Group/Intergroup Representative to raise the issue at an ISG meeting to get feedback from that source.
- Discuss it with your Area Delegate or BOT Regional Trustee.

The names of Area Delegates and Regional Trustees currently serving on the Board of Trustees are available from the WSO. Correspondence dealing with group problems is received by the WSO and forwarded to the appropriate Area Delegate or Regional Trustee, who offers suggestions for possible solutions based on S-Anon's Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts.

## Part 2: S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Structure/ Relationships of S-Anon Service Arms

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*Tradition 9. Our groups, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.*

In order to accomplish our goal as a fellowship, carrying the message to as many people as we can who need the help of S-Anon, we need structures within which we can function to achieve that goal. The entire S-Anon service structure exists for the sole purpose of helping the groups to help people (Traditions Five and Nine). The S-Anon service structure provides a framework for members to volunteer their time and skills in the service of the S-Anon fellowship as a whole. Although separate, the Traditional and Legal service structures operate simultaneously and are designed to complement each other. Each service structure has unique service positions, and the S-Anon fellowship is best served when these two bodies work in harmony (Concept Seven).

Some might look at our Ninth Tradition and say to themselves, “Why do we need all this material that describes the service structure of S-Anon at every level—local, area, regional, and international?” At every level of service we strive to “Keep It Simple” and function with as little organization as possible. We must, however, keep in mind that as soon as we come together to form an S-Anon Family Group, we accept the responsibility for adhering to the Twelve Traditions of S-Anon. In order to accomplish our goal as a fellowship, i.e., carrying the message to as many people as we can who need the help of S-Anon, we need a structure within which we can function to achieve that goal. The S-Anon service structure may seem unrelated to the more urgent concerns we discuss in our local groups. But soon we realize that “someone” must have created the literature we use. “Someone” must be making sure that the telephone is answered at the World Service Office. We may wonder, “Where does the money go that groups are asked to donate to support the World Service Office?” “Who makes sure that the Trustees are conducting the legal affairs of the fellowship in accordance with S-Anon’s Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service?”

The purpose of the material in this Service Manual is to provide some answers to questions like these, and to show that each member and each local group is a vital part of a worldwide fellowship (Concept Four).

The **Traditional** service structure follows the pattern that has worked for other Twelve-Step fellowships, placing decision-making authority in the hands of the Area Delegates who represent local groups, and other members of the World Service Conference (WSC) (Concept One). As depicted in the graphic below, Traditional authority in S-Anon flows from the individual groups toward the decision making that takes place at the WSC and is defined by the WSC Charter. This process assures each local group that its concerns and opinions are taken into consideration. The **Legal** service structure, defined in the Bylaws, consists of members of the Board of Trustees (BOT) Regional Trustees, the World Service Office Executive Director, the BOT Officers and the Chairs of the BOT Standing Committees (Concept Two). S-Anon is a legal entity, a 501c3 corporation, and as such is governed by U.S. and Tennessee state law. The BOT and WSO fulfill the legal and regulatory requirements. In summary, the graphic below shows both service structures as a whole.

[World Service Conference Service Structure](#)

Groups within each Area are entitled to be represented by an Area Delegate, and each region is entitled to be represented by a Regional Trustee. Areas (states or provinces) send one Area Delegate (AD) to the World Service Conference (WSC). There are presently 66 Areas: the 50 states (except California, which has 2 Areas – North and South), 13 Canadian provinces, the Phone Meetings, and Online Platform Meetings. The ultimate goal is to fill as many AD seats as possible so that the voice of the groups can be more clearly heard.

Some members have found that as soon as our recovery is on solid footing, and as our gratitude for the S-Anon fellowship increases, we want to give back some of what we have been given. We ask you to explore the possibility of using your skills and talents to serve the S-Anon fellowship beyond the group level. Members have found this service work has a very real potential to enhance your personal recovery. Ultimately, the S-Anon service structure begins and ends with you. You can be there for the next person, as someone was there for you. The willingness to serve is one of the most important qualifications, so please feel free to contact your Area Delegate or Regional Trustee through the World Service Office and join us! We welcome and need your participation.

NOTE: The S-Anon service structures, both Traditional and Legal, are works in progress. We are learning as we grow, and the need for change makes itself apparent on a regular basis. Even if you are not in a position to actively participate in a Traditional or Legal service position, a well-informed fellowship is better able to make decisions for the good of S-Anon as a whole. Understanding how our fellowship works is part of being well informed. Our hope is that we will update this Service Manual on an ongoing basis so that it accurately reflects the most current information. Please check with the WSO for the most up to date documents.

The Board of Trustees invites you to familiarize yourself with this Service Manual, the S-Anon service structure, and consider becoming actively involved, as your circumstances permit. We promise it will be an opportunity for growth and a very rewarding experience.

*Concept 4. Participation is the key to harmony.*

Last Updated September 2018

## **Relationships of S-Anon Service Arms**

In 2009 the Board of Trustees adopted a document titled the “Relationships of S-Anon Service Arms.” These are some statements quoted verbatim from the S-Anon World Service Conference Charter, the S-Anon Board of Trustees Bylaws, the S-Anon /S-Ateen Service Manual, and the AI-Anon/AI-Ateen Service Manual. These statements are particularly relevant to the relationships between four service arms – The World Service Conference (WSC), the World Service Office (WSO), the Board of Trustees (BOT), and BOT Standing Committees. This document is offered by the Board of Trustees (Appendix xx) to help clarify the relationships by compiling references from diverse documents, thereby making the material more available for your review.

Many members have some Twelve-Step experience outside of S-Anon, and it is particularly important to note the following. S-Anon’s service structure is modeled on that of AI-Anon, but our differing circumstances

showed us that their structure needed to be adapted for our unique needs. Therefore, Al-Anon and S-Anon have different service structures. The two major differences are:

- According to Al-Anon's Concept Eleven, the Al-Anon World Service Office, and thus, their [paid] Executive Director, plays a much more extensive operational role than is possible for the S-Anon [paid] Executive Director, given the size and financial resources of S-Anon.
- Al-Anon's standing committee chairpersons report to Al-Anon's Executive Director, and the Al-Anon WSO [paid] staff includes one staff person to assist the chairperson of each standing committee. S-Anon's standing committee chairpersons report to the S-Anon Board of Trustees. WSO staff may assist BOT Committee Chairpersons, but there is no dedicated S-Anon WSO staff for the Committees.

This leaves S-Anon's BOT to play a much more operational role than does Al-Anon's BOT. The S-Anon BOT not only oversees but also participates in committee activities. As we use Al-Anon literature regarding the Concepts to understand how the Concepts apply to S-Anon, we need to be aware that Al-Anon's policy statements do not always apply verbatim to S-Anon.

We frequently need to change the phrase "Al-Anon Executive Director" to "S-Anon BOT" or "S-Anon Executive Committee" in our readings.

In summary, in all references examined:

The S-Anon Board of Trustees (BOT) is ultimately responsible and approves all committee work and operating policies affecting the Legal S-Anon structure; all committees report to and are overseen by the BOT as a whole. Policy decisions affecting the S-Anon fellowship as a whole are brought to the annual World Service Conference (WSC), with the understanding that "... the Board shall reserve the right to decide which of its decisions may require referral to the Conference" (WSC Charter, Article X., Section E). Please see Part 3 for more information on the WSC process.

Work done by BOT committees is done independently, but final review and approval of the implementation of the committee work rests with the BOT as a whole.

### **Interaction of the Traditional and Legal Service Arms**

The Traditional (Area Delegates) and Legal Service Arms (BOT Members) of S-Anon cooperate throughout the year whenever necessary; a joint conference call may occur semi-annually in February. Both service structures officially interact at the annual World Service Conference (WSC) generally held on the Friday before the start of the July S-Anon International Convention. Members of the WSC include the Area Delegates, BOT Officers, Regional Trustees, Standing BOT Committee Chairs, and the Executive Director of the World Service Office. The purpose of the World Service Conference is to provide a forum where the issues and policies affecting all S-Anon and S-Ateen groups can be discussed and informed decisions can be made with all members of the fellowship having the potential to be represented.

Any individual member, group, or Intergroup is welcome to submit one or more motions through their Area Delegate or Regional Trustee for consideration and possible submission to the WSC. The decisions made

by the WSC are brought back to the fellowship through the same channels of communication. Motions can be submitted to the WSO anytime between August 1 and February 1. Delegates and other WSC members receive motions that will be on the agenda for consideration by the first week of May so that all registered S-Anon groups may be given the opportunity to provide feedback to their Area Delegate. Motions are also posted on the S-Anon website prior to the WSC. Presenting, discussing and voting on motions at the WSC ensures that S-Anon members have a voice regarding issues that may affect the fellowship.

Also as part of this interaction between the Traditional and Legal service arms at the WSC, the Delegates and the Trustees hear reports from the Area Delegate Assembly, the BOT Chair, the WSO Executive Director, and the BOT standing committee chairs. After reports are given, motions are presented, and discussion and voting on issues that may affect the S-Anon fellowship as a whole take place. Minutes of the current WSC and all previous WSCs are available on the S-Anon website. For more detailed information on the World Service Conference, please refer to Part 3 of this Manual.

Updated December 2020

## **Traditional S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Structure**

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In accordance with Concepts One and Two, the traditional S-Anon/S-Ateen service structure exists to assure each S-Anon or S-Ateen group that its concerns and opinions are taken into consideration and are represented in the group conscience of S-Anon as a whole. The information below describes the structure that facilitates that participation.

### **Brief History of the Traditional Service Structure**

Before 2001, the primary venue for members from our widely scattered groups to meet with each other to discuss items that affected our fellowship as a whole was the semi-annual International Conventions held in January and July. At every Convention, beginning in 1986, we held an S-Anon Business Meeting at which all S-Anon members in attendance were invited to discuss and make such decisions. For example, it was at these meetings that we first organized our literature creation and approval process, approved our first several pieces of Conference-Approved Literature, and decided how to change our structure as our fellowship grew large enough to support a more formal organization. By 2004, we implemented a World Service Conference (WSC) with Area representation, which is the current process through which the S-Anon groups exercise their ultimate authority and responsibility for S-Anon World Services.

## **Local Groups**

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The group is the basic unit where close personal interchange among members takes place. The entire S-Anon fellowship service structure exists for the sole purpose of helping the groups to help people (Traditions Five and Nine). We have found it is important for every member to participate in some way. Most of us find there is wonderful potential for growth when we welcome opportunities to be useful to the group. This may include accepting a group service position (such as Group Secretary), agreeing to a request to speak at a fellowship marathon or convention, undertaking minor tasks, or simply welcoming and giving comfort to

other members. While members may attend several different groups, it is common practice to designate one of the groups as your “home” group—the group in which you perform service and participate in S-Anon Fellowshipwide Group Conscience votes.

### **Local Group Service Structure**

We have found that it works best when group organization is kept simple (Tradition Nine), but even a small group needs a Secretary/Treasurer. This person usually collects and keeps track of Seventh Tradition donations, acts as a contact with the World Service Office (WSO) by receiving mail for the group either at home or at a post office box, shares correspondence received from the WSO with the group, and orders literature when needed. This person may also chair Group Conscience Meetings (described in Part 1, “Group Decision-Making”) and/or take meeting minutes if another member chairs the meeting. Larger groups generally split up these duties.

Most of us begin our personal recovery journey by attending an S-Anon or S-Ateen group, getting a sponsor and working the Twelve Steps. If the group is healthy and functioning well, discussion of the Twelve Traditions keeps us on track and helps to solve group problems. Group service positions are established, and the group grows and prospers. If an Intergroup is operating in the local area, local groups may designate group representatives (GRs) to attend Intergroup meetings and take information back to their groups on the matters of interest to all the local groups.

Most groups adopt a requirement that members attend meetings for a certain period of time, usually between 3 and 6 months, before assuming a group service position. This allows time for newcomers to ground themselves in the S-Anon program before taking on service responsibilities. Members are commonly elected (or volunteer) for 3-, 6- or 12-month periods of service, as decided by the group. Frequent rotation gives all members the privilege of serving. Tradition Two reminds us that group officers are trusted servants; they lead but do not govern.

S-Anon groups have an additional responsibility to fulfill. As discussed in Part 1, above, S-Anon groups hold the ultimate authority and responsibility for the functioning of the fellowship as a whole (Concept One). A local group exercises that authority and responsibility by electing and supporting their Area (state or province) Delegate, giving that Delegate feedback when requested through the Group Contact Person or Group Representative, and taking an interest in the Delegate’s report after she or he attends the World Service Conference. Issues being discussed at the World Service Conference may seem abstract or unimportant when compared to everyday problems and concerns, but becoming informed about those issues results in a more informed group conscience, and better decisions for our fellowship.

### **Autonomy of Individual Groups**

Each group is autonomous, so specifics relating to meeting format, Twelfth-Step work, etc., are decided by the group conscience. (See Part 1, “Group Decision Making.”) But, groups are autonomous only to the extent that S-Anon as a whole is not affected by their decisions. Each member of the group is encouraged and empowered to remind other members, if necessary, of our commitment to the Meeting Guidelines and Twelve Traditions of S-Anon. We are *all* responsible, not just the group officers or meeting leaders. No S-Anon Information Services Group (Intergroup), service committee, or other service entity has the authority to

“disband” a group because they disapprove of the manner in which it practices the S-Anon program. An ISG may decline to list a group on the local meeting list, or the WSO may decline to register a group that has chosen not to abide by the Twelve Traditions of S-Anon (Tradition Four). (Also see Part 1, “How Groups are Registered.”)

Last Updated June 2020

## Intergroups (Local Information Services Groups)

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An Intergroup (sometimes referred to as an Information Services Group) is a service body that facilitates the cooperation of S-Anon groups in a geographic area. An Intergroup’s primary function is to coordinate information and activities in a centralized fashion. Intergroups are not an official part of the Traditional service structure, but many groups find them a valuable tool in conducting local activities. An Intergroup is not a governing body; it exists to assist groups in their common purpose, and interaction and communication among local groups. Most Intergroups start with a few basic activities, as decided by the group conscience of the groups served by the Intergroup.

A local Intergroup can be created to provide services such as maintaining a telephone line, website or message service, distributing and updating group listings, maintaining a stock of Conference Approved Literature, distributing a newsletter of local activities, performing community outreach, etc. (Tradition Nine). Intergroups usually meet regularly and can also serve as a forum to discuss group problems in light of the Twelve Traditions or as a regional or Area event planning body. A large enough Intergroup (in terms of geographical region covered) might be in a position to coordinate election of the WSC Area Delegate (see the next section). Intergroups may receive financial support from the Seventh Tradition donations of the groups they serve.

The groups that support an Intergroup, not the Intergroup itself, have the voting privileges assigned to Registered Groups. Therefore the Intergroup itself does not have a vote in Fellowshipwide Group Consciences, Delegate selection, or Regional Trustee selection. The Intergroup, however, can do much to facilitate the voting privileges of its member groups.

As S-Anon groups grow and more members are involved in service, Intergroups may be asked to expand the services they provide, as discussed in Part 1, Section 1.5.6. The S-Anon publication L-17 “How to Start an Intergroup,” contains a more complete discussion of Intergroups and the activities they may undertake.

Last Updated September 2018

## Areas and Area Delegates to the WSC

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The purpose of the World Service Conference is to provide a forum where the issues and policies affecting all S-Anon and S-Ateen groups can be discussed and informed decisions can be made with all members of

the fellowship being represented. The WSC is currently held annually on the Friday morning or afternoon prior to the beginning of the January SA/S-Anon International Convention.

It was proposed and adopted at the first WSC in January, 2004, that for purposes of representation at the WSC, North America would be organized by "Areas," with each Area entitled to send one Delegate to the annual WSC. There are presently 66 Areas. Each Area covers one of the 50 states (except California, which has two Areas – North and South), 13 Canadian provinces, Phone Meetings and the Online Platform Meetings.

The Area Delegate (AD) is elected or selected by any means the group or groups in the Area decide. The most qualified candidate is an S-Anon member with several years of recovery and service experience, who has a working knowledge of the Twelve Traditions and Concepts of S-Anon and is familiar with the S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual. Some areas have established their own suggested qualifications and a full description of the duties of their Area Delegate.

If S-Anon groups in an Area have an Intergroup, the AD may be elected or selected through a formal election process of the Area's choosing. It is recommended that all Area groups be given the opportunity to have a voice in the selection of the AD. Once the Area elects or affirms a volunteer AD, the AD registers with the World Service Office (WSO). The WSO then gives the AD contact information for all registered groups within the Area that have given permission for their information to be shared so the Area Delegate can contact those groups.

#### \*GROUP REPRESENTATION BY AREA DELEGATES \*

An **Area Delegate** (AD) facilitates communication between the groups in his or her Area and the World Service Conference (WSC). ADs have Traditional rights and the Board of Trustees (BOT) have Legal rights (Concept Seven). WSC members gather annually to discuss matters that affect the fellowship as a whole (Tradition One). While ADs are elected by a specific Area, each AD serves the S-Anon Fellowship as a whole. Delegates and Alternate Delegates are elected or selected by their Area for a three year term and may serve that area for two consecutive terms. Delegates and Alternate Delegates shall serve no more than (2) consecutive terms in the same position, after which it is suggested there be a minimum interval of one (1) year before they are eligible to serve that position again.

#### **Alternate Area Delegate**

In addition to the AD, each Area may choose to elect an Alternate Area Delegate (Alternate AD), who also registers with the WSO. The Alternate AD, while not an official part of our service structure (per the WSC Charter) learns about the AD role and responsibilities, may attend the monthly AD calls and assist the AD with some of his or her tasks. The Alternate AD would perhaps be in a position to become the next AD at the end of the current AD's term, and step in if the elected AD cannot complete a full term or attend the WSC. The Alternate AD may attend the WSC along with the AD as an observer only. However, if the Area Delegate cannot attend the WSC, the Alternate AD may register with the WSO and attend the WSC conference with a voice and a vote.

#### **Area Delegate Responsibilities**



The Area Delegate (AD) communicates with the Delegate body on the monthly Conference Call and is encouraged to serve on a BOT standing committee. One of the many functions of the AD is centered around activities related to the annual WSC meeting. The AD also plays an important role for local groups by providing year-round support and encouraging service engagement. The AD may also share their experience with the AAD, to help prepare them to serve as AD in the future.

Several months prior to the WSC, the ADs receive periodic communications from the WSC Committee, which include the motions to be considered at the WSC in July. The ADs share the motions with Area groups, encouraging all groups to review and discuss the motions, and then report their views and feedback on each issue to the AD by a predetermined date. Some ADs attend various S-Anon meetings in their Area and participate in the group conscience discussions, while others work through Intergroups and rely on group representatives to explain each group's position on the issues. Others email the motions to members and ask for feedback. Each AD has the freedom to design a communication process that works for his or her Area.

*ADs are expected to arrive at the WSC fully informed and able to present the views of their Area groups on the motions to be considered (Concepts Four, Five). They do not collect votes from their local groups on the motions, but they take into consideration comments and feedback from the groups about the motions. During the deliberation on each motion, ADs listen with open minds to all points of view, and thoughtfully and prayerfully consider the perspectives presented by other WSC members. The AD then votes on each motion as she or he believes best supports the interests of the entire Fellowship (Tradition Two, Concept Twelve-Warranty Three and Concept Three).*

Upon returning home, the ADs report the results of the voting to their Area groups. Some ADs write a report and send it to their groups via email. Others hold conference calls or share the results at group or Intergroup meetings. This follow-up is important because it completes the communication cycle and keeps members informed.

Many ADs also engage in other important activities not directly linked to the WSC to support the growth and development of S-Anon in the Area. These activities may include working with the Board of Trustees Regional Trustee, serving as the contact person for his or her Area for service-related questions, and ensuring that the Alternate AD (if the Area has one) is informed and prepared to step into the AD role if needed. The S-Anon Service Literature L-19 is a helpful resource for Area Delegates and Alternates.

### **Area Delegate Communication and Coordination**

*While not part of the official S-Anon traditional service structure, a General Delegate Assembly (GDA) has been created by Area Delegates themselves. The GDA meets annually on the day before the WSC, and this body has proven quite helpful in facilitating communications between Delegates. The GDA does not, however, make decisions that are binding on all Delegates, the Board of Trustees, or on the World Service Conference. ADs are invited to participate in a monthly AD conference call to discuss matters of interest to all ADs. In addition, twice a year, usually in April and October, the ADs are invited to participate in a conference call with the BOT. While it is not required by the WSC Charter for the AD to attend the GDA and monthly conference calls, it is strongly encouraged, and may be defined by an Area to be an expected part of AD service in the Area.*

## Area Delegate Expenses

In accordance with Tradition Seven, Areas are responsible for paying expenses incurred by their Area Delegates to attend the World Service Conference. The World Service Office may reimburse up to half of the standing Area Delegate expenses, or the Alternate Delegate, if the elected Area Delegate cannot attend. (This practice was initiated in 2012 on a trial basis.) If your Area is not sufficiently organized or does not have the financial resources available, the Delegate must fund the remainder of the expenses not reimbursed by the WSO. Each Area that sends a Delegate is strongly encouraged to become self-supporting in this way. For example, in one Area, an Intergroup organized the selection of an Area Delegate. As the World Service Office could not reimburse all the expenses for the Area Delegate to attend the WSC, the Intergroup voted to defray a portion of the expenses their Delegate incurred, if funds were available.

\_NOTE: The sections above present only a brief discussion of how local groups come to be represented at the WSC. It may be challenging to hear that each Area is entitled to have a Delegate, and yet have very little idea or guidance about how to identify and organize other groups that may exist in your Area in order to select an Area Delegate. S-Anon as a fellowship is still far from realizing our goal of having every Area represented at the WSC by an elected Area Delegate.

You can determine if your Area is organized and represented by contacting the World Service Office. If you find that your Area does not yet have a Delegate, you may practice our slogan, “Let it Begin with Me,” and choose to attend the WSC as an individual. Members of the World Service Conference Committee will be available to speak with you, and if there is no other Delegate from your Area, you may be authorized to serve in that capacity.

We cannot emphasize this too strongly: Each Area is encouraged to send a Delegate, even if that Delegate does not have the recommended level of experience, in order to avoid not being represented at all.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE FUNCTIONS AND PROCESSES ASSOCIATED WITH THE WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE ARE LOCATED IN PART 3 OF THIS MANUAL.\_

Updated May 2023

## Legal S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Structure

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Concept 9. Good personal leadership at all service levels is a necessity. In the field of world service, the Board of Trustees assumes the primary leadership.

The Board of Trustees (BOT) is the legal entity responsible for stewardship of S-Anon’s funds, administration of services, and compliance with applicable U.S. and Tennessee laws and regulations. The Trustees direct the business operations of the World Service Office and act as the chief service arm of the World Service Conference. Most importantly, the Board serves as guardian of the S-Anon Twelve Traditions, Twelve Concepts of Service, and the World Service Conference Charter. (See Part 3, S-Anon’s World Service Conference.)

Updated November 2018

# Historical Background of the S-Anon Service Structure

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The service entity now known as the S-Anon Board of Trustees was formerly called the S-Anon International Committee (SIC).

## 1987

The idea of an S-Anon International Committee (SIC) was adopted by attendees at the first S-Anon International Conference Business Meeting in Bozeman, MT, in July 1987. The SIC was the precursor to the service arm now known as the S-Anon Board of Trustees.

## 1988

The Twelve Traditions of S-Anon were adopted by the Conference Business Meeting.

## 1989

The Business Meeting at Salt Lake City, UT, in January 1989 appointed a Selection Committee to search for volunteers to serve on the SIC. Those four Selection Committee members eventually volunteered to serve as the first SIC Representatives. Two additional representatives volunteered in July 1989, the term of office was set at two years, and the concept of a regional representation structure for S-Anon was proposed and approved. The SIC was empowered to make recommendations that were brought to the fellowship for approval via the Conference Business Meetings.

## 1991

In January 1991, the composition of the regions as part of the S-Anon Service Structure was proposed and approved.

## 2001

As S-Anon grew, we were ready for a more formal process to ensure all groups had the opportunity to participate in, and be represented during decision making that would affect S-Anon as a whole.

## July

At a historic meeting of the SIC in Nashville, TN, in July 2001, far-reaching structural changes were approved.

- The Twelve Concepts of Service of Al-Anon were adapted and adopted for use by S-Anon.
- Bylaws of the S-Anon Board of Trustees, which govern the BOT, were proposed and approved.
- The Bylaws changed the name of the S-Anon International Committee to the S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. Board of Trustees (BOT).
- The Regional Representatives to the SIC at that time were given the new title of "Regional Trustee."
- A number of formal standing committees were created, and some terminology related to the service structure was changed.

**August**

- The Al-Anon service structure was adapted for S-Anon and the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual and the Al-Anon book, *Paths to Recovery* were used as models for forming the new S-Anon service structure.
- The new Board of Trustees (BOT) formally approved a motion to conduct a World Service Conference (WSC), where the issues and policies affecting S-Anon as a whole could be discussed with representatives of all members of the fellowship in North America.
- The World Service Conference Committee (WSCC) was created.

**2002**

On July 13, 2002, at the Business Meeting at the Portland, OR, International Convention, the WSCC presented a motion to the BOT to begin holding an annual World Service Conference and discontinue the Business Meetings. The motion carried, and the planning for the first WSC began.

Prior to 2004, “Conference Business Meetings” were held in conjunction with the semi-annual SA and S-Anon conventions (then called “conferences”). Recommendations were presented by trusted servants serving on the S-Anon International Committee (SIC) and voted upon by all members in attendance at those Conference Business Meetings. When the S-Anon fellowship was very young, this method of “conference approval” was the best that could be devised, given the financial resources and level of organization that then existed.

**2004**

San Diego, CA was the venue for the first S-Anon World Service Conference. A number of motions were proposed, and the following motions passed:

- The Twelve Concepts of Service were formally adopted by the WSC.
- Eight BOT Standing Committees were created.
- The S-Anon World Service Conference Charter, which is the basic agreement between the World Service Conference, the Board of Trustees, and the World Service Office, was presented to and approved by three-quarters of the WSC members in attendance on January 9, 2004.

**2009**

The BOT created a Policy and Service Communications Committee to add to the original eight BOT Committees as shown in the S-Anon Service Structure graphic.

Updated November 2018

## **S-Anon/S-Ateen Board of Trustees**

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The Board of Trustees is the service arm of the World Service Conference (WSC). It exists as the legal entity, S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc., incorporated in the State of Tennessee as a 501©3 non-profit corporation. The BOT is responsible for making administrative, legal, and financial decisions for the fellowship of S-Anon. Each individual member of the BOT is asked to follow the spirit of S-Anon’s Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts in all actions taken on behalf of S-Anon.

The BOT is comprised of the Officers of the Board (The Executive Committee), 8 Regional Trustees, BOT Trustees at Large (members who chair Standing Committees, and who are not also serving as Regional Trustees), and the WSO Executive Director. The business of the BOT is conducted by means of monthly conference calls, the minutes of which are available from the WSO.

- The Officers of the Board are elected by the BOT itself.
- Regional Trustees are elected (in Regions that are sufficiently organized to conduct elections). Where elections cannot be conducted, Regional Trustees are individuals who have volunteered as trusted servants and have subsequently been elected by the BOT. (Additional information regarding the selection of Regional Trustees can be found below.)
- If a Regional Trustee is elected to serve as an Officer on the BOT, ideally a new Regional Trustee for that region is elected.
- Current Standing Committees of the Board of Trustees are: Executive, Finance, Literature, International Conventions, World Service Conference, Public Information and Outreach, Archives, S-Ateen, and Policy and Service Communications.

### **Purpose and Functions of the Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees is considered the legal entity of S-Anon. The Executive Committee directs the day-to-day business matters of S-Anon at the World Service Office. The Board is responsible for S-Anon's funds and services, makes policy and procedure suggestions for approval by the fellowship of S-Anon through its World Service Conference, and publishes S-Anon Conference Approved Literature and Service Literature.

Specifically, the BOT performs the functions shown below:

- Serves as guardian of S-Anon's Twelve Traditions, Twelve Concepts of Service, and the Conference Charter.
- Provides guidance in matters of policy.
- Serves as custodian and guarantor of good management of the WSO.
- Appoints Trustees-at-Large.
- Monitors and supports the accomplishment of the strategic goals of BOT committees.
- Approves the annual budget and maintains a prudent reserve.
- Ensures documentation of official proceedings of its committees, which are maintained in the Official Corporate Record Book at the WSO.

### **BOT Standard Operating Procedures**

Tradition One states that "...progress for the greatest number depends upon unity," and we have found that it often takes time to achieve "unity." The time necessary for service boards or committees to move through their processes in a thoughtful manner, whether considering structural changes, recovery and service literature pieces, letters to groups, or other matters, may at times seem unreasonably long but there are two considerations to keep in mind.

First, our processes have been developed based on the experience, strength, and hope of our fellowship over time. Experience has shown us that when we rush through revisions or circumvent procedures that

have been successful in the past, the outcome can be potentially damaging, both for S-Anon members and for S-Anon as a whole. We believe that changes to our standing operating procedures are best made after prayerful consideration based on the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts. Our processes are in place to help assure as much unity as possible in the way we conduct S-Anon business. When we ask a Higher Power to guide us, we trust that the decisions we make will be in the best interests of our fellowship.

The second consideration is related to the resources available to the BOT. The BOT and its Committees are aware of the many needs of the fellowship. Because we have limited financial and human resources, both of time, and skill set, we must prioritize our needs accordingly. Service within the Traditional and Legal service structure teaches us about patience, working together, timing, and reminds us that recovery is a process.

### **Requirements for Service as a Trustee**

The most important requirement for service on the BOT is a strong desire to serve the S-Anon fellowship. In addition, it is suggested that any S-Anon member interested in serving on the BOT has been regularly attending the S-Anon program for at least 5 years. They must be solidly committed to S-Anon and recognize that there is a commitment of time and effort involved that goes beyond participation in the monthly conference call. Trustees contribute their ideas and service as needed by the BOT. The BOT may express a specific need, or a Trustee may see an opportunity to contribute in a way that draws upon their own skills and experience. Trustees also make themselves available to members to share experience, strength, and hope on questions or problems that cannot be resolved at the group level. If you are interested in serving as a Trustee, please contact the World Service Office.

### **Bylaws of the Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees is governed by the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees. The initial version of the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees was developed and approved by the Board in August 2001. The BOT is obligated by the Charter of the World Service Conference to present any changes made to the Bylaws at the following World Service Conference. There have been several amendments to the Bylaws since 2001. The document containing the "Bylaws of the S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. Board of Trustees" appears in Appendix F

*The work of the Board of Trustees and the World Service Office is supported entirely by the Seventh Tradition donations of individual groups, by sales of literature, and by voluntary donations of time and material by members of the fellowship.*

Updated November 2018

## **Officers of the Board of Trustees**

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Officers of the Board of Trustees are distinct from the Regional Trustees and Trustees At-Large. They include the Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer. They are the legal representatives of S-Anon for purposes of signing legal and financial documents. The BOT Chairperson, in addition to monthly reports to the BOT, also reports to the WSC annually. BOT Officers are accountable to the full BOT. Officers are elected by the Board to a term of 3 years, and may serve no more than two consecutive terms in the

same position. Any Officer of the BOT may sign documents as a legal representative of S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc.

The Officers of the Board of Trustees, along with the Executive Director of the World Service Office, comprise the Executive Committee, sometimes referred to as the WSO Executive Committee. The duties and responsibilities of that Committee are described below.

### **Chairperson of the Board of Trustees**

The Chairperson (hereafter referred to as “Chair”), elected by the BOT, shall have those duties generally attributable by law and custom to a president under the laws of the State of Tennessee, with such greater or lesser duties as may from time to time be determined by the Board of Trustees.

The Chairperson of the Board of Trustees will carry out the following activities:

- Serve as an Officer of the Board of Trustees and a member of the Executive Committee.
- Preside over the monthly Board of Trustee meetings.
- Preside as Chairperson of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees.
- Establish the agenda for all Board and Executive Committee meetings.
- Supervise the Executive Director of the World Service Office.
- Provide, as needed, a Chairperson’s Report to the Board of Trustees.
- Attend the annual World Service Conference.
- Provide a Chairperson’s Report and Executive Committee Report at the annual World Service Conference.

### **Co-Chairperson of the Board of Trustees**

The Co-Chairperson (hereafter referred to as “Co-Chair”) shall perform the duties of the Chair in the event of her/his absence or disability. The Co-Chair shall be responsible for the implementation of the revisions to the Bylaws of S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. and will also assist the Chair whenever needed.

The Co-Chairperson of the Board of Trustees will carry out the following activities:

- Serve as an Officer of the BOT and a member of the Executive Committee.
- Maintain and keep current the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees.
- Be knowledgeable about the Bylaws and be available for questions regarding the Bylaws.
- Provide new Trustee members of the BOT with a copy of the current Bylaws.
- Support and assist the Chairperson of the BOT.
- Assume any of the duties of the Chairperson of the BOT should that person not be available.
- Assume the position of the Chairperson temporarily should that person resign or otherwise be unable to perform.
- Provide, as needed, a Co-Chairperson’s Report to the BOT.
- Attend the annual World Service Conference as a member of the Conference.
- Participate in the monthly Executive Committee meetings as a member.

### **Secretary of the Board of Trustees**

The Secretary shall similarly perform those duties generally attributed by law and custom to such offices with such other greater or lesser duties as may from time to time be determined by the Board of Trustees.

The Secretary of the Board of Trustees will carry out the following activities:

- Serve as an Officer of the BOT and a member of the Executive Committee.
- Take minutes of the monthly conference call meetings of the Board of Trustees.
- Send a copy of minutes to each Board member within two (2) weeks following the monthly conference call meeting.
- Send a copy of the minutes to the WSO for archival purposes.
- As a member of the Executive Committee, take minutes of the Executive Committee monthly conference call meetings, send a copy of the minutes to each Executive Committee member; and maintain a file of all minutes of past meetings.

### **Treasurer of the Board of Trustees**

The Treasurer shall similarly perform those duties generally attributed by law and custom to such offices with such other greater or lesser duties as may from time to time be determined by the Board of Trustees. S-Anon's Treasurer is required to have some professional background in Accounting.

The Treasurer of the Board of Trustees will carry out the following activities:

- Serve as an Officer of the BOT and a member of the Executive Committee.
- Be responsible for all Treasurer and Finance Committee obligations and actions.
- Manage the BOT financial responsibilities and present recommendations for significant financial actions to the BOT. Specifically, the Treasurer will:
  - Work with BOT members to draft and present the Annual World Service Office (WSO) operating budget to the BOT.
  - Evaluate unbudgeted/unusual expenditures of the WSO, the BOT, and BOT Committees.
  - Report financial results and key items, trends, and issues to the BOT.
  - Work with WSO staff to develop and implement sound financial procedures and systems.
  - Conduct an internal audit of WSO financial procedures and operations, or designate a representative to do so annually.
  - Perform other tasks as assigned by the BOT.
  - Review and approve monthly/quarterly/annual WSO State and Federal payroll tax filings.
  - Review and approve annual WSO State of Incorporation and IRS filings.
  - Consult with our CPA on the annual WSO filing of Form 990 with the IRS, and any other appropriate issues.
- Act as Chair of the Finance Committee:
  1. Arrange and chair monthly Finance Committee conference calls.
  2. Assure that Finance Committee minutes are distributed to Committee members on a timely basis.
  3. Report on Finance Committee actions on the monthly BOT conference call.

### **Executive Director of the World Service Office (WSO).**

The WSO is the central headquarters for providing services to individuals and groups (Concept Eleven). The Executive Director of the WSO is accountable to the Executive Committee, is supervised directly by the BOT Chair, and makes an annual report to the WSC and a monthly report to the BOT. The Executive Director is a paid special worker who also serves as a Trustee during the length of her or his employment.



Updated 5/30/2019

## Regional Trustees

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In January 1989 the concept of a regional representative was proposed and approved. A Regional Trustee (RT) is a trusted servant who serves the S-Anon fellowship and the members in their Region, and becomes a key component of the legal S-Anon service Structure. RT service positions allow the eight Regions in North America to be represented, and provide a Regional perspective at BOT meetings. The RT also assists trusted servants at all levels in the Region, and works to ensure that information from the World Service Office (WSO) and BOT is distributed to Delegates, Intergroups and Groups. Composition of the regions is shown below.

**Central Eastern Canada:** New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Manitoba, Nunavut

**Western Canada:** Alberta, British Columbia, Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, Yukon

**Midwest:** Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Ohio, Wisconsin

**Northeast:** Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia

**Northwest:** Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming

**Southeast:** Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee

**Southwest:** Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah

**West:** Northern California, Southern California, Hawaii, Nevada

An RT must be elected either by the groups in the Region in which he/she would serve, or by a vote of the BOT if the Region is not sufficiently organized to conduct an election process. The BOT seats Regional Trustees who are formally elected by their Region without further qualification or vote by the BOT. Elected Regional Trustees can best represent the needs and desires of the groups they serve and can be held accountable by those same groups. S-Anon publication L-21, "Serving as an S-Anon Regional Trustee" contains more detailed information; more information about a possible election process, "The Process for Electing a Regional Trustee," is located on the Area Structure page at [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org). The World Service Office can provide contact information for each Regional Trustee.

Updated 3/9/2023

## Standing Committees of the Board of Trustees

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### STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The S-Anon Board of Trustees is authorized by the Bylaws of the S-Anon Family Groups to create the following Standing Committees:

- Executive
- Finance
- Literature
- International Conventions
- World Service Conference
- Public Information and Outreach
- Archives
- S-Ateen
- Policy and Service Communications

Other committees deemed necessary to carry on special work may be formed as needed. All members of all committees take as their first duty the obligation to adhere to their best understanding of the S-Anon Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of Service in all actions taken on behalf of S-Anon.

BOT Standing Committee Chairpersons serve as Trustees-at-Large and as such participate in all BOT decisions. They coordinate the activities of the Committee and report to the full BOT in a monthly written report detailing activities and expenditures. Each committee works independently, but final review and approval of the implementation of all committee work rests with the full BOT (Concept Ten, Concept Twelve-Warranty 3). If the BOT did not have the service authority to make the final decision, and if two committees involved in a decision disagreed, the committees could issue conflicting directives, creating “double-headed management” (Concept Ten). To avoid the possibility of a situation like that occurring, the two committees can refer their concerns to the full BOT, where the final decision rests. Committee descriptions, membership suggestions, and responsibilities are shown below.

**Qualifications for Serving and Terms of Office:** In general, Standing Committee Chairs serve a term of 3 years and may serve one additional consecutive 3-year term. Term length for volunteer S-Anon members of Standing Committees is currently not limited by the S-Anon Bylaws. Experience shows that a mix of newer and longer serving members can facilitate more informed and effective operation of a committee, while keeping in mind that rotation of service is an underlying principle that serves the fellowship well in every service position. The purpose, membership, and duties of existing BOT Standing Committees are detailed below. In general, the main requirement for serving as a BOT Committee member is the desire and availability to serve. Additional information regarding the qualifications for serving as a Chairperson and for volunteering for service on a Standing Committee is available from each committee chairperson via the World Service Office.

## **Executive Committee**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Executive Committee is to administer the operations of the World Service Office (WSO) in accordance with S-Anon’s Concept Eight, “The Board of Trustees delegates full authority for routine management of the S-Anon headquarters to its Executive Committee.” The Board of Trustees, which sets WSO policy in accordance with S-Anon’s Concepts Three, Six, and Eight, has given the Executive Committee the legal authority to make decisions regarding the daily affairs of the WSO and to ensure that the WSO is adhering to BOT policy.

**Membership**

The Executive Committee is composed of the Officers of the BOT: the Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary. It also includes the Executive Director of the World Service Office. The BOT Chairperson chairs the Executive Committee. The term of office of all Officers of the Board of Trustees is 3 years, with two consecutive terms in the same position allowed. The Executive Director remains on the Executive Committee for his or her entire term of employment in that capacity.

**Responsibilities**

Members of the Executive Committee carry out the following activities:

- In accordance with Concept Eight, oversee the daily operations of the WSO, ensuring that WSO activities are conducted in accordance with policies approved by the Board of Trustees. Operations include, but are not limited to:
  1. Providing information to members and potential members
  2. Providing services and information to existing, registered S-Anon groups
  3. Maintaining and updating the S-Anon Web site
  4. Facilitating registration by Area Delegates and partial reimbursement of their expenses to attend the World Service Conference
  5. Maintaining up-to-date registered group information
  6. Maintaining listings of long distance sponsors, group, and intergroup service sponsors
  7. Providing administrative assistance to BOT Standing Committees, as time is available
- Meet monthly, or as needed, by conference call or in person
- Support the Executive Director using the members' experiences, both personal and professional
- Hire, supervise, and appraise the performance of the Executive Director
- Update the job descriptions of the Executive Director and WSO staff members as WSO operational changes require.
- Oversee all Service Literature including update to and approving new pieces
- In the event the Policy and Service Communications Committee goes inactive, assist the Literature Committee in managing approved updates to the SSSM as necessary

**Finance Committee**

**Purpose** The Finance Committee provides stewardship of the funds received by S-Anon's World Service Office (WSO).

**Membership**

The Finance Committee is composed of the Treasurer of the Board of Trustees and additional volunteer S-Anon members.

**Responsibilities**

Members of the Finance Committee carry out the following activities:

- Serve as stewards of WSO funds.

- Assist the Treasurer in carrying out assigned responsibilities.
- Meet monthly by conference call.
- Review WSO financial results and key trends.
- Evaluate WSO unbudgeted/unusual expenditures.
- Develop the WSO annual operating budget for presentation to BOT.
- Review/assist with annual WSO audits.
- Work with the Treasurer and WSO staff to develop and implement sound financial procedures and systems.

## **Literature Committee**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Literature Committee is to assure that every aspect of the S-Anon program of recovery is presented in adequate, comprehensive, and consistent written material. Literature includes books, pamphlets, leaflets, and other material that is reviewed and approved for distribution through the WSO to our members, friends, professionals, and to the world at large, via the S-Anon Web site.

### **Membership**

The Literature Committee consists of a Chairperson, who serves as a Trustee-at-Large on the Board of Trustees, between five and ten volunteer editors, approximately 25 “readers” distributed across all regions, and a Webmaster. Terms of Office are as stated under “Standing Committees of the Board of Trustees” above.

### **Responsibilities**

Members of the Literature Committee carry out the following activities:

- Make recommendations to the BOT and WSC on the short- and long-range literature needs of S-Anon.
- Create literature incorporating member submissions, as authorized by the BOT and WSC.
- Recommend and carry out procedures whereby written recovery material is reviewed and prepared for Conference Approval.
- Assist with the creation and editing of service literature as requested by the BOT.
- Manage and update S-Anon web site content, in coordination with the Executive Committee, which is responsible for the Web site.
- Act as an advisor on copyright matters.
- Obtain needed permissions to use quotes from sources outside of S-Anon Conference Approved Literature, as necessary.
- Review and approve suggestions for minor changes to previously approved recovery literature.
- In the event the Policy and Service Communications Committee goes inactive, the Literature Committee will manage approved updates to the SSSM as necessary, with the assistance of the Executive Committee.

## **International Conventions Committee**

### **Purpose**

The International Conventions Committee provides guidance to international convention planning host committees in an effort to ensure that the international conventions proceed in accordance with the S-Anon Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, Twelve Concepts and the BOT approved International Convention

Committee guidelines.

### **Membership**

The International Conventions Committee consists of a Chairperson, who serves as a Trustee-at-Large on the Board of Trustees and other volunteer S-Anon members. Terms of Office are as stated under “Standing Committees of the Board of Trustees” above.

### **Responsibilities**

Members of the International Conventions Committee carry out the following activities:

- Assist and support international convention planning host committees via telephone, mail, e-mail, and site visits, if necessary.
- Review the program for upcoming conventions, considering content and providing feedback and suggestions as appropriate.
- Review suggested speakers submitted by host committee and from WSO speakers' pool. After careful consideration invite speakers with a variety of ESH.
- International Convention Committee Chairperson attends all conventions to be on hand to support the current host committee and meet with members of the host committees of future international conventions.
- Participate in debriefing meetings at the conclusion of S-Anon International Conventions.
- Maintain and update the S-Anon Convention Guidelines and make that document available to international convention host committees.

## **World Service Conference Committee**

### **Purpose**

The World Service Conference Committee is responsible for planning and facilitating the annual S-Anon World Service Conference (WSC).

### **Membership**

The committee is made up of a Chairperson, who serves as a Trustee-at-Large on the Board of Trustees, and volunteer S-Anon members. Delegate participation on this committee is strongly encouraged. Terms of Office are as stated under “Standing Committees of the Board of Trustees” above.

### **Responsibilities**

Members of the World Service Conference Committee carry out the following activities:

- Make arrangements for the WSC date, time, and meeting facilities. This includes, but is not limited to, arranging for a meeting room, layout of the meeting room, lunch, recordings.
- Ensure that the WSC proceedings are recorded.
- Ensure that each Area of the S-Anon Fellowship is informed about the World Service Conference, invited to participate and register a delegate to represent their Area, and provided a format for submitting motions to the Conference.
- Follow a process for reviewing the motions submitted.
- Compile and distribute a WSC package of documents for each participant. It contains the agenda, BOT committee reports and motions with supporting documentation.
- Appoint a credentials committee to check in the WSC members (designated in advance) as they arrive,

and report on attendance as one of the first agenda items of the WSC for purposes of establishing a quorum.

- Develop the agenda for the annual World Service Conference.
- Work collaboratively with the World Service Office staff in coordinating details, mailings, and registrations.
- Appoint a Chairperson, Parliamentarian and Secretary for the Conference.
- After the Conference, create minutes from the Conference proceedings and disseminate the minutes within three months to the Fellowship.

## **Public Information and Outreach Committee**

### **Purpose**

The Public Information and Outreach Committee acts as a liaison between S-Anon and the general population through outreach to professionals, to the media, and to institutions. The Committee's goal is to increase awareness of the S-Anon program and to attract newcomers to the fellowship by using S-Anon Conference Approved Literature, print media, the S-Anon Web site, and other communication vehicles. The Committee serves as a resource for helping professionals, the families and friends of sexaholics, and individuals affected by sexaholism, following a public relations policy based on attraction rather than promotion.

### **Membership**

The Public Information and Outreach Committee consists of a Chairperson, who serves as a Trustee-at-Large on the Board of Trustees, and other volunteer S-Anon members. Terms of Office are as stated under "Standing Committees of the Board of Trustees" above.

### **Responsibilities**

Members of the Public Information and Outreach Committee carry out the following activities:

- Develop tools and recommend activities designed to communicate with individuals and organizations to increase awareness of the S-Anon program
- Provide templates, materials, ideas, guidance, and support to individuals, groups, Delegates, and Regional Trustees in their efforts to facilitate outreach in their local communities.
- Facilitate outreach to family members and friends of incarcerated sexaholic offenders during all phases of the legal process through the S-Anon Corrections Outreach Committee, a sub-committee of the PI&O Committee. The committee also reaches out to incarcerated S-Anon members.
- Advance the growth of S-Anon groups and their service structures outside of North America via the S-Anon Global Coordination Subcommittee of the PI&O Committee.
- Raise awareness of the S-Anon program in the helping professional community and provide answers to specific questions using Conference Approved material for guidance.
- Generate goodwill and facilitate the exchange of information between professional organizations and others with whom we wish to have contact to carry the S-Anon message of hope.
- Maintain information on the S-Anon Web site ([www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org)), in coordination with the WSO, to assist members or groups in carrying out their outreach programs.

## **Archives Committee**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Archives Committee is to preserve and organize historical S-Anon and S-Ateen material, making it available to the fellowship.

### **Membership**

The Archives Committee consists of a Chairperson, who serves as a Trustee-at-Large on the Board of Trustees, and other volunteer S-Anon members. Terms of Office are as stated under “Standing Committees of the Board of Trustees” above.

### **Responsibilities**

Members of the Archives Committee carry out the following activities:

- Assist the World Service Office in organizing and maintaining files of historical material. Types of general activities include:
  1. Arrange and organize electronic and hard copy files
  2. Review documents and edit where appropriate to ensure anonymity
  3. Adding and updating the Master Timeline
  4. Continue collecting historically relevant information
- Inspire a love for and create interest in the history of S-Anon and S-Ateen. This includes a variety of formats such as presentations, displays and literature.
- Make information available to the fellowship. Assist and inform the serious researcher within the framework of the S-Anon Traditions.

### **S-Ateen Committee**

#### **Purpose**

The S-Ateen Committee provides information, guidance, and support to anyone seeking an S-Ateen group through the World Service Office. The committee also provides ongoing support and guidance to S-Ateen groups including the administration of training and certification of S-Ateen Group Sponsors. In addition, the S-Ateen Committee offers S-Ateen program recommendations and guidance to host committees for International Conventions, regional marathons, and local events that include S-Ateen participation.

#### **Membership**

The committee is made up of a Chairperson, who serves as a Trustee-at-Large on the Board of Trustees, and volunteer S-Anon members. Terms of Office are as stated under “Standing Committees of the Board of Trustees” above. Terms of Office are as stated under “Standing Committees of the Board of Trustees” above.

#### **Responsibilities**

Members of the S-Ateen Committee carry out the following activities:

- Correspond with inquirers seeking an S-Ateen group through the World Service Office. If there is no meeting available, other possible recovery alternatives are suggested such as International Conventions, marathons, and online S-Ateen meetings.
- Upon request, provide information on how to start new S-Ateen groups (face to face, telephone, and/or online).
- Encourage a connection between existing S-Ateen groups so they may support each other and exchange helpful suggestions.

- Share experience, strength, and hope with regard to issues that affect S-Ateen as a whole.
- Provide guidance, support, training, and certification to S-Anon members involved in S-Ateen Service (SMISS). As S-Ateen Group Sponsors, this may include service in local areas on a regular basis at face-to-face group meetings, telephone and/or online group meetings, or temporarily at International Conventions, Conferences, and Marathons.
- Maintain a list of S-Ateen certified Group Sponsors and S-Ateen Committee members willing to connect with teenagers requiring a long distance connection by telephone and/or email.
- Provide support to the International Convention Committee and to the local S-Anon host committee for International Conventions with the planning of S-Ateen meetings.
- Provide support and help to the PI & O Committee in generating ideas to carry the message of S-Ateen, within our S-Anon fellowship and to the public.
- Participate in drafting and reviewing new projects, Conference Approved Literature, and Service Literature ensuring all represent the S-Ateen point of view.
- Oversees continued development of and support to the S-Ateen Online Community; weekly live S-Ateen meetings are held via this online venue.

## **Policy and Service Communications Committee**

### **Purpose**

The Policy and Service Communication Committee has two main purposes: the examination of issues and questions that affect S-Anon as a whole, and the review of Service Literature.

### **Membership**

The committee is made up of a Chairperson, who serves as a Trustee -at-Large on the Board of Trustees, and other current S-Anon members. Working knowledge of the Twelve Traditions is strongly suggested. Awareness of the principles of the Twelve Concepts of Service would be most beneficial.

### **Responsibilities**

Members of the Policy and Service Communications Committee carry out the following activities:

- Assist the full BOT by participating in the study of issues and questions that affect S-Anon as a whole.
- Develop recommendations based on study and documentation of applicable Conference approved resources named above, which may result in a motion prepared by the Committee and presented to the full BOT by the acting Chairperson.
- Review Service Literature developed by other committees or individuals for adherence to existing policy and the 12 Traditions and Concepts.
- Participate in committee monthly conference calls, email communications and independent research.
- Manage approved changes to the SSSM, including updates and additions.

**Other Types of Committees.** The BOT may from time to time create an “ad hoc” committee, which exists for a particular purpose, and has an end date tied to the specific purpose (when the event is over, when the project is complete, when the question is answered). For example, the ad hoc committee formed to revise the S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual will cease to exist when the revision is complete.

The BOT may also choose to create a sub-committee of a Standing Committee, which exists to work on a sub-set of ongoing activities within the larger entity. For example, Corrections Outreach is a sub-committee



of the Public Information & Outreach Standing Committee. The sub-committee Chair is a member of the Standing Committee, while the members of the sub-committee may or may not be members of the Standing Committee. The Chair of the sub-committee reports to the Chair of the Standing Committee, who in turn reports sub-committee activities to the full BOT monthly, along with the other Standing Committee activities. Sub-committee Chairs may attend the WSC as spectators, but do not have a voice or a vote.

Updated 3/9/2023

## **S-Anon International Family Groups World Service Office**

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The World Service Office (WSO) was established as the “S-Anon Central Office” in 1987 and was renamed the World Service Office in 2001. The WSO is the central headquarters for S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc., a registered 501( c )(3) non-profit, and is fully accountable to the S-Anon fellowship. The accountability to the groups is accomplished through the North America World Service Conference (WSC) (defined as United States and Canada) and the Board of Trustees (BOT). In turn, the BOT approves financial transactions, sets policy and procedures, and ensures that the WSO is adhering to those policies and procedures. The WSO is primarily funded by Seventh Tradition contributions from groups, individuals, and events, and S-Anon literature sales. The WSO, located in Nashville, TN, is staffed by onsite and remote paid special workers tasked with performing professional services. The S-Anon WSO is overseen by the S-Anon Executive Committee.

### Primary Responsibilities of the WSO:

- Registers, maintains records of, and distributes information for S-Anon groups and meetings worldwide.
- Serves as the communication link between groups, individual members, intergroups, Delegates, and the BOT and its Committees.
- Manages the production and distribution of S-Anon Conference Approved Literature (CAL) and Service Literature.
- Maintains legal and financial records of S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. overseeing financial and organizational filings and reports.
- Provides assistance to the BOT and service committees.
- Serves as a first point of contact for the media and referral agencies.
- Oversees S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc.’s website’s content, maintenance, and online store.
- Maintains and protects Intellectual Property.
- Works in conjunction with the Global Coordination Subcommittee of the Public Information & Outreach Committee to support the development of international service structures.
- Licenses the translation and distribution of literature to S-Anon service structures outside of North America.
- Responsible for providing consistent messaging of S-Anon recovery in North America and internationally through the lens of the S-Anon Twelve Steps, Traditions, and Concepts.
- Reports monthly to the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees, and annually to the World Service Conference.

Updated 12/6/2023

# Part 3: Fellowshipwide Decision Making: The World Service Conference and Conference Approved Literature

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## World Service Conference

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*Concept Two. The S-Anon Family Groups have delegated complete administrative and operational authority to their Conference and its service arms.*

*Concept Three. The Right of Decision makes effective leadership possible.*

## History and Background of World Service Conference

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### July 1989

As described in Part 2 of this Manual, the body now known as the S-Anon Board of Trustees was formerly called the S-Anon International Committee (SIC). The SIC came into existence in 1989. It was composed of volunteer representatives from each region, who made recommendations that were brought to the fellowship for approval. At that time Business Meetings were held in conjunction with the semi-annual SA/S-Anon conventions, or “conferences,” as they were then called. Recommendations were presented and voted upon at those Business Meetings. When the S-Anon fellowship was very young, this method of “conference approval” was the best that could be devised at the time, given the financial resources and level of organization. As

S-Anon grew and developed, a more formal process was needed to ensure all groups had the opportunity to participate in and be represented during decision making that would affect S-Anon as a whole.

### July 2001

At an historic meeting of the SIC in Nashville, TN, in July 2001, far-reaching structural changes were approved. The SIC adopted a set of bylaws that changed the name of the S-Anon International Committee to S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. Board of Trustees (BOT). The Regional Representatives to the SIC at that time were given the new title of “Regional Trustee.” A number of standing committees were created, some terminology related to the service structure was changed, and most importantly, the Twelve Concepts of AI-Anon were adapted and adopted for use by S-Anon.

### August 2001

The new Board of Trustees recognized the need for a forum where the issues and policies affecting S-Anon as a whole could be discussed with representatives of the fellowship, and formally approved the motion to conduct a World Service Conference (WSC). At that time, the World Service Conference Committee (WSCC) was also created, and the Committee began to coordinate the First Annual S-Anon World Service Conference. The WSCC presented the following motion to the BOT: “Move to have a yearly Delegate

Conference at the International Conventions in January and discontinue the Business Meetings completely.” The motion carried.

### July 2002

On July 13, 2002, at the Business Meeting at the Portland, OR, International Convention, the WSCC presented the plan to begin to hold an annual World Service Conference.

### January 2004

The San Diego, CA, International Convention was the venue for the first World Service Conference. Following communication by mail with the S-Anon Groups in 2003, Delegates were selected, and motions were submitted. The first WSC was attended by 28 members; 11 motions were addressed and resolved. The proceedings of the first and all subsequent WSCs are available from the WSO.

## S-Anon World Service Conference Charter

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The World Service Conference Committee adapted the Al-Anon Charter for S-Anon use. The Charter is the basic agreement between the World Service Conference, the Board of Trustees, and the World Service Office. The S-Anon Charter was presented to, and approved by, three-quarters of the WSC members in attendance on January 9, 2004. The Charter can be amended by the WSC by a three-quarters vote of members in attendance. The full text of the S-Anon World Service Conference Charter appears in Appendix G.

The Conference Charter is tied to the Twelve Concepts of S-Anon as indicated below:

**Concept Twelve.** *The spiritual foundation for S-Anon’s World Services is contained in the General Warranties of the Conference, Article XII of the [S-Anon World Service Conference] Charter.*

## World Service Conference Policies and Procedures

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### Membership

WSC members include all members of the Board of Trustees and all Area Delegates (see Part 2). Any member of S-Anon is welcome to attend the WSC, but only WSC members have a voice and vote. WSC members are encouraged to join a committee and serve on that committee during the year.

### Agenda

The WSC agenda is similar to most organizational meeting agendas as suggested by Robert’s Rules of Order:

- Roll is taken.
- A quorum is established.
- Since the BOT officers and standing committee reports have been distributed in advance only highlights of reports will be offered. Questions are welcome at this time.
- Delegates give a report.

- Motions presented by WSC members are addressed.

### **Standing Rules**

The World Service Conference follows Parliamentary Procedure as outlined in Robert's Rules of Order. It is essential to have a parliamentarian, or one or more S-Anon members not seated on the WSC who are well-versed in Robert's Rules, available to address questions of procedure. These additional Standing Rules were approved by the WSC in 2004 and in 2013.

- Only WSC members\* have a voice and a vote. They must wear badges and be recognized by the Chairperson to speak.
- Members who wish to speak must line up at the microphones, be recognized by the Chairperson, and be called on in order, with speakers "for" and "against" alternating.
- The presenter(s) of the motion will have 3 minutes to introduce their motion. This time is separate from time granted to them under rule #4.
- Each member may speak for 3 minutes on a topic/motion.
- Each member may only speak one time on a topic/motion.
- Voting will be done by a show of hands.
- Asking or answering a question does not count as time at the microphone, provided the member does not continue to debate the issue.
- Roberts Rules of Order may not be invoked to close off discussion before all members who are rightfully entitled to speak have spoken to the issue.

WSC members are members of the Board of Trustees and Area Delegates. "WSC members" does not refer to S-Anon members in general.

### **Credentials Committee**

Members of the Credentials Committee carry out the following activities:

- Welcome Delegates and Trustees and record their presence.
- Make available to visitors a limited number of agendas, copies of committee reports, etc.
- Provide Delegates and Trustees name badges.
- Establish the conference quorum. A quorum is two-thirds of all WSC members in attendance at the WSC. Report the quorum number to the conference.

### **Motions**

The World Service Conference is meant to be a forum for discussion of issues and policies that affect S-Anon *as a whole*. For that reason, motions received that would be more limited in scope will be referred to the Board of Trustees or the appropriate Standing Committee for a response.

Motions may be submitted at any time of the year. In early January, a Call for Motions is sent out to all WSC members of record. It is the responsibility of the Area Delegate to be sure that all Area groups receive a motion form and an invitation to submit a motion if desired. Any individual S-Anon member can write a motion, but only WSC members can submit a motion to the WSC. The deadline for submitting motions is February 1. This allows time for the motions to be reviewed and processed by the World Service Conference Committee and prepared for distribution to WSC members by early May.

## Writing a Motion

Motions should contain the following information and be limited to two pages. (See Appendix H for the Motion Template and a Sample Motion.)

- Exact language of the motion
- Paragraph describing the intent of the motion
- Statement of financial impact on the fellowship (to be provided by the Treasurer of the BOT and the Finance Committee after the motion is received)
- One or more arguments in favor of the motion
- One or more arguments against the motion (to be provided by the WSCC or BOT after the motion is received)
- Paragraph referencing how the motion is supported by S-Anon's Steps, Traditions, and/or Concepts of Service and documenting how the specific changes will be implemented should the motion pass.
- The name and contact information of the submitter.

For additional information about motion writing, see "Writing a Motion to the World Service Conference" Service Literature (L-27) available for download through the S-Anon bookstore.

## Submitting Motions

The Board of Trustees and the World Service Conference Committee (WSCC) invite and receive policy, procedural, and administrative motions from individual members and groups *through their Area Delegate or Regional Trustee, or another BOT member if their region is not represented by a Delegate or Regional Trustee*.

If an Area does not have an Area Delegate, we suggest that the local groups attempt to organize to elect a Delegate at least three months prior to the upcoming WSC and submit the motion through that elected Area Delegate.

If an Area that is not represented by an Area Delegate is unable to elect and send a Delegate, a motion may be submitted to the World Service Office for routing to the appropriate Regional Trustee. Motions from individuals and groups are accepted when submitted through the Regional Trustee *only* if the unorganized Area is unable to elect and send a delegate.

If neither a Delegate nor a Regional Trustee represents an Area, the WSO will request that another BOT member submit the motion on the submitter's behalf.

Any Board of Trustees member may submit a motion for consideration by the WSC. A Committee Chair from the BOT also may submit a motion.

## How Motions are Processed

The WSC Committee prepares the motions for the agenda. Motions that are limited in scope or impact are referred to the appropriate standing committee for response or action. In some cases, the BOT may adopt a motion without further discussion. Motions that may have a broad impact on the fellowship are reviewed according to the following criteria:

- Does the motion call for concrete actions or changes that would impact S-Anon as a whole?
- Is the action called for in the motion legal and in compliance with regulations governing 501c3 nonprofit corporations?
- Is the motion calling for action that is within the WSC's "Traditional" role and not about corporate/legal functions of the BOT?
- Does the motion align with the principles of S-Anon's Steps, Traditions, and Concepts?
- Is the motion about an action that has already been or is being taken on an issue?
- Is the motion language respectful, and does it clearly state what is actually being proposed?
- Does the motion cover all information requested in the Motion Form, and is it limited to two pages in length?

Motions that meet these criteria are placed on the agenda and distributed to the Area Delegates for discussion within each Area.

### **Out of Order Motions**

Sometimes motions are received that are worthy of consideration, but do not rise to the standard of "affecting S-Anon as a whole" or do not meet the criteria in the bullet points above. Motions like this are considered "out of order."

An example would be a motion to change the reimbursement formula for Area Delegates. If a motion is received that is more limited in scope, or only affects a limited number of members in S-Anon, it is referred to the Board of Trustees or the appropriate Standing Committee for a response. Other examples of motions that are "out of order" include:

- A motion submitted from the fellowship for revisions to S-Anon literature. These are forwarded to the Literature Committee for consideration and recommendation. The Literature Committee, however, may submit motions to the WSC requesting "concept approval" for a major piece of literature or a change to the process by which literature becomes Conference Approved.
- A motion to relocate the World Service Office into a residence would be considered out of order as it would violate a zoning ordinance.
- A motion to donate to a shelter for victims of sexual abuse would be out of order. It is outside the scope of S-Anon's purpose (Tradition 6).
- A motion that states "S-Anon stands for helping relatives and friends of Sexaholics" would be out of order. No action is called for and it is redundant.

There is new writing underway to further define motions that are out of order.

### **ROLE OF AREA DELEGATES**

Area Delegates (AD) have important responsibilities before, during, and after a World Service Conference. The AD may also play an important role in the local and Area service structure.

**Prior to the WSC:** During the months leading up to the WSC, the ADs receive periodic communications from the WSC Committee. In May, ADs receive the motions to be considered at the WSC in July. The AD shares the motions with Area groups, encouraging all groups to review and discuss the motions, and then

report back with their views on each issue by a predetermined date. Some ADs attend various area S-Anon meetings and participate in the group conscience discussions, while others work through Intergroups and rely on group representatives to understand each group's position on the issues. Others email the motions to members and ask for feedback. Each AD and the groups in the Area have the freedom to design a communication process that works for the Area. The AD listens with an open mind to all points of view from the Area groups and prepares to bring the Area's perspective to the WSC. (NOTE: If an Area is unable to cover all or part of the expenses required for its AD to attend the WSC, partial financial support is available from the WSO).

**During the WSC:** ADs are expected to arrive at the WSC fully informed and able to present the views of Area groups on the motions to be considered (Concepts Four, Five). During the deliberation on each motion, ADs listen with an open mind to all points of view, thoughtfully and prayerfully considering the perspectives presented by other ADs and the Trustees. The AD then votes his or her conscience on each motion as she or he believes best supports the interests of the entire Fellowship (Tradition Two, Concept Twelve-Warranty Three).

**Following the WSC:** ADs report the results of the voting on each motion to their Area groups. Some ADs write a report and send it to groups via email. Others hold conference calls or share the results at meetings. This follow-up is important because it completes the communication cycle and keeps members informed.

## **ROLE OF ALTERNATE AREA DELEGATES**

In addition to the AD, each Area is encouraged to elect an Alternate Area Delegate (Alternate AD), who also registers with the WSO and is put into contact with the General Delegate Assembly. The Alternate AD, while not an official part of our service structure per the WSC Charter, learns about the AD role and responsibilities and may assist the AD with some of their tasks. They would perhaps be in a position to be the next logical AD at the end of the current AD's term or to step in if the elected AD cannot serve their full term. The Alternate AD may attend the WSC but does not have a voice or vote, unless the AD cannot attend at all, or has to leave the meeting due to unforeseen circumstances.

## **RECORDING THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE WSC**

The proceedings of the WSC are recorded. Only one copy of the recording is made and is archived at the WSO. Three microphones are used. One is for the Chairperson, who will stand at a podium at the front of the room. Two microphones on stands will be placed at either side of the room and be labeled "pro" and "con" respectively. Only WSC members may speak at the microphone, and they must line up and wait to be recognized by the Chairperson.

## **WSC MINUTES AND SUMMARY**

The Summary of the WSC Proceedings is written by the WSCC or someone they appoint soon after the conference ends. The WSC recording secretary prepares minutes from the recording of the conference. The WSCC Chair or his/her designee reviews the WSC minutes before they are distributed. Then the minutes are emailed to WSC members and an online voting process to approve the minutes is conducted. If a quorum of the WSC members who attended the meeting vote in favor, the minutes are approved.



After the minutes are approved and ready for distribution, the WSO Executive Director or his/her designee directs the webmaster to post the minutes on [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org). Individual S-Anon members beyond the BOT and Delegates can request a copy of the minutes, and the copy will be emailed after the minutes have been approved by the BOT and Delegates.

## **FELLOWSHIPWIDE GROUP CONSCIENCE**

A Fellowshipwide Group Conscience (FGC) is only conducted when a motion is passed by the WSC that makes a change to any of the S-Anon Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions or Twelve Concepts of Service. All other motions from the fellowship may be addressed by the WSC, the BOT and its standing committees, or the WSO.

Updated August 2023

# **Approval of S-Anon Literature**

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S-Anon's policy for literature is to aim at only the best; we firmly believe that poorly conceived and poorly executed literature is not in S-Anon's best interests.

Updated 8/22/2019

## **S-Anon Conference Approved Literature**

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All recovery literature that is published for S-Anon members is subject to the Conference Approval process. "Conference Approval" is a process that ensures recovery material developed for S-Anon reflects the group conscience of the S-Anon fellowship. The CAL process assures us that a piece of literature formally represents the S-Anon experience. The only exceptions are flyers announcing local recovery events, service-oriented materials compiled by a local group or Information Services body that relate to local events, and Service Literature. Service literature has a different process, and may or may not go through the Literature Committee. Any S-Anon member can submit ideas for Service Literature. For a clarification on the difference between recovery literature and service literature, see Part 5 of this manual, updated policies in the Appendices.

Updated 8/22/2019

## **Purpose of Conference Approval Process**

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Conference Approved Literature developed for S-Anon reflects the S-Anon principles of recovery and is an important means of fostering our growth, unity, and service. The Conference Approval process ensures that proposed recovery literature is reviewed by the Literature Committee, which is made up of Editors and Readers. This is a representative group of members from across the US and Canada that provide feedback throughout the process. After the reviewing process is completed by the S-Anon Literature Committee, the

material is then voted on by the BOT, Editors, and Readers before publication. This way, we ensure that S-Anon CAL will be an expression of experience strength and hope by a wide variety of S-Anon members.

Updated 8/22/2019

## Summary of the Conference Approval Process

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A motion to approve the concept for a new piece of literature or major re-visions to an existing piece of literature may come from any WSC member, BOT member, or from the Literature Committee Chair on behalf of the Literature Committee. Any conference approval project goes through a lengthy and thorough process. Major projects such as our published books are approved in concept by the World Service Conference, before beginning the CAL process. Minor projects, such as booklets and pamphlets, are approved in concept by the BOT. After the WSC or the BOT has approved the concept for a new piece of literature, the Literature Committee seeks budget approval, gathers original material, develops a draft, reviews the content, and makes revisions. The revised draft is reviewed until the material is considered by the Literature Committee Editors to be ready for publication. All Literature Committee members and BOT members then receive the final version and vote on whether or not it should be Conference Approved. A description of the full Conference Approval process appears in Part 5 of this manual, in Appendix I.

Updated 8/22/2019

## Approval of Other Published Material

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Local groups, Information Services Groups (Intergroups), or Area group service structures are autonomous in matters affecting the groups they serve. These bodies may occasionally want to distribute materials locally to make S-Anon members aware of recovery events or to disseminate service-oriented information. Because these communications may have an impact on S-Anon as a whole, it is imperative to ensure adherence to the Traditions and Concepts in communications provided to S-Anon members on a broad basis. The BOT encourages groups to submit Service Literature for review and reserves the right to review them prior to distribution. The S-Anon name can be used by registered groups for a local event, but the logo is trademarked, and cannot be reproduced.

### Posters

The BOT extends permission for the production of posters to be distributed within a designated area of service but reserves the right to review these items before they are printed and distributed in order to protect our public image. Such permission is not required when posters are for single local events. Please do not use the S-Anon logo.

Updated 8/22/2019

# S-Anon Publication Policies

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- In accordance with Tradition Eleven, the full name of an S-Anon member never appears in the title of S-Anon material, nor is authorship acknowledged.
- All published material becomes the sole property of the S-Anon fellowship. The author grants ownership to S-Anon by signing and submitting the Release Form which is found in Part 5 of this manual, in Appendix I.
- The First and Fourth Traditions of S-Anon provide guidelines to help prevent any group, Information Services Group (Intergroup), or any other service arm from publishing its own recovery literature outside of the S-Anon Conference Approval process.
- The S-Anon name and logo are trademarked and cannot be reproduced.
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- S-Anon published CAL has a revision process outlined in Appendix I.

Updated 8/22/2019

# Part 4 Conference Approved Meeting Format and Readings for S-Anon and S-Ateen Meetings

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## Suggested Format for S-Anon Meetings

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**Explanatory Note:** Meetings should open and close on time, but there is no rigid formula for an S-Anon meeting. This Suggested Meeting Format is included because most new groups find a general outline to be helpful, especially if no one in the group has attended any Twelve-Step meetings. The format is printed for your convenience. Because S-Anon groups are autonomous, not every group chooses to plan its meeting in this way. However, this format is Conference Approved, which means that it reflects the experience of a wide variety of S-Anon individuals and groups. We suggest that you try it, and then adapt or vary the format to suit the needs of your group. We ask only that you keep in mind that “adaptation” does not mean substituting readings from material that has not been Conference Approved (Tradition One), or changing any words in the S-Anon Conference Approved suggested readings. **(Literature published by S-Anon, SA, Al-Anon and AA is Conference Approved for use in our meetings.)** Further suggestions for successful meetings can be found in Part 1 of the *S-Anon /S-Ateen Service Manual*. All of the Conference Approved readings for S-Anon and S-Ateen meetings can be found in Part 4 of the *Service Manual*.

**1. *Will those who care to, join me in a moment of silence, followed by the Serenity Prayer?***

[Serenity Prayer is said.]

**2. *Hi, I'm \_\_\_\_\_, your leader for this meeting.***

[To open the meeting, The S-Anon Welcome may be read.]

**3. *The Preamble to the Twelve Steps of S-Anon describes the purpose of our group:***

[The S-Anon Preamble to the Twelve Steps may be read by the leader or another member.]

**4. *Here are the Twelve Steps we follow which are suggested for our recovery:***

[The S-Anon Twelve Steps are read. Many groups pass a copy of the Steps around the group and each member reads one (or more) of them.]

**5. *Our group experience suggests that the unity of the S-Anon Family Groups depends upon our adherence to the following Traditions:***

[The S-Anon Twelve Traditions are read; some groups read only the Tradition that corresponds to the month, for example, January – First Tradition.]

## 6. Newcomer Welcome

[At this point in the meeting, many groups have the leader ask if there are newcomers present, and if so, extend a further welcome as decided by the group members, assuring them that they are free to share or remain silent, as they wish. If a Newcomers Meeting is available, that information can be given at this point. Some groups set aside a specific time at the end of the meeting to deal with newcomers' issues.]

## 7. Introduction by First Name

[Group members introduce themselves by first name. Some groups wait until later in the meeting, after the announcements, to introduce themselves and join in saying the Serenity Prayer, so that those who come in after the meeting has started can be included.]

## 8. *We are seeking recovery from our own progressive illness:*

[The short or long version of The S-Anon Problem may be read at this time.]

## 9. *Our recovery depends upon our willingness to adopt new ways of thinking about ourselves and our problems:*

[The short or long version of Keys to S-Anon Recovery may be read at this time.]

## 10. *There are three Obstacles to Recovery in S-Anon:*

[Obstacles to Recovery may be read at this time.]

## 11. *Our Seventh Tradition states that “every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.” We have no dues or fees for membership. The Seventh Tradition collection is used to cover group expenses and to support local and world services.*

[Pass basket. For the benefit of newcomers, many groups say something like, “If this is your first meeting, we would like you to be our guest and not contribute.” Some groups pass two baskets, one for group expenses, and one to support S-Anon Twelfth-Step work at the national and international level. Some groups wait until the end of the meeting to ask for Seventh Tradition contributions.

## 12. Announcements and Secretary/Treasurer reports.

[Leader asks if there are any S-Anon-related announcements or a Secretary or Treasurer's report. Announcements could also be made at the end of the meeting or during the passing of the Seventh Tradition Basket.]

## 13. Meeting Guidelines

[Before sharing begins, the leader reads the following:]

***Because our common welfare comes first, here are the guidelines for sharing during our meeting:***

***If you wish to share, please wait your turn to share or wait to be recognized by the leader, as there is no crosstalk. That is, we share with the group as a whole, rather than addressing comments or questions to individual members. We limit the length of our sharing so that everyone here will have a chance to speak. Our purpose in sharing is to discuss ourselves, not the sexaholic. Our meetings focus on the S-Anon approach to recovery, so we avoid the mention or discussion of specific titles and authors of publications other than S-Anon Conference Approved Literature. We leave our other identities outside the discussion – other Twelve-Step issues, philosophies, religions, therapies, and occupations. We speak about and from the S-Anon point of view. Each member of the group is encouraged to remind other members, during the meeting if necessary, of our commitment to these guidelines.***

[These are the guidelines that most S-Anon (and other) family groups have found to best serve the recovery of all the members. They provide information to newcomers and serve as a reminder to all group members so that our meetings stay focused on recovery and provide a safe place to share feelings without having to explain or justify them. While all groups may not use these exact words, it is important that the guidelines you do use are supported by a group conscience of the members, and that a substantial majority of group members are committed to upholding them.]

#### **14. Leader Qualifies (optional)**

[Sometimes the meeting leader “qualifies” (talks about his/her membership in S-Anon), with a limit of 5 minutes or less. They tell, from a recovery point of view, what they were like before S-Anon, how they have changed, and generally share experience, strength, and hope in coming to terms with the family disease of sexaholism.]

#### **15. Meeting Opened for Sharing**

[Leader announces the format of the meeting (for example, a Step or Tradition Meeting) or introduces the topic.]

#### **16. Closing Reminder**

[When it is time for the meeting to end, the leader reads the following:]

***This is an anonymous program. We ask all members to respect our anonymity. The stories you hear are told in confidence and should not be repeated outside, including to spouses or family members. They are told so that we might better understand this program and ourselves, and to give encouragement and help to the newcomer, so that we may keep what we have been given.***

#### **17. Please read the Gifts of the S-Anon Program.**

[The Gifts of the S-Anon Program may be read at this time.]

**18. *Will those who care to join us in the closing prayer:***

[Leader asks someone to lead the group in saying the Serenity Prayer, Third Step Prayer, or other prayer from S-Anon Conference Approved Literature, as determined by the group.]

**KEEP COMING BACK! IT WORKS IF YOU WORK IT!**

## **Suggested Readings for S-Anon Meetings**

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### **SERENITY PRAYER**

God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change,  
courage to change the things I can,  
and wisdom to know the difference.

### **THE S-ANON WELCOME**

We welcome you to the \_\_\_\_\_ S-Anon Family Group and hope that in this fellowship you will find the help and friendship that we have been privileged to enjoy. We would like you to feel that we understand as perhaps few can. We too were lonely and frustrated; but here we have found that there is no situation too difficult to be bettered and no unhappiness too great to be lessened.

The S-Anon Family Groups consist of relatives and friends of sexaholics who realize that by banding together they can better solve their common problems. We urge you to try our program. Without spiritual help, living with, or having lived with a sexaholic is too much for most of us. We become nervous, irritable, and unreasonable; our thinking becomes confused, and our perspective becomes distorted. Rarely have we seen a person who was not greatly benefited by working the S-Anon program. The Twelve Steps of S-Anon, which we try to follow, are not easy. At first we may think that some of them are unnecessary, but if we are honest, open-minded, and willing to apply the principles of the Twelve Steps to our lives, we find that the benefits can be limitless, including God's gift of serenity.

### **S-ANON PREAMBLE TO THE TWELVE STEPS**

S-Anon is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other so that they may solve their common problems and help others to recover. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of sexaholism in a relative or friend. There are no dues or fees for S-Anon membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. S-Anon is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization, or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to recover from the effects upon us of another person's sexaholism and to help families and friends of sexaholics.

### **S-ANON TWELVE STEPS**

1. We admitted we were powerless over sexaholism—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

(The Twelve Steps reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps does not mean that AA has approved the contents of this work, nor that AA agrees with the views expressed therein. AA is a program of recovery from alcoholism only. Use of the Twelve Steps in connection with programs which are patterned after AA but which address other problems does not imply otherwise.)

#### The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous:

1. We admitted we were powerless of alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable. 2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*. 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. 7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all. 9. Made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. 10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it. 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and power to carry that out. 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Step, we tried to



carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

### **S-ANON TWELVE TRADITIONS**

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity.
2. 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.
3. The relatives of sexaholics, when gathered together for mutual aid, may call themselves an S-Anon Family Group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of sexaholism in a relative or friend.
4. Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or S-Anon or SA as a whole.
5. Each S-Anon Family Group has but one purpose: to help families of sexaholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of S-Anon, by encouraging and understanding our sexaholic relatives, and by welcoming and giving comfort to the families of sexaholics.
6. Our S-Anon Family Groups ought never endorse, finance, or lend our name to any outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim. Although a separate entity, we should always cooperate with Sexaholics Anonymous.
7. Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. S-Anon Twelfth-Step work should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. Our groups, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. The S-Anon Family Groups have no opinion on outside issues; hence our name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV, and films. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all S-Anon and SA members.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities.

(The Twelve Traditions reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Traditions does not mean that AA has approved the contents of this work, nor that AA agrees with the views expressed therein. AA is a

program of recovery from alcoholism only. Use of the Twelve Traditions in connection with programs which are patterned after AA but which address other problems does not imply otherwise.)

### **S-ANON TWELVE CONCEPTS OF SERVICE**

1. The ultimate responsibility and authority for S-Anon world services belongs to the S-Anon groups.
2. The S-Anon Family Groups have delegated complete administrative and operational authority to their Conference and its service arms.
3. The Right of Decision makes effective leadership possible.
4. Participation is the key to harmony.
5. The Rights of Appeal and Petition protect minorities and assure that they be heard.
6. The Conference acknowledges the primary administrative responsibility of the Trustees.
7. The Trustees have legal rights while the rights of the Conference are traditional.
8. The Board of Trustees delegates full authority for routine management of the S-Anon headquarters to its executive committees.
9. Good personal leadership at all service levels is a necessity. In the field of world service, the Board of Trustees assumes the primary leadership.
10. Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority, and double-headed management is avoided.
11. The World Service Office is composed of an Executive Director and staff members.
12. The spiritual foundation for S-Anon's world services is contained in the General Warranties of the Conference, Article 12 of the Charter.

### **THE GENERAL WARRANTIES OF THE CONFERENCE**

In all proceedings the World Service Conference of S-Anon shall observe the spirit of the Traditions:

1. That only sufficient operating funds, including an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle;
2. That no Conference member shall be placed in unqualified authority over other members;
3. That all decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, by unanimity;
4. That no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy;

5. That though the Conference serves S-Anon, it shall never perform any act of government; and like the fellowship of S-Anon which it serves, it shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

(The Twelve Concepts of Service reprinted and adapted with permission of Al-Anon World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Concepts does not imply that Al-Anon is affiliated with this program. Al-Anon is a program of recovery from the effects of alcoholism. Use of this material in conjunction with programs which are patterned after Al-Anon, but which address other problems, does not imply otherwise.)

### **THE S-ANON PROBLEM (Short Version)**

S-Anon members have much in common with the friends and relatives of other addicted people. Most of us grew up in families with secrets, and we were not taught to think about our own needs and take positive action to meet them. We chose friends and partners who could not or would not love and support us in a healthy way. We lived life from the standpoint of victims and perceived any personal criticism as a threat. For most of us, anger, fear, and depression were nearly constant. We acquired some unhealthy beliefs about ourselves very early in our lives—that we were not worthwhile and lovable, that we were able to control other people's behavior, and that sex was the most important sign of love.

We have also felt the shame of thinking we were responsible for the sexaholic behavior of a family member or friend. Our self-esteem dropped to low levels, and we doubted our attractiveness, our emotions, and our sanity. We have felt betrayed by those we loved the most. Many of us were sexually abused, exposed to diseases, and otherwise placed in physical danger. We were often too ashamed to ask for help.

Some of us minimized the importance of the sexaholic behavior or denied it until we felt emotionally numb. Others focused on the sexaholic and the sexual behavior to the point of obsession and tried every known method to control it. Some of us participated in sexual behavior that made us ashamed of ourselves or used sex to manipulate the sexaholic. Some of us misused drugs, alcohol, or food, and others kept so busy that we didn't have time to feel our emotions. We often neglected our health, our jobs, and our children. No matter how we tried to struggle against it, deny it, or minimize its effects, the failure of our efforts to cope with sexaholism brought us to the point of despair. This is what we mean when we say in the First Step, "our lives had become unmanageable."

### **THE S-ANON PROBLEM (Long Version)**

S-Anon members have much in common with the friends and family members of other addicted people. Most of us grew up in families with secrets, and we were not taught to think about our own needs and take positive action to meet them. As we grew up we felt more and more lonely and isolated as we chose friends and partners who could not or would not love and support us in a healthy way. We lived life from the standpoint of victims and perceived any personal criticism as a threat. For most of us, anger and depression were a way of life. We were so afraid of being left alone that anxiety and frustration were nearly constant. Whether or not we were exposed to sexaholism as children, most of us think that we acquired some unhealthy beliefs about ourselves very early in our lives—that we were not worthwhile and loveable, that we were able to control other people's behavior, and that sex was the most important sign of love.

What is different is that we have felt the additional shame of being involved with the sexaholism of a family member or friend. It does not matter a great deal whether that person was a member of our birth family, a partner, spouse, child, or someone outside the family like a friend, teacher, or boss. It does not matter whether we were willing, unwilling, or unknowing participants in the relationship—sexaholism deeply affected our lives. Our self-esteem dropped to lower and lower levels, and we doubted our attractiveness, our emotions, our sanity, and our human worth. We have felt betrayed by those we loved the most, and those of us who didn't know about the sexaholic behavior felt even more humiliated and stupid for not knowing. Many of us were sexually abused, exposed to sexually transmitted diseases, and otherwise placed in physical danger. We were often afraid to trust others and reach out for help because we were afraid of what they would think of us or of the sexaholic.

Some of us reacted to sexaholism by denying its existence or minimizing its importance. We stuffed our feelings of anger and abandonment to the point that we felt emotionally numb. We told ourselves things like "Everybody does this," "This shouldn't bother me," or even "It can't be true—he would never do that." Others focused on the sexaholic and the sexual behavior to the point of obsession. We tried every known method to control it. We lied and covered up, spied at doorways, listened to private conversations, checked up on the sexaholic's whereabouts, read through journals and personal papers, begged, pleaded, and threatened. Some of us participated in sexual behavior that we did not enjoy or that made us ashamed of ourselves. Many of us tried to use sex to manipulate the sexaholic, thinking that being part of the acting out would give us a little bit more control over our lives. Most of us felt that we must have done something to deserve this kind of treatment and that happiness was for others, not for us. Some of us misused drugs, alcohol, or food to numb the pain; others used activities, such as shopping, exercising, or working to keep from feeling our emotions. We often neglected our health, our jobs, and our children. No matter how we tried to struggle against it, deny it, or minimize its effects, the failure of our efforts to cope with sexaholism brought us to the point of despair. This is what we mean when we say in the First Step, "our lives had become unmanageable."

### **KEYS TO S-ANON RECOVERY (Short Version)**

Over time, S-Anon members learn to accept a number of new ideas:

1. Sexaholism is a disease very similar to alcoholism. At first many of us could not accept this idea. For S-Anon members, it means that we see sexaholics as sick people, not bad people. They are powerless over lust.
2. The actions of the sexaholic are not a result of something we did or did not do, and we do not have the power to control their behavior.
3. Our attempts to control or ignore sexual addiction led to a decline in our emotional health and may have enabled the sexaholic to continue to practice his or her disease.
4. When we first come to S-Anon, we, too, are spiritually and emotionally ill.

As we work toward full acceptance of these ideas, we begin to see our problems in a new light, and the awareness dawns that we do have choices concerning our own actions. This is the beginning of our recovery.

We remind ourselves that we are powerless over the behavior caused by sexaholism. We ask a Higher

Power to help us to stop blaming and trying to control the sexaholic; the sobriety of the sexaholic is not our responsibility. We realize we cannot find serenity for ourselves if we continue to focus on someone else's recovery, so we commit ourselves to our *own* recovery. With the loving help of other S-Anon members and the God of our understanding, we take positive action to make our lives more serene and fulfilling. We attend as many meetings as we can, get a sponsor, if possible, and begin to apply the principles of the Twelve Steps to our lives. We use the telephone, the S-Anon literature, and the S-Anon slogans. Eventually we reach out to help others and try to carry the message of our own recovery. We do these things in our own way, one day at a time—striving for progress, not perfection. This is what is meant by “working the program.”

### **KEYS TO S-ANON RECOVERY (Long Version)**

We accept sexaholism as a disease very similar to alcoholism. This means that we see sexaholics as sick people, not bad people. They are powerless over lust. At first many of us could not accept this idea. We thought it meant that sexaholics were somehow not responsible for their behavior, or that we were not entitled to our feelings of anger and hurt. But it does not mean either of those things. For S-Anons, it means that the actions of the sexaholic are not a result of something we did or did not do. We did not cause the sexaholic behavior by being stupid, weak, or unattractive, and we do not have the power to control it. However, as we tried to control or ignore the sexaholism in our lives, we often unknowingly acted in ways that led to a further decline in our emotional health and enabled the sexaholic to continue to practice his or her disease. Over a period of time, many of us took on the shame, guilt, and fear that characterize the disease of sexaholism, even though we may not have acted out sexually. We, too, became spiritually and emotionally ill. Once we begin to see our problems in this light, we can also see that we do have choices concerning our own behavior. This is the beginning of our recovery.

We remind ourselves as often as necessary that we are powerless over the behavior caused by sexaholism and all actions and reactions of other adults. We know we must stop blaming and trying to control the sexaholic and the acting out behavior. Just as we did not cause the sexaholic's acting out, we cannot ‘cure’ it. The sexual sobriety of the sexaholic is not our responsibility. While our encouragement and cooperation can be helpful to the sexaholic seeking recovery, real peace of mind for us depends upon changing our attitudes and eliminating our self-defeating behaviors. As the recovering alcoholics put it, “Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas, but the results were nil until we let go absolutely.”

We commit ourselves to our own recovery, taking full responsibility for our actions and reactions. With the loving help of other S-Anon members and the God of our understanding, we focus on taking positive action to make our lives more serene and fulfilling, regardless of whether or not the sexaholic chooses sobriety. We attend as many meetings as we can, get a sponsor, if possible, and begin to apply the principles of the Twelve Steps to our lives. We use the telephone, the S-Anon literature, and the S-Anon slogans. Eventually we reach out to help others and try to carry the message of our own recovery. We do these things in our own way, one day at a time—but we do them, striving for progress, not perfection. This is what is meant by “working the program.”

### **OBSTACLES TO RECOVERY**

To ensure the success of our meetings in solving our common problems, we must recognize and overcome

three obstacles to recovery that can destroy the group. The first is the discussion of any religious denomination. Compulsive lustings respects no particular religion; therefore, our program is designed to help us regardless of our various beliefs. Let us not defeat our purpose by discussing any particular denomination.

The second is gossip. We are here to help ourselves and other group members. A belittling discussion of others, including the sexaholic, or a discussion of personal affairs other than those concerning ourselves, will eventually eliminate the group.

The third is dictatorship. We have no dominating authorities or self-appointed leaders. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern. We do not give advice; we suggest by telling how we solved similar problems through our experiences. The very essence of S-Anon is that the whole program is “suggested.”

We have no creed, charges, obligations, or anything that would tend to hinder you. Your progress can be made in your own time and in your own way. We merely invite your attendance in a common cause.

(Reprinted and adapted from *Alcoholism, the Family Disease*, page 35, Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., Virginia Beach, VA.)

### GIFTS OF THE S-ANON PROGRAM

When we approach the process of recovery with honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness to apply the principles of the Twelve Steps to our lives, we will soon begin to see the rewards. We will become able to surrender our self-defeating behavior. We will find that we have the strength and insight to make good choices for ourselves. Our ability to act positively on behalf of our health, families, jobs, and bank accounts will amaze us. We will find that others are doing things for themselves, which we thought we had to do *for* them. Our ability to give and receive love will expand tremendously, and we will become increasingly available for loving relationships with others. We will recover the feeling of joy. We will become more honest with ourselves and experience a new comfort in our intimate relationships. We will feel the security that arises from true fellowship with others in the program, knowing that we are loved and accepted just as we are. Feelings of failure and inadequacy will be replaced by self-confidence and independence of spirit. We will no longer expect other people to provide us with an identity or a sense of self-worth. We will find the courage to be true to ourselves. We will know peace of mind and feel a stronger connection with the Higher Power of our understanding, and our hope will turn to faith that God is really working in our lives, as we explore the wonders of serenity, dignity, and emotional growth.

Updated 11/24/2020

## **Suggested Format for S-Ateen Meetings**

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**Explanatory Notes:** Meetings should open and close on time, but there is no rigid formula for an S-Ateen meeting. The meeting format is included as a convenient general outline for a new group, and can be particularly helpful if no one in the group has attended any Twelve Step meetings. Because S-Ateen groups are autonomous, not every group will choose to plan its meeting in this way. However, this is the S-Anon/S-

Ateen International Family Groups Conference Approved format, which means that it reflects the experience of a wide variety of S-Ateen individuals and groups.

We suggest that you start with the format and adapt or vary it to suit the needs of your group. All included readings are Conference Approved. Keep in mind that “adaptation” of the meeting format does not mean substituting readings that have not been Conference Approved (Tradition One) or changing or altering any words in the S-Ateen Conference Approved readings. **(Literature published by S-Anon, S- Ateen, SA, AI-Anon, Alateen and AA is considered Conference Approved for use in an S-Ateen meeting.)**

S-Ateen meetings are conducted separately from those of S-Anon and are guided by adult S-Anon members serving as S-Ateen sponsors. S-Ateen sponsors take their turn during the meeting to share on the topic, Step, or Tradition along with the teens. The sponsors share from their “teen years” and what they may remember growing up. It is suggested that sponsors have one year in S-Anon, have completed or are working the Twelve Steps, and attend S-Anon meetings regularly. It’s also suggested that a sponsor not be the parent of a potential S-Ateen member. Even if the parent insists there are no family secrets, it can result in a teen not feeling free to share in the meeting. Most S-Ateen groups start with two S-Ateen sponsors. Some groups have four or more sponsors, and find a rotating schedule that provides for at least two sponsors in attendance at each meeting works well. This also gives the teens the opportunity to hear other members’ stories.

It is important to remember that the S-Ateen meeting belongs to the teens. It is for them, run by them, and the S-Ateen Sponsors act as “guides” to help make sure the Meeting Guidelines and Traditions are followed.

Further suggestions for successful meetings can be found in *S-Ateen—Information about Sponsorship and Meetings* and in the section of the *S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual* entitled “Suggested Readings for S-Anon/S-Ateen Meetings.” (*The S-Anon/ S-Ateen Service Manual replaces the S-Anon Group Handbook.*)

## SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR S-ATEEN MEETINGS

[Note: ***Bold italic*** type in the meeting format below shows items to be read aloud.]

***In keeping with Tradition One, our common welfare comes first. We ask members to turn off all pagers and cell phones or place them in silent mode during the meeting. If you must answer a call during the meeting, please step out of the room to do so.***

***1. Will all those who care to, join me in a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer.***

***2. Hi, I’m \_\_\_\_\_, your leader for this meeting.***

***3. Will someone please read The S-Ateen Welcome?***

***4. The S-Ateen Preamble to the Twelve Steps describes the purpose of our group.***

[S-Ateen Preamble to the Twelve Steps may be read by the leader or another member.]

**5. Here are the Twelve Steps we follow which are suggested for our recovery:**

[The *S-Ateen Twelve Steps* are read. A group may choose to pass a copy of the Steps around the room so that each member has a chance to read one or more of the Steps, or one member may read all the Steps.]

**6. Our group experience suggests that the unity of the S-Ateen Groups depends upon our adherence to the following Traditions:**

[The *S-Ateen Twelve Traditions* are read. The group may choose to pass a copy of the Traditions around the room so that each member has a chance to read one or more of the Traditions, or one member may read all the Traditions.]

**7. Newcomer Welcome**

[At this point in the meeting, the group leader asks if newcomers are present and, if so, extends a welcome as decided by the group, assuring them that they are free to share or remain silent, as they wish. If a Newcomer Meeting is available, that information can be given at this point.]

**8. Introduction by First Name**

[Group members may introduce themselves by first name only. The group may instead wait until later in the meeting for members to introduce themselves and join in saying the Serenity Prayer, so that those arriving late can be included.]

**OPTIONAL READINGS**

[At this point the leader may read, or ask a member to read, one or more of the following:]

**9. We are seeking recovery from our own progressive illness.**

[*The S-Ateen Problem* may be read at this time.]

**10. Our recovery depends upon our willingness to adopt new ways of thinking about ourselves and our problems.**

[*Keys to S-Ateen Recovery* may be read at this time]

**11. There are three Obstacles to Recovery in S-Ateen.**

[*Obstacles to Recovery* may be read at this time.]

**12. Meeting Guidelines**

***Because our common welfare comes first, here are the guidelines for sharing during our***



***meeting:***

***We have been brought together by one common problem; let us concentrate on that. We leave our other identities outside the discussion, other Twelve Step issues, philosophies, religions, therapies, and occupations.***

***We resist the temptation to gossip and discourage it in others. Anything that is hurtful to one member takes away from the strength of the group.***

***There are no bosses or self-appointed leaders in S-Ateen; all members are equal.***

***We are patient with those who are slow to grasp the principles of the S-Ateen program. Each person must progress in his or her own way and time. We help each other by telling our experiences and how we have handled or solved similar problems.***

***We focus on the Twelve Steps during the meeting. Applying the Twelve Steps to our problems helps make our lives more peaceful and fulfilling. Let us not defeat our meeting's purpose by wasting time socializing or complaining. We are here to share about the solution rather than the problem.***

***Each individual member has his or her own time to share without being interrupted. We share with the group as a whole rather than addressing comments or questions to individual members. We do not mention specific titles and authors of publications other than S-Anon Conference Approved Literature (SA, S-Anon, S-Ateen, Al-Anon, Alateen, and AA Literature).***

***This is a place where our feelings are honored. One way we do that is to keep our hands to ourselves during the meeting. After the meeting we can ask for a hug or handshake. We can also politely say no to a hug if it doesn't feel right.***

***Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of our program. This means we keep in confidence everything that is said at meetings as well as whom we see in meetings. When members are assured that their attendance and sharing at S-Ateen will not be revealed outside the group, trust is built and they feel encouraged to speak freely. Knowing that "you can tell anything" to fellow S-Ateens has rich rewards for all, so we are careful to observe the principle of anonymity.***

**Note to adult S-Ateen sponsors:** Please read the following at any S-Ateen meeting where newcomers are present. It may be helpful to discuss this point in more detail.

***S-Ateen is a safe place to share, but we want to inform all members that if any ongoing, unresolved sexual abuse of children that has not been dealt with previously is shared in the S-Ateen meeting, it is the legal responsibility of the Sponsor to report this to the proper authorities.***

**13. Leader Qualifies (optional)**

[The leader may take about five minutes to “qualify” (talk about his/her membership in S-Ateen). This is particularly helpful if a special Newcomer Meeting is not available. The leader tells, from a recovery point of view, what he or she was like before S-Ateen, how his or her life has changed, and how he or she in general has come to terms with the family disease of sexaholism. For a newly founded group, this might be done by an S-Ateen sponsor for the first month or two before handing the responsibility to the teen members. The S-Ateen sponsors will remain in the room throughout the meeting to provide support and guidance.]

#### **14. Meeting Opened for Sharing.**

[Leader announces the topic of the meeting (for example, a Step, Tradition, slogan, or other topic from Conference Approved literature). When a newcomer is present, the group may choose to stay together for a First Step Meeting, or one or two members might meet separately with the newcomer for a special Newcomer Meeting.]

#### **15. *Our Seventh Tradition states that every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.***

[Pass a basket or envelope for collection of Seventh Tradition contributions. For the benefit of newcomers, the groups may say something like, “If this is your first meeting, we would like you to be our guest and not contribute.” Some groups choose to take two collections, one to cover group expenses and one to support S-Ateen Twelfth Step work such as a local S-Anon/S-Ateen Intergroup, a local contact phone line, or services provided by our World Service Office.]

#### **16. Announcements and Reports**

[Leader asks if there are any S-Ateen-related announcements, which might include a group Secretary or Treasurer’s report.]

#### **17. Closing Reminder**

[The leader reads the Closing Reminder.]

***This is an anonymous program. We ask all members to respect our anonymity. The stories you hear are told in confidence and should not be repeated outside. The opinions expressed here were strictly those of the person who gave them. Take what you like and leave the rest. The stories are told so that we might better understand this program and ourselves, and to give encouragement and help to the newcomer, so we may keep what we have been given. Talk to each other, reason things out with someone else, but let there be no gossip or criticism of one another. Instead, let the understanding, love and peace of the program grow in you one day at a time.***

#### **18. *Will those who care to do so, join us in the closing prayer.***

[Leader asks someone to lead the group in saying the Serenity Prayer or other prayer from Conference

Approved literature that is acceptable to the group.]

# **Suggested Readings for S-Ateen Meetings**

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## **THE S-ATEEN WELCOME**

We welcome you to the \_\_\_\_\_ S-Ateen Group and hope that in this fellowship you will find the help and friendship that we have been privileged to enjoy. We would like you to feel that we understand as perhaps few can. We too were lonely and frustrated; but here we have found that there is no situation too difficult to be bettered and no unhappiness too great to be lessened. In S-Ateen we discover that it is possible for us to find contentment, and even happiness, whether or not the sexaholic or other family members are in recovery.

S-Ateen Groups consist of teenage relatives and friends of sexaholics who realize that by banding together they can better solve their common problems. We urge you to try our program. Without spiritual help, living with, or having lived with, a sexaholic is too much for most of us. So much depends on our own attitudes. As we learn to place our problem in its true perspective, we find it loses its power to rule our thoughts and our lives. It has helped many of us find solutions that lead to peace in our lives. Rarely have we seen a young person who was not greatly benefited by working the S-Ateen program.

The Twelve Steps of S-Ateen, which we try to follow, are not easy. At first we may think that some of them are unnecessary, but when we try, one day at a time, to apply them to our lives along with the tools of the S-Ateen program, the benefits can be limitless. We will come to know God's gift of serenity.

## **S-ATEEN PREAMBLE TO THE TWELVE STEPS**

S-Ateen is a fellowship of young people who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other so that they may solve their common problems and help others to recover. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of sexaholism in a relative or friend.

There are no dues or fees for S-Ateen membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. We do not discuss religion in our meetings or become involved as a group with any outside organization. Our primary purpose is to recover from the effects upon us of another person's sexaholism and to help families and friends of sexaholics.

We believe sexaholism is a family disease because it affects all the members emotionally, spiritually, and sometimes physically. We cannot change or control our parents, family members, or friends. We can detach from their problems while continuing to love them and ourselves. By applying the Twelve Steps to ourselves, we begin to grow mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

## **S-ATEEN TWELVE STEPS**

1. We admitted we were powerless over sexaholism—that our lives had become unmanageable.

2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

(The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions are reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions does not mean that AA has approved the contents of this work, not that AA agrees with the views expressed herein. AA is a program of recovery from alcoholism only. Use of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in connection with programs which are patterned after AA but which address other problems does not imply otherwise.)

#### THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS:

1. We admitted we were powerless of alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable. 2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*. 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. 7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all. 9. Made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. 10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it. 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and power to carry that out. 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Step, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

## **S-ATEEN TWELVE TRADITIONS**

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity.
2. 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.
3. The teenage relatives of sexaholics, when gathered together for mutual aid, may call themselves an S-Ateen Group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of sexaholism in a relative or friend.
4. Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting S-Ateen groups or S-Anon or SA as a whole.
5. Each S-Ateen group has but one purpose: to help other young people who have been affected by the sexaholism of a family member or friend. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of S-Ateen, by encouraging and understanding the members of our family, and by welcoming and giving comfort to the families and friends of sexaholics.
6. S-Ateens, being part of S-Anon Family Groups, ought never endorse, finance, or lend our name to any outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim. Although a separate entity, we should always cooperate with Sexaholics Anonymous.
7. Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. S-Ateen Twelfth Step work should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. Our groups, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. The S-Ateen Groups have no opinion on outside issues; hence our name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV, films, and other public media. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all S-Ateen, S-Anon, and SA members.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities.

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which are patterned after AA but which address other problems does not imply otherwise.)

## **THE S-ATEEN PROBLEM**

S-Ateen members have much in common with the friends and relatives of other addicted people. Most of us lived with or are living in families with secrets and we have believed that it was our responsibility to keep those secrets, no matter how destructive. We were not taught to think about our own needs and take positive action to meet them. We chose friends who could not or would not love and support us in a healthy way. We lived life from the standpoint of victims and perceived any personal criticism as a threat. For most of us, anger, fear, loneliness, and depression were nearly constant. We acquired some unhealthy beliefs about ourselves very early in our lives—that we were not worthwhile and lovable, that we were able to control other people's behavior, and that sex was the most important sign of love, affection and self-worth.

We may have also felt the shame of thinking we were responsible for the sexaholic behavior of a parent, family member, or friend. Many of us felt responsible for the happiness and safety of our parents or our siblings as well. Our self-esteem dropped to low levels, and we doubted our worth, our emotions, and at times even our sanity. We have felt betrayed by those we loved the most. Some of us were sexually abused or knew that other family members were being abused. Others witnessed sexual behavior or participated in sexual behavior that made us ashamed of ourselves. Sometimes we were placed in physical danger. In some cases a parent or other family member shared inappropriate information with us in ways that made us feel uncomfortable. Many of us were ashamed of what was happening in the family, but we often did not ask for help, did not know where to find help, or were not believed if we did share about the problem.

Some of us, knowing we could not leave the situation, minimized the importance of the sexaholic behavior or denied it until we felt emotionally numb. Others kept the family secrets because we feared retaliation, hurting other family members, or causing a crisis by talking about the problem. Many of us focused on the behavior of the sexaholic or other family members to the point of obsession and tried every known method to control or escape from their behavior. Some of us misused drugs, alcohol, or food, and others kept so busy that we did not have time to feel our emotions. We often neglected our health, jobs, schoolwork, and our friendships. No matter how we tried to struggle against it, deny it, or minimize its effects, the failure of our efforts to cope with sexaholism brought us to the point of despair. This is what we mean when we say in the First Step, "our lives had become unmanageable."

## **KEYS TO S-ATEEN RECOVERY**

Over time, S-Ateen members learn to accept a number of new ideas:

- Sexaholism is a disease very similar to alcoholism. At first, many of us could not accept this idea. For S-Ateen members, it means we see sexaholics as sick people, not bad people. They are powerless over lust.
- The actions of the sexaholic are not a result of something we did or did not do, and we do not have the power to control their behavior.
- The attempts of the non-sexaholic parent to control or ignore sexual addiction led to a decline in their emotional health and may have enabled the sexaholic to continue to practice his or her disease. The actions

and attitudes of each parent concerning the sexaholism in the home affected every family member, including us.

- Our attempts to control sexual addiction and keep the family secrets led to a decline in our emotional health.
- When we first come to S-Ateen, we, too, may be spiritually and emotionally ill.
- Growing up in a sexaholic home will influence many of our life choices, including our choice of a partner, unless we identify and address our own unhealthy beliefs and behaviors that we have learned through living with the family disease of sexaholism.

As we work toward full acceptance of these ideas, we begin to see our problems in a new light, and the awareness dawns that we do have choices concerning our own actions. This is the beginning of our recovery.

We remind ourselves that we are powerless over the behavior caused by sexaholism. We ask a Higher Power to help us to stop blaming and trying to control the sexaholic and other family members. The sobriety of the sexaholic and the welfare of other family members are not our responsibility. We realize we cannot find serenity for ourselves if we continue to focus on someone else's recovery, so we commit ourselves to our own recovery. With the loving help of other S-Ateen members, our S-Ateen sponsors, and the God of our understanding, we take positive action to make our lives more serene and fulfilling. We attend as many meetings as we can, get support from other S-Ateens, and begin to apply the Twelve Steps to our lives. We use the telephone, S-Ateen Conference Approved Literature, and the S-Ateen slogans. Eventually we reach out to help others and try to carry the message of our own recovery. We do these things in our own way, one day at a time—striving for progress, not perfection. This is what is meant by “working the program.”

## **OBSTACLES TO RECOVERY**

To ensure the success of our meetings in solving our common problems, we must recognize and overcome three obstacles to recovery that can destroy the group.

The first is the discussion of any religious denomination. Compulsive lusting respects no particular religion; therefore, our program is designed to help us regardless of our various beliefs. Let us not defeat our purpose by discussing any particular denomination.

The second is gossip. We are here to help ourselves and other group members. A belittling discussion of others, including the sexaholic, or a discussion of personal affairs other than those concerning ourselves, will eventually eliminate the group.

The third is dictatorship. We have no dominating authorities or self-appointed leaders. Our S-Ateen sponsors are but trusted servants, they do not govern our meetings. They are not here as professional counselors or parent substitutes. They are here as special people who offer us loving guidance and support as we learn to support each other. As S-Ateen members, we do not give advice; we suggest by telling how we solved similar problems through our experiences. The very essence of S-Ateen is that the whole

program is “suggested.”

We have no creed, charges, obligations or anything that would tend to hinder you. Your progress can be made in your own time and in your own way. We merely invite your attendance in a common cause.

(Reprinted and adapted from *Alcoholism, the Family Disease*, page 35, Al- Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., Virginia Beach, VA.)



## Part 5. Appendices

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### A. Group and Meetings Forms

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“All Group Forms are located on the S-Anon website, Member page, under Member & Group Resources, Registration Forms.”

Updated 3/11/2021

### B. S-Anon Group Banking Information Summary

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Please note that S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation and has been granted tax exempt status. However, the S-Anon World Service Office tax ID# is for WSO use only. Our corporate charter prohibits the use of this number by individuals or groups.

Here's some summary information on banking for S-Anon groups in the United States. We strongly encourage S-Anon groups and service committees contact a licensed local tax professional for advice on these matters.

Please keep in mind that this information relates solely to US federal rules. It does not extend to state regulations; groups should separately investigate requirements for their appropriate jurisdiction.

#### **Group Checking (Demand Deposit) Accounts**

Many S-Anon groups decide to use a bank checking account to help manage and protect the S-Anon funds they collect. While this commitment to accountability is commendable, proper diligence should be exercised when a group decides to open a bank checking account.

Such accounts typically require an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax identification number. Two different numbers might be used for this purpose: an individual's Social Security Number (SSN) or an Employer Identification Number (EIN) for groups and entities other than individuals.

If an individual's SSN is used to open an account, he or she will be held responsible for the financial activity of that account regardless of whether he or she has knowledge of or has participated in the checking account activity. Also, the funds in the account may be considered the personal funds of the individual whose SSN is on the account, and in some cases may be accessed by that individual as long as that SSN is on the account. For these reasons, it may be prudent that groups in the US use an IRS federal EIN to open a checking account.

#### **Digital Payment Platforms**

There are a number of groups that have utilized a cashless platform to provide opportunities for their

members to make donations to the 7th tradition basket. There are various digital platforms to facilitate this service. It is up to each group to determine which if any platform or platforms to utilize, as well as if the treasurer and or another position within the group helps facilitate use of a digital payment option.

### **Employer Identification Number**

The Employer Identification Number (EIN), also known as a federal tax identification number, is used by the IRS for identification purposes. If your group is interested in acquiring an EIN, you will need to apply to the IRS using Form SS-4. This will involve a volunteer or a group of volunteers to set this up and meet any future related obligations.

### **Tax Liability**

Most groups do not collect enough funds to have a tax liability. A 501©(3) however will require filing a tax return every year, regardless of the amount of funds. Whether an S-Anon group must file a tax return depends on how much money they receive each year. We suggest checking with a licensed local tax professional for advice on how to best meet your IRS reporting obligations, if any.

### **Nonprofit Organizations**

A nonprofit organization is one that, when it generates income in excess of expenses, does not use that excess in ways that personally “profit” its members or directors. For example, if a group collected \$1,000 during the year and actually spent only \$900, the group would not divide the leftover \$100 among its members. A group conscience can be held to determine what to do with leftover funds. While S-Anon groups practice the principle of being nonprofit, the legal status of an S-Anon group is a different matter. Such status is discussed further in the next section.

### **Tax-Exempt Status**

Acquiring an EIN and securing tax-exempt status are two very different things. An EIN can be obtained relatively easily; tax-exempt status is a much more complex endeavor. Typically, tax-exempt status is achieved as part of the process of becoming a 501©(3) corporation. This sometimes-costly process of incorporating requires formal, detailed reporting and financial accountability to the IRS and state agencies on an ongoing basis. For these reasons, we strongly recommend discussing the topic with a licensed tax professional familiar with not-for-profit and tax-exempt entities.

### **State Sales Tax**

Many states require consumers to pay a tax on goods and services purchased or used in their states. Typically, S-Anon groups must pay these taxes. Those groups who have secured 501©(3) status may check with their state tax agency for the application of this tax in their state.

Updated April 2022

## **C. Form to Submit Local Contact Information for Inquirers**

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[Group Registration Form](#)

The Group Registration Form is located on the Member Only Site.

## D. Board of Trustees Responses to Traditions-Related Questions

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### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

One of the functions of the Board of Trustees is to “provide guidance in matters of policy.” Over the years, the Board of Trustees (BOT), formerly called the S-Anon International Committee (SIC), has received questions from individuals and groups of S-Anon members about a variety of issues. Some of the questions have been asked so often that it seemed more efficient to draft letters of response to particular issues that could be tailored to individual circumstances, rather than having to start from the beginning to draft each response.

All of the responses to date have included statements that we felt were of universal importance when considering any Tradition- or Concept-related issues:

- The Traditions are our pattern for guidance in S-Anon, since they provide the unity that affords personal progress for the greatest number in our fellowship. In reviewing any issue, we focus on how the Traditions speak to that particular issue.
- The Board of Trustees is composed of individuals, and any Traditions-related issue brings up feelings and opinions as we discuss it. In this regard, we are very aware of the importance of applying Tradition Two. That is, we thoroughly study and consider all elements of the problem before coming to a decision, trusting that a Higher Power is expressing Himself through this group conscience process.
- Tradition Five reminds us that our primary spiritual aim is to help families of sexaholics, and Tradition One suggests that our common welfare and unity depend on our willingness to agree with what is best for S-Anon as a whole as reflected in our Group Conscience decisions (Traditions Two).

The responses in this section are considered in light of the statements above.

The BOT is aware that it can set no absolutes for the fellowship. Each group is autonomous so long as it does nothing that could affect other S-Anon groups or S-Anon as a whole. While each issue presents unique challenges within unique groups, we believe that the wisdom of the Traditions can help us not only to resolve the issues, but to grow.

When groups are called upon to make decisions in areas that may affect S-Anon as a whole, we suggest that you keep in mind the process described below:

### What is a Group Conscience?

As stated in Tradition Two, “Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern” and do not exercise

personal power or authority. S-Anon's Second Tradition of S-Anon indicates that important decisions within the group [or committee] are made by means of what is called a "group conscience." Simply put, a group conscience asks for a show of opinion by members of the group, but there is more to it than just a "majority rule" voting procedure. Together, the members seek to be guided by a Higher Power in reaching a decision that will be good for the group as a whole rather than for any one member or small group of members.

"When group members decide that a group conscience should be taken, we do our best to assure that the following criteria are met:

- All group members are well informed on the issue.
- All sides of the issue have been heard and thoroughly discussed.
- All members have had advance notice of the date of the upcoming group conscience.
- A substantial majority supports the decision.

"When these conditions have been met, we feel confident that a loving God has been expressed in our process. We guard against unintentional domination by any individual or small group by making sure that the group conscience process is carried out in a thoughtful and prayerful manner." (S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual, part one, Group Decision Making).

### **Who belongs in S-Anon?**

From S-Anon Tradition Three and the "S-Anon Preamble to the Twelve Steps": "The only requirement for [S-Anon] membership is that there be a problem of sexaholism in a relative or friend."

From "S-Anon Traditions One, Two, and Three, pamphlet, p. 27: "We each decide for ourselves if we belong in S-Anon. ... We qualify for S-Anon because someone's sexual behavior concerns us. Our personal philosophy, political views, education, profession, economic status, sexual orientation, race, and religious background are not relevant... "

From "S-Anon Traditions One, Two, and Three," pamphlet, p. 28: "We welcome and accept all who have been affected by sexaholism. It is not necessary that the sexaholic acknowledge his or her disease or be in recovery [in SA or any other sexual addiction recovery program] or us to seek help for ourselves in S-Anon."

S-Anon considers the recovery program of the sexaholic, or lack thereof, to be an "outside issue" that does not affect a person's qualification for S-Anon membership.

"Occasionally, sexaholics may realize that they have been affected by the sexaholism of another person, and therefore they also qualify for S-Anon. We offer them the same welcome and compassion that we give to all new members."

### **Can S-Anon cooperate with fellowships other than Sexaholics Anonymous?**

(The following is taken directly from the PSSC "findings" after studying this issue in 2014.)

"While S-Anon's Tradition Six instructs S-Anon to cooperate with SA, S-Anon groups are not prohibited by

this or any of our other Traditions from cooperating with other entities, including institutions, the professional community, or by extension, other Twelve Step groups, in furthering our primary purpose, i.e., to help families of sexaholics. The Traditions considerations listed below should guide any such cooperation.

Tradition One: Only S-Anon CAL should be used and/or sold, the S-Anon meeting format, anonymity, and all S-Anon principles and guidelines must be observed. The S-Anon portion of the event must be clearly and completely under the direction of S-Anon.

Traditions One and Two: To make sure the unity of the local group(s) is maintained, the decision to cooperate with another entity in this manner should be supported by substantial unanimity among the members or groups involved.

Tradition Three: The event itself, and/or the S-Anon portion of the event, must be open to all who qualify for S-Anon.

Tradition Four: Before the final decision is made to cooperate with another entity, all groups in the local area should be consulted (see 2. above) and if SA exists in the area, local SA should be consulted, not for permission, but to see if they have any concerns S-Anon might want to consider. Also keep in mind that Cooperation with a local entity cannot affect S-Anon or SA as a whole.

Tradition Five: If our Tradition One guidelines and principles (see 1. above) can not be observed in the context of full participation in an event, we could consider making literature and/or a contact phone number or website url available.

Tradition Six: This AI-Anon quote is directly relevant:

“Tradition Six specifically states that AI-Anon is a separate entity. Therefore, in keeping with this Tradition, there can be no combining, joining, or uniting, which would result in the loss of identity of either fellowship. Separateness rules out affiliation or merging, but it does not exclude cooperation with AA or acting together for mutual benefit. [italics and bolding added] [“AI-Anon Guidelines: Cooperation between AI-Anon and A.A.” (Publication G-3)]

Tradition Seven: “No S-Anon funds should be used to support another entity.”

*Updated May 2021*

## **QUESTIONS ABOUT CONFERENCE APPROVED LITERATURE (CAL)**

### **What about using non-CAL in meetings?**

In reviewing this issue, we focus on how Traditions One, Four, and Six speak to using outside literature. From Tradition One in *Working the S-Anon Program*, Second Edition, page 29:

“Tradition One asks us to recognize that the needs or desires of one individual, or even one group, do not take precedence over the need for the S-Anon fellowship to maintain unity of purpose and

message....Our S-Anon Conference Approved Literature (CAL) is written material that conveys S-Anon's unified message of experience, strength and hope to each group and individual member, so we use only CAL at our meetings to maintain our unity."

Tradition Four, *Working the S-Anon Program*, Second Edition, page 31-32 notes:

"“Each group has autonomy in matters such as what time the meeting starts and ends, adding special newcomer meetings, or choosing a closing prayer...On the other hand, bringing outside literature into the meeting, adding outside readings to the meeting format, or changing the wording of CAL are examples of matters that would affect S-Anon as a whole..... we limit the use of literature in our meetings to S-Anon CAL...this assures that the focus in our meetings remains on S-Anon principles.”

With regard to Tradition Six, from the *S-Anon Traditions Four, Five, and Six* booklet, page 32:

"...we do not promote anything that is not S-Anon, such as literature that is not CAL, announcements, order forms, therapy referrals, or therapeutic models, because promotion is a form of endorsement."

In summary, we note that several sections in Part 1 of the *S-Anon / S-Ateen Service Manual* say:

"As mentioned previously, our meetings focus on the S-Anon approach to recovery. In the spirit of unity, during our meetings we avoid the mention of specific titles or authors, or discussion of any publications other than S-Anon Conference Approved Literature..... This recommendation includes mention or discussion of specific television shows, movies, Web sites, magazines, articles, etc. Experience has shown us several other reasons for using only Conference Approved Literature during meetings:

- It focuses on the solution rather than the problem and explains the Twelve-Step approach to recovery
- It reflects an informed group conscience
- It helps us to avoid even the appearance of endorsing, directly or indirectly, any theory of sexual addiction or co-addiction, or particular therapeutic approach to recovery (Tradition Six)
- It speaks directly to our recovery from the effects of sexaholism, based upon the experiences of other S-Anon members (Tradition Five).

Many outside publications on sexaholism, co-addiction, religion, and philosophy appeal to S-Anon members as individuals. Members are encouraged to read whatever they find helpful, but S-Anon cannot assume the responsibility for evaluating or recommending reading matter other than S-Anon Conference Approved Literature. Understanding of Traditions One and Four leads us to avoid the promotion or sale of outside literature at our meetings.

To guard against the dilution of the S-Anon program (Tradition Four), S-Anon groups use S-Anon-published literature as the primary recovery tool. S-Anon literature is written by S-Anon members, addresses the S-Anon "problem" as experienced by the group conscience of S-Anon members, and addresses the S-Anon "solution" as experienced by S-Anon members using the S-Anon Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of

Service. We also ask that other S-Anon Conference Approved Literature be used in meetings only as a complement to S-Anon published literature.

We believe that the wisdom of these Traditions, built on the experience of thousands in recovery, is the rationale behind not using outside literature during meetings. Members are free to share with each other as individuals *outside of meeting time* any helpful literature and experiences that lie outside the realm of the S-Anon program. As our Service Manual says, “These Traditions and guidelines merely help to assure that our meetings present a strong and clear picture of S-Anon’s purpose and function.”

*Updated December 2021*

### **What about using the Bible during our meetings?**

[The statements shown in the previous response were included in the response to this question, with the addition of the following paragraph.]

“...because the Bible is not just any book, but a book clearly tied to specific religious faiths, we remind you that the first obstacle to recovery is “the discussion of any religious denomination... Let us not defeat our purpose by discussing any particular religious denomination.” S-Anon is a fellowship of individuals that practice many religions, not only those which use the Bible. To keep it safe for us all, the discussion at our meetings does not refer to specific religious writings or beliefs. Members, of course, do not leave their faiths at the front door of S-Anon meetings. In meetings we simply share our experience on spiritual matters in a general way that respects the right of each individual to believe in a Higher Power of his or her own understanding. (For example, “This morning I was reading about forgiveness in the book of my faith tradition. As I meditated on the reading, I became aware that I still had not forgiven the sexaholic in my life...”)

*Updated December 2021*

### **Is it all right to maintain a lending library of Non-CAL?**

In reviewing this issue, we focus on how Traditions One, Four and Six in particular speak to outside literature. Even though you are not planning on using the outside literature during the meeting, we believe that just announcing that your group has a “lending library” of outside literature would constitute endorsement of this outside literature.

*Updated December 2021*

### **Is it all right to make our own copies of CAL?**

In general, it is not OK to reproduce or copy S-Anon literature or share a downloaded e-version at in-person or virtual meetings, and we want you to understand the reason why.

In the early 1990s, the S-Anon International Committee (forerunner to the Board of Trustees) determined that, in order to be fully self-supporting and preserve S-Anon’s unity, the fellowship should further develop

its own literature. To make sure that S-Anon's unique message would remain consistent, a Conference Approved Literature process similar to that of Al-Anon was developed. The many volunteer members of the S-Anon Literature Committee began to develop literature that was truly our own experience, strength, and hope. They continue their work today. All CAL is copyrighted and cannot be reproduced in any way.

In order to preserve unity, S-Anon does not permit reproduction of copyrighted literature. We ask that members and others who use our literature purchase it from the S-Anon World Service Office. First and foremost, this respects the copyright of the literature and ensures that only the most recent versions of our literature are in circulation. Second, the affixation of the S-Anon logo helps readers know the literature is "S-Anon." That is, it helps uphold the safety of our meetings and programs; what a member sees and reads in one group will be the same as that used in another group. Third, newcomers and others who are not familiar with S-Anon literature and our copyright policy who see excerpts of our CAL being reproduced and shared may have the impression that they are also free to reproduce our literature. Finally, purchasing all literature from S-Anon helps to support our World Service Office member services.

Tradition Four states "each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or S-Anon or SA as a whole." While purchasing from the World Service Office obviously entails a greater financial cost than producing your own packet, we hope this explanation illustrates that producing your own packet might be a greater cost to S-Anon as a whole.

All this being said, there are some S-Anon materials acceptable for reprint:

- Service Literature downloadable from [member.sanon.org](http://member.sanon.org) may be reproduced without alteration or reduction.
- The Meeting Format and Readings are available for download from our website to be printed for use by groups.
- The S-Anon International Family Groups World Service Office grants permission for certain materials, or precise translations thereof, to be posted on group or intergroup websites. Postings must acknowledge S-Anon by including a credit line. These materials are posted on [member.sanon.org](http://member.sanon.org).

*Updated December 2021*

## **QUESTIONS ABOUT THE MEETING FORMAT**

### **What prayers are suggested for use in closing our meetings?**

In response to your letter concerning prayers that are appropriate when closing S-Anon meetings, we refer you to the Conference Approved S-Anon Meeting Format that is printed in our book, *Working The S-Anon Program* and in our Service Manual. It states: "Leader asks someone to lead the group in saying the Serenity Prayer, Third Step Prayer, or other prayer from our Conference Approved Literature." The Serenity Prayer, Third Step Prayer, Seventh Step Prayer, and Eleventh Step Prayer can all be found in our S-Anon literature; they were originally adopted from AA literature. Therefore, these prayers are all Conference Approved for use in our meetings. The Lord's Prayer is not printed in or mentioned in any literature published by S-Anon, and as far as we know, it is not printed in AA, Al-Anon or SA literature. The Lord's Prayer is occasionally mentioned in AA literature, but the actual text of the prayer is not included.



Along the same lines, S-Anon's "Obstacles to Recovery" Conference Approved reading cautions us against "the discussion of *any* religious denomination" (emphasis added). S-Anon is a fellowship of individuals that practice many different religions, so to keep our meetings comfortable for all, we are urged not to refer to *any* specific religious writings or beliefs.

*Updated December 2021*

## **Do We Have to Use the Conference Approved Meeting Format**

The following statements appear in our *S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual*:

"The Meeting Format contained in Part 4 of the Service Manual is Conference Approved, which means that it has been developed and revised according to the experiences of members of S-Anon groups worldwide. We suggest that you try it and then adapt it, if desired, to suit the needs of your group."

*"... adaptation of the Meeting Format does not mean changing any words in the S-Anon or S-Ateen Conference Approved readings."*

"...as stated in our Fourth Tradition, groups may exercise their autonomy and choose to customize the Meeting Format, including the "Meeting Guidelines" section, to better serve their needs."

"Making changes to the Conference Approved Readings, however, presents an interpretation of how the program works that may be contrary to the collective experience of S-Anon members, even though this may not be the intention of those creating the substitutions."

Please try the Meeting Format as presented and then adapt it as determined by group conscience, to suit the needs of the group. Meeting format adaptation is described more fully in our *S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual* Part One section titled "Customizing the Meeting Format."

*Updated December 2021*

## **QUESTIONS ABOUT REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP**

### **Are children allowed in S-Anon meetings?**

The key Traditions guiding our thinking on the subject of children in meetings are Traditions One, Three, and Twelve. Tradition One: Our common welfare should come first... With the exception of pre-verbal infants, the presence of children who are not attending S-Anon gatherings for mutual aid can have the effect of limiting the sharing by other S-Anon members. Members who need to share adult concerns may feel inhibited from doing so with children present because it would expose the children to age-inappropriate discussions. Likewise, if a pre-verbal infant becomes a distraction or disruption to member(s) in a meeting, then the S-Anon(s) bothered by the distracting behavior should gently let the parent know that for the common welfare the child should be removed from the meeting. "Tradition One asks us to recognize that the needs or desires of one individual ... do not take precedence over the need for the S-Anon fellowship to

maintain unity of purpose and message.” (Working the S-Anon Program, p. 29)

Tradition Three contains two key points: First, that members who gather for mutual aid may call themselves an S-Anon Family Group. Second, that there must be a problem of sexaholism in a relative or friend. If a person of any age is seeking to give and receive support (mutual aid) and he or she identifies a problem of sexaholism in a relative or friend, then that person meets the only membership requirement of S-Anon.

The fact that a child is related to a sexaholic, is affected by sexaholism, or has a sexaholic friend does not automatically make the child a member of S-Anon. The key is the child’s expressed need for giving and receiving support and his or her identification of a problem of sexaholism in a relative or friend. Children who are brought to an S-Anon Family Group simply because of a childcare problem do not attend in the spirit of Tradition Three. Children are not S-Anon members unless they are attending to get help for their personal pain and recovery from the effects of sexaholism.

Although SA and S-Anon are based on the principles of AA and AI-Anon, due to the unique aspects of the disease of sexaholism, the subject matter at meetings and at conventions may include adult themes. While our guidelines caution speakers not to share explicit or overly graphic material, even appropriate sharing may not be suitable for minors. We suggest that parents who might encourage their children to attend S-Anon meetings first consider the developmental level of the child, the level of knowledge the child has about the issue of sexaholism in the family, and any other factors unique to the situation.

The Twelfth Tradition of S-Anon also comes into play when considering whether or not it is appropriate for children to attend S-Anon Meetings. Children present at an S-Anon Family Group gathering of any kind who are not there for the express purpose of giving and receiving support and comfort can compromise the anonymity of the other members.<sup>1</sup> Children may have difficulty appreciating the need to keep in confidence what they hear and who they see at S-Anon gatherings. Consequently, their presence could pose a threat to the anonymity of other S-Anon, S-Ateen, and SA members.

While many families would enjoy having a meal together with their non-member children while at S-Anon conventions, marathons, and the like, we think doing so goes against our Traditions unless the gathering or function has been deemed open to the public. Any function that uses the S-Anon name falls under the umbrella of our Twelve Traditions, and all aspects of that function should be guided by the Traditions for the duration of the event. We think, as a general guideline, children who are pre-adolescent are too young to meet the spirit and letter of our only membership requirement.

*Updated May 2021*

### **Are teens allowed in S-Anon Meetings?**

The short answer is yes. It seems to us that the key Traditions to guide our thinking on this issue are Three, Four, and Five. The Third Tradition states that “The relatives of sexaholics, when gathered together for mutual aid, may call themselves an S-Anon Family Group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of sexaholism in a relative or friend.” This Tradition defines who is eligible to belong to an S-Anon group. Simply put, anyone who feels they meet this requirement may go to any S-Anon group.

Paraphrasing from *Working the S-Anon Program*, Tradition Three also means that

“An S-Anon group, by definition of Tradition Three, is open to any individual a who identifies a problem of sexaholism in a family member or friend.” page 31

In this self-defining respect, S-Anon and all Twelve Step fellowships are distinguished from most other types of organizations where membership is usually determined by members of the organization itself. Here, all who come and say they need help because they are bothered by someone’s sexaholism are welcome at our meetings. There is a clarification of age. A teenager who chooses to come to S-Anon for their own recovery would include S-Ateen members, who are between the ages of 12 and 19.

Teens in S-Anon meetings present a dilemma of sorts, though. Our meetings sometimes include the frank discussion of sexual matters. Whether or not a teen should participate in such a discussion is a subjective issue. Some teens are clearly more mature than others, and what can be said in the presence of one teen may differ from what can be said with another. It is important to recall our primary spiritual aim, stated in Tradition Five: “Each S-Anon Family Group has but one purpose: to help families of sexaholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of S-Anon, by encouraging and understanding our sexaholic relatives, and by welcoming and giving comfort to the families of sexaholics.”

Neither Tradition Three nor Five give an age limit. Rather they speak broadly of families, relatives, and friends and the necessity of welcoming all who say they meet this criteria. Occasionally, those who qualify for S-Anon and who attend meetings with us may seem to cause disturbing issues to surface for us. Yet we are called to welcome all who qualify and give them comfort, regardless of our personal discomfort. We have noted that as groups grapple with how best to welcome and accommodate those who are different than the majority, these groups are often enriched and strengthened, not only in their understanding of the Traditions, but also in the expanded common experience to which these newcomers contribute.

Finally, given the Traditions’ mandate to welcome all family members and friends of sexaholics, how can groups best do that? We offer some options from the experiences of others. After having teens attend S-Anon meetings, groups in several areas have started S-Ateen meetings, using the Conference Approved S-Ateen Meeting Format. Some groups welcome teens by ensuring safe sharing in S-Anon meetings. That is, they break up into smaller sharing groups, ensuring that the teen and their parent (if present) are in different groups. Some groups take special care to immediately match teen members up with a sponsor. Finally, those who have dealt with the issue of teens in meetings note the importance of asking their Higher Power for insight on the “how-to” of accommodating teens.

(1)However, a group conscience may decide that an exception can be made, as in the case of pre-verbal infants, so long as the child’s presence is not disturbing to the group or an individual member of the group.

*Update May 2021*

### **What is S-Anon’s position on meetings “for women only”?**

In reviewing this issue, we focus on how Traditions One, Three, Four, and Five speak to the issue of different types of meetings.

Paraphrasing *Al-Anon's Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions*, Tradition Three says

“The ONLY requirement for membership is that there be a problem of [sexaholism] in a relative or friend.’ This simply means that anyone who fits that description may go to any [S-Anon] group. *Even if a group was formed with the intention of dealing with the special problems of one category of persons, its meetings are open to anyone who is eligible to belong to [S-Anon].*” (p. 100, emphasis added)

In this self-defining respect, S-Anon and all Twelve Step fellowships are distinguished from most other types of organizations where membership is usually determined by members of the organization itself. Here, all who come and say they need help because they are bothered by someone’s sexaholism are welcome at our meetings.

Again paraphrasing, Tradition Four suggests that

“Any autonomous action of the group, however, is measured by its effect on another group, or [S-Anon], or [SA] as a whole... This Tradition has made it easy...to see that every decision we make could be tested by the question: Is this good for our fellowship?” (p. 104-5)

We believe that the wisdom of these Traditions is the rationale behind the distinctions between “groups” and “special meetings.” There should be nothing to deter members who seek to establish a special meeting to deal with the unique problems of one category of persons. However, this special *meeting* is distinct from an S-Anon *group*, which by the definition of Tradition Three *must* be open to any individual who qualifies for S-Anon. Only S-Anon groups that adhere to Tradition Three may be registered with the World Service Office and be included in the S-Anon group listing (though special meetings can still be listed with the WSO), vote for Area Delegates, or vote in a Fellowshipwide Group Conscience.

As to whether establishing special groups restricted to one category of persons affects S-Anon as a whole, we have several thoughts. We note that the incidence of these special groups in other fellowships has generally occurred after the fellowship is well-established in an area with numerous meetings. We also see that these special groups are restricted to what could be termed a “minority group” within the overall fellowship. For example, AA has the occasional “Vietnam Vets” or “Gay” group meeting in an area. However, even though the group may be publicized with its special distinction, it is clearly understood in AA that every group, regardless of any publicized special distinction, is open to any individual that qualifies by Tradition Three. Because there are still, relatively speaking, so few meetings of our fellowship, and because “women” currently do not constitute a minority in our fellowship (rather, women are clearly the vast majority), we feel that attempts to restrict groups to “women only” are not helpful to S-Anon as a whole at this time and do not add to the unity of our fellowship in carrying the message.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT S-ANON EVENTS

### Can S-Anon provide childcare?

In our view, any official provision of childcare by the fellowship is contrary to Traditions Four, Five and Six. Our Fourth Tradition states “when we participate in planning S-Anon events, we recognize that we conduct these activities on behalf of S-Anon at the international level, and we are thus bound to consider the

guidelines that are the result of the experiences of other S-Anon groups who have planned such events.” (Working the S-Anon Program, p. 34)

Tradition Five tells us that as S-Anon members we are responsible for carrying the message, which is our primary purpose. Providing childcare may certainly be a related issue, but it is not our primary purpose.

“What message do I carry? Is my message focused on the Steps, Traditions, and principles of the program or is it blurred with outside issues?” (S-Anon Twelve Steps, p. 153)

Tradition Six states “S-Anon does not endorse, finance or lend our name to any outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim.” If we were to become involved in childcare, S-Anon would need to ensure that our childcare providers were competent and investigate the local laws to ensure we had the necessary training, permits, child-to-provider ratios, etc. Soon, we would be diverted from our primary purpose. What if children in our care were injured or became lost? Could this drag us into public controversy over childcare? S-Anon, as an organization, cannot provide childcare.

*Updated May 2021*

### **What about identifying our event speaker as a therapist?**

In reviewing this issue, we focused on how Traditions Three, Six and Eight speak to using caution regarding outside speakers.

From the S-Anon /S-Ateen Service Manual, Part 1, Group Meeting Types:

“S-Anon recovery events are one form of expression of our community’s Step 12 work, therefore, it is not recommended to invite an outside speaker, that is, a speaker who is not an S-Anon member, to participate in an S-Anon/S-Ateen event for the following reasons:

- While it may seem helpful to invite a speaker with professional expertise for a recovery event, Tradition Eight reminds us that we should keep our twelfth step work forever non-professional. Inviting an outside speaker implies there is someone who is more qualified than S-Anon members to speak about the effects of sexaholism. Any talk given by any professional would not be about or from the S-Anon point of view.
- The ideas expressed by a professional speaker may divert us from our primary spiritual aim and dilute the S-Anon/S-Ateen message of hope and recovery from the effects of another person’s sexual behavior. (Tradition Five). Our common welfare and unity would be affected if an outside speaker creates confusion or controversy.
- Working the S-Anon Program says on page 33, under Tradition Six,…”If we mentioned names of therapists, treatment centers, or self help books in our meetings or advertised them in S-Anon publications, we would seem to be endorsing them and associating the S-Anon name with them…” The same could be true of inviting outside speakers to participate in S-Anon events. The outside speaker may bring along promotional products, their own agenda, philosophy, etc which may imply endorsement and association.

The S-Anon/S-Ateen WSO maintains a list of members willing to speak at events. This list, called the Speaker Pool, can be accessed by calling or emailing the WSO at [www.sanon.org](http://www.sanon.org).”

We also note that the S-Anon / S-Ateen Service Manual says:

“We are grateful for the growing awareness of sexaholism and its effects on families and friends, and many avenues of help are available outside the S-Anon program. We have found, however, that if we allow our meetings to drift into discussion of treatment theories, religious doctrine, other recovery literature, other Twelve Step programs, etc., no matter how helpful they may have been to individual members, our purpose becomes diluted (Tradition Six) and our unity is damaged (Tradition One). S-Anon is focused solely upon the Twelve Steps of S-Anon as a path toward recovery (Tradition Five), and when our meetings do not reflect that focus, newcomers and others may get a distorted picture of our objectives.” (p. 26)

We believe that the wisdom of these Traditions is the rationale behind not publicizing a therapist as a featured speaker at events clearly identified as S-Anon events. Even if the speaker is an S-Anon member, to highlight her or his occupation detracts from the equality established by the anonymity described in Tradition Twelve as the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions.

*Updated May 2021*

#### **WHAT IF A GROUP DOES NOT FOLLOW THE TRADITIONS?**

Regarding the question of whether groups that do not follow the Traditions should be listed officially as S-Anon groups, our *S-Anon / S-Ateen Service Manual* notes

“The WSO will register any group designating itself as an S-Anon or S-Ateen Family Group, with the understanding that the group will abide by the Twelve Traditions of S-Anon and that regular group meetings will be open to all who qualify (Tradition Three).” (p. 13)

## **E. August 23, 2001, Letter to S-Anon Groups**

August 2001

Dear S-Anon Family Groups,

On August 23, 2001, the S-Anon International Committee (SIC) met with five S-Anon members who had previously served on the SIC. Together, we took an inventory of the effectiveness of S-Anon’s service structure and its business management.

Out of this weekend came a consensus that S-Anon is ready to adopt a service structure similar to AI-Anon’s, as described in the 12 Concepts of AI-Anon. The S-Anon International Committee developed and adopted a set of bylaws, which renames the S-Anon International Committee as the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees carried a motion to adopt the 12 Concepts of AI-Anon, pending permission from AI-Anon and an adaptation for S-Anon.

The Board of Trustees created the following standing committees:

Executive Committee: Administers the World Service Office. Includes all Officers of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Director of the World Service Office.

Budget Committee: Reviews and prepares a yearly budget and all financial statements. Chaired by the Board of Trustees treasurer

Literature Committee: Conference Approved Literature, S-Anews, Website

International Convention Committee Assists S-Anon host committee with planning, according to the Convention Guidelines

Delegate Conference Committee Plans scheduled business conferences and reports back to the fellowship.

Public Information Committee S-Anon's liaison to the public.

Archives Committee Preserves and organizes historical S-Anon and S-Ateen material.

Each committee has a chair and any S-Anon member may join any committee of their choice. It is suggested that a member wishing to serve on any of these committees has been actively working an S-Anon program for at least one year. The Delegate Conference Committee will develop plans to create a Delegate Conference wherein the fellowship at large will be represented and larger issues will be addressed. For more information about this important service arm, please refer to and study the 12 Concepts in Paths to Recovery, the Al-Anon Service Manual and the Al-Anon pamphlet entitled "The 12 Concepts."

The Board of Trustees also voted to use the terminology used by Al-Anon in reference to its service structure. The following changes were made:

#### Old Terminology

S-Anon Central Office

S-Anon International Committee

S-Anon Handbook

International Conference

#### New Terminology

World Service Office

S-Anon Board of Trustees

S-Anon Service Manual

International Convention

We are very excited about these changes and anticipate that with our new structure, we will be more effective at Twelfth Step work, be able to welcome more newcomers, invite more members to do service work beyond the group level, and to facilitate the organization of the regions in the nation. Other exciting changes include: the hiring of new staff in the World Service Office, an exciting new format design for the S-Anon website and a new registration process for the groups which will improve communication among the groups and the World Service Office.

Our new structure has created more service positions and opportunities for service. We hope that if you are interested in deepening your recovery through service, you will contact your Regional Trustee and volunteer

for a service position.

Yours in Service,  
The S-Anon Board of Trustees

# **F. Bylaws of the S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. Board of Trustees**

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BYLAWS OF S-ANON INTERNATIONAL FAMILY GROUPS, INC.  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
Rev. June 2, 2021

(**NOTE:** Changes incorporated in this version were adopted by the BOT on July 8, 2011, May 1, 2012, February 2, 2013, June 2, 2015, September 1, 2015, June 1, 2020, and June 2, 2021.)

## **ARTICLE I NAME**

The name of this organization is S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. Board of Trustees, hereafter referred to as the Board.

## **ARTICLE II PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Board is to be of service to the groups in carrying the message of S-Anon recovery to the fellowship. The Board conducts S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. (SIFG) business matters, makes policy and procedure suggestions for approval by the fellowship of S-Anon, publishes S-Anon Conference Approved Literature (CAL) and Service Literature, and coordinates semi-annual conventions and annual World Service Conferences (WSC).

## **ARTICLE III MEMBERS**

### **Section 1: Suggested Experience**

It is suggested that potential Board members have been working the S-Anon program long enough to have gained experience at other S-Anon service levels (suggested five years), demonstrated the leadership skills necessary to serve as a Trustee, and have the personal skill set to meet any special requirements for a particular BOT position.

### **Section 2: Regional Trustees**

- A. An S-Anon member residing in the Region and elected to the Board by their Region shall be seated as the Trustee for that Region, with no further discussion.
- B. The individual Regions are responsible for maintaining active Board representation. If a Region is not sufficiently organized for an election, the Board will appoint a volunteer to be the Trustee for



that Region. A suggested Regional Trustee Election Process is published in the S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual.

### Section 3: Trustees-At-Large

- A. Chairpersons of BOT Standing Committees are Trustees-At-Large.
- B. The Chair of the Board may appoint a committee chair or the committee itself may elect a chair from its members.
- C. The BOT Chairperson can appoint an interim Standing Committee Chairperson with a voice but not a vote to serve until a Standing Committee Chairperson is nominated and elected by the BOT.
- D. Trustees-At-Large are nominated and elected to the BOT by the Board of Trustees.

### Section 4: Officers

See ARTICLE IV.

### Section 5: Executive Director

The Executive Director of the World Service Office is a Trustee of the Board, with a voice and a vote. If, however, the Executive Director position is vacant, or if the Executive Director or Office Administrator is not qualified to serve as a Trustee in accordance with Article III, Section 3, that person will participate in Board meetings ex officio, with a voice, but no vote.

### Section 6: Term of Office

- A. With the exception of the Executive Director of the World Service Office, whose Board term coincides with his or her term of employment as Executive Director, Trustees shall be elected to serve for a period of three (3) years.
- B. Trustees, after having served two consecutive terms on the Board of Trustees in any position or combination of positions, it is suggested that an individual step down from serving on the Board of Trustees in any position.
- C. After an interval of one (1) year, they may be eligible to serve again in any Board of Trustees position.
- D. To the extent practical, Trustee terms will be staggered such that approximately one-third end in any single year. To this end, an individual Trustee's term may be lengthened or shortened by at most one (1) year at the discretion of and with the approval of the Board.

### Section 7:

Three quarters of WSC members registered at the World Service Conference may bring about a reorganization of the WSO if or when it is deemed essential and may request the resignation of the whole Board and nominate a new slate of trustees.

### Section 8:

All persons either elected or appointed to the S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. Board of Trustees (including but not limited to any Board or Committee member) prior to acceptance and during tenure of that position, shall consider each item of business, where they have a vote or decision authority, to determine if a real or perceived conflict exists with the interests of S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. A conflict of interest is defined as any situation in which a member's influence, decisions or votes could substantially and directly affect the member's professional, personal, financial, or business interests. In the event that a person nominated for or serving as a Trustee or Committee member finds himself or herself in such a position, he or she shall promptly disclose the conflict of interest to the Board or Committee Chairperson and recuse himself or herself at any Board, Committee, or other meeting from any deliberations or vote on the matter giving rise to the conflict of interest.

## ARTICLE IV OFFICERS

### Section 1:

The officers of the Board of Trustees shall consist of the Chairperson, the Co-Chairperson, the Secretary and the Treasurer.

### Section 2:

#### General Qualifications for the Board Officers

- A. Have worked the Twelve Steps of the S-Anon program for a suggested minimum of five (5) years, have completed all 12 Steps and currently attend S-Anon meetings.
- B. Be familiar with the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts.
- C. Willing to learn the necessary leadership skills to serve as an Officer, and have the personal skill set to meet any special requirements for an Officer position, as detailed under Section 5, below.

### Section 3: Method of Elections

- A. Officers are nominated and elected to the Board by the Board.

### Section 4: Term of Office

- A. As a general rule, officers shall be elected to serve for a period of three (3) years. Whenever possible, terms will be staggered such that no more than two (2) Officer terms end in any single year. To this end, a particular Officer's term may be lengthened or shortened in special circumstances by at most one (1) year at the discretion of the Board solely to provide for staggering of Officer terms.
- B. Officers shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same or any combination of BOT positions. After having served two consecutive terms as an Officer, it is suggested that an individual step down from serving in any position on the Board of Trustees.
- C. After an interval of one (1) year, they may be eligible to serve again in any Board of Trustees position.

D. The outgoing BOT chairperson may remain on the Executive Committee as an advisor to the incoming BOT chair for up to 18 months. The outgoing BOT chairperson will participate in Executive Committee meetings with a voice but no vote.

## Section 5: Specific Responsibilities of the Officers

### A. Chairperson

1. Shall preside at all regular and special meetings and telephone conference calls of this Board.
2. Shall be responsible for establishing the agenda for all Board and Executive Committee meetings.

### B. Co-Chair

1. Shall serve in the absence of the Chairperson.
2. Shall assist the Chairperson whenever needed.
3. Shall be responsible for the implementation and upkeep of these bylaws.

### C. Secretary

1. Shall see that minutes are kept of all Executive Committee and Board meetings and that a copy of said minutes is made available to each Board member and to the World Service Office for archiving.
2. Shall be responsible for the implementation and upkeep of these minutes.

### D. Treasurer

1. Shall maintain all banking accounts for dispersal of Board funds.
2. Shall submit financial reports at each Board meeting.
3. Shall chair the Finance Committee of the Board.

## **ARTICLE V MEETINGS**

### Section 1: Regular Meetings

The Board shall meet monthly at a time and place designated by a majority of the voting members. The Board may elect to meet more or less often by a vote of a majority of voting members, but the Board shall meet at least quarterly.

### Section 2: Special Meeting

- A. A special meeting may be called at any time by a majority vote of the Board and by giving sufficient notice by email or telephone.
- B. Special Meeting for the purpose of this BOT is defined as a time sensitive event, issue,

catastrophe, or emergency, etc.

### Section 3: Voting Members

- A. The four Officers of the Board
- B. The World Service Office Executive Director, unless the Executive Director position, if filled, is filled by a person who does not qualify to serve as a Trustee in accordance with Article III, Section 3.
- C. The eight Regional Trustees
- D. The Trustees-At-Large, i.e. Chairpersons of Board of Trustees Standing Committees.

### Section 4: Quorum

Two thirds (2/3) of the Board members shall constitute a quorum for all proceedings of the Board.

## **ARTICLE VI COMMITTEES**

### Section 1: Standing Committees

The following standing committees have been established to carry out the purpose of the Board in the most effective and efficient manner:

- A. Executive
- B. Finance
- C. Literature
- D. International Conventions
- E. World Service Conference
- F. Public Information and Outreach
- G. Archives
- H. S-Ateen
- I. Policy and Service Communications
- J. Other committees, standing or special, deemed necessary to carry on special work.

### Section 2: Committee Chairperson Appointments

- A. The Board shall designate such committees as are deemed necessary for the welfare and operation of the Board.
- B. The Chair of the Board may appoint a committee chair or the committee itself may submit a candidate from its members for consideration by the Board.
- C. If BOT Chair appoints an interim standing committee chair, that chair shall serve for the remainder of the S-Anon service year, with a voice, but not a vote.
- D. If a willing and suitable candidate for Committee Chair is not available as described in B and C. above, the committee may remain active, but must provide a written monthly report to the BOT of all committee activities. A member of the committee must be available as a spokesperson to attend meetings of the BOT on an "as requested" basis, with a voice, but no vote. This partially inactive status can be maintained for up to 12 months, at which time, if the Chair position is not filled, the

committee becomes completely inactive.

### Section 3: Committee Chairperson Procedure

Each standing committee Chairperson may prescribe his or her own methods and procedures, subject to the guidelines of the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts, except in matters affecting another BOT committee or the BOT or S-Anon as a whole.

### Section 4: Committee Chairperson Responsibility

- A. Each committee chairperson shall submit a written monthly report to the Board.
- B. Each committee chairperson shall review all the monthly reports and motions submitted, paying special attention to the Financial Report to the Board to verify committee expenditures.
- C. Each committee chairperson shall actively participate in the monthly BOT meetings.

## **ARTICLE VII VACANCIES, RESIGNATIONS, AND REMOVAL FROM OFFICE**

All Sections of Article VII: Vacancies, Resignations and Removal from Office apply equally to all Members of the S-Anon Board of Trustees.

### Section 1: VACANCIES

Should a vacancy, resignation or removal of any BOT member occur, all pertinent information shall be turned over to the Executive Committee.

#### Filling of Vacancies

- A. Vacancies shall be filled by a majority vote at that meeting in which the vacancy is determined, or at a subsequent meeting. Persons elected to fill said vacancies shall serve for the remainder of the current term.
- B. A person chosen to fill a vacant BOT position shall meet the qualifications as defined in Articles III and IV and be aware of all responsibilities of that position as described and defined in those Articles.

### Section 2: Resignations

- A. Any BOT Member may resign at any time for any reason by giving the Chairperson of the Board two-week written notice.

### Section 3: Removal from Office

- A. If a member of the BOT fails to attend two (2) BOT meetings with or without prior notice, during one S-Anon service year, his/her position may be declared vacant by a majority of BOT members present and voting.
- B. Any BOT member may be removed from office by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board, with the

motion to remove having been announced prior to that meeting.

## **ARTICLE VIII SOURCE OF FUNDS**

### **Section 1: Source of Funds**

- A. Sources of funds include voluntary contributions from individual members, individual S-Anon groups, S-Anon Intergroups, International Conventions, Recordings by WSO, Copyright Licensing Royalties, Local/Regional Events, and income from literature sales.
- B. Other sources of income may be such occasional projects or activities as may be authorized by the Board according to Traditions Six and Seven.
- C. The maximum allowable annual donation in a calendar year to S-Anon by an individual member is limited to 5% of total revenue as identified in the previous year's financials, provided its use is not restricted by the donor.
- D. The WSO may accept a one-time bequest from a deceased S-Anon member in any amount, provided its use is not restricted by the donor. Bequest amounts up to ten percent of the total revenue as identified in the previous year's financials will be placed in the General Fund. Any portion of the bequest above ten percent will be placed in the Prudent Reserve as necessary in order to maintain policy-based balances and reported separately on the financial statements. The S-Anon Board of Trustees will authorize the use of these excess amounts according to our policy for use of the Prudent Reserve.
- E. The acceptance of bequests or donations from any outside source is prohibited.

### **Section 2:**

There shall be no accumulation of funds beyond current necessities, with retention of only an ample prudent reserve for contingencies.

## **ARTICLE IX PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

### **Section 1:**

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern this Board in all cases where they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws, the Twelve Traditions and Concepts, or any special rules of order this Board may adopt.

## **ARTICLE X AMENDMENTS TO THESE BYLAWS**

### **Section 1:**

These Bylaws may be amended at any time by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board Members at any regular or special meeting of the Board. The Bylaws of S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. Board of Trustees and any amendments thereto are subject to recall by the World Service Conference (WSC) by a two-thirds vote of all its members. All Bylaw amendments will be presented to the first WSC to be held after their adoption by the Board of Trustees.

## ARTICLE XI MAJOR POLICY MATTERS

### Section 1:

In accordance with Article X.E. of the World Service Conference Charter, “Except in great emergency the Board of Trustees ought never take action which could greatly affect S-Anon as a whole without consulting the [World Service] Conference. However, it is understood that the Board shall reserve the right to decide which of its decisions may require referral to the Conference.”

## ARTICLE XII DISSOLUTION

(Language to be developed by the attorney for S-Anon and subsequently approved by the Board.)

Revised June 2021

# G. S-Anon North America World Service Conference Charter

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## S-Anon North America World Service Conference Charter

As approved by the World Service Conference on July 30, 2022

### INTRODUCTION

The S-Anon World Service Conference Charter is a body of principles and relationships through which S-Anon as a whole can function. The provisions of the document are not legal, but traditional, since the Conference is not incorporated. This charter is an informal agreement between all S-Anon groups and its World Service Office (WSO). Certain countries of the world, for language or geographic considerations, have established or may desire to establish their own General Service Office and national conference. Therefore, the current “World Service Conference” will now be formally designated as the North America World Service Conference, and is understood to be the senior conference.<sup>1 2</sup>

### CHARTER

#### I. Purpose

- A. To be the guardian of both S-Anon’s world services and its Twelve Traditions;
- B. To be a service body, not a government.

#### II. Composition

- A. Area Delegates or Alternate Area Delegates from North America (United States and Canada) elected by the Area or selected by the Area and registered with the North America World Service Office. (If the Area Delegate is unable to attend, the Alternate Area Delegate may be seated for the current North America WSC only.)
- B. The Board of Trustees (BOT) of S-Anon and the WSO Executive Director.

- C. Representatives from other countries may observe the Conference without a voice or a vote.
- D. A Delegate to represent S-Anon members that participate in phone groups.
- E. A Delegate to represent S-Anon members who participate in online platform groups.
- F. Designated areas with large S-Anon populations may petition the Conference to divide and send an additional delegate to the Conference.

### **III. Relation to S-Anon**

- A. The Conference acts for S-Anon in the perpetuation and guidance of its WSO services.
- B. The Conference is a vehicle by which S-Anon can express its views on policy and note deviations from Traditions.
- C. Delegates are free to vote as their conscience dictates and not necessarily as instructed by their areas.
- D. No changes are to be made in the Traditions, Steps, Concepts of Service or General Warranties of the Conference Charter without written consent of three quarters of the S-Anon groups polled via a Fellowship-Wide Group Conscience.
- E. The Concepts themselves (not including the descriptive text) are accorded the same stature as the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.
- F. The Charter may be changed (with the exception of items III-D, III-E and 12) by the vote of three quarters of the Conference members.

### **IV. Relation to the World Service Office**

- A. Two-thirds vote of Conference members in attendance is binding upon trustees and any related corporate service.
- B. The above does not affect legal obligations of the WSO in conducting business.
- C. In accordance with the provisions of the Bylaws of S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc., three quarters of all members registered at the Conference may bring about a reorganization of the WSO if or when it is deemed essential and may request the resignation of the whole Board and nominate a new slate of trustees.

### **V. Delegates' Terms of Office**

- A. Delegates and Alternate Delegates are elected or selected by their area for a three-year term and may serve that area for two consecutive terms. Delegates and Alternate Delegates shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same position, after which it is suggested there be a minimum interval of one (1) year before they are eligible to serve in that position again.
- B. As the Conference grows, the election of Delegates will be staggered such that a third of the Delegates are elected in each of three consecutive years. This staggered election and tenure of office will assure that the Conference shall always include a group of delegates with two years' experience.

### **VI. Conference Meetings**

- A. The Conference meets annually. The Conference may vote to postpone its annual meeting for one year subject to the approval of 2/3 of the Conference members polled by telephone or e-mail.
- B. In the event the World Service Conference Committee is without a Chair six months prior to the scheduled Conference, and a poll of the conference members indicates a desire to hold a WSC in that year, the responsibility will fall to the Delegates to make the arrangements for the WSC.
- C. In grave emergency, special meetings may be called.
- D. Conference members may also be asked by the WSO or BOT to render advisory opinions at any time by



mail or telephone poll.

## **VII. Board of Trustees: Composition, Jurisdiction, and Responsibilities**

A. The Board of Trustees of S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. is composed of qualified members of S-Anon. The Board nominates its own successors unless a regional service structure can provide an elected Trustee. Nominees are subject to the approval of the Conference or a committee thereof. Elected Regional Trustees are seated without further approvals.

B. The Board is the chief service arm of the Conference, which is guardian of S-Anon's Twelve Traditions. Subject to E, below, the Board has responsibility to determine policy of the WSO and manage the business affairs of the WSO. It may appoint suitable committees and elect members to its Executive Committee.

C. If any subsidiary services are later formed, the Board of Trustees will be primarily responsible for their policy and financial integrity.

D. The Bylaws of S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. and any amendments thereto are subject to recall by the Conference by a two-thirds vote of all its members. All Bylaw amendments will be presented to the first Conference to be held after their adoption by the Board of Trustees.

E. Except in great emergency the Board of Trustees ought never take action liable to affect S-Anon as a whole greatly without consulting the Conference. However, it is understood that the Board shall reserve the right to decide which of its decisions may require referral to the Conference.

## **VIII. Conference Procedure**

A. The Conference hears financial and policy reports of the Board of Trustees and WSO services.

B. WSC members take under advisement all matters affecting S-Anon as a whole, engage in debate, appoint necessary committees and pass suitable motions for the direction of the Board of Trustees and the WSO.

C. The Conference may recommend action respecting serious deviation from S-Anon Traditions and Concepts of Service.

D. The Conference may adopt procedures and elect any needed officers by a method of its choosing.

E. A quorum of WSC members must be present in order for business to occur. A quorum shall consist of two thirds of all registered WSC members.

F. In order to maintain substantial unanimity, two-thirds of the registered WSC members in attendance at the WSC must vote in favor of any decisions and/or motions in order for them to pass, with the exception of those requiring a three-quarters vote.

G. If, after efforts have been made to bring a motion to an "in order" status, but that is unsuccessful and a motion is ruled "out of order," the World Service Conference Committee will provide a report to the World Service Conference members of each "out of order" motion with a summary of why the motion is out of order.

H. At the close of each yearly session, the Conference will send minutes from its proceedings to all World Service Conference members.

I. Because the Conference is Traditional, the rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern this conference in all cases where they are applicable except when they are inconsistent with this Charter, the Twelve Traditions and Concepts, or any special rules of order this conference may adopt. The Conference has decided by group conscience that Robert's Rules of Order may not be invoked to close off discussion before all members who are rightfully entitled to speak have spoken to the issue.

**IX. To Be Added as Necessary****X. To Be Added as Necessary****XI. To Be Added as Necessary****XII. General Warranties of the Conference**

A. In all proceedings the World Service Conference of S-Anon shall observe the spirit of the Traditions:

1. That only sufficient operating funds, including an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle;
2. That no Conference member shall be placed in unqualified authority over other members;
3. That all decisions be reached by discussion, vote and, whenever possible, by unanimity;
4. That no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy;
5. That though the Conference serves S-Anon it shall never perform any act of government; and that like the fellowship of S-Anon which it serves, it shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

NOTE: The term S-Anon includes S-Ateen. Therefore, the above Charter applies to all registered groups, including S-Ateen.

<sup>1</sup> For S-Anon's purposes, "North America" currently refers to the United States and Canada.

<sup>2</sup> All references to "the Conference" included in this document are understood to refer to the North America World Service Conference, that is, the "senior conference." In addition, all references to "S-Anon," "the World Service Office," "Delegates," "S-Anon groups," "the Board of Trustees," the "World Service Conference Committee," "S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc.," etc. should be understood to pertain to the North America conference, charter, and service structure participants.

Last Updated July 2022

## **H. Format for Motions to be Presented to S-Anon's World Service Conference**

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### **World Service Conference Motion Form**

[Download the World Service Conference Motion Form](#)

The window for submitting motions for the World Service Conference each July runs from August 1 – February 1. Total length must not exceed two 8-1/2 × 11" pages – delete instructions as you fill in the sections.

**A. MOTION:**

Be concise, specific, and unmistakably clear. Answer the question, "What action do you want the WSC to take?"

**B. BACKGROUND AND INTENT:**

Briefly tell why you want the WSC to consider this motion, and indicate how taking the action recommended by the motion would help the Fellowship.

**C. SUPPORTING PRINCIPLES:**

List the 3-4 most relevant Traditions and/or Concepts and briefly tell why and how the spiritual principle of each one supports the intent of the motion. Experience shows that choosing too many principles may actually decrease the likelihood that local group members will consider the motion and give feedback to the Delegate.

**D. FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

Leave this section blank; it will be added by the Board of Trustees [BOT] Finance Committee.

**E. ARGUMENT PRO:**

This section summarizes the “Intent” and “Supporting Principles” from sections B and C above. Be brief, keep it simple, and choose arguments you believe may be the most easily understood by the most members.

**F. ARGUMENT CON:**

If no “con” arguments are provided, the WSC Committee will solicit other members to provide the arguments.

**G. DOCUMENTATION:**

In this section, answer the question, “Where will the WSC or BOT action or changed policy be recorded, if your motion passes?” If you do not know the answer to this question, the BOT will add the section.

**H. SUBMISSION DETAILS:** Only a WSC member may submit motions to the WSC. If you are not a WSC member (Trustee or Delegate), contact the WSO to get contact information for someone who can submit your motion on your behalf.

NAME OF SUBMITTER:

AREA / POSITION :

NAME OF MOTION MAKER (if different than the submitter):

MOTION MAKER’S TELEPHONE NUMBER AND EMAIL :

(Requested so that the WSC Committee can contact the motion maker for clarification, if necessary)

For additional information on how to submit a motion and how motions are processed, please refer to the S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual, p. 50-84, email [wsc@sanon.org](mailto:wsc@sanon.org) , and/or call the World Service Office at 800-210.8141. A Trustee or Delegate should submit a motion by email to: [sanon@sanon.org](mailto:sanon@sanon.org) or US mail to: S-Anon WSO, P.O. Box 17294, Nashville, TN 37217

## S-Anon Motions Checklist

[Download S-Anon Motions Checklist](#)

For the submission of policy, procedural, and administrative motions by individuals or groups

### **Pre-Motion Tasks (See Reference, Section 1)**

- ☐ Review Writing a Motion to the WSC Resources (1a)
- ☐ Use the sample format to create your motion (1b)
- ☐ Determine who will place the motion on the floor (1c)

### **Preparing the Motion Tasks (See Reference Section 2)**

- ☐ State the motion precisely and concisely (2a)
- ☐ State the intent, supporting principles, and background (2b)
- ☐ State where the motion will be documented, if needed. (2c)
- ☐ Financial impact on the fellowship – this will be completed by Finance Committee (2d)
- ☐ Provide arguments pro (2e)
- ☐ Provide arguments con – WSCC can assist, if needed (2f)
- ☐ Include contact information for submitter (2g)
- ☐ Limit the length of the motion to two pages

### **Submit Motion Tasks (See Reference Section 3)**

- ☐ Submit motion by February 1 deadline (3a)
- ☐ Send to the S-Anon World Service Office, P.O. Box 17294, Nashville, TN 37217 or sanon@sanon.org (3b)

### **Post Motion Submission Tasks (See Reference Section 4)**

- ☐ Watch for email from WSCC confirming receipt of motion (4a)
- ☐ Receive assignment of a motion mentor/sponsor (4b)
- ☐ Review and understand the criteria for processing the motion (4c)
- ☐ Respond promptly to email messages from WSCC with feedback, questions, and updates on progress (4d)

# S-ANON MOTION REFERENCES

## 1) Pre-Motion Tasks

### a. Writing a Motion to the WSC

- i. [Service Literature – L27](#) (includes a sample motion)
- ii. [S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual: Part Three – World Service Conference Policies and Procedures](#)

### b. Motion format

- i. [S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual: Appendix H – Format for Motions to be Presented to S-Anon's World Service Conference](#)

### c. Motion presenter

- i. If no Area Delegate – local groups should attempt to elect a delegate at least three months before upcoming WSC so motion can be submitted by the newly elected delegate
- ii. If unable to elect an Area Delegate – motion may be submitted by Regional Trustee
- iii. If no Area Delegate or Regional Trustee – motion may be submitted by a member of the Board of Trustees

## 2) Preparing the Motion Tasks

### a. State the motion precisely and concisely

- i. Clearly state what action is being suggested
- ii. If more than one action is suggested – break it into sections

### b. State the intent, supporting principles, and background

- i. State why you are bringing this motion to the WSC
- ii. Summarize the history and current status of the issue
- iii. Give a brief explanation of the challenges that are created for the fellowship with the unresolved issue
- iv. Finally, if passed, how would the motion contribute to the solution

### c. Documentation

i. All motions will be documented in the following:

1. The minutes of the WSC

2. Decision database maintained by World Service Office

ii. If needed, provide a suggestion regarding where else the motion should be documented, i.e. the S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual, Charter, or Board of Trustees Bylaws (WSC will assist)

**d. Financial Impact on the Fellowship**

i. This section will be completed by the Finance Committee after the motion has been submitted.

**e. Arguments Pro**

i. Do not repeat Intent or Supporting Principles

ii. Provide clarification

iii. Use arguments that will resonate with most members

iv. State the benefits of the motion

**f. Arguments Con**

i. Provide viewpoints that would be opposed to your motion

ii. WSCC and BOT may also contribute to this section

**g. Submitted by**

i. Anonymous motions will be considered out of order

ii. Provide your name, address, phone, and email

iii. Include your Area Delegate's name

iv. Your name and contact information will not appear on the final motion distributed to WSC members

**h. Limit the length of the motion to two pages**

### **3) Submit Motion Tasks**

**a. Motions submission deadline – February 1**

- b. Return to the S-Anon World Service Office, P.O. Box 17294, Nashville, TN 37217, [sanon@sanon.org](mailto:sanon@sanon.org)

#### **4) Post Motion Submission Tasks**

- a. Watch for email confirming receipt of motion from WSCC
- b. WSCC will assign a Motion mentor/sponsor
- c. WSC criteria for processing motions:
  - i. Does the motion call for concrete actions or changes that would impact S-Anon as a whole?
  - ii. Is the action called for in the motion legal and in compliance with regulations governing 501c3 nonprofit corporations?
  - iii. Is the motion calling for action that is within the WSC's "Traditional" role and not about corporate/legal functions of the Board of Trustees?
  - iv. Does the motion align with the principles of S-Anon's Steps, Traditions, and Concepts?
  - v. Is the motion about an action that has already or is being taken on an issue?
  - vi. Is the motion language respectful, and does it clearly state what is actually being proposed?
  - vii. Does the motion cover all information in the motion form, and is it limited to two pages in length?
- d. Respond promptly to email messages from WSCC with feedback, questions, and updates on progress
- e. Motions that meet the above criteria are placed on the agenda for the WSC and distributed to Area Delegates for discussion within each area.
  - i. The Area Delegate, Regional Trustee, or a BOT member submitting a motion should be prepared to present the motion at the WSC.

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References used:

#### **S-Anon Service Literature**

Writing a Motion to the World Service Conference February 2017

#### **Manula online *S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual***

*Part 2:* S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Structure/Relationships of S-Anon Service Arms Standing.

Committees of the Board of Trustees

*Part 3:* Fellowshipwide Decision Making: The World Service Conference and Conference Approved Literature.

## World Service Conference Policies and Procedures

### Part 5. Appendices.

#### H. Format for Motions to be Presented to S-Anon's World Service Conference

#### G. S-Anon World Service Conference Charter

# I. Literature Conference Approval Process

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## Overview:

The Literature Committee's (LC) mission is to ensure that every aspect of the S-Anon/S- Ateen program of recovery is presented as useful and comprehensive written material for our members, friends, professionals, and the world at large. The S-Anon /S-Ateen Conference Approved Literature (CAL) process ensures that all program literature is:

- Identifiably S-Anon in content according to the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and the Twelve Concepts of Service.
- Responsive to identified needs of the fellowship.
- Factual.
- Timely.
- Understandable by a broad-based reading audience.
- Based on experience, strength, and hope from the S-Anon point of view.

Each literature project is unique. From concept to completion, it may take many specific steps and several years to produce a finished product. The process may require the expertise of several writers and drafts before a manuscript is approved. The Conference Approval process begins with an approved concept for literature development and ends when the LC and S-Anon Board of Trustees (BOT) approve the final manuscript.

The LC Chairperson and Editors review the conceptual idea for the literature and read all the writings that may have previously been submitted. They select a Sponsoring Editor (or Co-Sponsoring Editors) to create drafts for the Committee's review. If needed, additional writings may be solicited from the LC and other S-Anon members.

Before the Conference Approved Literature (CAL) status is assigned, the manuscript must obtain approval from the combined members of the:

1. Literature Committee, which is made up of the Editors and the Readers.
2. S-Anon Board of Trustees.

## The Conference Approval Process

The following describes more specifically how the LC considers the conceptual idea and implements the Conference Approval process in the actual development of projects.



1. An idea for recovery material may come from any S-Anon member, group, World Service Conference (WSC), or other service arm. The LC Editors consider the idea to determine if it meets current or future literature needs of the fellowship. Recovery material falls into two general classes. Minor publications include leaflets, pamphlets, and booklets. Major publications include bound books.
  - a) Minor publications may be conceptually approved by the LC Editors and BOT and moved through the Conference Approval process in a timely manner.
  - b) Major publications are presented by the LC Chairperson in a motion to the WSC requesting conceptual approval before work on the project can begin.
  - c) Any WSC member may present a motion for conceptual approval for Conference- Approved Literature (CAL) at a WSC. Literature approved in this manner will be referred to the LC, which will prioritize and coordinate development of the literature with all the other projects currently under consideration.
2. Once an idea has conceptual approval for development, the LC Editors determine the preliminary scope and direction of the project and assign a Sponsoring Editor.
3. Depending on the parameters of the project, the Sponsoring Editor submits one or more outlines of the proposed work to the LC Editors to ensure that both the Sponsoring Editor and the other editors agree on the direction of the project. For a large project, additional editors may be assigned to assist the Sponsoring Editor.
4. If member writings are needed, they are requested from the fellowship through World Service Office (WSO) publications, website announcements, and individual contact, so that the identified message of our program is adequately reflected in the proposed work. All writings received by the LC must include a written release by the submitter and become the property of S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. A lack of submissions from the membership may indicate that there is not an urgent need for the literature at this time.
5. LC Editors provide independent review of the initial outline and draft(s) of the manuscript for content and language and to ensure that S-Anon principles have been adhered to throughout the work. Following independent review of the drafts, the Sponsoring Editor incorporates the edits from LC Editors and subsequently from the Readers. This process may be repeated additional times, until the draft is ready for final review and approval. All comments are considered. Decisions to incorporate comments/edits into the draft regarding content are made based on the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service, especially Tradition One "Our common welfare should come first..." The Sponsoring Editor carefully considers how the content meets the needs of the fellowship as a whole or the members of the fellowship for whom the piece is written, such as S-Ateen members, parents, adult children of sexaholics, etc.

Editors adhere to the S-Anon Branding and Style Guide. Editors also adhere to S-Anon policies, as defined in the current S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual, and incorporate them into this process of developing literature. Drafts are reviewed and edited by LC members only and are not distributed to the fellowship.
6. After the Sponsoring Editor produces a final draft, it is sent to all LC and BOT members requesting a CAL

vote to approve or disapprove. Votes are to be submitted by the deadline to two designated LC Editors; late votes may be accepted with prior permission. A "no" vote is to be accompanied by a rationale in order to assist the LC Editors.

A quorum of eligible voting members must vote for a piece to pass as CAL. A quorum is defined as fifty percent plus one of eligible voting members.

If three "no" votes are received, the piece does not pass as CAL and will be returned to the Sponsoring Editor for revision and further rewrite. The Sponsoring Editor considers all concerns expressed by the voters and determines the next course of action.

7. If the manuscript is approved and the S-Anon Conference Approval process is completed, the project will enter production, including final copyediting, design, printing, and the creation of promotional materials.

8. It may take an additional three to six months to produce a finished product. The Sponsoring Editor(s) and the LC Editors determine the final presentation.

9. Once the manuscript is approved and the presentation style defined, estimated costs, including a marketing plan, are submitted first to the Finance Committee, and then by the Finance Committee to the BOT for approval of the printer, selling price, and the quantity to be produced.

10. If the LC and BOT conclude that an electronic version of a publication would benefit our fellowship, necessary steps will be taken for it to be formatted and made available through the [sanon.org](http://sanon.org) website.

### **Title Selection Process**

Throughout the development of a proposed CAL manuscript, LC members are invited to suggest titles for the work in progress. The final title, agreed upon by the LC Editors, is approved at the same time as the final draft of the manuscript.

### **Title Change Process**

A proposal to change the title of an existing piece of CAL must be addressed by the full LC and BOT. If they agree that a change may be made, the proposed new or amended titles are presented to the WSC for approval.

### **Literature Revision Process**

Any S-Anon member, group, or service arm may submit requests for revisions to recovery material to the LC. The LC Editors determine whether a current publication is in need of revision and/or update based on the expressed needs of our fellowship. For the revision to proceed, the CAL process is used throughout, from the point of assigning a Sponsoring Editor to its approval by the entire LC and the BOT.

### **Process for Discontinuance of Conference Approved Literature (CAL)**

1. The following criteria are required for discontinuing a CAL publication:

- Material has had a three-to-five-year initial introductory period from the date of initial publication.
- Sales of the material reflect minimal interest by membership.
- Content is or will be adequately covered in other CAL material if necessary

2. The LC makes a motion before the WSC to discontinue the item after a determination that the criteria outlined above have been fulfilled.

UPDATED 3/4/2021

## **J. Process for Electing Regional Trustees**

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### **Process for Electing a Regional Trustee (RT)**

To become one of the Regional Trustees who serve on S-Anon's Board of Trustees the candidate must be voted in either by the registered groups in the Region in which he/she would serve, or by a vote of the Board of Trustees (BOT). The Regional Trustee is elected for one three-year term and may be re-elected for one additional consecutive term of three years. There is a six consecutive year maximum to serve as a Board of Trustees member.

#### **1. Election by the Region**

**a. Qualifications.** Each candidate must meet the minimum requirements for service at the BOT level as described in Article III, Section 1 of the By-Laws of S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. Suggested Experience: "It is suggested that a Board member have been working the S-Anon program long enough to have gained experience at other S-Anon service levels (suggested five years), demonstrated the leadership skills necessary to serve as a Trustee, and have the personal skill set to meet any special requirements for a particular BOT position" and Article III, Section 2 of the By-Laws of S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. Regional Trustees: An S-Anon member residing in the Region and elected to the Board by their Region shall be seated as the Trustee for that Region, with no further discussion.

It is also suggested that each candidate have service experience above the group level, have a sponsor, and attend meetings regularly. In addition to working the Twelve Steps of S-Anon, it is recommended that each candidate be willing to learn to apply the Twelve Traditions of S-Anon and the S-Anon Twelve Concepts of Service as they relate to the challenges of service. Each candidate should have a willingness to become familiar with the S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual and be fully aware of the responsibilities, time commitment and energy required to serve in the full capacity of the Regional Trustee role. For further information, please refer to the S-Anon website under "Regional Trustee Selection, Qualifications and Responsibilities", "Serving as an S-Anon Regional Trustee" (L-21), and the S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual.

**b. Regional Trustee Election Process:** It is the responsibility of the outgoing Regional Trustee to let their region know, at least six months prior to the end of their term, sooner if possible, that they will be stepping down and ask for candidates to submit their resumes to the World Service Office(WSO). The outgoing

Regional Trustee will serve as the election facilitator for their region; however, when there is no current Regional Trustee in a region, the Regional Trustee Chairperson will become the election facilitator and identify another current, or former, Regional Trustee to assist and provide accountability. The facilitator will request current contact information from the WSO for all of the registered groups in the vacant region, use the Trustee election email address for all correspondence related to the election process and send out periodic appeals (Bcc) for service, along with the suggested qualifications. When the first candidate's letter of intent and resume are received, the facilitator will send an email (Bcc) to all the registered groups in the region informing them of a designated deadline for receiving additional resumes, with the initial candidate's documents remaining anonymous.

If the current Regional Trustee is considering serving a second three-year term, they will notify the other Regional Trustees of their intent and submit their letter of intent and resume to the WSO. An election facilitator will be chosen from the other current Regional Trustees, or possibly a previous Regional Trustee. This facilitator will notify the region and call for additional candidates to submit their resumes to the WSO as outlined in the paragraph above.

After the facilitator has notified the Region of a deadline for additional candidates to apply, those interested will send their letter of intent and resume to the election email address. When the deadline is reached, the facilitator will send an email (Bcc) or letter to all the registered groups in the region that includes:

- nomination of each candidate
- each candidate's S-Anon service resume and a letter of intent stating their willingness to serve.
- a ballot
- instructions for how to ask questions
- instructions for how to submit a vote, and what the deadline is, including a statement that each registered group's response and vote is important because at least 50% of the registered groups in the region must respond in order for the election to be valid.

Prior to sending this information to the registered groups in the Region, the Election Facilitator should make sure that each candidate meets the qualifications described in 1.a, above.

The email or letter should go to all registered groups in the region at least 6 weeks prior to the voting deadline indicated in the letter. Intergroups and Delegates should be cc'd on the emails so they can help facilitate the election process by making sure group contacts share with their home groups, encourage everyone to vote, and remind groups of ballot deadlines.

The email or letter should include instructions related to how registered groups may ask questions once they have received the material and reviewed each candidate's S-Anon service resume. Questions may be sent to the Election Facilitator and forwarded to each candidate, and/or a forum, such as a conference/zoom call, may be set up with each candidate, Election Facilitator and anyone else who may have questions. If a conference/zoom call is to be held, the letter or email should include information for the call (date, time &

call-in number).

The registered groups vote by returning the completed ballot to the Election email address by the given deadline. Each S-Anon member gets only one vote (no matter how many meetings they attend), to be sent in with the group's ballot (see sample ballot below). No individual ballots will be accepted. **Groups should include their ID# when they reply. If a group does not know its group ID#, it may contact the Election Facilitator, or the WSO, at [sanon@sanon.org](mailto:sanon@sanon.org).**

If a new group is established and registered with a group ID#, during the election process, every effort should be made to forward the candidate(s) and voting information (Letters, Resumes, Ballot, Directions) to them. If this group is able to vote, then the Election Facilitator will adjust the regional group count accordingly. The Election Facilitator will contact the WSO periodically during the election process to find out if new groups have been registered.

If a registered group has been verified as closed the Election Facilitator should remove the group from the Election database, and notify the WSO.

After the election process is complete the candidate(s), Region, BOT and WSO will be notified of the results.

Special meetings and intergroups are not considered voting registered groups, so they will not receive ballots. The Intergroup members, however, will vote in the registered group that they regularly attend.

**c. Election Criteria.** In order for the election to be valid, a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the registered groups in the region must respond by the given deadline. When there is only one candidate, a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the votes received is required in order to elect that candidate. When there are multiple candidates, a simple majority of the votes is needed to elect a Regional Trustee.

If a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the registered groups in the region do not respond, then the region is considered not sufficiently organized to elect a Regional Trustee. The candidate(s) will be notified that the Region did not meet the fifty percent (50%) requirement, then the Region and the WSO will be notified that the Region was not sufficiently organized to elect a Trustee. Each candidate can then submit their letter of intent and resume to the BOT for approval.

The BOT must accept a Regional Trustee duly elected by vote of the registered groups in the Region when the minimum requirements are met.

## **2. Election by the BOT**

**a. Qualifications:** Same as above.

**b. BOT Election of Regional Trustee.** If the region is not sufficiently organized to elect a willing candidate, that candidate can then submit their letter of intent and resume to the BOT for approval, complete the BOT application to serve as a Trustee and, assuming favorable consideration, be elected by the BOT.

If no candidates have stepped forward, the BOT may approach a qualified member from the Region,

ascertain their willingness, nominate and approve them as stated in the BOT By-Laws.

**c. Election Criteria.** In this case, approval by the BOT is the only criteria for election.

**SAMPLE BALLOT A**

**(For use with only one candidate)**

**Group ID# \_\_\_\_\_**

Candidate's Name: Number of Yes votes \_\_\_\_\_

Number of No votes \_\_\_\_\_

**Each S-Anon member gets only one vote (no matter how many meetings they attend). If a member has voted in another meeting, they are not counted on this ballot.**

**SAMPLE BALLOT B**

**(For use with multiple candidates)**

**Group ID# \_\_\_\_\_**

*Candidate's Name:* Number of Yes votes \_\_\_\_\_

*Candidate's Name:* Number of Yes votes \_\_\_\_\_

**Each S-Anon member gets only one vote (no matter how many meetings they attend). If a member has voted in another meeting, they are not counted on this ballot.**

Updated March 2023