

Appendix A

Summary of Answers to the Knowledge Based Decision Making Questions

1. What do we know about our members (or prospective members) needs regarding this discussion?

We know to apply Tradition 1 (Our Common Welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity) and Concept 4 (Participation is the key to harmony) when answering these KBDM questions.

The Area committee has an obligation to inform and engage with members through meetings with Group Reps and District Reps.

In person meetings help create relationships with other members in BC/Yukon and allow for the opportunity to connect, interact, and network with each other and that 20 D.R.'s out of 30, attended our first Zoom AWSCM. This is a typical attendance in face-to-face AWSCM. (Area World Service Committee Meeting).

We do know that our fellowship is divided on the topic of Electronic Meetings in 3 groups; embraces, rejects, or is indifferent to join an Electronic Meeting format. However, Electronic Meetings are the preferred way for many of the younger members and this may be a way to increase the declining numbers we are experiencing at in person meetings. The average Electronic Meeting on AI-Anons app is 125 per meeting with at least 70% being newcomers.

We have evidence of members expressing the lack of time or money and distance to travel to biannual meetings and to engage in service, particularly Northern groups. Also, there are members who may have health issues and no way to get to the in-person Assembly and AWSCM. Having virtual hybrid meetings for these events would alleviate these obstacles and have the potential of including more members.

2. What do we know about the capacity and strategic position of the Area relative to this discussion?

Members are interested in supporting AI-Anon events to be healthy and strong in BC/Yukon and would do so either in person or computer.

We have tech support (Annette P., Webmaster and Akemi M.) and trust we would be able to enlist others to volunteer for set up, & take down, on the day of the events.

We know we do not have a budget for this past year due to the pandemic, but we are financially healthy to acquire the equipment needed and we may be amalgamating the Alateen Coordinators position which will save money.

Some rural communities may not be able to host AWSCM as it may be difficult to find venues with the necessary capability of Wi-Fi.

3. What do we know about our current realities, evolving dynamics of the world and our fellowship's environment that is relevant to this discussion?

We know that travelling by air, ferry or driving is expensive. Not every group can afford to pay for G.R. or D.R. expenses to get to the meetings and may opt for online attendance. The World is highly connected and used to electronic formats and there seems to be a push for more rather than less electronic formats.

We know that people have become comfortable using Zoom and Electronic meetings and this is becoming the preferred ways of communicating for many members.

Al-Anon members traditionally are not used to integrating electronic formats as part of their recovery such as E-Books, Online Group Meeting, Online Speaker Events and Online Socializing.

The Pros and Cons

Pros

Hybrid Meetings are more likely to attract G.R.'s that would not normally be able to attend the Assembly and AWSCM, particularly Northern and remote locations.

Members that are comfortable meeting in-person will be able to attend and interact with each other. Tradition 3 (The relatives of alcoholics, when gathered together for mutual aid, may call themselves an Al-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 alcoholism in a relative or friend.)

We assume that more members would attend the meetings than an in-person event since they would not require travelling and the expenses that go with it and may increase participation at events by non-voting members.

Entire groups could participate online along with their D.R. and/or G.R.

Smaller venues with better technological support may be easier to find than the large venues required for in-person only.

Screen share for reports is clearer on a computer screen than a large screen in front of a large room.

It is easier to manage the audience on-line versus in person particularly if there is a "hot" topic to discuss and vote on.

There is a way to make voting easy for the Chair (Shannon P.) who has experience doing a Zoom meeting at the recent AWSCM. This event went very well and flowed nicely.

Staying home is safer than travelling or being around a large group of people due to the pandemic. We do not know when the pandemic will be gone.

Cons

The cost of equipment could be high depending on the equipment and method chosen. It could be in the \$3,000.00+ range.

The technology might fail during the meeting, disrupting the meeting or making online participation impossible.

There may be parts of the in-person meeting on-line members could not take part in, such as lunches, breaks, Sunday spiritual meeting.

We may have more trouble getting people to volunteer for service work when having a small venue and less people attending in person.

Service members will not experience the value of getting to know Al-Anon members out of their Groups and Districts as well as they can when meeting in person and mentoring and encouraging new service members is more difficult to do when members join online.

Some members may not have the equipment and internet access required to attend online.

Connections between Groups and Area may become weaker if Hybrid Meetings make G.R.s and D.R.'s more of a spectator rather than a participant.

Skits, games, or celebrations will be more difficult to do or would need to change how we do them.

G.R.s and D.R.s may experience more distractions at home and not attend the complete event.

Officers and Coordinators would need time to share how they can serve the groups (display tables would not be useful to online participants).

Literature displays would only be available to in-person attendees.

The agenda may need to be adjusted to allow more participation from online participants.

Chair and Secretary positions may become more difficult to perform.

Requires a time commitment to set up equipment prior to the meetings.

There is knowledge and routine already known for in-person events whereas we have only done one online event for a much smaller membership in attendance. We don't know what we don't know.

Meeting in person can increase spiritual awareness through practicing the principles with a large, diverse group in a way that online cannot.

Sitting for long lengths of time in front of the computer can be hard for some people.

It may be difficult to find venues with adequate internet capabilities.

We cannot know if the membership will be able to provide the necessary technical expertise in the future.

4. What are the ethical implications of our choices? Will our decision be in line with our spiritual principles?

There may be more new electronic users attending which could cause more work for the technical people but also a higher risk of anonymity being broken.

Some members may feel we should not incur such a large financial expenditure, and go with Zoom only, as was done with the past successful AWSCM 2021.

As members begin to hear how others have enjoyed the more organized interaction at the mic and not having to worry about noise, it may attract them to attend both meetings via online and less to the in-person events.

For anonymity purposes, making sure that those in the virtual platform are recognized and don't feel like "strangers".

With the change in how individuals, groups and events are now handled due to the pandemic, hybrid meetings would benefit the most members. Tradition 1 and Concept 4.

If we do not find ways to allow all groups to participate, G.R. votes may not reflect the group conscience of the entire Area.

Hybrid Meetings may give voice and vote to Groups and Districts currently not attending.

A Hybrid Meeting is in line with Tradition 1 (Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity) and Concept 1 (The ultimate responsibility and authority for Al-Anon world services belongs to the Al-Anon groups) Concept 4 (each Group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or AA as a whole, and Concept 5 (The rights of appeal and petition protect minorities and insure that they be heard). Whatever the decision may be, every change will create a situation for our members which has the potential to create conflict and discomfort.

5. What do we wish we knew, but don't?

- We wish we knew how many people would be attending in person and online.
- What are the long-term consequences of choosing in person or hybrid?
- Would more people volunteer for service positions if hybrid were an option?
- Will members choose not to send G.R.s and D.R.s because electronic attendance requires less of the groups funds?
- Will those meeting on-line feel isolated and left out from the in-person group?
- Will meeting on-line change some minds and want to attend in-person next time?
- Would increasing travel reimbursements and making a concerted effort to those outside of the lower mainland and island to participate in person?
- How much money will it take when everything is over and done?
- Which platform is most useful and practical?
- Are Hybrid Meetings feasible without members without a high level of technical expertise?
- What is most practical – renting or buying equipment?