

## Spirituality in Area Finances



A guide to help you understand Area finances and the spiritual principles behind it.

## Spiritual Aspects of Area Finances in Al-Anon

Step Twelve suggests we practice these principles in all our affairs. But do we do that with our finances? Are we not asked to apply spiritual principles in finances? So how can we do this? What might some of these principles be?

### We apply some of the spiritual principles in Area financial discussions when...

- \$ We as an Area are *unified*, and we practice *harmony* when we agree to take on our financial responsibilities and support all service levels.
- \$ Our Area is *inclusive* to all members when we make *responsible*, *knowledgeable* and *informed* financial decisions for the good of all.
- \$ We are *autonomous* within our collective group conscience when we take on our *responsibilities* and are *accountable* financially for our Area.
- \$ We support our *singleness of purpose* when we support our service arms to provide public outreach.
- \$ Our Area maintains Al-Anon's autonomy with our *singleness of purpose* while cooperating with A.A. when we keep our financial support within Al-Anon and its service arms. We pay our own way.
- \$ Our Area is being *fully self-supporting* when we take *responsibility* and are *accountable* to all service levels. We use the principles of *abundance*, *faith* and *trust* when making financial decisions.
- \$ We are including our collective Higher Power when we support *delegation* in service and financially support that service.

- \$ Our Area adheres to our *singleness of purpose* when we keep focused on Al-Anon and don't get distracted.
- \$ We practice *anonymity* when we all do our part to make Al-Anon visible to the public and support the costs that come with that.
- \$ We practice *equality* when our Area financial decisions are based on the spirituality of our program and not who is doing what. This is how we place *principles above personalities*.

### Here are some questions to help initiate an Area financial discussion using spiritual principles:

- \$ *Who in your Area would initiate a spiritual conversation about money?*
- \$ *How can we communicate our Area financial needs to our Districts and groups?*
- \$ *How can we decide how the Area spends its money?*
- \$ *What spiritual principles can be used to overcome fears when asking for an increase in your trusted servant budget?*
- \$ *Do we have a mission statement, goals or dreams as an Area? How do these align with our budget?*
- \$ *How can we as an Area embrace abundance in our financial discussions?*
- \$ *How can we use the Legacies when discussing the budget?*
- \$ *What can we do to introduce spirituality into Area financial discussions?*
- \$ *In what ways can we demonstrate confidence in our members to meet our financial needs as an Area?*

**See the Legacies and other Conference Approved Literature for more spiritual principles regarding Area finances.**

## Where Does Our Area Abundance Come From?

The first time that members discover the Area, they may be curious how it receives the financial *support* it needs to operate and provide services.

We give to the Area because we care and have a deep sense of commitment to Al-Anon. Funding for the Area comes from the *gratitude* of its members, donations from the groups and financial support from other service arms. Another method of support is through the *abundance* from fundraisers.

### Donations

When members observe the *Seventh Tradition* by putting a donation in the basket, they can *envision* that a share of that donation goes to help *sustain* their various service arms, including the Area. Individual members or other service arms, like a District, can also forward on their *abundance* in *gratitude* to the Area for the services it provides. *Planning* for the future by placing an Area donation *goal* into a budget is a healthy financial practice.

### Fundraisers

Many Areas hold an Area wide fundraiser such as an event at an Area Assembly like a raffle or auction. These fundraisers can help give an important financial boost to the Area income. For more information about fundraisers refer to the *2014-2017 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27).

## How Does Our Area “Carry the Message” With Our Finances?

We’ve identified the spiritual aspects of finances and how money is raised for the Area. Now, let’s look at how it is spent. Through our recovery we found that to keep it, we had to give it away. This means being *willing* to reach out and have *courage* that we have something to offer our group, our District and our Area in service.

No one needs to have money in order to serve. We are all *equal*. *We are a resource*. Stepping forward to be a coordinator or officer at the Area level, you are trusted with *respect, honesty, knowing your role* and having the *integrity* to perform service.

Being of *service* means we *volunteer* our time, our talents and ourselves. It does not necessarily mean donating our money to perform service.

We support our *trusted servants* to get the message out to the public and our members. Whether they are Area Secretary, the Literature Coordinator or the Public Outreach Coordinator, we need to give them the funds they need in order to perform the duties of their roles.

When we see the attraction of *responsible delegation* and can *trust the process* by which they are elected or appointed into their roles, we can be assured they are using the *spiritual principles of honesty, integrity and respect* as they make financial decisions in their roles.

## The Spirituality of Financial Responsibility

In discussions of Area finances, the last but certainly not least factor to be considered is who will be handling the money. The Area budget communicates in financial terms the *spiritual principles, priorities and dreams* identified by the Area in its discussions of finances. The Area then demonstrates its *faith* in its *trusted servants* by giving them the *authority and responsibility* of fulfilling their assigned tasks within the financial constraints defined in the budget. These *trusted servants* demonstrate *accountability* of the money they have spent through their reports back to the Area. Often the accountability takes two forms. One may be the direct report that the coordinator or officer gives to the Area. The other may be in the process by which expenses are reimbursed and audited by the Area Treasurer, or an audit or budget committee.

During the course of financial discussions, the Area might also want to consider how to address extraordinary circumstances that may fall outside the Area budget. For example: How are decisions made to take advantage of a public outreach opportunity that was not apparent when the budget was approved? Looking at finances as a means of demonstrating *spiritual principles* helps identify in general terms who can accept that *responsibility*.