These 25 topics were presented to Conference members prior to Conference. The two highlighted topics were the topics the majority of Conference members chose to discuss. The discussions/posts relating to these two CAI will be in the 2020 World Service Conference (WSC) Summary which will be available in July online. A printed version will be available for purchase in August.

1. How do Areas address welcoming new potential Al-Anon groups?

Groups are the foundation of the Al-Anon fellowship. Areas need to take an active role when a new meeting is attempting to register. It provides an opportunity to visit the group in order to discuss Al-Anon principles and why we adhere to them. Creating the link to service at the time of registration fosters a firm foundation for the group which is vital to the fellowship as a whole.

2. How can our Al-Anon fellowship support members who have loved ones that have mental illness concurrent with alcoholism, without violating Tradition Three or Ten?

An increasing number of Al-Anon members have loved ones with alcoholism accompanied by mental illness. Mental health providers refer family members to Al-Anon, and members report confusion and stress because they cannot talk about mental illness in the Al-Anon meeting. Al-Anon has tackled difficult "outside issues" such as sexual orientation and intimacy with CAL. Is it time to address the "elephant in the room" with CAL to support members without violating our Traditions?

3. How would building bridges between Al-Anon and A.A. - establishing and maintaining links of communication - foster cooperation and respect between the recovery programs?

Alcoholism affects not only the drinker but also the family and other relationships. When members of both recovery programs connect, not only in the traditional ways such as at open meetings, rallies, roundups, conventions, etc., but also in more creative venues such as family activities, picnics, campouts, etc., healing and healthy recovery can be encouraged through finding common ground. When A.A. and Al-Anon exist mainly in isolation, recovery for both the drinker and those affected suffers.

4. Is our current vernacular inclusive and diverse?

Discussion of vernacular is of value to the strategic plan as it ensures identification and inclusivity in our fellowship. Does meeting and/or literature vernacular (or member’s responses to new vernacular) keep people from feeling welcome? Is it time for written (e.g., In the Loop, Service Manual) guidance/clarification of "professional terms and labels" that includes examples of labels and professional terminology (e.g., qualifier, codependent, my alcoholic, crosstalk, etc.).
5. What are Group/District/Area/WSO cashless society or electronic payment best practices?

Cashless payment (e.g., Venmo and PayPal) is popular among members and is of value to them so they can show gratitude through abundance. Does the “Group Bank Accounts” section of "Groups at Work" need expansion to include guidance on cashless payment to provide guidance on how to 1) protect a member’s anonymity 2) protect member/Group/District/Area money security, 3) ensure monies received are from an Al-Anon member and 4) audit practices?

6. How can use of the Links of Service (up and down) be encouraged?

Transparency, discussion, and substantial unanimity is critical to our strategic goals. The Links of Service (member to GR to DR to AWSC to Delegate to WSO) provide time for experience, strength and hope to be shared. E-mail has empowered members to communicate directly with WSO about issues, which causes a break in the Links of Service. Do we need to "redefine" the Links of Service?

7. How is Al-Anon going to reach new members in the 21st century and the millennial generation?

The population age of Al-Anon members are 56-60 years old. If we continue doing the same things in some moments Al-Anon Family Groups will struggle difficult times. So, is important for Al-Anon seeing new ways to reach out the message.

8. How can Areas ensure that newly registering groups understand the significance of Al-Anon’s Traditions and abide by them, improving Al-Anon as a whole?

Warranty Four reminds us to protect the Al-Anon name. Currently, many meeting lists include groups that violate the Traditions with outside affiliation and stringent sponsorship policies. How can Areas inform all members, and preclude the registration of new meetings that don’t warrant the Al-Anon name in the light of the complexities presented by the meeting list policy?

9. Dreaming Big with 20|20 Vision: “How can we support groups with the use of communication technologies in our recovery meetings in a safe way?”

We have small intimate meetings in outlying areas whose members are homebound due to personal health reasons or taking care of someone else and don't want to miss their face-to-face meeting occasionally. Members are beginning to use their phones to allow members to participate in meetings. We understand that confidentiality and anonymity are of the utmost importance. We want to support members staying connected and also consider the safety of all members.
10. Would creating WSO minimum requirements for an Area Meeting List Publishing Policy as was done with the Alateen Safety and Behavior Requirements ensure safe meetings?

Could creating a WSO Meeting List Publishing Policy that clearly sets forth a minimum set of requirements keep Al-Anon meetings safe for beginners and members anywhere within our fellowship? Could this contribute to our members understanding how we keep the focus on Al-Anon by emphasizing our commitment to the principles behind our Traditions and Concepts? Would this help members discuss and/or safety documents for groups, Districts, and Area?

11. How could WSO incorporate Regional Delegate Meetings into the Service Structure?

Incoming, potential future incoming, and currently serving Delegates benefit by the experience, strength, and hope that is shared not only from their own Area’s past Delegates but from those outside their individual Area. Could WSO help with the development of regional electronic/hybrid meetings for those Regions with language or travel issues? By enabling greater sharing of knowledge and wisdom, would such meetings allow Areas to increase the eligibility of those trusted servants who may attend?

12. Links of service. Which link is missing and why?

As Delegate, I get inquiries from members, GRs, and even DRs asking questions about items I know I have related at AWSC, Assembly, in emails, and in person. When I question what is the problem, it seems the answer is, "That's just the way it is in Al-Anon." In the past, WSC has only discussed this issue 3 times. Brainstorming ideas and realizing the necessity to exchange information is vital to the Al-Anon program.

13. What would be the impact of Alateens attending meetings virtually (calling into an existing meeting)?

How can we imagine it? What are the requirements of our 2003 Motion that we need to understand before moving forward? What is possible? Where are the fears? Are there realities we can work within our Requirements to be open to technology with the teens?

14. What impact does opening a F2F (face-to-face) meeting up to speaker phone or iPad FaceTime participation have on the fellowship as a whole?

Can we discuss the possible impacts on newcomers in terms of anonymity? In terms of someone seeming to be of special importance? Does this create cliques or factions? What discussions can we have to explore inclusiveness and address fears?

15. How can we maintain our vital link in service if Areas do not schedule more than 30 minutes - 1 hour for a Delegate to convey all that happens in Conference?

In my 16 years of Area service I have seen the time allotted to a Delegate for reporting on Conference shrink to a fraction of what it was. How can we, as a Conference, use our
spiritual principles to the members through new and creative ways?

16. Our Envisioned Future sees Al-Anon being a global organization with barrier-free access to the program, how do you see this manifesting?

Today, approximately 40% of our groups exist outside the WSC service Structure. This does not even include electronic meetings which are without geographical limitations. These groups and meetings are growing, while our face-to-face groups are getting smaller. The creation of an actual worldwide group conscience is not only desirable but imperative. All voices must be heard. How to make AlAnon a truly global organization is a difficult task, with many visions. Input from the Conference can only further this goal.

17. Dreaming big that Al-Anon "experience, strength, and hope" be available to everyone. How can we make Conference Approved Literature accessible to all in Canada?

Many in Canada, especially newcomers, aren’t able to access Conference Approved Literature (e.g. Paths to Recovery is $19 in the US; in Canada $41). It is expensive to produce books; there is a high exchange rate; book sales contribute to Al-Anon revenue, but is there a way CAL can be produced in cheaper soft cover versions (e.g., How Al-Anon Works) so that everyone, regardless of income, has access to the wisdom that has helped us? Or some other way?

18. Would the fellowship benefit by making the World Service Conference (WSC) Summaries more user-friendly as a tool for sharing KBDM reports in an index?

The WSC Summaries are archived on the WSO website and grouped in "decade" bundles. Useful research information for members and service arms can be found in the Thought and Task Force reports within the Summaries. Many members are likely not aware this information exists because the information within each Summary is not easily accessible. Accessing information on a specific topic is like looking for a needle in a haystack. I suggest we consider creating a Thought and Task Force index.

19. How do we increase Alateen attendance and attract new AMIAS?

There are many Alateen meetings that open, fail to thrive, and then close. Alateens report feeling uncomfortable in Al-Anon meetings and that they miss Alateen when they age out. AMIAS are often in short supply. In what ways can we bridge the gap that exists between Alateen culture and A-Anon culture that will ease the transition from Alateen to Al-Anon?

20. Attracting Diversity in Our Membership - How can we attract younger members and all genders and ethnicities to Al-Anon, to ensure our growth and future?

The average age, gender, and ethnicity of the Al-Anon membership continues to be a white female who is roughly 60 years old. How can we become attractive to members under that median age? What kind of outreach might we employ to attract men or those who identify elsewhere on the gender spectrum? How can we reach non-white ethnicities with the Al-Anon message of hope? We know that Al-Anon's message is for all people, and our
membership should reflect that.

21. Al-Anon and Social Media - How can members appropriately utilize social media? Do we need tools and guidelines to help facilitate this?

Members are online and navigating social media to varying degrees. Many find it confusing when they hear that Al-Anon is also on social media. They have concerns about their anonymity and don't see how it can be kept if they interact with Al-Anon online. Should there be a Guideline for appropriate use of social media? Could other tools be developed to aid members in understanding how to use social media while keeping their anonymity?

22. How can the fellowship expand our members' knowledge and application of the spiritual principles of our program?

Some groups/speakers in my Area have assigned one spiritual Principle to each of the Steps, Traditions and Concepts and promote it as the ONLY Principle for that Legacy. Many of our members have no understanding of what Principles are or how they apply to the Legacies and their personal program of recovery. How do we change that?

23. How can we evolve our AWSC and Policies to remain energized, relevant, and experience growth?

In our Area, the AWSC is "keeping the light on" in terms of supporting Al-Anon in MN North, but not really creating energy, excitement, and growth-related actions.

24. Can we consider the impact of using religious prayers at Al-Anon events?

As a Christian prayer I believe the Lord's prayer is divisive and inappropriate to be recited at any Al-Anon meeting, Assembly, convention, and especially at an International. It's one of our “Three Obstacles to Success in Al-Anon”: "Discussion of religion: Al-Anon is not allied with any sect or denomination. …based on no particular form of religion." It is not inclusive of Jews and Muslims or any other non-Christian member or potential member.

25. What are the advantages or disadvantages to digital literature?

With rapid changes in technology, more members are requesting to have literature available in a digital format. Also, audio books are being requested for visually impaired members, and for members traveling and wishing to listen instead of read. What would be the financial impact of producing digital literature? Would digital literature be available as a single download, a subscription-based platform, or as a playaway audiobook?