

# Spirituality in District Money Discussions

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## *Facilitator's Guide*

**Frame:** Due to the effects of living with alcoholism, many Al-Anon members have fears about financial matters, which carry into service, making it difficult to have discussions about District finances. This workshop is designed to help uncover the fears and barriers to District discussions about money, as well as the spiritual principles that can help to overcome them.

### **Roles Needed:**

- A *facilitator* to guide the group through this exercise and recorder (optional) to note responses to questions posed on the “District Fears and Barriers Worksheet.”
- A *recorder* (optional) to document the group’s brainstorming ideas

The following workshop has been created to help District members explore *spiritual principles* when discussing financial matters as a District.

**Time frame:** The time to present this workshop may be adapted to your allotted time. It may also be presented as a series of workshops, broken into segments over several District meetings based on the amount of time, experience of members, etc. Adapt this guide to fit your needs. It is not necessary to read all of the material out loud. It is important to have the discussion of finances rather than making sure all the material below is read at the workshop.

### **Workshop sections:**

#### Part 1: Fears and Barriers in District Money Discussions

This section opens a conversation about what may make us uncomfortable in discussing financial matters in our District. It may help members become more aware of what fears may surface when discussing money in relation to District finances; consider what barriers might exist; and explore ways to overcome them. (20-30 minutes)

Handout: “Fears and Barriers in District Money Discussions: Participant Worksheet” (Attached)

#### Part 2: Spiritual Principles in Money Discussions

This section asks members to explore how using our spiritual principles can help us move forward to more confident, open conversations about District financial matters. (20-30 minutes)

Handout: “Spiritual Principles in Money Discussions” (Attached)

### **Resource documents:** (recommended for workshop participants)

The current *2014-2017 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27)

#### *Guidelines:*

*District Meetings* (G-15)

*District Representative* (G-37)

*Reserve Fund Guideline* (G-41)

### **Facilitator Question—Fears: What are our fears in talking about finances as it relates to our District?**

*The facilitator helps the participants determine the list of fears that the District may have concerning financial discussions. The recorder or individual participants write(s) a short description of each response on the “Fears and Barriers in District Money Discussions Participant Worksheet.” The following list of fears may be used to help generate discussion, as needed:*

- Financial insecurity
- Fear of loss of control. Will my voice be heard?
- Fear of making a decision
- Fear of reduced group donations due to declining membership
- Fear of disclosure about personal feelings about money or the state of one’s personal finances

### **Facilitator Question: Are there any additional fears you can think of for our District? Which fear seems to be the biggest issue for our District?**

### **Facilitator Question—Barriers: What are the barriers we have concerning money discussions and our District finances? \*\*\*A barrier can be anything that gets us stuck or stops us from having open discussions.**

*The facilitator guides the group in a brainstorming exercise. The following list of barriers can be used to generate discussion or to provide the group a few examples. The recorder or individual participants write(s) a short description of each response on the “Fears and Barriers in District Money Discussions Participant Worksheet.” (Facilitator: choose one or two to get the discussion started, if needed).*

- Members may not understand the principle of abundance and how it fits into our three Legacies (Steps, Traditions and Concepts).
- It may take time in AI-Anon recovery to make changes and move to a place of gratitude and feeling of abundance.
- Members believe others tire of hearing about money or think it is rude to discuss it.
- Talking about money is uncomfortable for some members.
- Members want to know where the money goes and the value to their group.
- Members are not aware of the benefits of budgeting and planning.
- Members are not aware of the service arms (e.g. WSO, Area, AIS or District) and the money necessary to their functions.
- Districts with a large reserve fund may deter members from contributing.
- Members may avoid broaching the subject of money for fear that other members may become uncomfortable if they are having a hard time with their personal finances.

**Facilitator’s Question: Which issue seems to be the biggest roadblock for our District?**

**Facilitators Question: How can our *spiritual principles* help us to address the fears and barriers we have identified?**

*The facilitator guides the group in identifying the spiritual principles that would apply to the fears/barriers generated in the brainstorming exercise using the following list, or any additional principles District members can list.*

**Spiritual Principles:** Values, beliefs, attitudes, philosophies, standards of being, doing, thinking, believing and behaving. The principles of the Al-Anon program are found in the three Legacies: Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service.

The following is a list of *spiritual principles* to help with this exercise. This is only a partial list; you may think of others that can be used.

Abundance	Action	Consistency	Common Goal
Unity	Love	Responsibility	Vision
Carrying the Message	Service	Self-Support	Willingness
Gratitude	Independence	Participation	Trust

**Facilitator Question: From the *fears* we identified earlier to be our biggest concern, what spiritual principles would apply and why?**

**Facilitator Question: From the *barriers* we identified earlier to be our biggest concern, what spiritual principles would apply and why?**

## Part 2: Spiritual Principles in District Money Discussions

### **Facilitator's Guide**

The facilitator guides the group in a discussion of "Spiritual Principles in Money Discussions" utilizing the questions relating to dreams, hope and trust below. The recorder or individual participants write(s) a short description of each response after the questions.

**Dreams:** *"To think of Tradition Seven as a protection for my spiritual growth is humbling and freeing."*

*...I now know that not only do I get to give my money and service, but I also get to receive miracles in abundance."*

**Paths to Recovery—Al-Anon's Steps, Traditions, and Concepts (B-24), pp. 198-99**

1. What are our dreams for our District?

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2. How can I as an individual support those dreams?

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3. How does a District budget help a District realize its dreams?

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**Hope:** *"If you have received help, and you no doubt have, why not give to further the cause for the peace and serenity of future members."*

**Anne B., Al-Anon Co-founder, 1958**

1. How can a District encourage abundance in thought and action?

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2. What information do I need to understand and support our District's financial needs and wants?

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3. How can I clearly relay the financial needs/dreams of our District decisions to my group?

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4. How can I help the members of my group understand how their donations support the goals of the District?

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5. How could having different types of fundraising events encourage and unite our District in meeting our goals?

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**Trust:** *"The Seventh Tradition has taught me to be a giver instead of a taker. I ask my Higher Power to show me where I can contribute to life each day. All of my needs are met. I am doing my part and I feel calm when that is my focus."*

*Paths to Recovery—Al-Anon's Steps, Traditions, and Concepts (B-24), pg. 200*

1. What do you think is a priority as a District?

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2. In what ways does our District support our Area? Does this meet our District goal?

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3. In what ways does our District support WSO? Does this meet our District goal?

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4. What financial challenges does our District face? How can the District meet these challenges?

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5. Has the District established an abundant reserve based on prudent financial principles, or is it stockpiling moneys for no specific reason?

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