

Spirituality in Area
Money Discussions
Task Force Presentation
2017 World Service Conference

Background:

For many years, the World Service Conference has been discussing topics via a spiritually-based approach to more effectively communicate information to the membership. At the 2015 World Service Conference, there was a presentation “Thought Force: Create Strategies to Show the Importance of Abundance and Spirituality in Money Discussions.” As a result, Conference members requested a workshop or skit that could be presented to their Areas on the spiritual principles in financial matters and discussions.

Charge:

Review the barriers and strategies described in the handout and PowerPoint from the 2015 World Service Conference presentation created by the “Thought Force: Create Strategies to Show the Importance of Abundance and Spirituality in Money Discussions” and develop a presentation for an Area Assembly that incorporates spiritual principles (e.g. gratitude, abundance, etc.) in financial matters and discussions. Incorporate realistic financial situations that would aid members in relating to the financial discussion.

Presentation:

- ❖ Chairperson (Mike) will welcome members of the Conference to the presentation of the Task Force and give the name of the Task Force; then go on to introduce the absent members of the Task Force.

JINKIE	REDDEN	Arkansas	54
ANGELA	ANGELLOZ	Louisiana	54
MICHELE	RAIMONDO	New York South	54
LIESEL	BROOKS	Alaska	54
Lourdes	Coello (Honorary Guest Member)	MEXICO	

Members present will introduce themselves.

- ❖ Member (?) will give the Background and the Charge:

Background: For many years, the World Service Conference has been discussing topics via a spiritually-based approach to more effectively communicate information to the membership. At the 2015 World Service Conference, there was a presentation “Thought Force: Create Strategies to Show the Importance of Abundance and Spirituality in Money Discussions.” As a result, Conference members requested a workshop or skit that could be presented to their Areas on the spiritual principles in financial matters and discussions.

Charge: Review the barriers and strategies described in the handout and PowerPoint from the 2015 World Service Conference presentation created by the “Thought Force: Create Strategies to Show the Importance of Abundance and Spirituality in Money Discussions” and develop a presentation for an Area Assembly that incorporates spiritual principles (e.g. gratitude, abundance, etc.) in financial matters and discussions. Incorporate realistic financial situations that would aid members in relating to the financial discussion.

- ❖ Segue into Skit – Mike will comment:
In our first meeting at the World Service Conference last year, our Treasurer of the Board of Trustees made a comment that I found very profound and has stuck with me ever since.
- ❖ Jennie will briefly talk about “Money as a Tool – Not as an Emotion”.
We have often seen a lot of emotion when discussing financial matters. For some of us, money defines us and measures our worth. For others, it brings fears of scarcity and manipulation. In fact, money is just a tool, a means to realize our dreams and to help fulfill our potential as we are guided by our Higher Power.

- ❖ Member (?) will say:

Our concern was not centered on how to inspire people to give more freely or in larger amounts, but rather to think and talk about financial matters in perhaps a different way, a way that includes these spiritual principles that we hear so much about. Bringing in ideas about gratitude, unity and abundance may strengthen our connection to our worldwide fellowship and extend to the Twelfth-Step work we all find so important.

- ❖ Members (All) will present the “Woeful/Hopeful” Skit – Synopsis of skit:

Cast Members (9): Narrator – (?), Fear Woeful Chair – (?), Scarcity Woeful #1 – (?), Trustless Woeful #2 – (?), Purposeless Woeful #3 – (?), Faith Hopeful Chair – (?), Abundance Hopeful #1 – (?), Responsibility Hopeful #2 – (?), Gratitude Hopeful #3 – (?)

Narrator (?):

The scene depicts two AWSC budget meetings taking place; one is a woefully dis-spirited, fear-based group; the other is more hopeful and is well-grounded in Al-Anon’s spiritual principles. As the discussion goes on, the Woeful group looks more and more glum (putting on paper chains and slumping lower as the negativity goes on). Each Woeful member has a sign.

Fear Woeful Chair: (Deep sigh, head low) Okay, I guess we better start this meeting to discuss the Area's budget for the upcoming year. Not sure why we bother – we never seem to have enough money to do anything!

Fear Woeful Chair: So let's just get this over and done with; everyone *hates* talking about money. (Puts on chain)

Scarcity Woeful AWSC member #1: Budgets are *such a downer!* When I think of the word budget, I think of "Can't! Can't! Can't!" (Puts on chain)

Trustless Woeful AWSC member #2: Well, we managed to have enough this past year to *barely* cover our Area trusted servants in their work, but we didn't have much left over to launch the public outreach project we talked about.

Purposeless Woeful AWSC member #3: Yeah, it was a struggle to stretch our resources. I don't know if our groups and Districts will be able to step up again to fully fund the upcoming year's budget. I don't even want to ask. (Puts on chain)

Scarcity Woeful AWSC member #1: I think we'll have to cut the budget for this coming year, or the groups and Districts in our Area really won't want to support it. There's never enough money to go around.

Trustless Woeful AWSC member #2: I agree with tightening our belts. We need to do more with less. Our job is to prove to the membership that we can get by with less and that we understand that this disease leaves us devastated and unable to do much. (Puts on chains)

Purposeless Woeful AWSC member #3: You know, last Assembly we discussed budgeting for Past Delegates to attend Area Assembly to help with public outreach. How would we *ever* fund their expenses *and* still have money for a public outreach project?

Scarcity Woeful AWSC member #1: (Gasp!) We can't spend that money! We don't know if the groups and Districts will ever contribute another dime! (More chains)

Trustless Woeful AWSC member #2: Back to cutting back... We probably should stop having snacks at the Assembly. That shows a real lack of understanding for the lives of our members. In addition, we could save at least \$50 by staying at the Sketchy Hills Campground in the next town—where we bring our own sleeping bags and towels. (Chains)

Fear Woeful Chair: (With a deep sigh and negative tone) Ok, now the Treasurer says we have to talk *again* about curtailing our spending until we come to a decision about our Reserve. 'Because you *know* that rainy day is just around the corner!

Hey, look at this handout that was in the Treasurer's box. It looks like it says something about Spirituality in Area Financial Discussions. It says it's from the 2017 World Service Conference Task Force Presentation on Spirituality in Area Money Discussions.

- ❖ Segue into Workshop – Member (Julie?) At the end of the Woeful Group's meeting, one member, while cleaning out the group's literature box, discovered, at the bottom of the box, a copy of the Spirituality in Area Finances handout from the 2017 World Service Conference.

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 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, 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**.

- ❖ Segue back into Skit – Member (?) **At the end of the discussion period, the Task Force Chairperson will get the attention of the conference.**

You have now had a few minutes to start thinking about area finances in a spiritual manner. Now, let’s see how the Hopeful Group conducts their budget meeting.

- ❖ Members (all) will present the “Hopeful” portion of the skit:

Narrator says, “Let’s rejoin this Area World Service Committee meeting after they’ve read the material and participated in the workshop.

The Hopeful group becomes brighter and brighter, more and more positive (putting on hats with rays of sunshine). By the end of the discussions, members of the Woeful group are shedding their chains, moving over to the Hopeful group, attracted by the healthy, spiritual nature of the discussion.

by the Serenity Prayer. [Everyone say the Serenity Prayer]

Faith Hopeful AWSC Chair: Let's begin our discussion of our Area's budget with the spiritual principles we want to keep in mind as we go, like *abundance & gratitude...* (Puts on sunshine hat) (Members chime in with more, putting on sashes with spiritual principles written on them)

Abundance Hopeful AWSC Member #1: Trust & Generosity;

Responsibility Hopeful AWSC Member #2: Responsibility & Mutual Respect;

Gratitude Hopeful AWSC Member #3: Our Common Goals & Working Together (Unity).

Abundance Hopeful AWSC member #1: I remember our Delegate coming back from the World Service Conference and saying that a budget is just a plan for making our dreams come true. Our Area *can* dream big! (Puts on sunshine hat)

Responsibility Hopeful AWSC member #2: I'm really impressed that we could support our trusted servants in their work and get started on our Area's public outreach Dream Project. Maybe we can make our dream *even* bigger this next year!!

Gratitude Hopeful AWSC member #3: I think the groups and Districts in our Area are really starting to understand responsibility and what it means to be self-supporting; thanks to some of the information brought back by our Delegate and the work he/she did at the Conference. I think we're all starting to link up abundance, gratitude and responsibility. (Puts on sunshine hat)

Faith Hopeful AWSC Chair: The groups and Districts have trusted us to put their contributions to good use, doing the business of Al-Anon to both maintain our representation at the World Service Conference *and* fulfill our primary purpose: Helping families and friends of alcoholics.

Let's ask the Area Assembly to think of some projects that can further our Twelfth-Step work. I believe that when our members see it as "gratitude in action," they will continue to step up. We all want to spread the message of hope, don't we? Isn't that what we're here for?

Responsibility Hopeful AWSC member #2: An Area project is a great idea! We need to remember our primary purpose. I need to remember where I came from and how much my life has changed for the better since practicing these principles and getting involved in service. I want to show my appreciation and give hope to others that everything in our lives benefits from recovery – even financial matters. (Puts on sunshine hat)

Gratitude Hopeful AWSC member #3: I recall, a Past Delegate sat on the Public Outreach Committee at the WSO as part of her service as Delegate last term. I'll bet she'd have some great suggestions on the Area's public outreach campaign. We sure are missing out on some wonderful experience, strength and hope when she's unable to

join us.

Abundance Hopeful AWSC member #1: Well, then why don't we budget to cover her expenses and suggest the Assembly ask her to work with our new Area Public Outreach Coordinator on a task force? We can trust her to guide us in our efforts to reach our common goals, just as our groups and Districts can trust us to budget wisely.

Responsibility Hopeful AWSC member #2: You know, if we believe in abundance, then we will have abundance. Part of my recovery has been learning to treat myself well, and knowing that my Higher Power wants good things for me. We need to treat our trusted servants well and show our appreciation for their service by providing a safe location for Area meetings, comfortable meeting rooms, and sleeping rooms. Maybe even some nice snacks! If service is fun and appreciated, maybe we'll fill some of those positions that have gone vacant lately.

Faith Hopeful AWSC Chair: I think we've come to see that when the groups and Districts know how their money is spent and we are accountable and our purpose is clear, that they understand and will support us. It's great to work together in unity!

Narrator (?):

Now...let's begin a conversation about how our Area might consider increasing our Reserve Fund so we can dream *even* bigger.

- ❖ Thank members of the Task Force for all their hard work and all the great results.
- ❖ Open mic to discuss workshop findings and comments about presentation.