

## **HOW TO PLAN A CONVENTION/ASSEMBLY**

**These are suggested Guidelines that have worked over the past assemblies/conventions.**

**NOTE:** The Spring Convention/Assembly and Fall Assembly are financially self-supporting – the seed money must be returned to NYN treasury along with extra money raised over costs as a fundraiser for NYN. This is covered under treasurer's duties

### **HOST COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON AND CO-CHAIRPERSON:**

*Within the first 3 months of your position:*

**Meet with NYN Convention Coordinator prior to convention/assembly to go over any questions and meet immediately after convention/assembly to review pros, cons and any concerns that came up during the event. This will help the next district when planning their convention. Take and send to convention coordinator notes on what is done for a final report.**

Arrange for date and location of Convention/Assembly. Make appointment with (hotel) management to see their facilities and discuss expenses. The Spring Assembly and Convention should be held the third weekend of May, if possible. As long as there are at least 2 weeks in between the World Service Conference and the Spring Assembly and Convention. The Fall Assembly should be scheduled to avoid Sept/Oct Jewish Holidays, if possible. If possible, prior to signing contract with hotel, have NYN Convention Coordinator review the contract and visit the hotel with you.

The purpose of the Spring Assembly and Convention is to provide a forum to help Group Representatives fulfill their responsibility to hear the Delegate's report, and to conduct area business at the Assembly meeting, and to provide an Al-Anon program for the rest of the participants.

### **ROOMS:**

Panels – Held at the Spring convention/assembly may invite AA to participate. Panels are held on Saturday and are led and attended by non-voting Al-Anon/Alateen members. There are no panels during the Fall Assembly.

Check with Presentation Committee to see if breakout rooms are needed.

New GR Meeting will be held on Saturday mornings, led by the Immediate Past Delegate. This is held at both Spring Convention/Assembly and Fall Assembly.

#### **Friday** 1. Registration/Raffles/Literature

2. Hospitality
3. (Spring) 8 PM AWSC meeting – need microphone
4. Room for Ice Breaker / Open Al-Anon/Alateen meeting
5. (Spring) Room for AA to meet

#### **Saturday** 1. Registration/Raffles/Literature

2. Hospitality
3. (Fall) 8 AM AWSC meeting – need microphone
4. (Spring & Fall) 8AM New GR meeting
5. (Spring) Al-Anon/Alateen Panels – 2 morning workshops, 2 afternoon workshops
6. (Spring) AA meeting room - plans own program
7. (Spring & Fall) Assembly 9:15 am – 5:00 pm

- a. Need head table/podium/microphone
- b. Seating for Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Immediate Past Delegate, Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer
- c. Should have adequate seating for Assembly members, coordinators DR's and GR's.
- d. Try to have two microphones on the floor.
- e. Need place to set up projector/screen.
- f. Need tables for displays and other information. (4 tables: AWSC material, presentations, literature, forum and Public Outreach.)

\*\*Check to see if presentation committee will need breakout rooms during Assembly presentation.

\*\*Check with NYN Area Chairperson for any special needs for AWSC and Assembly meetings.

- 8. Banquet room (same as assembly room or different room)
- 9. Room for entertainment after banquet speaker

**Sunday** 1. Room for Alateen interest meeting

- 2. Spiritual panel

Banquet Room – Can they provide microphones and podiums if needed? Make sure seating is adequate per room. Watch for room dividers as they can be deceiving, **as far as space available**.

Audio-Visual Equipment: NYN has a system stored in Syracuse AIS if needed. You may only need Microphones, cords and stands. Also check with local community college to see if they loan out audio-visual equipment. Identify ahead of time someone who can help if something goes wrong. If you need to borrow AV equipment you should be able to use it. We also have a projector available for PowerPoint presentations at Syracuse AIS.

Does the hotel provide accommodations for convention/assembly chair people and/or hospitality chairperson? Try to have these rooms extended off the hospitality room. These above rooms are normally provided free of charge for commitment of rooms filled by our members. **This is unclear -- What kind of accommodations are needed or available for how many people? Does this mean extra bedrooms or offices?** Usually with a certain number of rooms booked the hotel will give you a free room for so many booked.

#### **AL-ANON HOSPITALITY ROOM:**

- Can finger foods, etc. be brought into the hospitality room?
  - Can we use the hotel's coffee pots, or may we supply our own?
  - Are drop cloths required? **Used in the hospitality room to protect the floors.**
  - What are the expenses of having coffee in the panel rooms, if you desire?
- Or, is it possible for you to bring your own coffee to the panel rooms, same as hospitality room?

Compare room rates and food expenses. Pick up banquet menu and prices. Request a breakdown of all expenses – room, food, etc. (Meet with Banquet chairperson).

Are there other eating facilities at the venue, and if so, what are the prices? Are there other restaurants near-by? Can a map be provided along with a list of local restaurants, nearest drug/grocery stores, and attractions?

#### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

Where will your registration table and chairs be? Decide where to have tables for raffles, literature, Public Outreach, Forum and sales. These tables may be placed in panel room or hospitality room where they are available and always attended. But, open areas have been used in the past, ex: lobby, etc.

Look for attractions, such as a swimming pool, game rooms and maps. Toll-free number, for hotel registrations.

**Remember, our members may not always let the operator know which convention they are attending,**

**AFG Convention can be used to identify.**

A correct count of rooms used is necessary. Keep records of our people staying there through your registration table (Not every committee does this). Ask the hotel to keep a count of rooms reserved under NYN. You will need a count for Friday, Saturday and a combined count and any extra nights. Please keep each day separate and then combined totals. This will help future committees in planning

Do you want entertainment for Friday icebreakers and Saturday following the banquet? This should be up to the convention committee and what they can afford. What is available? Is there a stage room if needed? Is it large enough? Is there a dance floor? Etc. Please remember that this is a weekend of fellowships. Allow time for members to network outside of the meetings.

Remember: We do not affiliate, so we do not use hotel/motel mailing cards or stationary. They do not use our name, Al-Anon because of the anonymity. Use AFG on ALL signs. (Al-Anon Family Groups) Do not use Al-Anon.

Hold your first committee meeting shortly after you have confirmed the date and location of the assembly. Then every 3 months of the last 12 months before the Convention/Assembly. If necessary, one meeting within the last two weeks. If possible, invite people who have had past experience working with convention committees, people with food experience, recordkeeping, artistic ability, etc. Those who have been active and those eager to help make good chair people and co-chairs. From there each chairperson forms her/his committee. (Send ALL minutes of meetings to the NYN Convention Coordinator in a timely manner). Have all chair people make suggestions to help decide what your theme is.

### **ONE YEAR PRIOR TO THE CONVENTION/ASSEMBLY:**

Have a special meeting including all your chair people. Always have a co-chair for each committee. Discuss their responsibilities and how to begin their work. Provide copies of these responsibilities to all host committee chair people. Some of these positions may be combined.

1. Convention	Chairperson and Co-Chairperson
2. Program	" "
3. Attraction	" "
4. Registration	" "
5. Hospitality	" "
6. Raffle and 50/50	" "
7. Literature Public Outreach	" "
8. Banquet	" "
9. Signs	" "
10. Greeters	" "
11. Decorations	" "

All chair people are to make reports and give same to the Convention/Assembly chairperson, including the finalized report at the end of the convention/assembly.

It normally works out well to have these meetings held one hour before a regular Al-Anon meeting.

## **THE FOLLOWING ARE A FEW SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR CHAIR PEOPLE**

Chairpersons select co-chairs and committee members, makes and gives reports back to Convention Chairperson at each meeting and a finalized report at the end of the Convention/Assembly.

### **PROGRAM:**

1. Contact the NYN Assembly Chairperson for business agenda.
2. Set up time slots for round tables, workshops, business agenda and Sunday agenda.
3. If an election assembly, get agenda for that.
4. Get a moderator for Al-Anon panels (if any)
5. Get a speaker for banquet. (You can draw from WSO for speakers) be mindful of the cost. Please try to avoid circuit speakers. The main speaker for the banquet should have all costs covered (meals, room if needed, registration and travel expenses). That would also include if you are asking someone from WSO to speak. It is strongly suggested that we do not use circuit speakers. We have many wonderful members to share their experience, strength and hope.
6. Find a printer for flyers, programs, etc. Decide on design for program.
7. If desired, small tokens and/or gifts may be given to panelists or speakers. Allow room for assembly members to get to the microphones.
8. Make sure rooms are set up, podium and microphones in place.
9. Acts as host/hostess for main speaker. **WHO IS IT THAT IS THE HOST/HOSTESS?? Anyone from the host district can act as host/hostess. Make sure the speaker has host contact information prior to the convention.** Have members open panels with Moment of Silence, Serenity Prayer, Anonymity statement, 12 Steps and 12 Traditions. You could also use the booklet, "Groups at Work", in all panel rooms. Cost is \$1.00 and it is good exposure of a service tool.
10. Decorations/flowers for speaker table if wanted. Check with hotel for decorations. They may be FREE. You may add to them if necessary.
11. In the Spring the AWSC is on Friday evening and in the Fall it is on Saturday morning.

**IT IS WISE TO ALLOW YOURSELF EXTRA TIME. For anything else that might need to be done. Don't wait until the last minute. Always have a plan "B". "Murphy's Law".**

### **ATTRACTON:**

1. Use a "Save the Date flyer pre-notice of Convention/Assembly. Include Date and Location.
2. Include the Al-Anon Logo (found in the service manual) on all flyers and "AFG" not Al-Anon – PLEASE – NO ALTERATIONS TO THE LOGO!!!
3. Use AFG Logo from Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual on all flyers. P.103 – 2014-17 service manual
4. Later a complete and informative flyer with map and/or directions.
5. Use newsletter, Al-Anon/Alateen.
6. Carry the message to those groups that have no GR.
7. Give all reports back to chairperson.
8. Use website [www.nynafg.com](http://www.nynafg.com)
9. Notify Northern Hi-Lights Editor with a copy of the registration form.
10. Encourage Alateen to be involved in creating signs/decorations
11. Put information into NHL. Encourage AIS or District newsletters. To do the same.
12. Have the registration and flyers put up on NYN website and local AIS websites, district newsletters.
13. Perhaps it would help a great deal to use more AFG on any flyers, registration forms, etc. connected to Convention/Assembly to impress on us the need to use it. Don't forget to use correct Al-Anon LOGO from 2014-17 Service Manual. Page 103 Make sure Al-Anon and Alateen are spelled correctly.

## **REGISTRATION:**

1. Set up filing system and/or book to keep records. Keep a count of registrations returned, number of people attending (each program). Keep a correct count of rooms used and a count of those attending banquet.
2. It is good to send a confirmation when registration is received.
3. Keep a count of pre registrations and walk in registrations, separate Al-Anon, Alateen, and AA. Then a combined count.
4. Get name tags and logos for Al-Anon and Alateen.  
Note: If your area has a convention bureau, they will normally supply these name tags. Be sure their name does not show on card by turning them over, blotting out, etc.
5. Your registration table will be busier Friday evening and early Saturday. You will need extra help at that time.
6. Try to form separate lines for prepaid and unpaid. It will move the lines faster. You may want a separate table for meal tickets to be sold.
7. You will need people to work file boxes, record book and name tags. EX. 2 people to work index file to locate returned registrations, prepaid and unpaid. Use last names, file in alphabetical order from A to Z. One book to record Al-Anon, Alateen, and rooms used by each.
8. Can make banners or badges for officers of convention/assembly.
9. Can make banners or badges for chair people of convention/assembly.
10. Check P.O. Box daily for two months prior to event for pre-registrations.
11. Any special needs on returned registrations need to be reported to Convention/Assembly Chair.

**12. Alateens and Al-Anon members under 18 must have notarized Permission and Medical Form along with their registration. They must be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian or sponsor. All Alateen paperwork must be shredded as soon as possible after completion of convention/assembly.**

13. As registrations come in put all information into a data base, make a copy of the check (in the event there are questions regarding payment sent in) and staple to registration form. File alphabetically. When convention is finished, shred all registration forms and copies of checks.
14. Somewhere on registration form have a place for monetary donations for hospitality.
15. Have a place for DR luncheon YES  NO

**\*\*\*the registration form (see attached sample) should include: Location – hotel – room rate including any tax/night. (Example: \$109.00 + 17.44 = \$126.44.)**

**Are extra nights available – before or after convention**

**Program associated with: Al-Anon, Alateen, or AA**

**Cutoff date for room reservation.**

**Travel direction if space available.**

**Will you be attending the convention or assembly?**

**When making reservations use AFG convention for room rate**

**Toll free phone number if possible.**

The registration form can be sent to the Newsletter [newsletter@nynafg.com](mailto:newsletter@nynafg.com) and to the NYN website [web@nynafg.com](mailto:web@nynafg.com)

Copies can be brought to the AWSC meeting and DRs can then make copies to distribute to their groups.

Reach out to groups with no GR/DR

Requests for help, raffle and hospitality donations can be posted in the newsletter.

## **HOSPITALITY:**

1. Ask each GR to go back to their group and ask members to bring finger foods, etc. passing a list of time slots for members to place name and what they will bring and when. Put an article in Northern HI Lights asking for donation to the hospitality room either in supplies, food or money.

Snacks	Friday PN
Donuts, etc.	Saturday AM
Small sandwiches	Saturday noon
Snacks	Saturday PM, table
Donuts, etc.	Sunday AM

NOTE: Catered breakfast and lunch may be a part of Convention/Assembly package depending on committee's decision.

2. Make time slots for people to work, getting as many different people involved as possible.
3. Get all necessary supplies, such as coffee, sugar, cream, stirring sticks, cups, napkins, small plates, drop cloth if needed, table covers if needed, coolers, thermos, coffee pots, etc. Make arrangements for someone to transport nonperishable supplies left over to the next convention. After the Fall Assembly, if any perishable or time sensitive supplies remain, they should be given to NYNAC.
4. If desired, donation container can be made and placed on coffee table.
5. Sign for "Open" and "Closed" hours. It may be closed during the panel time slots if desired, and during Assembly meetings, round tables, etc. Or it may be open at all times.
6. Maintain a message board in hospitality room.
7. Place an area on registration form for monetary donations to hospitality

## **SIGNS:**

1. Decide on which signs are needed.
2. How many do you need for each panel room, assembly meeting, AWSC meeting, Sales Table, Raffle & 50/50 Table, Banquet, Hospitality Room, Registration Table, Literature and Public Outreach Table.
3. May be you know someone artistic.
4. Remember to use AFG and **NOT** Al-Anon on signs.

## **GREETERS:**

1. Decide how many.
2. Busy time Friday evening and Saturday morning.
3. Can wear something relative to theme in order for members to spot greeters EX. Hat, shirt, flower (you decide)

## **BANQUET:**

1. The outgoing delegate is the speaker at the election assembly banquet.
2. Chairperson maybe moderator. This is usually the chair or co-chair on planning committee or it can be anyone committee chooses.
3. Make or get tickets.
4. Arrange seating for head table (if one is to be set up). Not mandatory
5. Gift for guest speaker.
6. If desired, provide entertainment.
7. Microphones and podiums (if not provided by management) – need one for podium and two for floor during convention/assembly – need just podium for banquet.
8. Arrange for prayer before dinner and who will say it – remember we are a spiritual program.
9. Tables may be decorated. Use hotel decorations if available. **THEY MAY BE FREE.** Select the colors for the table linens.

## **RAFFLE & 50/50:**

1. Get tickets, decide what kind of raffle (white elephant or theme baskets or regular).
2. Get as many people as possible involved and working at raffle table and selling tickets. Make time slots for each.
3. Announce the message of help needed to supply raffle needs, crafts, etc.
4. Some members may want to get together and work on making items.
5. You will need a cash box or bag for money.
6. Have a 50/50 if you wish. This is a good money maker.
7. Record profits and sales and report to be given to chairperson or Treasurer.
8. May give the Treasurer large amounts of money to be kept in the hotel safe
9. Have treasurer provide some startup money for making change.
10. Keep raffle, basket and any other monies collected separate. You will need this for your report.
11. Keep accurate records for all sales.

## **SALES TABLE: IS PART OF RAFFLE:**

1. Announce the message of needs, crafts, etc. and keep a list of same. Work through GRs and members.
2. May order items for sales table. Remember, we do not affiliate.
3. Again, some members may enjoy working together making items.
4. Get people involved in helping and work out time slots for each.
5. You may call on literature depot. If your area does not have one, call on nearest one to you, if possible or contact NYN Literature Coordinator.

“Raffling various articles at meetings or other gatherings is a matter of autonomy but to avoid commercialism in the fellowship, it is suggested that these items relate in some way to our spiritual principles. Items such as Al-Anon or Alateen books, subscriptions to the Forum, or the donated products of the creative efforts of individual members are suggested.” 2014-17 Al-Anon/Alateen Service manual pg. 98.

## **REPORTS:**

Convention/Assembly host committee to send reports of their meetings and what the committee people have decided to have or do for their convention/assembly back to the NYN Convention Coordinator. Return finalized reports of convention/assembly and financial report for Coordinator. This will enable the coordinator to keep records and give reports at AWSC meetings, Spring Assembly and Conventions and Fall Assemblies. NYN Convention Coordinator has a notebook of previous year’s reports which will give you an idea of what is included in a report. Make sure it has: \_\_\_\_\_

## **STATEMENT OF ANONYMITY:**

**In the spring it should be read @ the opening of each panel and @ Banquet/spiritual panel.**

Suggest one reading from Al-Anon and Alateen Service Manual.

It is good to read this at the opening of the Convention/Assembly and Opening of Banquet. Refer to page 93 Anonymity in the 2014-2017 service manual.

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See p. 107, 2014-2017 Al-Anon/Alateen service manual for more information: Authorization to Publish and Reprint and Requests to Reprint.

## **ELECTION ASSEMBLY (EVERY 3 YEARS)**

Format for Election Assembly differs on Saturday only.

AWSC meeting is held Saturday morning at all Fall Assemblies.

A brief description of each office and its duties will be given. This will be followed by nominations, and then by the election.

Following lunch, we finish up the election. Any reports that need to be given will be at this time. We will finish up with any old or new business that needs discussion. All items listed on the agenda for consideration by the NYN Assembly for vote are dealt with.

We do not have any panels during the Fall Assemblies.

The outgoing Delegate is the guest speaker at the election assembly banquet.

The remaining scheduled format for Saturday evening and Sunday follow these regular suggested guidelines found under program and under other considerations. P. 4 of this document

## **FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

**“CONVENTION” IS A CONFUSING TERM SINCE “ASSEMBLY” IS USED UNTIL NOW.**

**CONVENTION IS FOR THE SPRING, NOT THE FALL.**

1. All Convention/Assembly checking accounts should require two signatures (Chairperson/Co-Chairperson: Chairperson/Treasurer) whatever works as a safeguard and as a protection to Al-Anon and to the person in charge of the monies.
2. Our Federal Tax number EIN, necessary for opening a bank account is available through the NYN Area Treasurer.
3. State Tax Exempt Certificate for sales tax exemption is also available through Area Treasurer. This number is to be used ONLY for NYN purchases.
4. Contact NYN Area Treasurer for seed money (\$750 Fall and \$1000 for Spring) to be used for securing the hotel 1<sup>st</sup>. Then other expenses and guidelines for set-up and operation of checking account.
  - Account is set up as NYN \_\_\_\_ (year) Spring Convention or Fall Assembly.
  - Address used is NYN Area Assembly and (Current NYN Treasurer).
  - Bank statements are sent to NYN Treasurer who makes a copy for NYN records and then forwards the original and canceled checks to the Convention/Assembly Treasurer.
  - All seed money will be issued 15 months before the Convention/Assembly and deposited in the account
5. Most banks will require documentation to authorize opening the bank account, especially to use NYN’s tax-exempt status. Check with the financial institution on what documentation is required to open an account. You may need to have on hand a copy of the following:
  - AWSC minutes where the decision was made to authorize the Districts to do the planning and handle the funds.

- Minutes of the Assembly Planning Committee giving the first and last names of the officers, especially the treasurer and whoever the co-signers are decided to be.
  - A letter from the Area Treasurer indicating that bank statements are to be sent to the NYN Area Assembly address even though the contact and signatures are local people. All you need is listed in #2 above. And some money to open the account with.
6. Suggestion: Each table receiving cash funds be given envelopes. Two people count the cash and place into envelopes with amount marked on outside. Then have someone collect these and return to chairperson. The Co-Chair may want to do this. For instance, registration table: every hour for every \$200 or \$300 over amount of cash on hand. Each cash-receiving table will need a starting amount and should have change on hand.

## **TREASURER'S DUTIES:**

1. **KEEP ACCURATE RECORDS.**
2. Responsible for all money, receipts, donations, ticket sales for banquets, registration fees, State Sales tax exempt certificates, etc.
3. Opens bank account, holds checkbook, secures a cash box for receipts.
4. Makes out all checks, signs with a designated co-signer.
5. Pre-authorizes ALL purchases (Group conscience – the committee may set an amount above which would require committee vote.)
6. Pay the bills for all committees.
7. Advised chairperson of available balances, receipts and expenses.
8. Keeps permanent records of entries and withdrawals, submits reports regularly to Convention committee.
9. Assists in making a proposed budget for all committee expenses.
10. Daily, during convention/assembly, places monies in safe-deposit box at hotel.
11. Reimbursement requests MUST be accompanied by detailed receipts and submitted to convention treasurer ASAP after purchase.
12. Returns all profits to NYN Treasurer within 3 months; seed money can be returned within 1 month.
13. All Checks must be deposited within 1 week of receipt.

You may also find help and suggestions for planning and running your Convention/Assembly using WSO Al-Anon Guidelines. This is Al-Anon/Alateen Area Conventions G-20.