

FELLOWSHIP COMMUNICATION ACTION COMMITTEE SURVEY RESPONSES

Spring Assembly 2006 (March 25) – updated June 25, 2006

To get input on how to improve communication within our fellowship, our action committee conducted a survey with the attendees of the Spring Assembly (3/25/06). We received 75 completed surveys:
Thank You!

Here are the questions that were posed:

<p>1. Communication Issues “What are the top communication issues affecting AI-Anon today (at any level: group, district, area, communication with AA, etc.)? What information are you/your group missing?”</p>	<p>3. Suggestions “For the issues that you listed in #1 and the communication vehicles you ranked important in #2, please share your ideas for improvement.”</p>
<p>2. Communication Vehicles “How important are each of these to you/your group?” (CAL, activity fliers, websites, etc.)</p>	<p>4. Services Under Consideration “Would the following services be useful to you/your group?” (Tip Sheet, monthly email message)</p>

The complete responses and a summary are presented in this document. To facilitate the use of the full response text for questions 1 and 3, we grouped them as shown below:

Category	# of responses
Group level, District level, and WSO	24
Butterfly, Audio Library, CAL, Activity flyers	23
Web, E-mail, Tip Sheet	21
Records/Meeting Lists, Newcomers	15
AA, Alateen	6
Great job, other	13

The Fellowship Communication A.C. has just begun to work with these issues. It is anticipated that we will be calling upon others in the fellowship to help us develop solutions. We will have more to report later!

Who we are...

The Fellowship Communication Action Committee is composed of:

Literature Coordinator	GRs & DRs
Butterfly Coordinator	Alternate Delegate
Tape Librarian	Past Delegate(s)

Our Mission Statement

Communicate – and facilitate communication of – the purpose and activities of our fellowship among its members.

Summary of Perceived Issues and Suggested Solutions

The problem and solution statements below are based on responses that were provided to survey questions 1 and 3. This is a first pass analysis of respondents' answers, and were not taken verbatim from survey results. The counts at the left reflect the number of times each was mentioned or implied. The statements shown in bold were identified by the survey subcommittee as important to address in the near term for one of the following reasons: impact it has on the fellowship, mentioned multiple times by respondents, a solution is already being developed, or relatively straightforward to implement.

Problem Description

- 23 **Low awareness of Area and WSO resources (websites, Guidelines, etc.)**
- 17 Group members have low understanding of and interest in affairs of the District, Area, WSO
- 9 Group members have low understanding of and interest in service
- 9 Low cohesion within Districts (esp. in geographically-dispersed districts)
- 9 **Inappropriate use of electronic communication (esp. email)**
- 8 Insufficient effort, resources devoted to attracting new members (esp. youth)
- 7 Need more electronic functionality at the Area level (e.g., forums for dialogs)
- 6 **Area information (meetings, events, contacts, Butterfly) is out of date and inaccurate**
- 5 Insufficient communication/coordination between AI-Anon and AA
- 4 Some members are not electronically "plugged in" and fear getting left behind
- 3 GRs need better advance knowledge of issues before Assemblies
- 2 WSO Communication seems top-down
- 15 Other

Solution Description

- 21 **Group meetings on service, unity**
 - 8 - **Provide area materials for group meetings**
 - 15 **Improve Butterfly usefulness**
 - 14 **Improve the use of electronic communication (Web, E-mail) within the Area**
 - 8 - **Publish Electronic Communication Guidelines**
 - 6 - **Districts, Action Committees: use pages on the Area website**
 - 5 - Support (moderated) forums and chats
 - 13 Encourage GR enthusiasm
 - 11 Improve cohesion within Districts
 - 10 **Publicize Area and WSO resources**
 - 21 - **Publish Area Tip Sheets, Bulletins**
 - 7 - **Publicize availability of the Audio Library**
 - 9 Improve public outreach (example: share with other Districts the experience, strength and hope from successful projects)
 - 8 Improve the communication process (see all others, plus continue to explore improvements to the Fellowship Communication process)
 - 3 Improve communication/coordination with AA
 - 2 Better communication with AWSC
 - 2 Improve the accuracy of the Area meeting list
 - 20 Other
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Survey Responses: Questions 1 & 3

1. Communication Issues

“What are the top communication issues affecting AI-Anon today (at any level: group, district, area, communication with AA, etc.)? What information are you/your group missing?”

3. Suggestions

“For the issues that you listed in #1 and the communication vehicles you ranked important in #2 (shown below), please share your ideas for improvement.”

The full text of each response is listed in the tables below. Some notes:

- The responses have been grouped into general categories.
- The content of some answers was split when more than one topic was addressed. In cases where a response couldn't be split and remain understandable, it was duplicated and each copy is marked (D).
- The “Issues” and “Suggestions” columns don't always match because of the way the survey was structured. Also, not everyone provided responses to both questions.
- Each row is numbered just for reference.

Group level, District level, and WSO (24 responses total)

	Communication Issues	Suggestions
	Group level (12 responses)	
1	My groups get whatever info I get but I it seems to go in one ear and out the other.	I think we are doing all that we can get the most information out to as many people as possible. However, I would love to see a current list of group representatives and contact information for them. But I imagine that isn't possible.
2	Low- moderate interest of AI-Anon members	
3	I feel that a good amount of info is sent to me as GR. I take it to the group but I don't get a sense that they partake of much.	Part of the problem is that we only have two GRs for our whole district. I think it is hard to make group members feel the connection to the district and to the area and WSO. I am encouraging people to look at the website and at our next AI-Anon Way Day our theme will be 'Recovery Thru Service'.
4	Group = "Don't want to use group time to hear what's happening". Tried a business meeting and a typed report on clipboard to pass around, #1: No feedback to GR on issues needing a voice from the group. #2: Does the GR vote or abstain?	Big communication in a small group. #1: Share with the group service handbook, reference responsibilities of the GR. Invite DR to come to a group meeting. Talk to other DRs. #2: Talk about the Forum, share about an article I read. Have Forum subscription forms available to the group. Encourage members to subscribe even though someone says "You don't need a group copy since so and so donates hers".
5	Group level - members participating at business meetings, low attendance.	
6	Very few people in my home group have patience with taking time for communication about district, area, or WSO. (D)	To help increase my group's interest in "higher level" aspects of the AI-Anon fellowship, I plan on having a group meeting with the topic of "The importance to me of district, Area and WSO". The Fellowship Communication AC could help by

	Communication Issues	Suggestions
		distributing a guideline-like lists of points, and references to resources. I have already provided some information to my group on what's available on websites (for example) but there has been little or no interest.
7	The greatest need is for people to read and discuss the information that is already distributed. Need to get this out to individuals in meetings!	Continue to emphasize to GRs the importance of getting Butterflies, forms, accurate meeting lists, information from the area and district out to the meetings. Also let people know about websites.
8	Some groups don't have a group rep and don't see the need for one. Some groups don't have business meetings. Group is missing lots of information regarding what's going on with the Al-Anon fellowship and what other group needs are.	
9	Lack of participation for all groups. Like attending district meetings by the GRs which in turn information doesn't get to the members.	Lack of information getting to the members, I didn't know we had a Colorado website until today.
10	Sharing assembly issues with group prior to assembly. Group Representative issue.	
11	Helping members in our groups see the larger picture, the worldwide view, and how it affects the future of our fellowship. How to pump up outreach tradition 5. (D)	To figure out how to get people reading all the great communication tools.
12		GIC [Group Information Coordinator?] needs to be trained, have service sponsor to know what's available.
	<i>District level (5 responses)</i>	
13	More communications between groups within district.	Each district should have a Web page. (D)
14	Our group is just in need of a DR as well as GR at other group meetings. I am a GR without a DR and I don't receive much information regarding Al-Anon.	I think it would be helpful to be on the DR's list for communication so that I can communicate to my group about what's happening. Thank you.
15	Our district is spread out over three counties I would like to come up with better and more effective communication with our Pagosa & Cortez groups and make the district feel more unified.	
16	Getting group representatives into service from small rural areas.	
17	Our district - 11 - is completely inactive, so to us that is a major issue. District 8 has been kind enough to adopt our meeting. Three meetings and the district have indicated that they want no interaction above the group level.	I wish I knew?! Prayer

	Communication Issues	Suggestions
	<i>WSO (7 responses)</i>	
18	Communication seems to be flowing "down" (From World Service Organization) but not "up". (from fellowship)	Responsiveness by the World Service Organization to the fellowship as represented by the delegates is VERY important. Responsiveness by the area to the needs of Colorado AI-Anon needs to also be consistent an ongoing. All issues boil down to keeping the AI-Anon message going without keeping specific people or systems as is. (Consistency in the midst of change, ie: incorporation, etc.).
19	Group level - members feeling like the world service office is top-down organization.	
20	We have never adequately involved groups (through their GRs) in conference decision making. I think the problem is largely and how we utilize our delegates. I've never felt that the GRs have an essential understanding of the business before the conference at any given time. As a result, I believe that conference action and decisions are determined more by delegates than by groups.	We need new forums of communication between groups and delegates. In a one-hour (even two hour) report once or twice per year is not effective I do not have any clear suggestions.
21	WSO to Groups. What is happening on a daily basis?	
22		Information, the tools to reach out to younger people - 20s, that will be suitable to them.
23	WSO targeting the younger groups coming in. Attractive materials: especially discs for videos and television.	
24	World Service Organization to groups - or I guess to Colorado assembly to groups: need to know more about the happenings of the World Service Organization.	Not sure - Not enough time to think about it.

Butterfly, Audio Library, CAL, Activity flyers (23 responses total)

	Communication Issues	Suggestions
	<i>Butterfly (10 responses)</i>	
25		The Butterfly is looked at by some but mostly passed by - service does not seem to be very pressing at meetings but helpful to me as GR.
26	The Butterfly comes out so late that events listed are already passed and there is no time to make reservations etc for assemblies.	That the Butterfly come out much sooner one month after the deadline.
27		Sometimes by the time the Butterfly is received events of passed. I believe the Butterfly needs to be notified earlier.
28		Butterflies need to be revamped or dumped, information is not timely.

	Communication Issues	Suggestions
29		Put the Butterfly on the AFG Colorado website? (D)
30		Butterfly online or area website. Reason: new Group Representatives are 'out of the loop' too long. (Plus it is good way to archive past Butterflies.) (D)
31		Activity fliers included in the Butterfly and on the Colorado website need to stay current with groups' info, meeting times, contact numbers, etc. (D)
32	Helping members in our groups see the larger picture, the worldwide view, and how it affects the future of our fellowship. How to pump up outreach tradition 5. (D)	I would like to see more of our area fellowship contributing to the Butterfly, so it has added value. How can we encourage officers, coordinators, DRs, etc to contribute more and communicate more via this tool? This would be a good discussion.
33		It is up to groups to have the information, short reminders in Butterfly would be helpful.
34	The tape library and the websites are not used by my group. This is probably because little is known about either one. (D)	Inclusion in the Butterfly and service center newsletter work sometimes. (D)
Audio Library (8 responses)		
35		Never used tape library, but I'd like too. Which are CDs? Can we get a brief synopsis on what's contained? Explain how Web page works, (e.g., how is mailing fee collected?)
36		Would like more information on how to use area Tape library.
37		Would like to have updated tape library information.
38		tape library updated list
39		I rarely see stuff for the tape library. I have never heard of tapes as a tool in meetings but feel myself that they are valuable.
40	I would like to know more about the tape library list and how to get a tape. I don't how much about it.	
41	The tape library and the websites are not used by my group. This is probably because little is known about either one. (D)	I think flyers are the most effective way to get information to the members.
42		Some of the items that we list as "unimportant" are really just unknown to our group. They might be used if group representative (me) promote them more - and I need more information to be able to do that. ie: how to order tapes.
CAL (3 responses)		
43		If three members took one book in each group bought the book in English, French, Spanish and had it in their area library - Wow! Think about it if there are three groups in the area - three groups get it to participate when one from each group buys the book.

	Communication Issues	Suggestions
44		Would like to order literature locally (use the world service organization site now), but not sure how that works.
45		Our group orders the Forum, but most who read it have ordered it themselves.
	Activity flyers (2 responses)	
46	The tape library and the websites are not used by my group. This is probably because little is known about either one. (D)	I think flyers are the most effective way to get information to the members.
47		Activity fliers included in the Butterfly and on the Colorado website need to stay current with groups' info, meeting times, contact numbers, etc. (D)

Web, E-mail, Tip Sheet (21 responses total)

	Communication Issues	Suggestions
	Web (11 responses)	
48	Multiple sources of information, most don't look or don't know where to look and what is available.	Move most information to Web
49		Add more information to area website - would like to see minutes posted without compromising anonymity. Add a moderated forum to Area website for questions and answers. Make more use of the website.
50		Post more events to website! Keep info there current.
51		Put the Butterfly on the AFG Colorado website? (D)
52		Be able to register online for Butterfly plus make address changes etc... (D)
53		Butterfly online on area website: new Group Representatives are 'out of the loop' too long. (Plus it is good way to archive past Butterflies.) (D)
54		Activity fliers included in the Butterfly, at Colorado or at websites need to stay current with groups info, meeting, times, contact numbers etc. (D)
55	More communications between groups within district.	Each district should have a Web page. (D)
56		Improve website anonymity
57	Assemblies, E-mails, websites, and mail are all great ways to communicate information, assuming you use any of them. I prefer E-mail and face-to-face interaction at assemblies. (D)	
58	Privacy on Web meetings	
	E-mail (7 responses)	
59	Speed of information getting to groups and members. Stuff doesn't always trickle all the way down to individual members.	Set up one or two E-mail groups through the Area 5 website, one for the AWSC members and one for GRs. I think the AWSC member group's is in the works? (Like a Yahoo group with a closed registration)

	Communication Issues	Suggestions
60	Assemblies, E-mails, websites, and mail are all great ways to communicate information, assuming you use any of them. I prefer E-mail and face-to-face interaction at assemblies. (D)	
61	The proper use of E-mail. Business by the E-mail or just the facts?	Guidelines needed for who needs your E-mail. Guideline for the use of the E-mail.
62	Need for electronic communication guidelines for Area 5 policy.	Fellowship Communication Action Committee is planning to submit a draft.
63	Misuse of E-mail - Our district has passed guidelines and passed them onto the area for consideration to write their own guidelines.	That we as an area accept E-mail guidelines similar to those accepted by District 13.
64	The use of the E-mail. For those of us without it now we are often skipped with information. District reports, action committees tend to use the E-mail to distribute news. I understand how useful it is. However, I am willing to serve, but I often miss opportunities because I'm not on the list.	Remember snail mail for all communications within AI-Anon - district, area, action committee.
65	Internet and E-mail, not everyone is able to participate and discussion & decisions are being made without a vote or unanimity, hindering our common welfare.	Discussion & votes via chat room, E-mail may need to be scheduled and letters in mail can give people notice of discussion time and day so that they can arrange to be included if they want.
	<i>Tip Sheet (3 responses)</i>	
66	Very few people in my home group have patience with taking time for communication about district, area, or WSO. (D)	To "sell" the value of key communication vehicles, I try to convey enthusiasm as I mention each vehicle - such as the Forum when our monthly issues arrive. The "tip sheet" could help by concisely stating why each vehicle is useful.
67	People aren't aware of rich resources the WSO and Area makes available to us.	I think the tip sheet idea could help; I would like to hand out a sheet (guidelines format perhaps) that would itemize what's out there and why it useful. Since this information changes, the sheet would have to be updated periodically.
68		Tip of the month - E-mail to group representatives, am interested on a periodic basis. Would like to hear "I didn't know this" and "these snippets of info help me better serve my group."

Records/Meeting Lists, Newcomers (15 responses total)

	Communication Issues	Suggestions
	<i>Records/Meeting Lists (10 responses)</i>	
69	Records - keeping area and WSO abreast of changes	
70	The online schedule for meetings is out of date. No one seems able to get it corrected.	Let every group representative know who to contact to update the website in case of changes in time or meeting place of their meeting.
71		Be able to register online for Butterfly plus make address changes etc... (D)

	Communication Issues	Suggestions
72		Very hard to keep the Butterfly coming consistently - don't quite understand the process.
73	I'm here to make sure I get on the Butterfly list.	I look forward to reading the Butterfly.
74	Meeting location and times, the message of recovery, we have access to whatever is needed.	
75		Activity fliers included in the Butterfly and on the Colorado website need to stay current with groups' info, meeting times, contact numbers, etc. (D)
76	Rural websites or awareness for reaching potential AI-Anons. It is hard for new people to locate meeting information, etc.	Conference approved literature, Forum, is there a statewide website listing current meetings (time, location) and current AI-Anon activities?
77	Accurate and timely meetings information as there seems to be a top down approach to change is being "official" Example to WSO, Area records, Area websites, district Rep., where everything else is grassroots bottom-up. Example being district, area, and the WSO.	Change of flow of meeting changes to be bottom up in order to serve potential members more accurately and therefore cut down on irate phone calls about info being inaccurate.
78		better and easier to reach meetings
	<i>Newcomers (5 responses)</i>	
79	Attracting and retaining new members	
80	We have an excellent district, area, etc.: very active My group is relatively "young" (newcomers) and although the information is given they aren't necessarily aware of its importance in their lives.	Enthusiasm and length of time in program (newcomers) and service.
81	Simple communication (who, what, when, where, why, how) for the beginning group members.	
82	What is AI-Anon to non-informed?	
83	newcomers information	

AA, Alateen (6 responses total)

	Communication Issues	Suggestions
	<i>AA (5 responses)</i>	
84	Communication with Alcoholics Anonymous.	
85	Communication with Alcoholics Anonymous.	
86	Communication with Alcoholics Anonymous - big gap	
87	Affecting AI-Anon: coordination and communication with AA depending upon district, group, District Representative communication.	I don't know what solution exists with AA. Yes they are in a different fellowship, an "outside issue" when it came to discussion in the meeting. I feel that there is an attitude that they're the bad guys in AI-Anon, when neither of us would exist without the other. I guess to increase love and understanding for the alcoholic.
88	There's a real lack of communication regarding AI-Anon and Alcoholics Anonymous at assemblies. Before the place is chosen by Alcoholics Anonymous, during the process in choosing a	I do not know how to improve communication between Alcoholics Anonymous and AI-Anon. I think better communication to the district on what is needed for AI-Anon on should be updated and plenty of copies

	Communication Issues	Suggestions
	facility for both groups, and finally while the assembly is taking place.	given to the Alcoholics Anonymous so they have it in their information packet before it goes out for bid.
	Alateen (1 response)	
89	Alateen safety	

Great job, Other (13 responses total)

	Communication Issues	Suggestions
	Great job (3 responses)	
90	Actually, I think we are good. We have many members who are involved at all levels of Al-Anon. I as a group representative receive a plethora of communications vehicles to share with my group.	
91	I think in this area we are doing great!!	I think we're doing great stuff. Keep up the good work.
92	Lee does in an excellent job of relaying communication info to our group.	
	Other (10 responses)	
93	How do Al-Anon family groups reach those with chemical and alcohol abuse? Most focus on chemical abuse and except alcohol abuse.	Experience, strength and hope for families of addiction are often the same no matter what the chemical, alcohol or meth-amphetamine. Daly reader / literature addressing that we reacted and deal with ourselves.
94	Fear of change in groups	It is a slow process, which people want at their timing and willingness to want change.
95	Not always sure where to find the information I need.	
96	I don't know, I am a new GR and I'm still learning.	
97		I just need to share with my group.
98		I don't read the assembly minutes; they're awfully long.
99		Need more workshops on service topics.
100		General Tspats to all areas. GR / information 1-800 number
101	[outreach to] doctors	
102	[outreach to] police	

Survey Responses: Question 2

2. Communication Vehicles

"How important are each of these to you/your group?"

Ranked Importance	Communication Vehicles	Unimportant			Important	
		#1's	#2's	#3's	#4's	#5's
1	Conference Approved Literature	0	1	3	15	59
2	Activity flyers* (e.g., A Day in Recovery)	2	0	8	27	38
3	The Forum	6	3	17	19	32
4	Colorado's Al-Anon/Alateen website	7	5	13	19	30
5	The Butterfly	6	7	27	17	21
6	WSO's Al-Anon/Alateen website	8	7	23	18	18
7	Newsletters	6	13	27	19	12
8	Tape (Audio) Library	14	10	31	15	5
	Other (see list below)	0	1	3	3	17

* Flyers:

At our meeting we pass them around with the calendar for chairpersons. I have seen a lot of people . take flyers and this keeps people updated on events w/o having to take the time to announce them all. Tear offs with our phone numbers, website - we put these up at libraries, doctor's offices, supermarkets.

of times

mentioned "Other" (most were ranked as "5")

7	E-mail
5	Meetings, including announcements
4	Meeting lists
3	AWSC (including emails and meeting minutes)
2	Hotlines
2	District meetings
2	Local groups' websites
2	Word of mouth
1	Service Centers
1	Phone list for group
1	Letters
1	Sponsor
1	Newspaper
1	Professionals
1	Meeting times on business cards for Health Fair
1	Chapter reports
1	Trusted servants
1	Communication is very important to participation and the worldwide view.

Survey Responses: Question 4

4. Services Under Consideration

"Would the following services be useful to you/your group?"

	yes	no	maybe
A tip sheet with pointers to useful Al-Anon information.	53	5	2
A monthly email message with additional tips.	39	14	1