

Northern Hi Lights
New York North Area
Newsletter

Writing Guidelines
For
Area Officers & Coordinators
& other interested members...
(AIS, District Reps, Alateens, Sponsors)



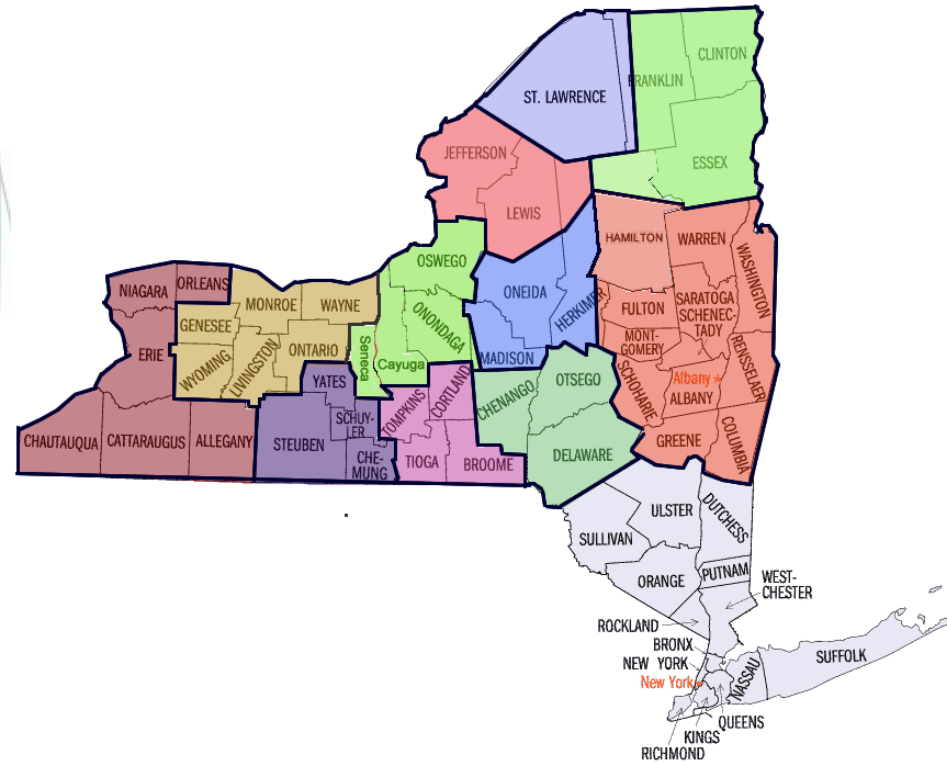
New York North

All of New York State except
gray area (New York South)

Our *Northern Hi Lights* is designed
as an

OUTREACH TOOL

to all of our membership in New
York North.



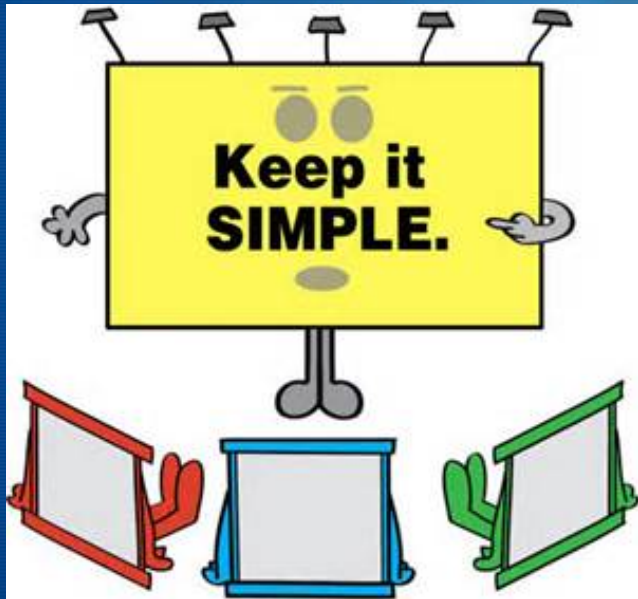
What do we share?



First, this is a newsletter.

- Share current information connected to your position, such as time sensitive info from the Area or WSO.
- Do you have a “Hot Topic”? Would you like members to respond with their input? Ask for a response.
- If you feel you have nothing to report, check the WSO website and share something that relates to your position, such as something from the WSO Guideline for your position.

What do we share?



Second, we may be asked to share on a topic.

- How can you relate the topic to fulfilling your service position?
- How does it relate to your personal recovery?
- Ask:
 - Will this sharing be helpful for readers in using the tools of the program?
 - Will this encourage and attract members into service?

Some things to think about.

- Does my sharing reflect on Al-Anon recovery?
- As an Officer or Coordinator, keep the focus on Area news and functions.
- When sharing on a topic, use “I” pronouns. Keep the focus on your own program. Leave out specifics about others.
- Focus on principles, not personalities.





Forum Writing Guidelines

G-32

The guidelines for the *Northern Hi Lights (NHL)* writing can basically follow the guide found on pg.2 of G-32, keeping personal sharing so that it relates to the suggested topic.

In general, the way to share your story in *The Forum* is the same way that you would at an Al-Anon/Alateen meeting.

- Share an experience from the heart with the focus on yourself, not the alcoholic or others.
- Relate a personal experience based on a program principle, such as detachment, acceptance, a Step, Tradition, or Concept of Service, etc., and give an instance of how and where you used it.
- Use the first person (I, me, we, us). True personal sharings do not give direction; they express your own experience, strength, and hope. Please avoid the use of the pronoun “you.”
- Avoid generalities, outside issues, treatment center language, and religious philosophy or doctrine. Al-Anon members in other Twelve Step programs, including Alcoholics Anonymous, are asked to write only of their experience in the Al-Anon program.
- Kindly observe Al-Anon’s Twelve Traditions when sharing.
- By established policy we do not accept poetry, skits, prayers or fictional stories.



Anonymity

In the spirit of the 11th & 12th Traditions...

- Review *Anonymity* (pages 91-94) in the Policy Section of the *Service Manual P24-27*.
- Because our newsletter is posted on our website and can be viewed by the public, we need to protect personal anonymity, as well as the anonymity of others.
- Please, also remember that personal information should be removed before leaving a hard copy of the newsletter at a meeting.



Copyrights

Why do we guard our copyright so tightly within the fellowship? Al-Anon copyrighted literature is ONE of our primary sources of revenue within the fellowship, not only for the WSO but also for the literature distribution centers and GSOs throughout the world. By respecting our copyright we are protecting our own Tradition Seven, "Every group out to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions." If we allowed others to copy and reprint our literature freely, we would be diverted from our primary purpose, 'helping families and friends of alcoholics,' by becoming entangled in outside issues (legal disputes) which would be a violation of Tradition Ten.

All this sounds so complicated - why do we have to follow these guidelines for a small area or district newsletter? We understand that this process is cumbersome and that these guidelines will require your advance planning. In order for Al-Anon/Alateen to continue to carry our message of hope to families and friends of alcoholics we must protect what is rightly ours. Much like with our Traditions--one violation can put our entire fellowship in jeopardy. (Example - If another organization quoted from one of our pamphlets or *The Forum* lobbying for legislation on alcohol, without our written permission, this quote could create the appearance of our lending support to an outside issue.) We can each do our part in assuring all that: "When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always be there, and -- *Let It Begin With Me.*"

- Review the section on **Copyrights** (pages 106-108) in the *Service Manual P24-27.*
- Go to WSO website for more info. <al-anon.alateen.org/members>; login with homegroupafg; click on *service structure* and scroll down the page; click on *copyrights and trademarks*; click on *read more*. There are three sections that have questions about copyrights. Read and become familiar with these.

- Talk to each other and reason things out.
- We have offered some tools that can help us have a productive newsletter.
- A service sponsor might be helpful.
- Take advantage of the wealth of information that can be found on the WSO website.
- Encourage members to subscribe to the newsletter.
- Share information at your meeting.
- This is the best tool we have to share information with the membership of New York North, Al-Anon and Alateen alike.



I
am
responsible.





Talk to each other.
Ask for help.
Share some recovery.
Encourage others.