

Service Manual Skit

Cast:

Della Gate: World Service Delegate

Rebella: who is rebellious about following guidelines

Whining Willa: who is completely bewildered?

Faith: who is a faithful and steadfast member

Props: Service Manual

Five book covers with string to hold them around members necks. There can be made from cardboard or Bristol board.

One cover saying, *Service Manual* and then one for each part of the manual.

Della: Hi, I'm Della Gate, your World Service Representative, and I would like to introduce my friends, Rebella, who is rebellious about following guidelines; Willa, who is completely bewildered; and Faith, who is a faithful and steadfast member of Al-Anon. And, of course, the *Service Manual*

Rebella: Della, I keep hearing all this talk about using a *Service Manual* and I am *really* tired of it. I have a *Manual*, but I keep it **safely put away**.

Della Gate: Have a look at the *Service Manual* and find out more about it and see how we can use them at our groups and in our districts.

(shows Service Manual book cover)

Rebella: Many years ago we had four books for our *Service Manual* and now there is only one. I guess there is only a quarter as much to learn now.

Della Gate: No, all the information was compiled into one book in 1992. It contains the four sections that were previously in four separate booklets. The *Service Manual* reflects the collective experience of our membership in its ongoing effort to interpret the Traditions and Concepts in a spirit of unity and harmony.

Part one: I am part 1 of the *Service Manual*, *The Al-Anon Program*, and I tell about our three legacies.

Faith (*excitedly*): I know what the legacies are! They are Recovery through the Twelve Steps; Unity through the Traditions; and Service through the Concepts. If we follow the legacies we will have harmony in our groups!

Rebella: (complaining) There would be a lot more harmony in MY group if they just do what I tell them. They did elect ME as the boss.

Part one: The Twelve Steps suggest acceptance of four primary ideas:

1. We are powerless over the problem of alcoholism
2. we can turn our lives over to Power greater than ourselves
3. we need to change both our attitude and our actions
4. we keep Al-Anon gifts by sharing them with others

Willa: Our group representative is *always* reading from the Service Manual, but its pretty boring and I don't really listen. I don't know why she keeps referring to the Manual when we elected *her* to be the boss in our group.

Della: Our Service Manual tells us how our groups can function well by using the guidelines and practicing the 12 Traditions. Why not take a look at it?

Part 2: Originally I had my own book, but now I am working in unity with the other books and together we are the *Service Manual*. My part is called *Al-Anon and Alateen Groups at Work* and it was written as an introduction to the other three books. The Executive Director has responsibility for the wording of my book and it is intended to reflect current policy and procedures as found in the other sections of the Manual.

Rebella: So, who does this Executive Director think he is, making rules for all the groups? This guys got attitude.

Willa: No Rebella, he is doing the job which Al-Anon hired him to do. But *some people* here DO have attitude.

Rebella: There's nothing wrong with *MY* attitude. If people would learn to do things *MY* way we would have *no* attitude problems.

Della: The Executive Director is responsible for the *wording* of the information in *this section of the book*. It is compiled from the experiences of the groups, and the information is updated as necessary, to reflect response from Al-Anon groups worldwide.

Al-Anon and Alateen Groups at Work provides a framework within which each group can develop and grow.

The harmony and success of each group depends on shared responsibility, a warm spirit of fellowship and individual self-improvement.

Rebella: (determinedly) **It says** on page 103 that the service manual is NOT a book of rules, so why should I bother reading it. I want to be able to go to my group and really tell them how to do things.

Faith: *That phrase only applies to the handbook section.* It **does say** that the *handbook* gives procedures drawn from long trial-and-error experience. When we use the guidelines from the Manual at our group it helps us to put Principles above Personalities, and we have more unity in the group.

Its in the book!

Willa: My group is always in a mess. We don't really know how a group should work or why we need to have a group representative. We are **always** looking for new ideas for meeting topics and we don't know where to find them either.

Part 2: *Al-Anon & Alateen Groups at Work* give us information about the structure of the Al-Anon Fellowship, tells us how to start a group and gives suggested group policies. It also gives us a meeting format and many topics for meetings. There is also has a section which explains the terms used in Al-Anon.

Willa : I didn't understand much about alcoholism, but in the *Al-Anon & Alateen Groups at Work* I read about *Understanding Alcoholism* and *Understanding myself*. That really helped me.

Faith: We didn't know how to start a group, but we found all the information in the *Groups at Work* section *Service Manual*. Our group uses the guidelines for *Duties for Group Officers*. It helps us to understand our responsibilities and we are able to keep it simple.

Its in the book!

Part 3: I am part 3 of the *Service Manual, the Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies*. I was compiled from the questions and shared experience from many sources Al-Anon and Alateen members, national conferences and delegates to the World Service Conference. The language for me is suggested by the Policy Committee and can then be modified by the Board of Trustees. My wording is presented to the delegates at

the World Service Conference and they can edit, modify and accept or deny the changes.

Willa: Does that mean the all of us can have input into the Service Manual by sharing our group experiences with our delegate?

Della: That's right. Your delegate takes the concerns of your group to the Conference and can share your ideas during discussion on these motions and through discussions at workshops. Our Service Manuals are a reflection of the collective wisdom of all the groups.

Rebella: Oh, I took a look at the book, and you are right --- its pretty hard to digest.

We were looking for a name for our group and I thought Rebellas Al-Anon Group was a good name, but some of our members didn't like it. Boy, have they got problems.

Part 3: On page 67 in my book it tells you how to name a group. I have information that can help to solve many group problems.

Faith: Our group has been able to answer a lot of questions members have by referring to the Policy Digest. Last month one of our members had a baby and some of our members thought it would be nice if the group sent a gift. We checked the Policy Digest and on page 77 it talks about gifts to members and it says Group funds are used for group purposes only, not for personal gifts to members.

Willa: That's putting principles above personalities when we get our answers from the Service Manual instead of just listening to one members opinion.

Rebella: **No ones** got personality like I have.

Part 4: I am the *World Service Handbook* section of the Manual I give all the duties of assembly members and the GR is a vital link in service. Only the group representatives have a vote at our assemblies so they need to be familiar with my guidelines so they can be an INFORMED group conscience for Al-Anon in our area and worldwide. We need to respect the guidelines we are given in the Service Manual.

Della: I am on the Admissions/Handbook Committee at the World Service Conference and we draft language for the Handbook section of the Manual. A part of the committee (*WSO members*) meets during the year and they review our suggestions and help to draft the wording. Then motions are submitted to *full Committee* and finally the Conference where they can edit, modify, accept or denial the changes we have suggested.

Willa: I've learned so much from these books that I would like to try being a group representative. I've found lots of information that will help me.

Faith: I read the whole Handbook section before I went to our assembly. It gave voting procedures and *General Information* for assemblies. It also explained all of the duties of the assembly members. It sure helped me to understand things at my first assembly.

Della: As assembly officers we refer to the Handbook to make sure we are following the Al-Anon guidelines. We try to answer questions by referring to the *Service Manual*, and that puts principles before personalities. The opportunities to serve can take us far beyond the group and our personal problems.

Part 5: I am the *Twelve Concepts of Service* Section of the *Service Manual*. I record the why of our service structure to show you how the valuable experience of the past and lessons drawn from that experience will never be forgotten or lost.

I include principles such as the right of decision and the right of participation, and how to choose your leaders.

Della: The Concepts include principles which have become traditional in our service. The Warranties in Concept Twelve contain the spiritual foundation for Al-Anons World Services.

Willa: Warranties? I thought that warranties were for cars and toasters. How does this fit in with Al-Anon.

Della - A warranty is a guarantee of the integrity of a product and our warranties protect the integrity of the Al-Anon program. Our Traditions have given us a set of values for our program and the Warranties reinforce those values.

(rolls out a long paper with fine print and an expiration date)

Rebella - Any warranty I've ever seen is very long and has a lot of fine print and they always ask if you've done the proper maintenance.

(wearing a scarf with words like prudence, integrity, equality pinned to it)

Della: In Al-Anon we need to do proper maintenance too, by following our Twelve Traditions. If we put our common welfare first and practice all the Traditions then we are fulfilling the prerequisites for the Warranties.

Willa: Where did you find these Warranties? I've read lots of our books but I NEVER heard about warranties.

Della Gate: The Warranties are in Concept 12. You can read about them in the *Service Manual, Paths to Recovery, and Concepts, Al-Anon's Best Kept Secret*.

Rebella: Well, I wish they would keep their secrets. This is just way too complicated.

Della Gate: No, Connie????, its actually pretty simple. Our Warranties tell us to practice prudence, good judgment, and wisdom in managing our affairs. They show how to manage our finances, and reinforce the need for an INFORMED group conscience in all our decisions. Warranty Two guarantees the rights of minority opinions to be heard.

Faith: Our triangle shows recovery, unity and service. The sides of the triangle are equal, and we can insure the integrity of our program when we balance our own triangles. Our recovery needs to be in balance with our service.

It's in the book!

Della :The Warranties guarantee that the Al-Anon Conference shall always remain democratic in thought and action. The future effectiveness of Al-Anon depends upon our maintenance of a non-aggressive attitude in all our public relations.

Faith: Our trusted servants do not rule by mandate, they lead by example.

Della : Our World Service Conference exercises the authority granted to it by the groups. The World Service Office does not create policy, it merely reflects the will of the Conference. That is not to say that it cannot initiate discussion, but the traditional authority in all instances is the Conference.

The Warranties express deep and loving respect for the spiritual liberties of our fellows. May God grant that we shall never be so unwise as to desire anything less.