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Dear Al-Anon members,

On-line meetings provide an opportunity for members to share their experience, strength and hope in a unique way. The WSO is aware that some members attending on-line meetings would not be able to have any experience of an Al-Anon meeting if they could not attend these electronic meetings. To those in service at the on-line meetings we acknowledge your time and effort in extending the help of Al-Anon.

Several members have written to the WSO with the same disturbing concern. They have been blocked out of on-line meetings because the Webmaster, or site owner, whichever term applies, has determined these members are causing disunity in the meeting.

Members in service roles such as the Webmasters, or site owners at on-line meetings, have the same obligation to those at their meetings as members in service roles at face-to-face meetings. At a face-to-face meeting no one person, no matter what their service role, has the authority to decide what is best for the meeting. Keeping a member from attending meetings is a serious matter and should be a decision made by the entire meeting in keeping with Tradition Two. In the rare case when a member is so disruptive that his or her behavior is damaging the meeting, a decision by all members of the meeting would be appropriate in order to ask the person to leave the meeting. Sad to say this does happen on rare occasions and could happen at on-line meetings. However, the decision would come from an informed meeting discussion, not the determination of any one person.

On-line Al-Anon meetings can be a great source of help for members. Adherence to the Twelve Traditions has always been the common factor that binds the fellowship. For all the on-line meeting Webmasters who are diligent in practicing the Traditions we extend our thanks. To those who are not, we hope this new information about your role will clear up any misconceptions you may have about the authority of members who serve on-line meetings. If additional clarification is needed please feel free to contact the WSO.

A copy of this letter will be sent to those members who raised the concerns. Al-Anon's unity and perhaps even its survival are dependent on adherence to the principles in the Traditions.

With love in Al-Anon,



Barbara Older  
Associate Director of Member Services