**Some suggestions for group business meetings**

**about using Knowledge-Based Decision Making**

The basic idea of Knowledge-Based Decision Making (KBDM) is that decisions are made *after* all members have the same information. The following suggestions are some practices that have helped other meetings run effective group business meetings to arrive at a meaningful group conscience:

1. Many groups begin their business meetings with the Serenity Prayer.
2. Before starting, ask how much time members want to give the discussion and set the timer.
3. Decide: a) who will moderate – it should be someone able to be less emotional, more impartial, good at getting all points of view out and/or summarized and b) who will take notes. This should be a 2nd person.
4. Restate the topic/issue/question to begin the discussion.
5. **Information gathering comes first**: Get ALL questions about the subject out, list all information that the group might need to know in order to come up with a solution, before anyone states an opinion.
6. Decide if the meeting has all the necessary information or if more needs to be gathered and brought back later. Decisions do not need to be made in one meeting.
7. When the members feel there is no more information to gather, then it is time for members to express their opinions.
8. Each member only speaks once when expressing opinions. All members should be encouraged to speak.
9. Are we ready to decide?
10. Some thoughts about group decision-making: the process of business meetings in Al-Anon can be as much a personal recovery tool as it is one of group management. We learn how to listen, if we are talkers; how to speak up, if we are people who prefer to duck difficult conversations. We practice a new way of interacting with others in an environment not overwhelmed by alcohol and alcoholics but in conversation with others who are also making an effort to learn a new and more successful way of living.
11. A record must be kept in the secretary’s book of any decision. That becomes the history of the meeting and information for later group business meetings.
12. Concept Four says “participation is the key to harmony” and Concept Five says it’s important that the minority voice be heard.
13. End with the Al-Anon Declaration.