

## Is there an official answer on the “chant” or “cheerleading” following the closing prayer in meetings?

Concern over the length of meeting closings because of the additions of chants was a discussion topic at the 2001 World Service Conference. The Conference members concluded that it is not appropriate for the WSO or the Conference to make a policy or issue a statement regarding the use of chants in the closing of a meeting. Conference members were in agreement that it is within group autonomy to determine the use of chants and/or prayers at the end of a meeting by making a group conscience decision that abides by the Traditions. The group conscience decision could then be stated at the end of the meeting. Conference members were reminded that our cofounder, Lois W., said, “It doesn’t matter what [prayer] we close with, but we close with a spiritual moment.” Details of this discussion can be found in the *2001 World Conference Summary*, page 21.

So there is no official policy regarding chants; how groups close their meetings is the decision of an informed group conscience. The only reference to the closing at the end of a meeting in the *AIAnon/Alateen Service Manual* is the **Suggested AIAnon/Alateen Closing** on page 24 (2006-2009 edition). It states at the end of the **Suggested Closing**: “It is suggested that groups close in a manner that is agreeable to the group conscience.” (The *Service Manual* can be found on the AIAnon/Alateen Members’ Web site: [www.alanon.alateen.org/members](http://www.alanon.alateen.org/members) under the “Group Services” tab. The password to enter the Members’ site is your group name followed by AFG, e.g. *Easy Does It AFG.*)

Some additional things to think about regarding “chants”:

- o Chants are not part of AIAnon and came into the program from treatment centers and other 12 Step programs.
- o When looking at the faces of newcomers when members are chanting and pumping their arms, they are clearly left out of the process.
- o Such chants and behaviors may reinforce the idea that AIAnon is a cult when we know that it isn’t nor do we want it to be perceived to be.
- o The experience of some groups has been that adding the AIAnon Declaration at the end of their chosen closing prayer seems to replace the chants. In 2006, every group was sent a table card to display the Declaration, and it is printed in the “Groups at Work” section of the *AIAnon/Alateen Service Manual* (page 24 in the 2006-2009 edition).