

## 2023 Fall AWSC Report

Greetings AI-Anon family,

Today I want to share with you my experiences at our AI-Anon International Convention, held this past July, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. This was my fourth International Convention, and unless you have attended, there is really no way to describe the feeling of being with over 4,000 AI-Anon members from around the world. I know several of you here today were there in Albuquerque, but in a crowd that large, it was difficult to connect and I only caught fleeting glimpses of many of the Ohio people there.

What I wanted to express today was my extreme gratitude to the Ohio Area for supporting the Delegate's trip to Convention. I realize this topic has caused some debate in our Area, and I want to share with you what I have learned. In the three prior International Conventions I attended, I attended as an observer. Obviously I attended sessions and soaked up the wisdom and fellowship that was so freely shared. I learned about AI-Anon around the world and saw the difference AI-Anon was making in people's lives. I took home stories and experiences that enhanced my life.

This Convention was different. Because of the questions raised regarding supporting the Delegate to attend the IAC, I had done considerable research. I reached and discovered the varying levels of support that are provided in other Areas. It was a reminder that not only is each group autonomous, but so is each Area. Our World Service Office is a clearinghouse, helping us stay united, but not providing rules, only guidelines. I spoke with a Trustee mentor and gained her opinion, and I began to further understand the role of Delegate in the IAC. No one told me what I had to do, but it became clear to me that in order for an International Convention to happen, a lot of participation was necessary. As I have heard so many times, changed attitudes aid recovery. As I had that change in attitude it became clear that my role in this Convention was to participate as fully as possible. Once again, participation is the key to harmony.

So, I dove in. I registered for the Day of Connection; I volunteered as a presenter; I said yes to helping with an Alateen session; I signed-up with the local host committee to be a greeter, and put my name on an emergency volunteer list when speakers were delayed in arrival. (Of course, I was not called on to fill all of those roles.) What did this mean to me personally? I gave up my one day of site-seeing. I got up early the first day I was there to be at the beginning of registration line, grab my tee shirt, and get to my greeter post on time. I met so many new friends in the Hospitality area: I prepared and presented a Traditions Workshop where the room was filled to capacity and nearly everyone wrote a sharing to be submitted to the Forum. Oh, and I can't forget the Language of Love Parade, where a Trustee pulled me from my seat, saying, "Hurry up, we need someone to carry the Ohio sign!" I was able to grab a few fellow Ohioans on the way and off we went!

Yes, this Convention was different for me; knowing our WSO Staff and amazing Trustees, seeing how hard they were working to provide us, AI-Anon members, the best possible experience. For me, just being a small part of providing that experience truly changed how I view the International Convention. So once again, I gained so much more than I will ever be able to return, and I am eternally grateful to the Ohio Area for helping to provide me with that experience.

With love in service,  
Ann F  
Ohio Delegate  
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