



Al-Anon Family Group

Newcomers Guidelines!

Affirming Names- *Al-Anon affirms everyone here to help themselves and their lives. We do this by acknowledging everyone's first name. This is an opportunity to remember someone you relate with to get their number from the sign in sheet!*

Twelve Steps- *This is one of the cornerstones of Al-Anon! Without them you will **not** get recovery.*

The Tradition of the Month- *These are the guidelines on how to keep Al-Anon healthy! If Pepsi Cola wanted to donate \$250,000 to Al-Anon, we could not accept it unless done anonymously. Al-Anon is successful because you can practically find help all over the world!*

The Do's and The Don'ts- *It takes years for us to come to Al-Anon and it will take time to gain recovery; there are no quick fixes but we have the do's and the don'ts to help us immediately get on the healthy road!*

The Twelve Promises- *If you come to meetings, work your Steps, read the Al-Anon literature, do the Do's and don't do the Don'ts, you will have these 12 promises come true for you!*

Six Meetings and One Year- *We asked all newcomers to attend six scheduled meetings before deciding if Al-Anon is for you. We suggest you hold off one year on any major decisions such as divorce, etc... Your perceptions will change. Your decision may not! (**Exception:** If there is a threat of physical abuse Al-Anon suggests you to find shelter immediately!)*

Schedule- *Is passed around so you can see who is planning to lead and to sign up to lead or chair one day when you desire.*

Sign-In Sheet- *Sign in with First name and optional Last name initial. It is suggested that newcomers not place their phone numbers on the sign in sheet unless they are willing to receive calls from persons in need of help. It is suggested to hold off for a year.*

Telephone Therapy- *Sometimes the best meetings are after the meetings! We suggest you take several phone numbers of Al-Anon members of the same sex as you. Unfortunately, Al-Anon meetings are only an hour long and the chaos in our lives is 24 hours long. When people in Al-Anon leave their phone numbers down on the sign in sheet they are accepting anyone in need, to call them around the clock to help you. And to give back the help giving to them in their time of need! If a member is busy hang up and call another member immediately!*

Sponsorships- *Like a member has eloquently expressed on having a sponsor "Sponsors are like power tools to hand tools you will get recovery by coming to meetings but by having a sponsor you'll get there faster!" It does not have to be announced officially although you can. If you decide you need a different or new sponsor just pick up the phone and call a new one! (If you have not completed the 12 steps with a Sponsor or not had your first sponsor it is suggested to only have one sponsor and not switch sponsors until you do finish the steps with them. We have a propensity to do our will and when we don't like what we hear we keep looking for someone to tell us what we do want to hear.)*

Literature- *On the table you will notice three books One Day At Time, Courage To Change and Hope for Today. There are 3 common ways to read these books. 1) Date to day everyday! 2) Index at the end of the book- Most of us doesn't really understand our feelings in relation to our lives. By searching the feelings in the index, it will lead us to a healthy perspective. Example: **Depression** is **Anger** turn inward. So now you read on anger! 3) If you don't know what you'll feeling, just ask God to help and open to a random page for an answer! Show the FORUM (the subscription form is in their newcomers' packet.) Then pass out the latest and*

greatest book! "Al-Anon and How It Works!" (Prices are in the inside covers.) Just pay the leader of the meeting you chose to attend.

Alateen Alatees- *Are available! Just call the Intergroup for schedules.*

Anonymity- *The importance of anonymity to Al-Anon is crucial for a successful group meeting. Some members' lives or recovery program can be threatened if word of their attendance gets out. The trust of anonymity, not gossiping or criticizing allows us to speak out freely and openly! If you see a member outside of the meeting just ask them if they know Bill W.*

Spiritual Program- *This is a spiritual program not a religious one. Al-Anon is a group of inclusion not exclusion. If there is a problem with alcoholism Al-Anon is there for anyone and does not want the difference of religious beliefs to keep you from help! Please respect this guideline by referring to all tenets by using God or Higher Power within meetings.*

Open AA Meetings- *Al-Anon encourages its members to learn as much as you can about alcohol. One method is to attend occasional open AA meetings!*

Basket- *This is usually a donation of your conscience! Al-Anon is self-supporting. Some of it goes to buy more newcomers packets. Some meetings own their building and pay a mortgage each month! Never ever let the basket stop you from coming to a meeting! Members with a program will not even look.*

Topic- *When the meeting has started the leader may ask if anyone has a topic. This could be a theme or subject matter for the rest of the meeting. If you need to talk first and you don't know what the topic is just try to speak on one issue or concern and a member will figure out the topic for you. If the group is on a particular topic and you wish to speak on something else, feel free to do so! It may or may not turn the topic into something else.*

Focus on us- *The primary reason we are here is to change **us** not the alcoholic, therefore when talking; keep the focus on **us** and not on the alcoholic. This is how we help one another in Al-Anon!*

War Stories- *When an Al-Anon member talks on all the horrible events in their lives no one ever gets help or recovery. Most all members have been there and done that. It is conducive for members to use an example of one war story to share how **they handled** the experience. For that kind input, is very useful. But to sit and complain will ultimately not help the group. If you have a need to express more, just grab a member after the meeting has ended.*

Crosstalk- *God gave us one mouth and two ears for a reason. He wants us to listen more than we speak. The meetings are set up for everyone to have an opportunity to speak without interruptions. When members are finished they usually note it with a sincere thank you! If you have a question or concern just wait until the member is finished or after the meeting has ended.*

I Pass- *If it is your turn or you are called on and do not want to talk, just say what all other members say: "I pass!"*

Considerate Talker- **Look** *at the amount of members in the meeting to judge your talking time. Make sure everyone has an opportunity to talk within an hour. It might be a good idea to speak concise and to the point. Members will make the other points you may have left out. If you want more time, wait until everyone has had a chance to talk or grab a member after the meeting has ended.*

Burning Desires? *- Before closing the meeting, the leader may ask if there are any burning desires. Sometimes a special thought of pain or joy may need to be expressed. This is the opportunity to do so before closing the meeting. Just keep in mind; people are rightly expecting the meeting to close on time! If anyone must leave please feel free to do so!*

Closing Prayer- *If you are offended by the Lord's Prayer just leave early or enjoys the holding of hands. The unity of the group is based on what is best for the majority not the individual!*