

Al-Anon and Alateen Meetings in the Five Boroughs of New York

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What Is Al-Anon?

The Al-Anon Family Groups are a fellowship of relatives and friends of alcoholics who share their experience, strength, and hope in order to solve their common problems. We believe alcoholism is a family illness and that changed attitudes can aid recovery. Al-Anon is not allied with any sect, denomination, political entity, organization, or institution; does not engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any cause. There are no dues for membership. Al-Anon is self-supporting through its own voluntary contributions.

Al-Anon has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps, by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics, and by giving understanding and encouragement to the alcoholic.

Who Is a Member? Anyone affected by someone else's drinking.

NOTE: By tradition, all Al-Anon meetings are open to anyone affected by someone else's drinking (such people are called members). Unless otherwise marked, all meetings are "Closed" to those who are not members, such as professionals, researchers, or students. "Open" meetings welcome all visitors whether affected by someone else's drinking or not. Some Al-Anon family groups choose to discuss topics from a standpoint, such as men's, women's, LGBTQIA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersexual, asexual/allied) issues, adult children of alcoholics, parents, and so on.

Keywords

AA Also: There is an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting at the same time in the same venue

AAC: The group discusses topics from the standpoint of Al-Anon Adult Children of alcoholics

Alateen: The meeting is for young people up to the age of 18 who have been affected by someone else's drinking

Beginners: The group focuses on topics of relevance to newcomers and prospective members of Al-Anon and may have a special format to include them

Concepts: The group discusses the Twelve Concepts

LGBTQ: The group discusses topics from the standpoint of those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersexual, and asexual or allied

Literature: The group reads from Al-Anon Conference-approved literature

Meditation: The group includes time for meditation within the meeting format

Men: The group discusses topics from the standpoint of men

Open: The group welcomes visitors seeking information about Al-Anon as well as newcomers and members of Al-Anon

Parents: The group discusses topics from the standpoint of parents

Regular: No special topics or standpoints

Slogans: The group discusses Al-Anon slogans, which are sayings to assist members in their recovery

Step: The group discusses the Twelve Steps

Topic: The group discusses a topic from Al-Anon Conference-approved literature

Traditions: The group discusses the Twelve Traditions

WK: Week of the month, the topics discussed change according to the week of the month

Women: The group discusses topics from the standpoint of women

The Twelve Steps

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

The Twelve Traditions

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants—they do not govern.
3. The relatives of alcoholics, when gathered together for mutual aid, may call themselves an Al-Anon Family Group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend.
4. Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or AA as a whole.
5. Each Al-Anon Family Group has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of AA *ourselves*, by encouraging and understanding our alcoholic relatives, and by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics.
6. Our Family Groups ought never endorse, finance or lend our name to any outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim. Although a separate entity, we should always co-operate with Alcoholics Anonymous.
7. Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

8. Al-Anon Twelfth Step work should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. Our groups, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. The Al-Anon Family Groups have no opinion on outside issues; hence our name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, and TV. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all AA members.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities.