

SERENITY

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP



MEETINGS

MONDAY ~ WEDNESDAY ~ FRIDAY

NOON - 1PM

201 S. Locust St. #108
Denton, TX 76201

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MEETING FORMAT AND INSTRUCTIONS

*CHAIRPERSON: In the following text, italicized words are to be read, normal print represents instructions/directions.

*CHAIRPERSON: Please pause the meeting at 12:45 and pass the basket after reading the contribution statement. After the meeting, please record today's contribution amount on the calendar and place in envelope in the back of the notebook for the treasurer to deposit.

NOTES TO CHAIRPERSON

- * Chairpersons rotate, giving all members the privilege to serve.
- * The chairperson has the authority to hold a mini group conscience for the day if an outside observer/student attends to determine if the members attending are comfortable.
- * The chairperson has the responsibility to keep the meeting moving so that all attending may share. "Time is running short please share with someone after the meeting, and let the next person share"
- * The chairperson has the responsibility and authority to keep the meeting within guidelines, i.e. no religions, other 12 step programs, philosophies, outside publications. If someone sharing continually goes on and on about a subject outside our guidelines, chair states, "This is going outside our guidelines". Re-read our card and move on. If it is just touched on, gently tell them after the meeting.

MEETING TEXT

Chairperson: *We ask that you please silence or turn off all cell phones*

Chairperson: *Will you join me in a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer?*

*THE SERENITY PRAYER
God, grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change,
Courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.*

Chairperson: (Reads opening)

We welcome you to the Serenity Al-Anon Family Group and hope you will find in this fellowship the help and friendship we have been privileged to enjoy.

We who live, or have lived, with the problem of alcoholism understand as perhaps few others can. We, too, were lonely and frustrated, but in Al-Anon we discover that no situation is really hopeless, and that it is possible for us to find contentment, and even happiness, whether the alcoholic is still drinking or not.

We urge you to try our program. It has helped many of us find solutions that lead to serenity. So much depends on our own attitudes, and as we learn to place our problem in its true perspective, we find it loses its power to dominate our thoughts and our lives.

The family situation is bound to improve as we apply the Al-Anon ideas. Without such spiritual help, living with an alcoholic is too much for most of us. Our thinking becomes distorted by trying to force solutions, and we become irritable and unreasonable without knowing it.

The Al-Anon program is based on the Twelve Steps (adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous), which we try, little by little, one day at a time, to apply to our lives along with our slogans and the Serenity Prayer. The loving interchange of help among members and daily reading of Al-Anon literature thus make us ready to receive the priceless gift of serenity.

Anonymity is an important principle of the Al-Anon program. Everything that is said here, in the group meeting and member-to-member, must be held in confidence. Only in this way can we feel free to say what is in our minds and hearts, for this is how we help one another in Al-Anon.

Chairperson: *Let's read the Twelve Steps (indicate which member should start and go around the room reading first the preamble and one to three steps, then proceed reading the remaining steps from member to member)*

PREAMBLE TO THE TWELVE STEPS

Study of these Steps is essential to progress in the Al-Anon program. The principles they embody are universal, applicable to everyone, whatever his personal creed. In Al-Anon, we strive for an ever deeper understanding of these Steps, and pray for the wisdom to apply them to our lives.

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.*
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 of our affairs.*

Chairperson: (Indicate which member should proceed with the reading of the preamble and twelve traditions)

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS

PREAMBLE: These guidelines are the means of promoting harmony and growth in Al-Anon groups and in the world-wide fellowship of Al-Anon as a whole. Our group experience suggests that our unity depends upon our adherence to these Traditions.

- 1. Our common welfare comes 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 Al-Anon 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 cooperate with Alcoholics Anonymous.*
- 7. Every group should be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.*
- 8. Al-Anon Twelfth Step work should remain forever nonprofessional, 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, TV and films. 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.*

Chairperson: (Indicate which member should proceed with the preamble to the Twelve concepts and the concept that corresponds with the current month – e.g. 1=January)

THE TWELVE CONCEPTS OF SERVICE

PREAMBLE: The Twelve Steps and Traditions are guides for personal growth and group unity. The Twelve Concepts are guides for service. They show how Twelfth Step Work can be done on a broad scale and how members of a World Service Office can relate to each other and to the groups, through a World Service Conference, to spread Al-Anon's message worldwide.

- 1. The ultimate responsibility and authority for Al-Anon world services belongs to the Al-Anon groups.*
- 2. The Al-Anon Family Groups have delegated complete administrative and operational authority to their conference and its service arms.*
- 3. The right of decision makes effective leadership possible.*
- 4. Participation is the key to harmony.*
- 5. The rights of appeal and petition protect minorities and insure that they be heard.*
- 6. The conference acknowledges the primary administrative responsibility of the Trustees.*
- 7. The Trustees have legal rights while the rights of the Conference are traditional.*
- 8. The Board of Trustees delegates full authority for routine management of Al-Anon Headquarters to its executive committees.*
- 9. Good personal leadership at all service levels is a necessity. In the field of world service, the Board of Trustees assumes the primary leadership.*
- 10. Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority and double-headed management is avoided.*
- 11. The World Service Office is composed of selected committees, executives and staff members.*
- 12. The spiritual foundation for Al-Anon's world services is contained in the General Warranties of the Conference, Article 12 of the Charter.*

Chairperson: *Please remember that only Conference Approved Literature is used in meetings.*

(Ask that those in front of table cards read them)

(Ask someone to read from one or more of the daily readers: "One Day at a Time", "Courage to Change" and/or "Hope for Tomorrow")

Chairperson: (Ask someone to read group announcements and ask if there are any other announcements)

Chairperson: *A quick reminder to please silence all cell phones.*

INTRODUCTIONS

Chairperson: *I am (name) and I am your chairperson for today. Are there any newcomers here?*

(If so, say): *As a newcomer, you may feel that you are here for the alcoholic...that your presence here may teach you how to stop his or her drinking. The truth is you are here because of the alcoholic and not for the alcoholic. You will soon learn that you did not cause the alcoholic to drink, you cannot control the drinking, nor can you cure the alcoholic. You are here for yourself. You and you alone are responsible for dealing with your own pain. This is your program; it is your recovery from the effects of the disease of alcoholism.*

You will find love, understanding and a lot of hope from the Al-Anon Family Group. The people around you are experiencing in varying degrees the hurt, anger and anxiety that you might be experiencing. We in Al-Anon share our experiences because it helps us to focus on our recovery and ourselves. We do this with the use of the Al-Anon tools of the program (steps, slogans and literature), which are available to you.

Al-Anon will work for you if you allow it to. It's as effective as you make it. It's the safe place, the right place to be. Feel free to ask any questions after the meeting. There are no "musts" in Al-Anon. Finally, what you say here or hear here and who you see here stays in this room. Your anonymity is protected at all times. We suggest you attend six meetings as close together as you can to see if Al-Anon is for you. If you would like to share with us, you are welcome; if not, feel free to pass, but please stay after the meeting and let us give you a newcomer's packet and a book.

Chairperson: *Let's introduce ourselves* (indicate where to start and go around the room)

Chairperson: (Announce the type of meeting):

A. Discussion meeting: *This is a discussion meeting. We like to go around the room, one at a time, without cross talk and being courteous of the number of people, and share our experience, strength and hope* (Chairperson presents topic for discussion)

B. Step study meeting: *This is a step study meeting in which we read and discuss the steps, traditions or concepts. Today we will discuss _____.*

C. Speaker meeting: (Chairperson introduces the speaker) *This is a speaker meeting and today _____ will share with us.*

PASSING BASKET (APPROXIMATELY 15 MINUTES BEFORE THE END TIME OF THE MEETING)

Chairperson: (Pause the meeting to pass the basket) *We are self-supporting through our own voluntary contributions. We have no dues or fees. If this is your first meeting, please be our guest/s.*

CLOSING

Chairperson: *In closing, I would like to say that the opinions expressed here were strictly those of the person who gave them. Take what you liked and leave the rest.*

The things you heard were spoken in confidence and should be treated as confidential. Keep them within the walls of this room and the confines of your mind.

A few special words to those of you who haven't been with us long: Whatever your problems, there are those among us who have had them, too. If you try to keep an open mind, you will find help. You will come to realize that there is no situation too difficult to be bettered and no unhappiness too great to be lessened.

We aren't perfect. The welcome we give may not show the warmth we have in our hearts for you. After a while, you'll discover that though you may not like all of us, you'll love us in a very special way — the same way we already love you.

Talk to each other, reason things out with someone else, but let there be no gossip or criticism of one another. Instead, let the understanding, love and peace of the program grow in you one day at a time.

Will all who care to, join in the closing prayer.

Chairperson: (Choose a prayer for closing see page 10). E.g., Serenity Prayer, Group version aka "we" version of Serenity Prayer, Lord's prayer, etc — group members stand, join hands and speak in unison if desired)

ALL: *Keep coming back, it works if you work it!*

PRAYERS

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.

Third Step Prayer

God, I offer myself to Thee, to build with me and to do with me as Thou will. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Your will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Your power. Your love and Your way of life. May I do Your will always.

Seventh Step Prayer

My Creator, I am now willing that You should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that You now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to You and my fellows. Grant me strength as I go out from here to do Your bidding.

St. Francis Prayer

Lord make me an instrument of Thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy. O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved, as to love, for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

THE AL-ANON PROMISES*

If we willingly surrender ourselves to the spiritual discipline of the Twelve Steps, our lives will be transformed. We will become mature, responsible individuals with a great capacity for joy, fulfillment, and wonder.

Though we may never be perfect, continued spiritual progress will reveal to us our enormous potential. We will discover that we are worthy of love and loving.

We will love others without losing ourselves, and will learn to accept love in return.

Our sight, once clouded and confused, will clear and we will be able to perceive reality and recognize truth.

Courage and fellowship will replace fear.

We will be able to risk failure to develop new, hidden talents.

Our lives, no matter how battered and degraded, will yield hope to share with others.

We will begin to feel and will come to know the vastness of our emotions, but we will not be slaves to them.

Our secrets will no longer bind us in shame.

As we gain the ability to forgive ourselves, our families, and the world, our choices will expand.

With dignity we will stand for ourselves, but not against our fellows.

Serenity and peace will have meaning for us as we allow our lives and the lives of those we love to flow day by day with God's ease, balance, and grace.

No longer terrified, we will discover we are free to delight in life's paradox, mystery, and awe.

We will laugh more.

Fear will be replaced by faith, and gratitude will come naturally as we realize that our Higher Power is doing for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

*p. 269-270 "From Survival to Recovery"