



# **Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.**

**- 2015 Membership Survey -**

**Results and Longitudinal Comparison**

# Table of contents



	Page
<a href="#"><u>General survey information</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>3</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Demographics and children</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>5</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Involvement in Al-Anon</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>7</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Relationships with drinkers</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>8</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Health/functioning self assessment, and abuse</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>12</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Professional involvement and treatment</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>19</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Spiritual/religious inclination</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>25</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Al-Anon impact</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>27</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Summary of key findings</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>28</u></a>

# Background and objectives



**Al-Anon Family Groups provide friends and families of problem drinkers with the opportunity to share their experiences, to find strength and hope.**

**Al-Anon Family Groups' World Service Office (WSO) has conducted a membership survey every three years since 1984. The 2015 Membership Survey is the eleventh study. The findings are an aid to professionals, researchers, students, the media, or anyone seeking information about Al-Anon Family Groups.**

**Specific objectives for the study were to:**

- Determine the demographic and sociographic profile of Al-Anon Family Group members.
- Identify the relationship between the member and the problem drinker.
- Measure the impact that a problem drinker has had on the members' lives.
- Determine the impact of the Al-Anon Family Groups program on the quality of life of the members.

# Methodology



Al-Anon Family Group members were provided with a URL for the on-line membership survey. The survey was written by the World Service Office staff, and the on-line survey was programmed, hosted, and tallied by an outside vendor.

The survey was available in English, French, and Spanish. 87% of participants were from the U.S., Bermuda, and Puerto Rico, while 13% of participants were from Canada.

2.4% (203) completed the survey in French

1.6% (138) completed the survey in Spanish

Data was collected from January 9 to February 22, 2015 with 8,517 Al-Anon Family Group members participating. The average time to complete the survey was 22 minutes.

Study results contain a margin of error of +/- 1 at the 95% confidence level.

## Demographic profile



	2009	2012	2015
Average Age	55.9	56.81	59.8
% Female	84%	86%	83%
% Married	58%	58%	61%
% College Graduate	56%	59%	64%
% White	93%	91%	93%

- In 2015, **8%** were also members of A.A.

Note: Demographic questions (Q37 – Q50a) were not mandatory. Percentages are reflective of those that responded to each question.

Q34: In addition to being a member of Al-Anon Family Groups, are you also an A.A. member?

Q37: What is your gender?

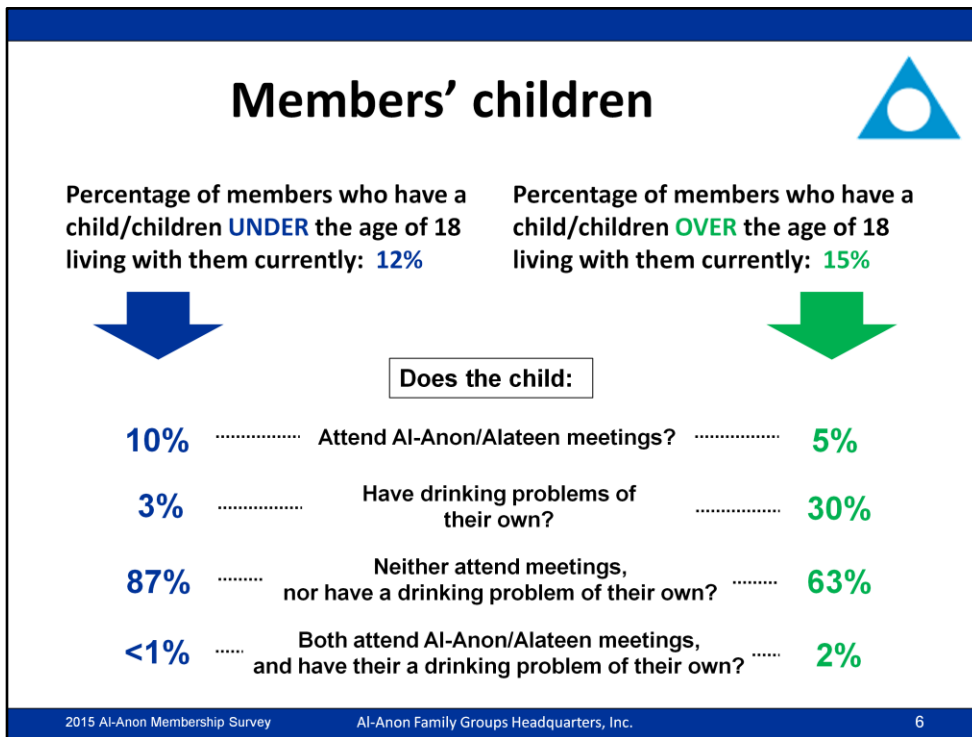
Q38: What year were you born?

Q39: Please select the highest level of education you have achieved.

Q40: Are you now married, widowed, divorced, separated, or never married?

Q47: Please select the race or ethnic group to which you consider yourself a part.

Base (Q34, Q37, Q38, Q39, Q40, Q47): All respondents (n=8,715)



Note: Demographic/psychographic questions (Q37 – Q50a) were not mandatory. Percentages are reflective of those that responded to each question.

Q43: Do you have any children under the age of 18 living with you currently?

Base: All respondents (n=8,715)

Q43b: Does this child (or children) currently:

Base: Respondents who have any children under the age of 18 living with them currently (n=1,006)

Q43c: Why doesn't this child (or children) attend Al-Anon or Alateen meetings?

Base: Respondents who have any children under the age of 18 living with them currently, and the child either has a drinking problem of their own, and/or doesn't attend Al-Anon/Alateen meetings (n=900)

Q44: Do you have any children 18 years of age or older living with you currently?

Base: All respondents (n=8,715)

Q44b: Do these children (child) currently:

Base: Respondents who have children 18 years of age or older living with them currently (n=1,281)

Q44c: Why doesn't this child (or children) attend Al-Anon meetings? *Please select all that apply.*

Base: Respondents who have children 18 years of age or older living with them currently, and the child either has a drinking problem of their own, and/or doesn't attend Al-Anon/Alateen meetings (n=1,183)

## Members' involvement in Al-Anon



	2009 (N=1,775)	2012 (N=3,232)	2015 (N=8,517)
Avg. # of continuous years membership	12.7	11.9	13
% attend electronic meetings	10%	10%	6%
Ever been involved in service work	91%	90%	85%
Involved in service work now	66%	63%	54%
Have a personal Sponsor (mentor)	75%	75%	71%
Sponsor (mentor) other members	53%	48%	44%

In 2015:

- 75% have been a member for at least 5 years, including 31% for at least 25 years.
- 67% have been a continuous member for at least 5 years, including 21% for at least 25 years.
- 99% attend at least 1 face-to-face meeting weekly.
- 58% of those who have a Sponsor, communicate with them weekly; 7% do so daily.
- 66% of those who sponsor others, sponsor 2 or more members.

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7

Q2: In what year was your first Al-Anon Family Group meeting?

Q3: In what year was your first Al-Anon Family Group meeting that was the beginning of your continuous attendance?

Q4: Do you have a personal sponsor?

Base (Q2, Q3, Q4): All respondents (n=8,715)

Q4a: On average, how often do you communicate with your Sponsor?

Base: Those who have a personal sponsor (n=6,021)

Q5: Do you sponsor an Al-Anon Family Group member?

Base: All respondents (n=8,715)

Q5a: How many members do you sponsor?

Base: Respondents who sponsor an Al-Anon Family Group member (n=3,720)

Q6: How many face-to-face Al-Anon Family Group meetings do you attend on average each week?

Q7: How many electronic (on-line, telephone, software application (VOIP), etc.) Al-Anon Family Group meetings do you attend on average each week?

Q32: Have you ever been involved in service work in Al-Anon Family Groups?

Base (Q6, Q7, Q32): All respondents (n=3,232)

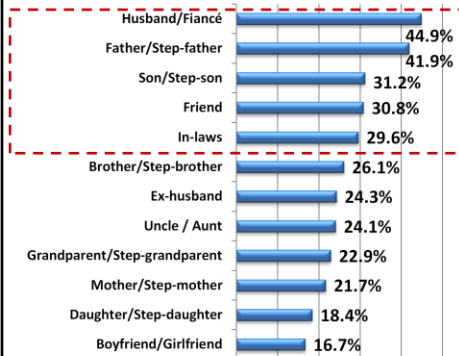
Q32a: Do you currently hold a service position in Al-Anon Family Groups at or beyond the group level?

Base: Those who have been involved in service work in Al-Anon Family Groups (n=7,272)

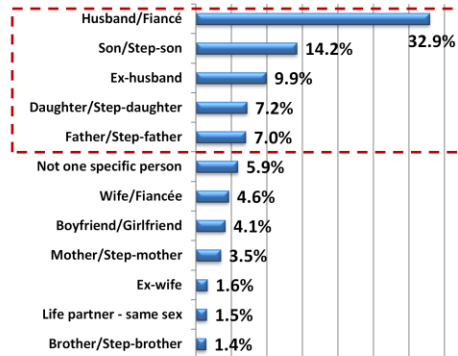
# Relationships to drinkers



**Top relationships of *all* people who have negatively affected members' lives, due to problem drinking**



**Top relationships of the *one* person whose problem drinking led members to Al-Anon**



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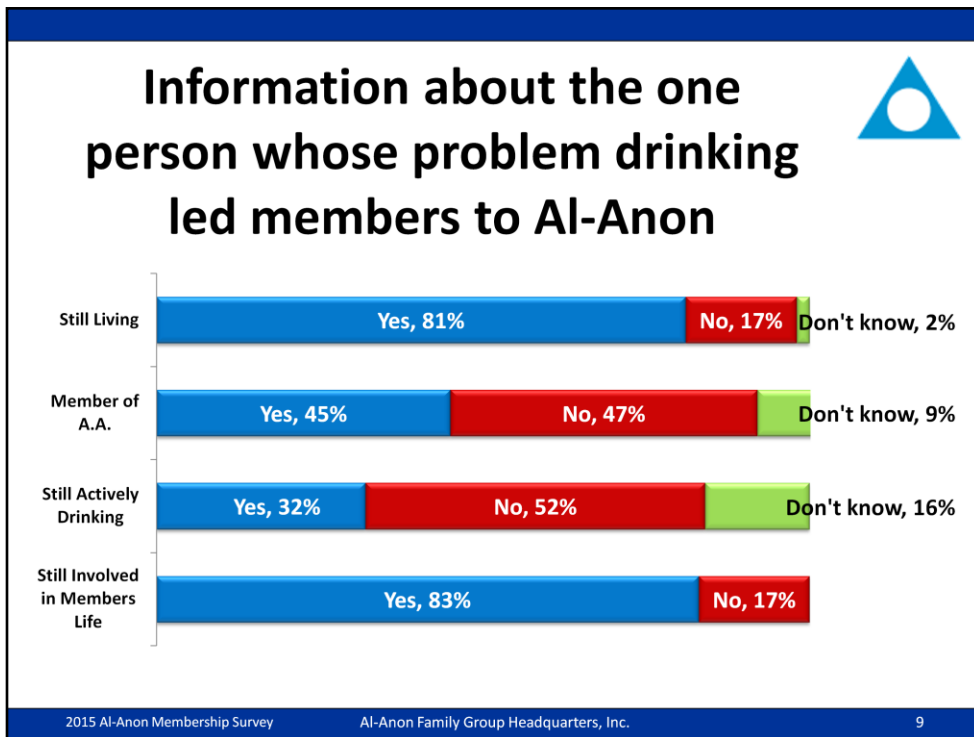
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8

Q8: Please select the relationship to you of EVERY person whose alcoholism or problem drinking has negatively affected your life.

Q9: Please select the person whose alcoholism or problem drinking led you to attend Al-Anon.

Base (Q8, Q9): All respondents (n=8,517)



Q9a: Is the person whose alcoholism or problem drinking that led you to attend Al-Anon still living?

Base: Respondents who specified a person whose alcoholism or problem drinking led them to attend Al-Anon (n=8,011)

Q9b: Is this person a member of A.A.?

Q9c: Is this person still actively drinking?

Q9d: Is this person still involved in your life?

Base (Q9b-d): Respondents who specified a person whose alcoholism or problem drinking led them to attend Al-Anon, and the individual is still living (n=6,503)

## Romantic relationships with drinkers



- **80%** of respondents have been in a romantic relationship involving an alcoholic partner.
- **Members' current relationships are with a person who:**
  - Does not have a problem with alcohol: **32%**
  - Is a member of A.A.: **26%**
  - Is actively still drinking: **11%**
  - Is not actively still drinking and is not an A.A. member: **7%**

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10

Note: Demographic/psychographic questions (Q37 – Q50a) were not mandatory. Percentages are reflective of those that responded to each question.

Q10: How many romantic relationships, including your spouse, have you had that have involved an alcoholic partner?

Q42: Is your current relationship with someone who has a problem with alcohol?

Base (Q10, Q42): All respondents (n=8,715)

## The “other” reason why members initially joined Al-Anon



- **40%** of respondents initially joined Al-Anon because a person with a drug problem was negatively affecting their lives.
  - Of them, **85%** later discovered that someone’s drinking had also negatively affected their lives.

Q35: Did you initially start attending Al-Anon Family Group meetings because a person with a drug problem was negatively affecting your life?

Base (Q10, Q35): All respondents (n=8,517)

Q35a: Did you later discover that someone’s drinking had also negatively affected your life, which led you to continue attending Al-Anon Family Group meetings?

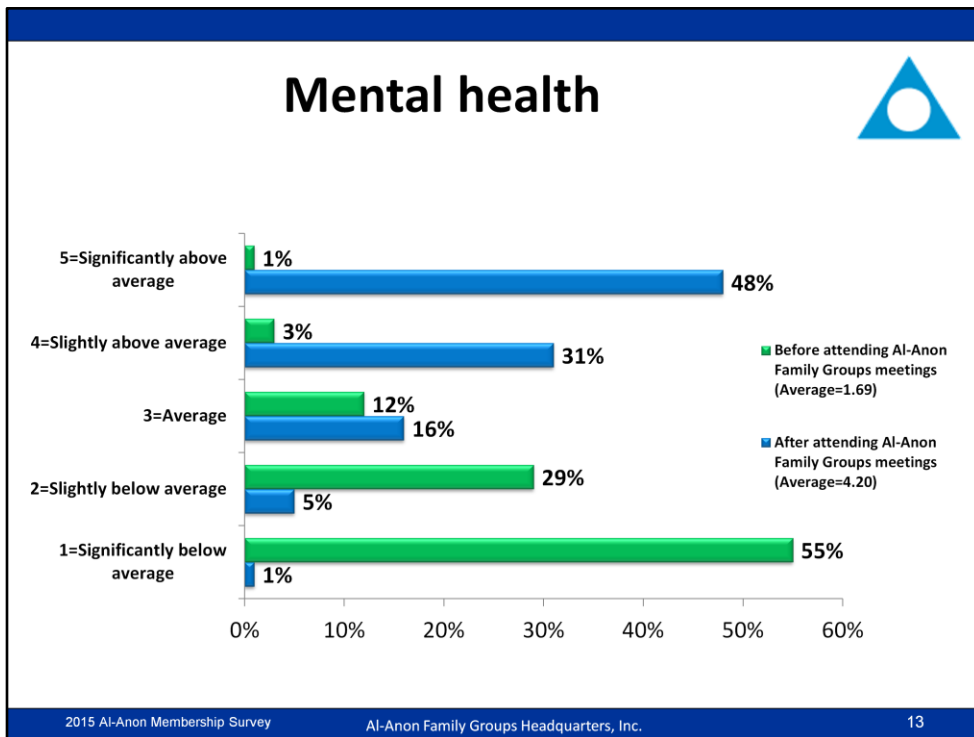
Base: Those who started attending Al-Anon Family Group meetings because a person with a drug problem was negatively affecting their life (n=3,406)

## Health profile – self-assessment



**After having attended Al-Anon meetings, members report improved well-being across the board, in the following areas:**

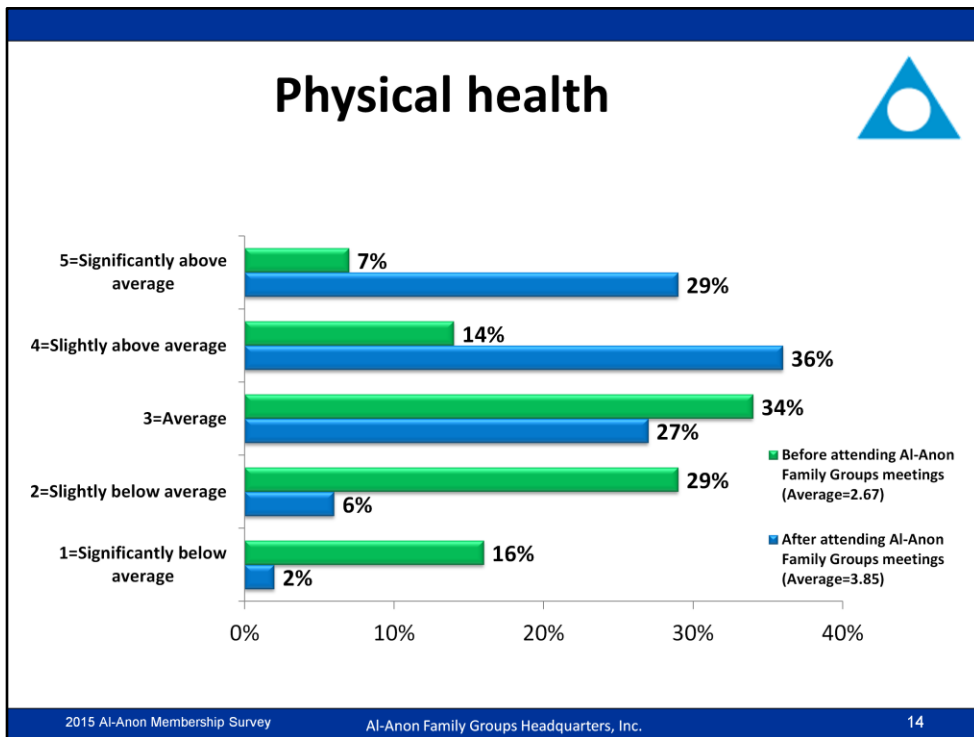
- Mental health
- Physical health
- Emotional health
- Problem areas experienced
- Problem behaviors experienced, including on the job
- Daily functioning



Q11: How would you rate the condition of your mental health BEFORE you began attending Al-Anon Family Group meetings?

Q14: Since attending Al-Anon, how would you rate the condition of your mental health?

Base (Q11, Q14): All respondents (n=8,517)



Q15: How would you rate the condition of your personal physical health BEFORE you began attending Al-Anon Family Group meetings?

Q17: Since attending Al-Anon, how would you rate the condition of your personal physical health?

Base (Q15, Q17): All respondents (n=8,517)

## Work-related problem behaviors



Work-related problem behaviors	Experienced before attending Al-Anon	Experience currently	% Change for better
None	14%	34%	20%
Falling asleep at work	14%	7%	-7%
Frequent absenteeism	17%	8%	-9%
Inability to follow through on work assignments/routine tasks	47%	37%	-10%
Poor or inappropriate customer service	18%	7%	-11%
Arriving late/leaving early	41%	27%	-14%
Poor quality of work	41%	21%	-20%
Conflicts with a coworker or supervisor	39%	12%	-27%

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15

Q19a: Relating to performance on your job, please indicate the areas you had problems with on a continual basis due to your experiences with the alcoholic or problem drinker, **BEFORE** attending Al-Anon.

Base: Those who lack productivity at work (n=1,886)

Q25a: Relating to performance on your job, please indicate the areas you are **CURRENTLY** having problems with on a continual basis due to your experiences with the alcoholic or problem drinker.

Base: Those who lack productivity at work (n=385)

## Work-related problem experiences



Work-related problem experiences	Experienced before attending Al-Anon	Experience currently	% Change for better
N/A – self employed	15%	27%	12%
None	64%	67%	3%
Increase of personal injuries due to carelessness or lack of concentration	5%	2%	-3%
Placed on probation or suspended from work	9%	2%	-7%
Fired from work	12%	4%	-8%

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16

Q19b: Relating to performance on your job, please indicate if you experienced any of the following due to your experiences with the alcoholic or problem drinker, BEFORE attending Al-Anon.

Base: Those who lack productivity at work (n=1,886)

Q25b: Relating to performance on your job, please indicate if you are experiencing any of the following due to your experiences with the alcoholic or problem drinker.

Base: Those who lack productivity at work (n=385)

## Daily functioning



Rating of daily functioning condition	Before Al-Anon	After	% Change
Significantly below average	19%	1%	-18%
Slightly below average	37%	5%	-32%
Average	30%	23%	-7%
Slightly above average	10%	39%	29%
Significantly above average	4%	32%	28%
<b>*Average Score</b>	<b>2.43</b>	<b>3.96</b>	<b>1.53</b>

\*Members' rating of the condition of their daily functioning, before/after attending Al-Anon Family Groups, on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being significantly below average and 5 being significantly above average.

Q18: How would you rate the condition of your daily functioning BEFORE you began attending Al-Anon Family Group meetings?

Q20: Since attending Al-Anon, how would you rate the condition of your daily functioning (school, work, and/or home life)?

Base (Q18, Q20): All respondents (n=8,517)

# Abuse



- **48%** of members have feared for their physical safety in the presence of a problem drinker.
- **57%** have experienced abuse from this person, as follows:

	Experienced this type of abuse	Sought help	Still experiencing	Currently seeking help
Physical	43%	46%	1%	24%
Emotional	95%	72%	14%	34%
Sexual	21%	50%	3%	24%
Verbal	94%	64%	16%	31%

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18

Q26: Have you ever feared for your physical safety in the presence of the person in your life with a past or present drinking problem?

Q27: Have you ever experienced any kind of abuse from this person?

Base (Q26, Q27): All respondents (n=8,517)

Q27a-d: Was the abuse physical, emotional, sexual, verbal?

Base (Q27a-d): Respondents who experienced any kind of abuse (n=4,881)

Q27e-h: Did you seek help related to this physical, emotional, sexual, verbal abuse?

Q27i: Are you still experiencing this abuse?

Q27j: Are you currently seeking help?

Base (Q27e-j): Respondents who experienced the specific form of abuse (Physical n=2,081, Emotional n=4,624, Sexual n=1,013, Verbal n=4,571)

## Health profile – professional diagnosis



**32%** of respondents have been diagnosed with a **mental health disorder**.

The most common are:

- **80%** Depression.
- **42%** Anxiety disorder.
- **21%** Post traumatic stress disorder.
- **13%** Sleep disorder.
- **9%** Eating disorder.
- **8%** Mood disorder.
- Of those, **54%** currently take prescription medication for a mental health disorder.

Q22: Have you ever been diagnosed with a mental health disorder?

Base: All respondents (n=8,517)

Q22a: What were you diagnosed with?

Q22b: Are you currently taking prescription medication for your mental health disorder?

Base (Q22a,b): Respondents who have been diagnosed with a mental health disorder (n=2,753)

## Health profile – professional diagnosis, continued



**75%** of respondents have been diagnosed with a **medical condition**. The three most common are:

- **29%** Arthritis.
- **25%** Acid reflux.
- **18%** Migraine headaches.

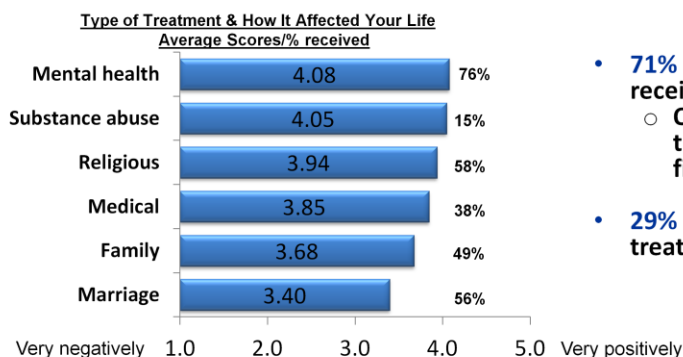
Q23: Have you ever been diagnosed with any of the following?

Base: All respondents (n=8,517)

## Treatment received before attending Al-Anon meetings



- **65%** received treatment, counseling or therapy before attending Al-Anon Family Groups meetings.



- **71%** are no longer receiving treatment.
  - Of these, **81%** received treatment for less than five years.
- **29%** are still receiving treatment.

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Al-Anon Family Groups Headquarters, Inc.

21

Q28: Did you receive treatment, counseling, or therapy BEFORE attending Al-Anon Family Group meetings?

Base: All respondents (n=8,517)

Q28a: Please indicate the kind of treatment counseling, or therapy, you received BEFORE attending Al-Anon Family Groups meetings and rate how receiving this treatment, counseling, or therapy affected your life.

Q28b: Are you still receiving treatment, counseling or therapy?

Base (Q28a,b): Respondents who receive treatment, counseling or therapy BEFORE attending Al-Anon (n=5,531)

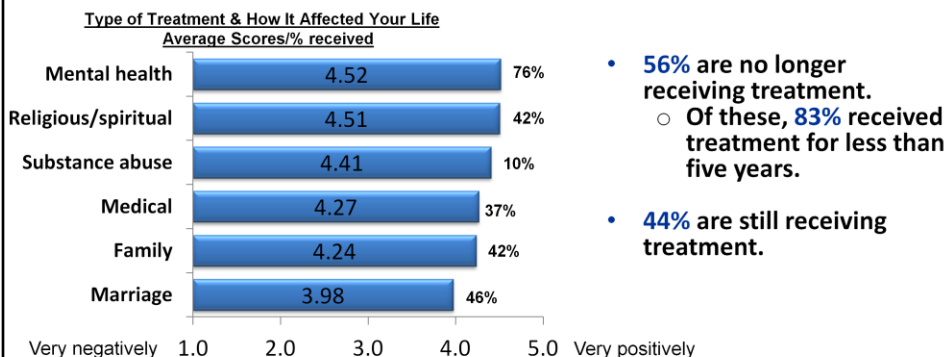
Q28c: How long did you receive treatment, counseling, or therapy?

Base: Respondents who aren't still receiving treatment, counseling or therapy (n=3,926)

## Treatment received after attending Al-Anon meetings



- **54%** received treatment, counseling or therapy after attending Al-Anon Family Groups meetings.



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Al-Anon Family Groups Headquarters, Inc.

22

Q29: Since attending Al-Anon Family Group meetings, have you received treatment, counseling, or therapy?

Base: All respondents (n=8,517)

Q29a: Please indicate the kind of treatment counseling, or therapy, you received AFTER attending Al-Anon Family Groups meetings and rate how receiving this treatment, counseling, or therapy affected your life.

Q29b: Are you still receiving treatment, counseling or therapy?

Base (Q29a,b): Respondents who receive treatment, counseling or therapy After attending Al-Anon (n=4,593)

Q29c: How long did you receive treatment, counseling, or therapy?

Base: Respondents who are no longer receiving treatment, counseling or therapy (n=2,590)

# Treatment effectiveness



**Members' ratings of how the treatment they received affected their lives on a scale of 1 – 5, with 5 being the best**

Type of treatment received	Before attending Al-Anon	After	Change
Marriage	3.40	3.98	0.58
Religious/spiritual	3.94	4.51	0.57
Family	3.68	4.24	0.56
Mental Health	4.08	4.52	0.44
Medical	3.85	4.27	0.42
Substance abuse	4.05	4.41	0.36

- **Members report treatment, counseling, or therapy affect their lives more positively, after attending Al-Anon.**

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Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.

23

Q28a: Please indicate the kind of treatment counseling, or therapy, you received BEFORE attending Al-Anon Family Groups meetings and rate how receiving this treatment, counseling, or therapy affected your life.

Base: Respondents who receive treatment, counseling or therapy BEFORE attending Al-Anon (n=5,531)

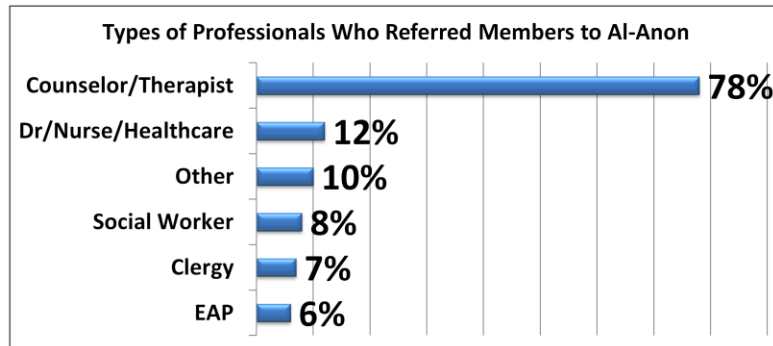
Q29a: Please indicate the kind of treatment counseling, or therapy, you received AFTER attending Al-Anon Family Groups meetings and rate how receiving this treatment, counseling, or therapy affected your life.

Base: Respondents who receive treatment, counseling or therapy AFTER attending Al-Anon (n=4,593)

## Professionals' involvement in recommending Al-Anon



- **46%** of respondents were referred to Al-Anon by a professional.
  - Of them, **64%** attended Al-Anon because of the professional recommendation.



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Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.

24

Q30: Did a professional ever recommend that you attend an Al-Anon Family Group meeting?

Base: All respondents (n=8,517)

Q30a: What type of professional recommended you to Al-Anon?

Q30b: Did you attend Al-Anon because of the professional recommendation?

Base (Q30a,b): Respondents who received a professional recommendation (n=3,926)

## Spiritual inclination



**76% of respondents said they had a personal spiritual inclination before attending Al-Anon.**

- **Of them, 95% reported their quality of spiritual life has improved, since attending Al-Anon.**
- **92% of those who did not have a spiritual inclination before attending Al-Anon, said they have developed a sense of spirituality.**

Q33: Did you have any personal spiritual inclination before attending Al-Anon?

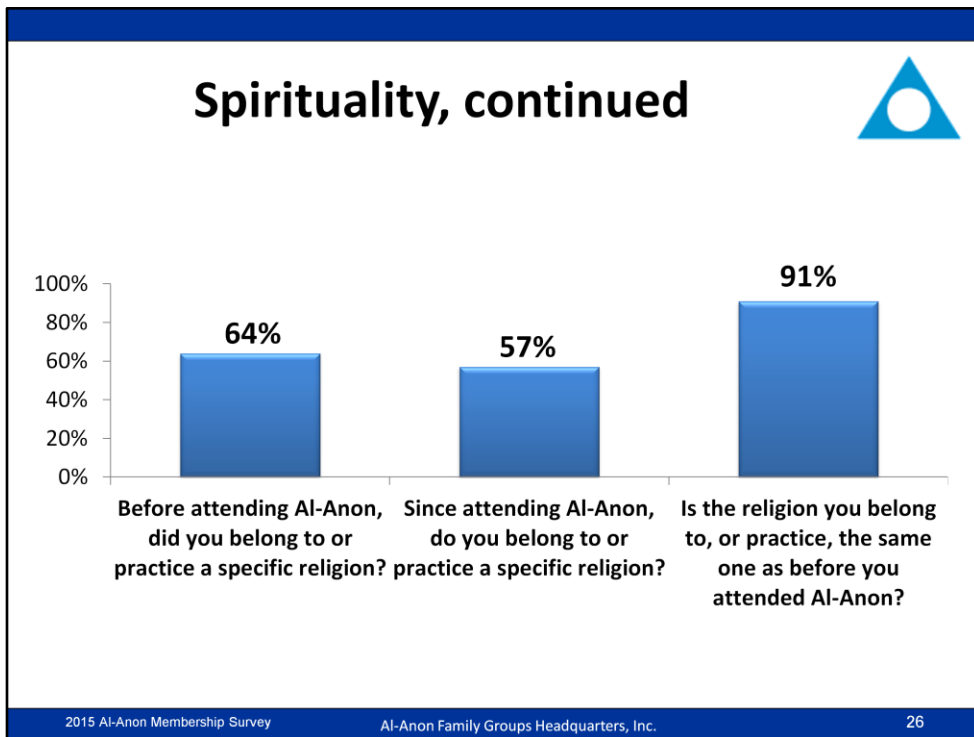
Base: All respondents (n=8,517)

Q33a: Has your quality of spiritual life improved since attending Al-Anon?

Base: Those who had any personal spiritual inclination before attending Al-Anon (n=6,451)

Q33b: Have you developed a sense of spirituality since attending Al-Anon?

Base: Those who did not have a spiritual inclination before attending Al-Anon (n=2,066)



Q33c: Before attending Al-Anon, did you belong to or practice a specific religion?

Q33d: Since attending Al-Anon, do you belong to or practice a specific religion?

Base (Q33c,d): Those who did not have a spiritual inclination before attending Al-Anon (n=8,517)

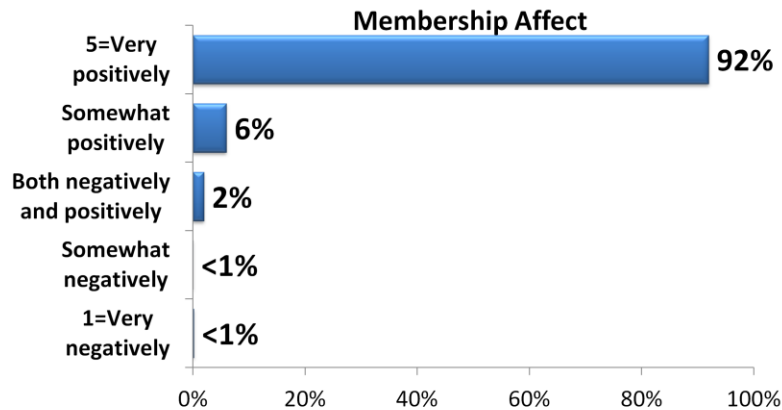
Q33e: Is the religion you belong to, or practice, the same one as before you attended Al-Anon?

Base: Those who practiced a specific religion both before and after attending Al-Anon (n=4,342)

## Al-Anon impact



**92%** of members' lives have been **very positively** affected from being a member.



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27

Q31: How has being a member of Al-Anon Family Groups affected your life?  
Base: All respondents (n=8,517)

## Summary of findings



- **Members' self-assessment of physical/mental health problems improve after Al-Anon.**
- **The professional referral has significant influence for many new members to try their first Al-Anon meeting.**
- **Members rate the effectiveness of treatment, counseling, or therapy better after attending Al-Anon.**
- **The majority of members who joined due to someone else's drug use, later discover someone else's alcoholism is also a factor.**



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**Find a local meeting: 1-888-4AL-ANON**