

Al-Anon guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

Suggested Programs for Meetings

G-13

Al-Anon groups are the heart of the Al-Anon program — great meetings ensure healthy groups! Varying the meeting topics and planning specific programs keeps the group healthy, alive and interesting. Preparing for a meeting, whether it is telling your own story or researching the vast treasure of Al-Anon literature and materials, stimulates growth and self confidence. There are as many possibilities for topics and types of meetings as there are groups and individual members. The following is by no means an exhaustive list!

Types of Meetings

- **Step Study** - It is recommended that one of Al-Anon's Twelve Steps be covered in at least one meeting per month. The chairperson or leader reads the Step and provides an explanation followed by discussion.
- **Traditions Study** - The group studies one or more of the Al-Anon or Alateen Traditions, keeping in mind their value in maintaining the unity and growth of worldwide Al-Anon as well as of the group itself. Applying them to family relationships may offer new insight.
- **Concepts & Warranties Study** - A better understanding of Al-Anon as a worldwide fellowship can be obtained by a study of the Twelve Concepts of Service and the General Warranties as outlined in Concept Twelve. Discussion of applying them to your personal life may also be stimulating.
- **Slogans Study** - One or more of the slogans and their value in daily living may serve as the basis of discussion. The Chairperson chooses a slogan and asks members to explain how they apply it in their lives. Another variation is to have a members select a slogan and explain how the slogan could be used to solve a specific problem.
- **Personal Stories** - One or more members are asked in advance to speak at the meeting and tell how the Al-Anon program helped them find a new way of life.
- **Topic Discussion** - The chairperson or leader presents a topic to help members share the principles of the program and discuss the subject as it applies to them.
- **Panel Discussion** - Members are invited to write questions, anonymously or not, which are then answered by two or three members selected by the chairperson. Another variation is to have the questions answered by the group with the chairperson limiting each person to one or two minutes so as to allow as many members as possible to speak.
- **Exchange Meeting** - An individual or team of speakers from another Al-Anon/Alateen group may exchange speakers with your group.
- **Open Meeting** - The function and usefulness of Al-Anon/Alateen can be explained to a wider audience if an open meeting is planned at which members, friends, A.A. members, students, and professionals are welcome. A meeting held to celebrate a special occasion is usually open. (See guideline *The Open Al-Anon Meeting* [G-27])
- **Outside Speakers Meeting** - An occasional talk by an A.A. member or a meeting comprised of a husband, wife, and child team (Al-Anon, Alateen, and A.A.) often presents insights into the disease of alcoholism. Members of the clergy, doctors, social workers or other professionals in the field of alcoholism are another option. Care should be taken to select speakers familiar with the Al-Anon and Alateen program in order to avoid diverting the focus from our own recovery to that of the alcoholic or from the Al-Anon program to that of treatment philosophy. (See the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* [P24/27], "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies" section on "Outside Speakers.")
- **Beginners' Meeting** - An introductory meeting may be held 30 to 45 minutes before the regular meeting to acquaint newcomers with the Al-Anon program. It also gives newcomers a chance to share specific concerns so that the regular meeting can be focused on a topic for growth and recovery. (See *Beginners' Meeting* guideline [G-2])
- **Group Inventory Meeting** - This type of meeting can be based on the *Taking a Group Inventory* guideline (G-8a & b), available on the Members' Web site, www.al-anon.alateen.org/members.

Resources for Meetings

- Al-Anon/Alateen Conference Approved Literature (CAL) provides an unlimited supply of topics. Each book, pamphlet, and leaflet offers options for a variety of subjects and situations. For a complete listing of Al-Anon/Alateen Conference Approved Literature see the catalog S-15 order form S-16, or visit the Al-Anon/Alateen Web site, www.al-anon.alateen.org.
- *The Forum*, Al-Anon's monthly magazine, is recommended to be used at meetings. Sample articles are available on the Public Outreach Web site, www.al-anon.alateen.org.
- The *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27), guidelines, and other service materials also provide excellent resources for meetings. The *Service Manual* and the guidelines are posted on the Al-Anon/Alateen Members' Web Site, www.al-anon.alateen.org/members.

Possible Topics

For an endless variety of specific topics conducive to good meetings, look in the index found in each Al-Anon and Alateen book. Listed below are sample topics that can be found in CAL and other service materials.

- Slogans
- Twelve Steps
- Twelve Traditions
- Concepts of Service
- "The Three Obstacles to Success" (P-4 and "Groups at Work" section of the *Service Manual*)
- Sponsorship
- Anonymity and the Twelfth Step
- Acceptance
- Principles above personalities
- Serenity
- Humility
- Gratitude
- Attitudes
- Making amends
- Higher Power: God as I understand Him
- Spirituality
- Control
- Forgiveness
- Hope
- Humor
- Serenity Prayer
- Self-esteem
- Self-pity
- Enabling
- Detachment
- Love
- The Benefits of Service in Al-Anon/Alateen
- 3 Cs (I didn't cause it; I can't control it; I can't cure it)