

AL-ANON guidelines

The Shared Experience Of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

The Open Al-Anon Meeting

G-27

Many groups hold special open meetings for occasions such as their group anniversary. Some groups that generally are considered "closed," hold periodic meetings open to the public. In some cases, several groups get together and hold an open meeting for public outreach.

Note: For additional help, refer to Al-Anon's Guidelines for Members Interested in Speaking (G-1) and A Meeting on Wheels (G-22). They offers suggestions for speaking before a non-Al-Anon audience.

WHY HOLD AN OPEN MEETING?

A meeting open to the public can do a great deal to introduce Al-Anon to the professional community by:

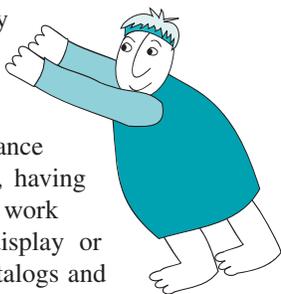
- Encouraging professionals to make referrals to Al-Anon.
- Offering an opportunity to publicly thank friends of Al-Anon for making referrals and/or making their facilities available for Al-Anon meetings.
- Giving potential members an opportunity to learn about Al-Anon.
- Permitting members to invite individuals interested in Al-Anon but who are unable to attend closed meetings.



PLANNING THE PROGRAM

Here's What Professionals Say They Need To Know

- How to obtain local meeting schedules
- How to contact Al-Anon locally
- What happens at an Al-Anon or Alateen meeting
- The essential elements of personal recovery: regular attendance at meetings, reading literature, having or being a sponsor, and service work
- Literature and materials to display or give to their clients. (Have catalogs and order forms available).



Here's What Helps The General Public

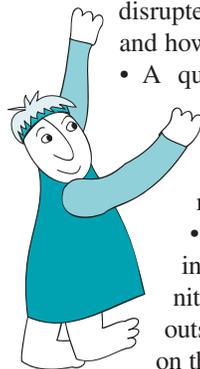
- An explanation of Al-Anon's purpose
- The benefits of Al-Anon or Alateen
- Who can be a member

- The importance of attending meetings
- What happens at meetings
- Anonymity and confidentiality at meetings
- How members recover
- How to obtain local meeting information
- That contributions are voluntary



A Suggested Format

- One or two members briefly share their personal stories - how *their lives* were disrupted by someone else's drinking problem and how they found help in Al-Anon.
 - A question and answer period - Potential members can learn *how they* were affected by someone else's drinking. The professional can learn *how* and *when* to make referrals to Al-Anon.
 - A professional (doctor, clergy) describing how he/she used Al-Anon as a community resource. (It is important to stress to an outside speaker that the focus in Al-Anon is on the non-alcoholic family members.)



Anonymity

At all open meetings when nonmembers are present, Tradition Eleven must be stressed. Request that those present respect the anonymity of Al-Anon members; remind the press, specifically, not to print the full names of participants, or take photographs without permission. One suggestion is as follows:

There may be some who are not familiar with our Tradition of personal anonymity at the public level.

If so, we respectfully ask that no AA, Al-Anon, or Alateen speaker or member be identified by full name or picture in published or broadcast reports of our meeting.

The assurance of anonymity is essential to our efforts to help other families of alcoholics, and our Tradition of anonymity reminds us that Al-Anon and Alateen principles come before personalities.

ANNOUNCING THE MEETING

- An announcement can be made in a newspaper, on radio, TV or World Wide Web
- When possible, identify the topic of the meeting.
- Invitations or mailings such as the one shown can be sent to individual professional, agencies and organizations.



This invitation can be sent to:

- Al-Anon groups in your district
- Al-Anon information services
- AA groups in your area
- Mental health agencies
- Industrial firms
- Employee assistance professionals
- The media (TV, radio, press)
- Schools
- Judges
- Clergy
- Doctors
- Hospitals
- Institutions

You can mail these invitations three to four weeks in advance. Follow up notices (use the same invitation, mark it "Just a Reminder") are helpful and should be sent one week prior to the event.

More Ideas

- Set up a sample display table with a copy of Al-Anon books, booklets and pamphlets along with a catalog and order form
- Create a take one table
- Place a piece of literature on each person's chair
- Stamp or label the literature with your group meeting information
- Provide the name and phone number of your local Al-Anon information or answering service phone number
- Stamp or place a label on the literature with meeting information

 **"AL-ANON - A COMMUNITY RESOURCE
FOR FAMILY RECOVERY FROM ALCOHOLISM"**
The Serenity Al-Anon Family Groups (or District 15 Al-Anon Family Groups)
invite you to
AN OPEN AL-ANON MEETING

DATE:

TIME:

LOCATION:

Paula T. of Al-Anon will chair the meeting. Guest speakers: Frank Stone,
Reverend Anderson, Jane D., Al-Anon, John G., Alateen
For further information, contact: (Name) (Phone number)

Tip

If your meeting is generally "closed," advise members in advance of the "open" meeting; they can then choose to observe only or attend another meeting.



In keeping with the Al-Anon philosophy of "attraction vs. promotion," an open Al-Anon meeting is an excellent way to "attract" families and friends of alcoholics to our fellowship.