

Fact Sheet for Professionals

Information About Al-Anon & Alateen



AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS
hope for families & friends of alcoholics

Al-Anon Family Groups is a community resource providing support to anyone affected by a relative or friend's drinking. There are over 24,000 Al-Anon and 2,300 Alateen groups meeting in 115 countries.

Al-Anon:

- Has only one requirement for membership—each member has been affected by someone else's drinking.
- Is a fellowship of relatives and friends of alcoholics who meet anonymously to share their experience, strength, and hope in order to solve their common problems; adult children of alcoholics, parents, partners, spouses, co-workers, etc. can all find help in Al-Anon.
- Is a separate fellowship from Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). Al-Anon is based on the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions adapted from AA.
- Is nonprofessional, self-supporting, spiritually based, apolitical, welcomes all cultures, and is available almost everywhere.

Alateen:

- Is part of the Al-Anon fellowship designed for the younger relatives and friends of alcoholics through the teen years.
- Members conduct their own meetings with the guidance of an Al-Anon member Sponsor.
- Follows the same Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and principles as Al-Anon.

Al-Anon and Alateen Members Are Helped when They:

- Attend meetings on a regular basis.
- Make telephone contact with other members.
- Read Al-Anon/Alateen literature.
- Have a personal sponsor.
- Apply the Twelve Steps of recovery to their lives.
- Become involved in Al-Anon service work.

People Are Referred to Al-Anon/ Alateen Group Meetings:

- To learn the facts about alcoholism as an illness and how it has impacted their lives physically and emotionally.
- To benefit from contact with others who have similar problems.
- To improve their own attitudes and behaviors through the study and practice of Al-Anon's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

A Formal Referral Is Not Necessary

You or your client can call for meeting information:

- The Al-Anon information service listed in your telephone directory, or on our Web site, www.al-anon.alateen.org
- Toll-free for meeting information between 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, ET.
**888-4AL-ANON U.S.A. or Canada
(888-425-2666)**

The 2003 Al-Anon/Alateen Membership Survey revealed that 40% of our members were referred to Al-Anon by professionals. Many Al-Anon members continue to seek professional assistance in addition to regular attendance at meetings. The role between Al-Anon and the professional community has always been one of inter-change, cooperation, and support.

Al-Anon/Alateen Meetings Include:

- OPEN meetings that may be attended by anyone interested in learning about the Al-Anon or Alateen program.
- CLOSED meetings that are for anyone whose life is or has been affected by a problem drinker.
- Limited access groups which meet in locations where the general membership may not be able to attend (i.e. industrial, military, or school settings).
- Introductory meetings at facilities to introduce Al-Anon/Alateen to newcomers.

Al-Anon/Alateen Groups Do Not:

- Give advice.
- Indulge in gossip or criticism.
- Discuss members' religious beliefs, or lack of them.
- Endorse or oppose any cause, therapy, or treatment.
- Provide support for problems other than the impact of alcoholism upon the family members.

Al-Anon/Alateen Is Self-Supporting:

- Through the voluntary contributions of members; there are no dues or fees for membership. Al-Anon does not accept any outside funds, grants, or donations.

Al-Anon/Alateen Is a Program Based upon Anonymity:

- The identity of all Al-Anon and Alateen members, as well as members of Alcoholics Anonymous, is protected.
- Confidentiality is allowed to develop from a sense of trust and honesty.
- The focus is on spiritual principles, not personalities, which leads to a fellowship of equals.

Al-Anon/Alateen Cooperates with Professionals by Providing:

- Speakers and literature for conferences, workshops, and meetings.
- The newsletter *Al-Anon Speaks Out* in PDF format on our Web site.
- Open meetings.
- Meetings at schools, institutions, and other facilities.
- Local meeting schedules.
- A variety of literature.
- A **FREE** packet of literature—
Call U.S., 888-4AL-ANON (888-425-2666)
or e-mail wso@al-anon.org

- Visit the AFG, Inc. World Wide Web site <www.al-anon.alateen.org> or use our fax number to order literature, (757) 563-1655. Visa, MasterCard, Discover, and American Express accepted.

Al-Anon/Alateen Groups Are Started by:

- Al-Anon and Alateen members.*
A minister, doctor, social worker, or AA member initiates the formation of an Al-Anon/Alateen group. However, after the group has started members operate the group. Professional or AA participation should be limited to open meetings.

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 our affairs.

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.
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.



©Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.
1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617
Phone: (757) 563-1600 Fax: (757) 563-1655
e-mail: wso@al-anon.org