

Chapel Hill Saturday Early Bird AFG - Meeting Format

[at ~8:15am... Sign on to our Zoom meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/979498248> or Meeting ID: 979 498 248 Password:
Area42

or online details: <https://ncbermudaafg.org/newsite/uncategorized/early-bird-afg/>

As folks join, greet them warmly, and ask for volunteers for the readings. You can email readers this document (which includes our *Newcomers Welcome*), or suggest they turn to page 11 of our Service Manual: <https://tinyurl.com/s8rzqhz> or

<https://Al-Anon.org/for-members/members-resources/manuals-and-guidelines/service-manual/>]

Readings may be found below:

Welcome, Preamble to the Steps, 12 Steps, Traditions, Closing, Newcomer Welcome

[at 8:30am, begin the meeting...]

“Before we start, please **mute** your audio. After sharing, please be considerate of others and remember to mute again!

Welcome to the Saturday Early Bird Al-Anon Family Group; my name is _____.

Let's open with a **moment of silence**, followed by the Serenity Prayer. God, grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
Courage to change the things I can, and
Wisdom to know the difference.

read the Suggested Welcome

Ask a volunteer to read:

- ◇ **Preamble to the Twelve Steps**
- ◇ **Twelve Steps**
- ◇ **Twelve Traditions**
- ◇ **Today's Reading from a Daily Reader**

Introductions:

Thanks everyone. Let's all now please wave to each other! If you'd like to get in touch after the meeting, we have an electronic phone list we can send you. The phone list includes folks who welcome your calls about working the Al-Anon program. If you'd like to receive the list, or be added to it, please send an email to: EarlyBirdAFG@gmail.com. If you're willing to answer calls, you may also wish to add your phone to your Zoom profile name here.

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Newcomer's Welcome:

Are there any newcomers here today, those who have attended six Al-Anon meetings or fewer? Is there anyone here for the first time at this meeting?

- *If so, ask a volunteer to read Newcomer's Welcome and share a brief story.*

Announcements:

Because "participation is the key to harmony," we encourage you to lead a meeting if have been here for at least 6 months and haven't led in the past two months. Would someone volunteer to lead next week?

[leader: please wait patiently through any silence here until someone volunteers, giving the more shy folks a chance to step up.]

Thanks! If you need this meeting format script, please email

EarlyBirdAFG@gmail.com Is there any Al-Anon Business or other Announcements for the good of Al-Anon?

Statement on Sharing:

In keeping with Traditions 4 and 6, we request that only Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature be used during the meeting and that members refrain from the discussion of religion, politics, treatment centers, self-help programs, counseling, or other 12-step programs. While we welcome members of other 12-step programs, please only identify ourselves as Al-Anon members in this meeting.

To get the most out of our sharing and to promote principles above personalities, we avoid cross-talk. Crosstalk danger areas we have come up with include: using the words "you" or "should"; giving advice; interrupting; and mentioning an individual by name, instead of addressing the group as a whole. Ways we avoid cross-talk danger areas are: using the word "I"; keeping the focus on ourselves, and speaking from our own experience, strength and hope on how we're applying the program in our own life today.

In keeping with the first Tradition, we believe personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity. We ask that all members be considerate in regard to the length of their sharing and avoid sharing more than once, so that all may have the opportunity to participate.

Introduce Today's Topic...

[wrap it up at about 9:25am...]

- We have no dues or fees, but we do pass a “virtual basket” to cover group expenses, including purchase of literature, support of our trusted servants, and Al-Anon service arms. In accordance with our Seventh Tradition we want to be self-supporting through our own voluntary contributions. Newcomers, please do not contribute; we ask you to be our guest.

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During this time of “virtual meetings,” we are accepting donations via PayPal. Please send what you can to our Treasurer, Stephanie J. at StepGael@gmail.com. You can also snail mail a check if you send her an email asking for her address.

Alternately, we recommend you put an envelope by your screen, and for each meeting, put in your dollar or two. When Binkley re-opens and we come back together, you can put your envelope in the basket in person!

Lastly, after this meeting, you're welcome to stay connected for a few minutes to

chat. **Suggested Closing**

Serenity Prayer

[Visiting After the Meeting...]

Once the meeting has officially ended, most folks will sign off. Some will stay on to “visit.”

After a minute or two, it'd be nice if you ask: **are there any newcomers still on?** If so, ask if they have any questions.

Also remind them they can email EarlyBirdAFG@gmail.com and get links to meeting info, electronic literature, and our e-Phone List.

Thanks!

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Suggested Welcome

We welcome you to the Saturday Early Bird 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 will show you how to 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.

Our meetings last for approximately one hour. During this hour we come together for mutual help. We come to learn how to live the Al-Anon program. The group conscience requests that all present refrain from gossip, dominance, the discussion of religion, treatment centers, self-help groups, counseling, and the use or mention of materials other than our Al Anon conference approved literature.

Please remember that in Al-Anon we keep the focus on ourselves, and not on the alcoholic. We thank you for your cooperation in our group effort to stick to Al-Anon principles.

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Preamble To The Twelve Steps

The Al-Anon Family Groups are a fellowship of relatives and friends of alcoholics who share their experience, strength, and hope in order to solve their common problems. We believe alcoholism is a family illness and that changed attitudes can aid recovery.

Al-Anon is not allied with any sect, denomination, political entity, organization, or institution; does not engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any cause. There are no dues for membership. Al-Anon is self-supporting through its own voluntary contributions.

Al-Anon has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of AA, by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics, and by giving understanding and encouragement to the alcoholic.

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The Twelve Steps

Because of their proven power and worth, AA's Twelve Suggested Steps have been adopted, almost word for word, by Al-Anon. They represent a way of life appealing to all people of good will, of any religious faith, or none.

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.

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The Twelve Traditions

The Traditions that follow bind us together in unity. They guide the groups in their relations with other groups, with A.A., and the outside world. They recommend group attitudes toward leadership, membership, money, property, public relations, and anonymity. The Traditions evolved from the experience of A.A. groups in trying to solve their problems of living and working together. Al-Anon adopted these group guidelines and over the years has found them sound and wise. Although they are only suggestions, Al-Anon's unity and perhaps even its survival are dependent on adherence to these principles.

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 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 ought to 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 opinions 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.

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12. Suggested Closing

In closing, we 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 you 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.

Asking someone to be our sponsor is part of our own personal recovery in Al-Anon. If you have questions about sponsorship, see the pamphlet, talk with someone after the meeting or call someone from our phone list who has an asterisk by their name. Would all who are willing to discuss sponsorship, please wave your hands?

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, please unmute your audio, and join me in the Serenity Prayer?

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Newcomer Welcome

If newcomer(s) are present, please share the following...

We are honored that you have chosen to attend our meeting as a first exposure to Al-Anon. We sincerely hope that you will begin to find here the help that you are seeking.

In Al-Anon, we soon learned the 3 C's. We did not Cause the alcoholic to drink. We cannot Control the drinking and we cannot Cure the alcoholic. We are here today for ourselves. We are responsible for dealing with our own pain. This is our program - our recovery from the effects of the disease of alcoholism.

We have found love, understanding and a lot of hope in the Al-Anon Family Groups. The people in this room today are experiencing in varying degrees the hurt, the anger, the anxiety that you may be experiencing. We focus on taking care of ourselves and our recovery by attending meetings, working the twelve steps, talking with others, reading Al-Anon conference approved literature and using Al-Anon slogans. One especially important slogan to keep in mind today is "Keep Coming Back".

We encourage you to attend at least six different meetings before deciding if Al-Anon is for you.

There is a Beginner's Meeting especially for newcomers held every Saturday morning at 10am. It's a rotating series of six meetings – you may join at any time. The Zoom URL is <https://tinyurl.com/SatBeginners>

A list of area Zoom meetings, electronic literature, and the group's phone list are available for the asking. Folks listed on the phone list welcome calls about Al-Anon and would be glad to chat with you

If you'd like to get a list, please email EarlyBirdAFG@gmail.com and we'll send you the links.

As a sign of our welcome, when the virtual basket is passed, as a newcomer you are asked not to contribute.

You're welcome to stay on after the meeting concludes to ask questions and get answers specific to your situation.

Finally, what you say or hear here and who you see here stays in this room. We strive to protect your anonymity at all times.

...As the reader of this Welcome, please briefly share your experience in Al-Anon for the Newcomer's benefit...

The Twelve Concepts Of Service

Carrying the message, as suggested in the Twelfth Step, is Service, Al-Anon's third legacy. Service, a vital purpose of Al-Anon, is action. Members strive to do as well as to be.

Anything done to help a relative or friend of an alcoholic is service: a telephone call to a despairing member or sponsoring a newcomer, telling one's story at meetings, forming groups, arranging for public outreach, distributing literature, and financially supporting groups, local services, and the World Service Office.

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 ensure 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.

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General Warranties of the Conference

In all proceedings the World Service Conference of Al-Anon shall observe the spirit of the Traditions:

1. that only sufficient operating funds, including an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle;
2. that no Conference member shall be placed in unqualified authority over other members;
3. that all decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, by unanimity;
4. that no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy;
5. that though the Conference serves Al-Anon it shall never perform any act of government; and that like the fellowship of Al-Anon Family Groups which it serves, it shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

Our Three Legacies

SERVICE	UNITY	RECOVERY
Through the Concepts	Through the Traditions	Through the Steps

The threefold guides of Al-Anon point the way to a normal, useful life for the individual. They also are a framework within which the groups can carry on their affairs in harmony.

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