

Opening and Welcome

Good Evening, my name is _____.

Would everyone please join me in a moment of silence to use as you wish?

We welcome you to the Boise Secular 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 aim to welcome people of all faiths or no faith. Secular Al-Anon meetings have removed the presumption of monotheism from their readings and practices: no prayer and no religious references in the readings. This is an open meeting: we welcome visitors seeking information about Al-Anon, as well as newcomers and members of Al-Anon. Typically, someone will present a topic. Everyone is welcome to speak; please take no more than five minutes and refrain from taking another turn until everyone has had a chance to speak. We ask that you refrain from crosstalk, dominance, and gossip. You may pass if you wish, no one is required to speak. There are no 'musts' in Al-Anon.

We urge you to try our program. It has helped many of us 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 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 other aids. 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.

If anyone is looking for a sponsor, or a temporary sponsor, please see the people raising their hands. For anyone interested in literature, please see _____, books are for sale, and pamphlets are free. Before we start, does anyone have any announcements?

We have no dues or fees; according to the seventh tradition, 'Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions' we do this through our own voluntary contributions by passing the basket to cover group expenses, including rent and the purchase of literature (pass the basket). If you are new to Al-Anon or to our group, please let the basket pass and be our guest this evening.

I've asked _____ to read the steps.

I've asked _____ to read the traditions while the basket passes.

Do we have any newcomers that are new to this meeting or Al-Anon as a whole? (Welcome)

If there are newcomers:

For the benefit of the newcomer(s), would anyone like to share what life was like before and what it's like now?

Let's go around the room and introduce ourselves.

Does anyone have a topic? (If none is forthcoming, suggest someone read something from literature, or suggest discussing one of the steps).

*Five minutes before the end of the meeting (**if there were new members**): Would any of the newcomers like to share? It's okay to pass.

Closing

In closing, I would like to say that the opinions expressed here were strictly those of the person who gave them. Take what you like 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.

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, join me in closing with the Al-Anon Declaration:

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, let the hand of Al-Anon always be there, and—
Let It Begin with Me.

Keep coming back, it works if you work it AND YOU'RE WORTH IT.