

## The Twelve Steps

The Steps are studied in-depth at Al-Anon meetings and daily practice of them is recommended to all members. Whether or not the problem drinker is a member of AA, these Steps can be a rewarding way of life for the alcoholic's family.

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.

## Serenity Prayer

Reflecting on each thought in the Serenity Prayer can help put situations into a clearer perspective.

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

Al-Anon may be listed in your  
telephone directory.

For information and catalog of literature write to  
World Service Office for Al-Anon and Alateen:

**Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.**  
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<http://www.al-anon.alateen.org>  
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Al-Anon/Alateen is supported by members' voluntary contributions and from the sale of our Conference Approved Literature.

This pamphlet is also available in: Estonian, French, Hebrew, Icelandic, Italian, Korean, Polish, Russian and Spanish.

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Approved by  
World Service Conference  
Al-Anon Family Groups

# Purpose & Suggestions

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



## Al-Anon Family Groups

Al-Anon Family Groups, Al-Anon and Alateen, are a fellowship of men, women and children whose lives have been affected by the compulsive drinking of a family member or friend.

Whether or not the alcoholic has found sobriety, the family and friends can do a great deal to help themselves as well as the alcoholic.

## Purpose

Each Al-Anon Family Group has one purpose: to help families and friends of alcoholics. This is achieved by:

- Offering comfort, hope and friendship to the families and friends of compulsive drinkers.
- Providing the opportunity to learn to grow spiritually through living by the Twelve Steps adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous (AA).
- Sharing experience in coping with the disease of alcoholism and learning how the Al-Anon program helps us to give understanding and encouragement to the alcoholic.

Membership in an Al-Anon group and regular attendance at meetings has shown us new ways to deal with our problem. We have found friends who understand. We have become part of a constructive program to achieve personal fulfillment and a new way of life.

In Al-Anon we seek to improve ourselves. We learn that our growth and serenity depend on not criticizing or condemning the alcoholic or discussing the alcoholic's shortcomings with others.

Strict avoidance of gossip preserves group unity and protects the anonymity of our members and those of AA.

Our program is spiritual, but not religious.

## Suggestion for Newcomers

Learn to accept the fact that alcoholics suffer from an illness they cannot control. Try to avoid nagging, scolding and arguing. It doesn't help; it hurts - both you and the alcoholic.

Involve yourself in Al-Anon work; helping others helps you, too.

Search out your own shortcomings and try to correct them. Later you will find that you can detach your mind from your troubles, a sign of real progress.

Meditate daily on Al-Anon's simple slogans:

- First Things First
- Live and Let Live
- Easy Does It
- Let Go and Let God

Learn more about alcoholism by reading Al-Anon literature available at our meetings. Pamphlets are provided, while books can be purchased or found in libraries.

Avoid complaining about the alcoholic's faults and gossiping about Al-Anon and AA members. It hinders your personal progress.

## If the Alcoholic is in AA

Be willing to cooperate with the alcoholic's efforts to get and maintain sobriety in AA, but do not interfere or advise. Alcoholics have a better chance of success when left free to work out their own problems.

Overcoming the obsession to drink requires an equally strong drive toward involvement in AA. Graciously accept an alcoholic's need to spend much time at meetings and in doing Twelfth Step work (helping others).

When the alcoholic is busy with AA, you can cure the lonely, left-out feeling by becoming active in Al-Anon. There you will find others who have used the Al-Anon program to adjust to the many changes sobriety brings.

Have patience - and then more patience. Sometimes it's harder to bear with daily petty irritations than it is to deal with big problems.

Don't be discouraged if progress is slow. Some alcoholics take longer to be restored to health than others.

Don't expect immediate personal readjustment. The distorted relationships which resulted from drinking will still leave many personal problems to be ironed out. Patience and understanding will help.

Have faith. Don't let yourself doubt, even during slips. The AA fellowship has a long history of success with cases that seemed hopeless.

## You can start an Al-Anon group

If there is no Al-Anon group near you, you can start one. Any two or three relatives or friends or alcoholics, who need and want Al-Anon help, are sufficient to start an Al-Anon group, provided that as a group, they have no other affiliation outside of Al-Anon. The Al-Anon World Service Office will provide material to help plan the meetings, and a registration form that should be completed and promptly returned to the WSO. This will make it possible for the group to benefit from the many services provided by the WSO.

Al-Anon meetings usually are opened with a moment of silence and closed with a prayer. They are led by a chairperson who calls on members who tell how Al-Anon helps them.

Maximum benefits come from emphasis on spiritual growth and the acquiring of loving attitudes, rather than dwelling on the alcoholic's faults.

Most groups pass a basket for contributions to cover local expenses. Four times a year the individual membership is asked to contribute to the support of Al-Anon's World Services.

## Al-Anon books and ISBN listings:

*The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage*  
0-910034-18-4

*One Day at a Time in Al-Anon*  
0-910034-21-4  
0-910034-63-X Large Print

*...In All Our Affairs: Making Crises Work for You*  
0-910034-73-7

*Courage to Change: One Day at a Time in Al-Anon II*  
0-910034-79-6  
0-910034-84-2 Large Print

*From Survival to Recovery*  
*Growing Up in an Alcoholic Home*  
0-910034-97-4

*How Al-Anon Works for Families & Friends of Alcoholics*  
0-910034-26-5

*Paths to Recovery - Al-Anon's Steps, Traditions and Concepts*  
0-910034-31-1