



# AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS

Northern New South Wales Area

## Newcomer's Welcome Letter

Hello and welcome to Al-Anon Family Groups in the Northern NSW Area.

Our groups are here to support you and help you, as all of us recover together from the family disease of alcoholism.

This support and help comes in the way of group members sharing their experience, strength and hope with you. Through these sharings, you will learn about the disease of alcoholism and about Al-Anon's principles and strategies that help us all.

Here are a few things to keep in mind at your first meetings:

- ▲ Al-Anon is a mutual support group. Everyone at the meeting has experienced a problem with someone else's drinking. As such, everyone is equal no matter how many meetings have been attended. This means that no one person is in a position to give advice or direction. Keep coming until you find the answers that are right for you.
- ▲ Al-Anon is a spiritual program. Although there is reference to God, this is a god of your own understanding, and does not denote a religious god. It is a Higher Power that is a source of support and guidance and is one of your choosing; it can be the group or the members, whatever feels comfortable for you.
- ▲ Every meeting is different. Whilst Al-Anon has guidelines for meetings, each meeting is autonomous and can choose how its meeting is run, so you may find each meeting is a little different from the next. Feel free to attend different meetings to hear different members' experiences. It is suggested that you attend a minimum of six meetings before you decide whether Al-Anon is right for you.
- ▲ During the meeting you may be asked if you would like to share (i.e. speak about your experience). If you would rather just listen, you can say. "no thanks" or "pass" or "I'll just listen thanks". We suggest that while you are at a meeting, try to listen to the similarities rather than differences.
- ▲ Our Groups will focus on Al-Anon literature and personal sharings during the meeting. There is no discussion on religion, politics or any outside issues in the meetings. This is to help members focus solely on recovering from the effects of someone else's drinking.
- ▲ Al-Anon's Traditions guard everyone's anonymity, including your own and the alcoholic's. Confidentiality is respected whether members are face-to-face or online. For our groups, this means that members will respect the confidentiality of what you say never revealing to anyone what is said in an Al-Anon meeting.
- ▲ The meeting will likely begin with a reading of the Twelve Steps and/or Traditions of Al-Anon. It will take some time to fully understand how these can be a helpful tool in recovering from the effects of someone's drinking.
- ▲ Al-Anon gives you the opportunity to grow at your own pace and to find your own answers.
- ▲ If you would like phone numbers of any members you hear, please ask them or the chairperson following the meeting. It helps us all to stay in regular contact.

## Meetings

To find an Australian-based Al-Anon meeting follow one of the links below. There are also many other electronic meetings worldwide:

- △ [On-line meetings](http://www.al-anon.org.au/meetings/?type=online) [www.al-anon.org.au/meetings/?type=online](http://www.al-anon.org.au/meetings/?type=online)
- △ [Meetings by location](http://www.al-anon.org.au/meetings) [www.al-anon.org.au/meetings](http://www.al-anon.org.au/meetings)
- △ [Worldwide on-line meetings](http://www.al-anon.org.au/al-anon-meetings/electronic-meetings) [www.al-anon.org.au/al-anon-meetings/electronic-meetings](http://www.al-anon.org.au/al-anon-meetings/electronic-meetings)

## Al-Anon's Legacies

Al-Anon's program of recovery is based on the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Steps are the foundation for personal recovery in Al-Anon, and the Traditions help Al-Anon groups sustain their unity and fellowship. The Twelve Concepts of Service provide guidance for service in the Al-Anon fellowship.

- △ [Twelve Steps, Traditions and Concepts of Service](http://www.al-anon.org.au/member-resources/12-steps-traditions-and-concepts)  
[www.al-anon.org.au/member-resources/12-steps-traditions-and-concepts](http://www.al-anon.org.au/member-resources/12-steps-traditions-and-concepts)
- △ [Al-Anon Slogans](http://www.al-anon.org/for-members/members-resources/literature/al-anon-slogans)  
[www.al-anon.org/for-members/members-resources/literature/al-anon-slogans](http://www.al-anon.org/for-members/members-resources/literature/al-anon-slogans)

## Pamphlets and Members' Stories

Several electronic versions of our pamphlets including stories from other Al-Anon members are freely available to download online from the Australian and World Service Office websites. Links are provided below.

- △ [Are you troubled by someone's drinking?](http://www.al-anon.org/pdf/S17.pdf) [www.al-anon.org/pdf/S17.pdf](http://www.al-anon.org/pdf/S17.pdf)
- △ [Did you grow up with a problem drinker?](http://www.al-anon.org/pdf/S25.pdf) [www.al-anon.org/pdf/S25.pdf](http://www.al-anon.org/pdf/S25.pdf)
- △ [Detachment](http://www.al-anon.org/pdf/S19.pdf) [www.al-anon.org/pdf/S19.pdf](http://www.al-anon.org/pdf/S19.pdf)
- △ [Adult Children of Alcoholics](http://www.al-anon.org/pdf/S69.pdf) [www.al-anon.org/pdf/S69.pdf](http://www.al-anon.org/pdf/S69.pdf)
- △ [Austra-Link / Families Facing Alcoholism](http://www.al-anon.org.au/member-resources) [www.al-anon.org.au/member-resources](http://www.al-anon.org.au/member-resources)  
(From 'Member Resources' scroll to relevant subheading for direct links to current versions)

## Al-Anon Literature

Al-Anon literature helps members to continue their recovery between meetings and gain insight into themselves and the principles of the Al-Anon program. Our "Conference Approved Literature" (CAL) is written by and for our members.

Our full catalogue is listed on our [website](http://www.al-anon.org.au/shop/) ([www.al-anon.org.au/shop/](http://www.al-anon.org.au/shop/)) along with instructions on how to purchase our literature. Alternatively, ask a group representative or the chairperson at an Al-Anon meeting to assist.

**Remember:** *you are not alone and there is always hope.*

For more information, call the Al-Anon national helpline on 1300 AL ANON (1300 252 666) email our Northern NSW Area at [alanonnorthernnsw@bigpond.com](mailto:alanonnorthernnsw@bigpond.com) or visit our website at [www.al-anon.org.au](http://www.al-anon.org.au)