

Chairing Beginners' Meetings / Weeks 1-6

Beginners' meetings are conducted by an Al-Anon member who understands the spiritual principles expressed in the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. When chairing a beginners' meeting, members simply share the experience, strength, and hope that they found in the Al-Anon program of recovery. Patience, tolerance, and the ability to listen and explain the Al-Anon program to families and friends of alcoholics are important qualities for those who conduct beginners' meetings. It is a good idea to have two or three other Al-Anon members present to share their experience in applying Al-Anon principles in their own lives and respond to questions that may arise.

(From "Al-Anon Guidelines" for Beginners' Meeting)

Leader's Guidelines and Information:

ARRIVAL TIME TO SETUP: Arrive by 9:15 am - Hang Yellow Al-Anon and Newcomer meeting sign at entrance. BEGIN PROMPTLY AT 9:30 AND END AT 9:55 WITH AL-ANON CLOSING & PRAYER.

LEADER'S GUIDE BLUE NOTEBOOK: 1-6 weekly meeting guidelines and literature materials. (LARGE BLUE BAG STORED IN CLOSET/ NEWCOMER PACKETS STORED IN RED BAG IN CLOSET)

ROOM SET UP:

A. SET UP WHITE TABLE & 6 CHAIRS IN FAR RIGHTHAND CORNER OF ROOM. PLACE ROOM DIVIDER WITH "QUIET SIGN" DIVIDING 10:00 AM MEETING SETUP.

B. HAVE 6 "How Al-Anon Works" BLUE BOOKS ON TABLE WITH NEWCOMER PACKETS TO HAND OUT. (Have Newcomer Packets for Newcomers, Parents, Men, Adult Children of Alcoholics and Alateen.)

C. HAVE LEADER'S GUIDE BLUE NOTEBOOK AND LEADER'S COPY OF "How Al-Anon Works" AVAILABLE TO REVIEW PAGES IDENTIFIED TO BE READ FOR THE CURRENT WEEK (PINK TABS MARK ONES USED WEEKLY. LITERATURE FOR EACH WEEK FOLLOWS WEEKLY PAGES IN LEADER'S GUIDE BOOK.

AS NEWCOMERS ARRIVE (A WARM WELCOME ENCOURAGES THEIR SHARING EACH WEEK): INTRODUCE YOURSELF, ASK FOR THEIR FIRST NAME. HANDOUT "HOW AL-ANON WORKS" BLUE BOOK AND APPROPRIATE NEWCOMER PACKET WITH CONTACT LIST AND MEETING SCHEDULE. (EXPLAIN: BLUE BOOK IS USED FOR EACH BEGINNER'S MEETING THEY ATTEND.)

BEGIN EACH WEEKLY MEETING WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

"THIS IS WEEK_?_ IN A SERIES OF 6 MEETINGS INTRODUCING NEWCOMERS TO THE AL-ANON PROGRAM AND INFORMATION ABOUT THE DISEASE OF ALCOHOLISM. YOU'RE INVITED TO ATTEND ALL 6 MEETINGS. IT'S HELPFUL TO ATTEND REGULAR AL-ANON MEETINGS, TALK WITH MEMBERS BEFORE AND AFTER MEETINGS, and READ CAL AL-ANON RECOVERY LITERATURE, OCCASIONALLY ATTEND OPEN AA MEETINGS AND ALATEEN IS FOR THE CHILDREN OFALCOHOLICS (MENTION PACKET).

BEGIN EACH MEETING WITH THE SERENITY PRAYER:

"PLEASE JOIN ME IN THE SERENITY PRAYER, AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR AL-ANON PROGRAM." HAVE EVERYONE TURN TO P. 79 OF THE BLUE BOOK "How Al-Anon Works" WHERE PRAYER IS LISTED. (MANY NEWCOMERS ARE NOT FAMILIAR WITH PRAYER.)

BEGIN EACH MEETING READING "SUGGESTED AL-ANON WELCOME" ON PAGE 8 IN "How Al-Anon Works". ALL TURN TO P.8 TO FOLLOW ALONG AS IT'S READ. (MOVE TO THE LEADER'S GUIDE BLUE NOTEBOOK AND PROCEED WITH APPROPRIATE WEEK.)

REMINDER: CLOSE EACH MEETING AT 9:55. ALL TURN TO "SUGGESTED CLOSING" ON P. 396 IN "How Al-Anon Works". ALL FOLLOW ALONG. CLOSING PRAYER FROM - THE AL-ANON DECLARATION (HAVE COPY OF PRAYER ON TABLE), SERENITY PRAYER OR THE OUR FATHER. INVITE NEWCOMERS TO JOIN 10:00 AM MEETING.

