

## Al-Anon Is:

- A fellowship of relatives and friends of alcoholics who believe their lives have been affected by someone else's drinking.
- A spiritual program compatible with all religious beliefs, or none.
- Based on the Twelve Steps adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous.
- A nonprofessional fellowship where members share their experience, strength, and hope with each other to solve their common problems.
- A program that protects the anonymity of all Al-Anon, Alateen, and AA members.

## Al-Anon Is Not:

- Allied with any sect, denomination, political entity, organization, or institution.
- Involved in any outside issues—it neither endorses nor opposes any cause.
- Affiliated with AA, though the two fellowships cooperate with one another.
- A religious organization, treatment center, counseling agency, or teaching program.
- Intended for families of drug abusers or individuals with other difficulties unless there is a problem of alcoholism as well.

## Al-Anon's Twelve Steps

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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**Al-Anon may be listed in your telephone directory.**

**Compiled and Distributed By:**  
**Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.**  
**Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters (Canada) Inc.**

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# Al-Anon Is For...

**...African Americans**  
**...African Canadians**  
**...All People of Color**

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

## Al-Anon Recovery

Al-Anon is for anyone who has been affected by alcoholism. If you are concerned about someone else's drinking, the Al-Anon program can offer help.

Al-Anon began over 50 years ago as “family groups,” attended by the families of alcoholics who found sobriety in Alcoholics Anonymous. Today, Al-Anon/Alateen members are finding serenity and help in our program, whether the alcoholic is still drinking or not. Recovery in Al-Anon is based on the Twelve Steps (adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous).

**Step One: We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.**

From the beginning, we learn we cannot control another person's drinking. We will continue to live in frustration until we stop trying to control. Once we learn to leave the problem alone, the loving concern and help of the other members will provide strong support to help us understand what the Al-Anon program can do for us.

## It's a Spiritual Program

**Step Two: Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.**

An important principle of Al-Anon recovery is belief in a “Higher Power.” Al-Anon does not endorse any particular religion or religious belief (or lack of religion), but members are encouraged to use their faith in a Higher Power as a tool of recovery. “Insanity” is a strong word, but most agree that living with alcoholism can take us there, and our faith in a Power greater than ourselves can and does “restore us to sanity.”

**Step Three: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.**

Al-Anon/Alateen members learn that surrender to a Higher Power is an important aid to recovery. Whatever our beliefs, the God of our understanding will help us through any trials we encounter.

## But I Feel Different...

Al-Anon members are old, young, female, male, Asian, Black, Hispanic, Native American, Aboriginal, Pacific Islander, and Caucasian. They are children of, employers and employees of, friends of, parents of, grandparents of, siblings of, spouses and partners of alcoholics. We will not find all of these types of people at every meeting, but we will find a common bond: alcoholism, which we call a family illness.

### Black members share about attending their first meeting:

*I felt very uncomfortable—I was the only person of African descent, and one of only two men present. I tried to project “just a normal guy” vibes to everyone but sensed some fear projected at me. I remained because my friend was there—I returned because I was deeply moved by the sentiment/sincerity of Al-Anon's Suggested Closing.*

*I was supposed to be a role model, a leader, a teacher, one of the perfect ones. I was still trying to project that image when I came to Al-Anon the first time. So, not only did I feel that I was letting my husband down, but I also felt like I was letting my people down. After all of those years of trying to be one of the perfect ones, here I was not just admitting that I had a problem that I couldn't solve, but also admitting it in a room full of “white folk.”*

*I had my concerns about the program when I first started. Being African-American, I had a distrust for non-African-American members. This mistrust stemmed more*

*from my upbringing rather than my present experience. Trusting the program, as well as trusting people of other ethnic backgrounds, was an internal barrier I had to overcome.*

## Keep Coming Back...

It is important to attend several meetings before deciding if Al-Anon is for you. Below, African-American/Black members share what kept them coming back to meetings.

*I believe it was my Higher Power, which I call God, working through people in Al-Anon. I was advised to read books that led me to see that I had been affected by the disease. Al-Anon members always told me to keep coming back. They always took the time to listen to what I had to say. I hadn't ever experienced that before — people listening to what I had to say.*

*I remember the severe pain I endured prior to the program. As a result, I have the desire to be here for someone like others were for me, whether African-American or not. I learned I needed to break the cycle of no recovery in my family and to get better for the sake of my children. I know that I won't truly meet a stranger in our worldwide fellowship. I have developed mentally, emotionally, and spiritually in ways that I found nowhere else.*

*The group knew my pain, and I felt their support and warmth. Second, we were all there for “singleness of purpose” unlike that of any church I have attended.*

**I came back because I felt unconditional acceptance and understanding in the rooms of Al-Anon. In Al-Anon I felt a “sameness” that surpasses race, creed, and color. We all feel the same pain. Alcoholism is truly an equalizer.**