Sunday Step Study Meeting -- Chairperson's script

Read: **Please turn off or silence your cell phone at this time and join me in a moment of silence, followed by the Serenity Prayer.**

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.

Read: We welcome you to the Sunday morning Al-Anon Step Study 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 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 spiritual 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 the Serenity Prayer. The loving interchange of help among members and daily readings of Al-Anon literature thus made 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.

The Al-Anon Family Groups are a fellowship of relatives and friends of alcoholics who share their experience, strength and hope in order to solve their common problems. We believe alcoholism is a family illness and that changed attitudes can aid recovery.

Al-Anon is not allied with any sect, denomination, political entity, organization or institution, does not engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any cause. There are no dues for membership.

Al-Anon is self-supporting through its own voluntary contributions.Al-anon has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the the Twelve Steps, by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics, and by giving understanding and encouragement to the alcoholic.

Read - ONLY if someone has brought a child:

Our primary purpose is to support families of alcoholics. However, our limited space is not large enough to provide childcare. We invite you to stay for the meeting with your child if he or she can remain quiet. If necessary, one of us may volunteer to take the child out for a short diversion with your permission. After this meeting, we will be happy to discuss childcare options for your child in hopes that you may continue attending this meeting. In any case, welcome. We're glad you're here.

Preamble to The Twelve Steps (found on p. 3 of Paths to Recovery)

Read: Because of their proven power and worth, A.A.'s Twelve Steps have been adopted almost word for word by Al-Anon. They represent a way of life appealing to all people of goodwill, of any religious faith or of none. Note the power of the very words!

The Twelve Steps (found on p. 3 of Paths to Recovery --
read the first one and then read by turns, going around the room))

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.

Preamble to the Twelve Traditions - found on p. 131 of Paths to Recovery

Read: The Traditions that follow bind us together in unity. They guide the groups in their relations with other groups, with A.A. and the outside world. They recommend group attitudes towards leadership, membership, money, property, public relations, and anonymity.

The Traditions evolved from the experience of A.A. groups in trying to solve their problems of living and working together. Al-Anon adopted these group guidelines and over the years has found them sound and wise. Although they are only suggestions, Al-Anon's unity and perhaps even its survival are dependent on adherence to these principles.

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity.

2. For our group purpose there is but one authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants—they do not govern.

3. The relatives of alcoholics, when gathered together for mutual aid, may call themselves an Al-Anon Family Group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend.

4. Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or A.A. as a whole.

5. Each Al-Anon Family Group has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of A.A. ourselves, by encouraging and understanding our alcoholic relatives, and by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics.

6. Our Al-Anon Family Groups ought never endorse, finance or lend out name to any outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim. Although a separate entity, we should always co-operate with Alcoholics Anonymous.

7. Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

8. Al-Anon Twelfth Step work should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

9. Our groups, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create services boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

10. The Al-Anon Family Groups have no opinion on outside issues; hence our name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion: we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films and TV. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all A.A. members.

12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities

Introductions:

Read: My name is _____. Let's go around the room to introduce ourselves by our first names only.

Announcements:

Read: Are there any Al-Anon announcements or business?

- Group Representative?
- Monthly District 26 Report?
- Treasurer Report?

Guidelines for this Meeting:

Read: Our Group Conscience has decided that:

1) This is a Step Study and other Al-Anon related literature meeting.

2) Out of respect for each member, this is a no cross talk meeting. Cross talk is defined as commenting, questioning or giving advice during another's sharing or during your own.

3) This is a closed meeting for friends and families who are affected by another's drinking and we ask members of other anonymous fellowships to remain anonymous and focus on the Al-Anon program.

4) Sponsorship is an important part of recovery. A sponsor is someone with whom a member can discuss personal problems and who can guide them as they work the Al-Anon steps and Traditions. We suggest you find someone who has what you want and ask them to be your sponsor.

5) Anonymity is one of the most important principles in Al-Anon. Whom you see here, what you hear here, when you leave here, let it stay here. Outside of this meeting, do not break anyone's anonymity by indicating that person was at an Al-Anon meeting.

6) Please turn off or silence your cell phones now.

Thank you.

Read: **Is there anyone new to Al-Anon or new to this meeting?**
If YES, read this:

(To the newcomer(s)) ***Read:*** Please tell us your first name so we can welcome you.

We welcome you to our meeting, and while we do not answer specific questions during the meeting, people will be available to talk with you afterwards.

Through the program, many of us have found a serenity we never thought possible. We suggest you attend at least 6 meetings with different groups and then decide if Al-Anon is right for you.

Would someone briefly share your reason for coming to Al-Anon and how it has helped you?

Would anyone volunteer to be available if the newcomer has questions after the meeting?

Optional meeting structure if newcomer is present:

- *Read pamphlet "Understanding Ourselves and Alcoholism" (p48) or chapter 4 in How al-Anon Works*
- *Read 1st Step from "Path to Recovery*
- *Read 1st Step from any of the daily readers; Courage to Change, Hope for Today or One Day at a Time*

The Program for Today:

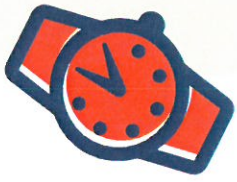
Look to the group's calendar to see which step, tradition, concept or program topic we are using this week. After reading from the literature, open up the meeting for sharing.

About 15 minutes before the end of the meeting introduce our 7th Tradition, passing the Basket:

Read: We have no dues or fees, but we do pass the basket to cover group expenses, including purchase of literature, support of our trusted servants and Al-Anon service arms.

Our Seventh Tradition says we are self-supporting through our own voluntary contributions.

About 2 minutes before the end of the meeting:



Read: Before we close, does anyone have a burning desire to share?

Read: Before we close, who would like to volunteer to lead next week's meeting?

At the end of the meeting read the Suggested Al-Anon Closing:

Read: In closing, I would like to say that the opinions expressed here were strictly those of the person who gave them. Take what you liked 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. This is a reminder to keep everyone's anonymity that is here today. Al-Anon will be a safe haven for sharing only if we all remember to keep the principle of anonymity.

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 in the *(Meeting chair selects from the following)*

- The Al-Anon Declaration - *Let it begin with me (Green)*
- The Serenity Prayer *(Blue)*
- *Both:* The Al-Anon Declaration *(Let it begin with me)* and The Serenity Prayer *(in whichever order the meeting chair prefers).*

The Al-Anon Declaration
Let it begin with me
When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always be there, and, let it begin with me.

The Serenity Prayer
God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.