

Guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon Members

How to start a new Al-Anon meeting

Starting and building a healthy Group is a spiritual undertaking. It takes time and commitment. Before starting a Group, ask for help. The District, Area and General Service Office are available to offer information, support and encouragement. Below are some thoughts and suggestions gathered from members who have started Groups and from members who have had to disband meetings.

Things to think about when starting an Al-Anon meeting

- Experience suggests it is a good idea to start a new meeting with at least one other person, preferably more. 
- Is the rent at the venue or the online platform affordable? For in-person Groups, ask the venue about any payment options until the meeting is established. Is it possible that District or Area can offer financial support for a limited period of time? 
- For in-person Groups, has the venue granted permission for the address to be shared?
- Consider attending local meetings to share information about the new Group and invite members to offer support.
- Attending District and Area Assemblies can also be a useful way of connecting with the wider Al-Anon fellowship.
- Set a start date that does not clash with members' planned holidays. Once advertised, it is important the meeting is held regularly on the chosen day and time.
- For in-person meetings, is the venue close to transport links? Well-sited meetings can grow quickly. Is there a church or other community resource in the locality that is looking to support the local



community and would be keen to have an Al-Anon meeting held there?

- Consider finding an in-person AA meeting in the locality and see if the venue has another room available on the same night? There might be potential Al-Anon members who have relatives in AA.
- When deciding on a day and time, think about other Al-Anon meetings in the locality and try to choose a different day and time.
- Is the entrance of the in-person venue clearly lit, sign posted and accessible for all? 

Choosing a name?

The Group name needs to include the town or section of the town and meeting day. For online meetings this refers to the town or section of the town (in the UK or Eire), which the members who started the Group originated from. This will be inviting to all and conform to Al-Anon principles. Having an appropriate Group name is very important as it may be a potential member's first impression of Al-Anon.

And finally...

- The Group must be registered with GSO before holding the first meeting so that the details can appear on the



website and it is covered by public liability insurance.

- Download a Registration form from the website. Complete and return it to GSO.
- The Group can liaise with the PI Co-ordinator, District Representative and/or Area Delegate giving plenty of notice of the starting date of the meeting. Notices can be circulated to the membership who may wish to support the meeting. Carry out Public Information in the locality. Put up a poster at the venue with permission. Inform appropriate local organisations, for example doctors, community centres, libraries and hospitals.

Resources

- Website al-anonuk.org.uk [Start a new Group](#)
- UK & Eire Service Manual
- UKG26 Online Al-Anon Meetings

