

Guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon Members

Etiquette for Online Al-Anon Meetings

It is important that members understand the principle of anonymity and how it applies when attending an online Al-Anon meeting. The contents of this guidance document have been gathered from the experiences of members attending online Al-Anon meetings.

UNDER 18 YEARS

Under 18s are not permitted at an online Al-Anon meeting.

At the start of every online meeting the Chair states that anyone under the age of 18 must leave the meeting.



you hear here (Please respect each member's right not to be overheard by non-members).

When you leave here, Let it stay here (What has been seen and heard shouldn't be discussed or repeated outside the meeting).

ANONYMITY



Anonymity is as important in online meetings as it is for in-person meetings. It goes well beyond mere names. All of

us need to feel secure in the knowledge that nothing seen or heard at a meeting will be revealed. Therefore, when you sign into an online Al-Anon meeting, it is recommended that you consider the following:-

- How your name is displayed on the screen (e.g. first name; pseudonym).
- Where possible be in a room by yourself to ensure no interruptions or background noise.
- Disabling devices such as Alexa or Google Home that may have listening features.
- Removing items in the background (e.g. personal photographs) that will be visible to others attending the meeting.
- Using headphones if there are others within the vicinity who could overhear members' shares.

Members are trusted not to record any online meeting.

ANONYMITY TABLE CARD

Whom you see here (Please respect each member's right not to be seen on screen by non-members). **What**



BEHAVIOUR

Members are reminded that they are attending an Al-Anon Group, so it should be treated as such by keeping the focus on Al-Anon and the meeting. It is suggested that members, where possible, keep their camera on and show their face during the meeting. This allows members to feel safe because they can see who is in attendance. Groups may decide via the Group Conscience to accept cameras off, provided that members identify themselves on camera at the start of the meeting. In some rare circumstances, members may have to do something else while attending the meeting. If this is the case, they should switch their camera off to avoid distracting other members. They will still be able to see and hear the other members in attendance.



To avoid disruption, it is suggested that the Chair asks those who want to share to unmute themselves. After sharing, they will be asked to mute themselves again.

Meeting Hosts have the technical ability to mute anyone they consider disruptive, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Group members should decide to what degree they wish Hosts to take control of meetings (e.g. do they have the autonomy to mute any member making background noise?).

If the Group decides to have the chat function on during a meeting, members should be considerate with the use of the chat to avoid the impression of cross talk. (See UK130 *Policies and Procedures for Online Al-Anon Meetings in the UK & Eire*, Meeting Security for more information on the various chat options).

DEALING WITH ZOOM BOMBERS

On rare occasions, organised groups of people have seriously disrupted Zoom meetings. Should this happen at an online Al-Anon meeting, it can be very upsetting for members.

Therefore, Groups need to consider how they would deal with this situation, should it arise.



The Host/Co-host need to be alert throughout the meeting and be able to immediately remove the disruptive people. Some Groups may choose to have the mute/unmute function fully controlled by the Host. (See UK130 *Policies and Procedures for Online Al-Anon Meetings in the UK & Eire*, Meeting Security for more information on the mute/unmute options).

If it is not possible to regain control of the meeting by removing the disruptive people to the Waiting Room (and reporting them to Zoom), the Host may choose to end the meeting. Should the meeting be ended suddenly, the Group should have a plan in place as to how they resume the meeting.

