

# Area 9 Assembly September 2025

## Timely Topic Report

Researched by District 3

**Question #1: What is an appropriate greeting for the newcomer in a meeting? Are there specific readings for newcomers? I've heard newcomers referred to as the most important person in the room. Is this true? Is it appropriate to direct our personal share to them?**

Sources:

- *2022-2025 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*
- *Paths To Recovery, Al-Anon's Steps, Traditions and Concepts*
- *How Al-Anon Works for Families and Friends of Alcoholics*
- *Tradition Five*
- *Tradition Eight*
- *Concept One*
- *Courage To Change*
- *One Day at a Time*
- *As we understood...*
- *A Little Time for Myself*
- *Al-Anons Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*

### **Introduction:**

*One Day at a Time*: "The newcomer to Al-Anon usually feels alone in a hostile world, drowning in a sea of trouble." (p.206)

The *Service Manual*: "The newcomer to Al-Anon/Alateen is often nervous, lonely, and usually desperate. In addition to the help, guidance, and literature provided by the group, individual attention and the friendship of an established member can be of great help" (2022-2025, p. 38)

### **Part one: "What is an appropriate greeting for the newcomer in a meeting?"**

*How Al-Anon Works*: "newcomers are always welcome in Al-Anon." (p. 110)

And that "our groups carry out our purpose by giving a warm welcome to newcomers and by giving love, comfort, and support anyone who seeks it." (p. 114)

*Paths to Recovery*: "We let newcomers know the meeting structure and important group conscience decisions so they will not be embarrassed by ignorance." (p. 147) and "we want to be sure that any newcomers...feel welcome and will be able to decide for themselves whether or not they belong." (p. 156) as well as the idea that "Welcoming requires more than just a statement at the beginning of a meeting" (p.176)

*5th Tradition:* "by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics."

The *Suggested Meeting Format* in the *Service Manual* : "The meeting usually begins with a welcome to newcomers and a reading of *Al-Anon's Suggested Welcome*" (P-24/27, 2022-2025, p. 27) and "We welcome you and hope you will find in this fellowship the help and friendship we have been privileged to enjoy" (P-24/27, 2022-2025, p. 12).

*One Day at Time:* "a warm welcome and words of hope and reassurance will be all the therapy she can use at first." (p. 206)

### **Part two: "Are there specific readings for newcomers?"**

The *Suggested Al-Anon Welcome* and the *Reading on Anonymity* for newcomers in the optional readings section of the *Groups at Work*.

[Two recommendations of previous readings shared at meetings specifically for newcomers, these readings could not be confirmed as current Conference Approved Literature and are not included in this report.]

CAL given sometimes includes: the book *How Al-Anon Works*, the *Newcomer Packet pamphlet*, the magazine *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism*, and the bookmark *Are You Troubled by Someone's Drinking?*

[Citation: The *Service Manual*: 'provide the newcomers with Conference Approved Literature (possibly a Newcomer Packet [K-10]); urge them to read the material; and share with them the value of using the program to cope with problems.' (P-1/2, 2022-2025, p. 38)]

### **Part three: "I've heard newcomers referred to as the most important person in the room. Is this true?"**

*Paths to Recovery:* "Tradition Eight reminds us who we are-a fellowship of **equals** who share our mutual experience, strength, and hope in order to recover and help each other along the way." (p.204)

*Concept One:* "Without the constant infusion of newcomers, the program can become stale and repetitious. This may cause regular members to abandon the group and possibly Al-Anon altogether." (P.252)

### **Part four: "Is it appropriate to direct our personal share to them?"**

*Groups at Work:* "No member of Al-Anon should direct, assume authority, or give advice. Our program is based on suggestion, interchange of experience, and rotation of leadership." (P.21) and "In group meetings, we share our own experience, strength, and hope, keeping the focus on ourselves and how the

program has helped us change our attitudes and actions." (p.37)

*Paths to Recovery:* "Advising is not Al-Anon. If I give you advice and things go wrong, then you may blame me. If you don't follow my advice, I might be sick enough to get mad because you didn't listen." (P.151) and "As a newcomer, I prefer not to be the focus of the meeting. But I can say that the welcome I received as I entered helped me realize the effect that alcoholism had on my own life." (P.252)

*One Day at Time:* "Let us not be too eager to swamp this confused person with advice.." (p. 206)

*Courage to Change:* "I do not know what is best for other people. Today I will remember that newcomers, and everyone else, are in the hands of a Power greater than myself." (P.185)

*A Little Time for Myself:* "Members share their own experience, strength, and hope with the newcomer..." (p. 38)

*Al-Anon's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions:* "we...assist newcomers as they learn to help themselves."

*As we understood...:* "take what you like, and leave the rest."

**Conclusion:**

*One Day at a Time:* "The first gift a newcomer receives from contact with Al-Anon is hope." (p.104)

*Courage to Change:* "Newcomers bring me back to reality." (P.276)