



# **Lets Talk about Safety In** **Al-Anon Meetings.**

Excerpts taken from WSO Let's Talk about Safety

Assembly , October 7-9 2022.

Panel 61 Breakout

Elsa C./ Mark F.

Let's Share:

**"Our Experience strength and hope."**



- 1. Have you in your meetings had an experience, where you or anyone felt unsafe?**
- 2. Have you have applied to your meeting something from the safety guidelines in your meetings?**
- 3. What are the spiritual principles they think of, when they think about safety in meetings.**

# Talk About Safety in Al-Anon

Excerpts taken from WSO Let's Talk about Safety



Meetings



 **Safety is an important issue within Al-Anon—one that all can address. Open discussion on the topic can aid groups in developing workable solutions to safety issues—solutions that are based on the fundamental principles of our fellowship and that will help keep our meetings safe.**

 **When members feel safe and are safe at meetings, the unity of our groups (Tradition One) is maintained.**

 **Al-Anon groups are spiritual entities; they are made up of families and friends of alcoholics who gather and share their experience, strength and hope to solve their common problems. Yet, we are not immune to the difficulties that affect the rest of humanity.**

# Autonomy belongs to the groups.

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## Autonomy and Group Action

There is no government within Al-Anon and no central authority, legal or otherwise, to control or direct the behavior of Al-Anon members. In accordance with the Fourth Tradition, the formation and operation of an Al-Anon group is guided by the group conscience of its members. Al-Anon groups and service entities such as Areas, Districts, Al-Anon Information Service Offices and Literature Distribution Centers are autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon as a whole.

Recognizing that safety is an important issue to their members, many groups have taken action to keep distractions and disruptions to a minimum within the context of the group.



# Group Safety and Unity

Excerpts taken from WSO Let's Talk about Safety



**Situations that groups have addressed through their group consciences include: sexual harassment or stalking; threats of violence; bullying; high-pressure controlling behavior; financial coercion; racial intolerance; sexual orientation or gender identification intolerance; and dominance that pressures Al-Anon members to accept a particular point of view or belief regarding medical treatments and/or medications, politics, religion, or other outside issues. In addition, there may be other behaviors that go on outside of typical meeting times that affect whether someone feels safe enough to return to the group.**



# Group Safety and Unity

Excerpts taken from WSO Let's Talk about Safety



Some groups develop their own guidelines or procedures to help keep the meeting safe. Al-Anon members can speak to those who are acting inappropriately, being careful to consider everyone's personal safety when doing so. Situations can be discussed at business meetings, where members can come to a group conscience about how to handle concerns: a meeting on the Traditions may be all that is necessary to make the member aware of behavior that is unacceptable to the group as a whole and help the member become willing to change. As a last resort, the disruptive member may be asked to stop attending the meeting for a specific period of time. Groups that take this drastic action do so to preserve the common welfare and to maintain the unity of the Al-Anon group.



# Group Safety and Unity

Excerpts taken from WSO Let's Talk about Safety



**In any situation, if a person's safety is in jeopardy, or the situation breaches the law, the members involved can take appropriate action to ensure their safety. Calling the proper authorities does not go against any Al-Anon Traditions. *Anonymity is not a cloak protecting criminal or inappropriate behavior.***



**Inappropriate or predatory behavior, such as unwanted sexual attention or targeting vulnerable members, can be especially troublesome. These behaviors may go on outside of the meeting room. While Al-Anon members can be caring and supportive to those affected, we are not professionals trained to handle such situations. Law enforcement or other professional help may be necessary.**



**Victims of inappropriate behavior, harassment or predators can let the group know about such situations, often through a Sponsor or trusted friend. This way the group is informed, and members can help address the situation and curtail further problems. Group discussion should focus on how to create an environment where all family members and friends of alcoholics can find and maintain serenity.**

# Al-Anon Above the Law

Excerpts taken from WSO Let's Talk about Safety



Al-Anon membership does not grant anyone immunity under the law; being at an Al-Anon meeting does not put anyone beyond the jurisdiction of law enforcement officers. As individuals, Al-Anon members are also "citizens of the world," and as citizens, we are not above the law.



Through the group conscience process, many groups have established guidelines identifying when it may be appropriate to call authorities and handle a given situation within the legal system. No Al-Anon group has to tolerate illegal behavior, and any activity within an Al-Anon meeting is subject to the same laws that apply outside the meeting. In the past, groups have had to confront illegal acts such as violence, embezzlement, theft of property and more.



# Keeping the focus on our primary purpose

Excerpts taken from Let's talk about safety. WSO website



**Tradition Five states: "Each Al-Anon Family Group has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of AA ourselves, by encouraging and understanding our alcoholic relatives, and by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics." It is hoped that our primary purpose will transcend most issues and curtail negative behaviors. However, sometimes issues of safety jeopardize group harmony.**



**Safety is important to the functioning of the group. When members maintain order and safety in meetings, the group benefits, and all those involved are able to focus on recovering from the family disease of alcoholism and learning how to live a serene life.**

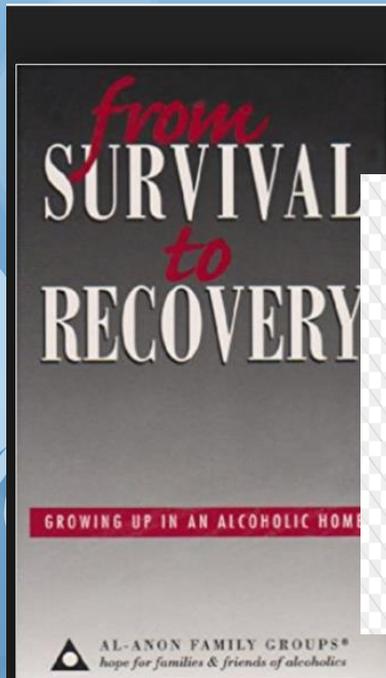


**Ultimately, the experience of how these situations are handled can be as varied as our fellowship. Using good judgment and common sense, while adhering to the Twelve Traditions, seems to provide the best guide.**

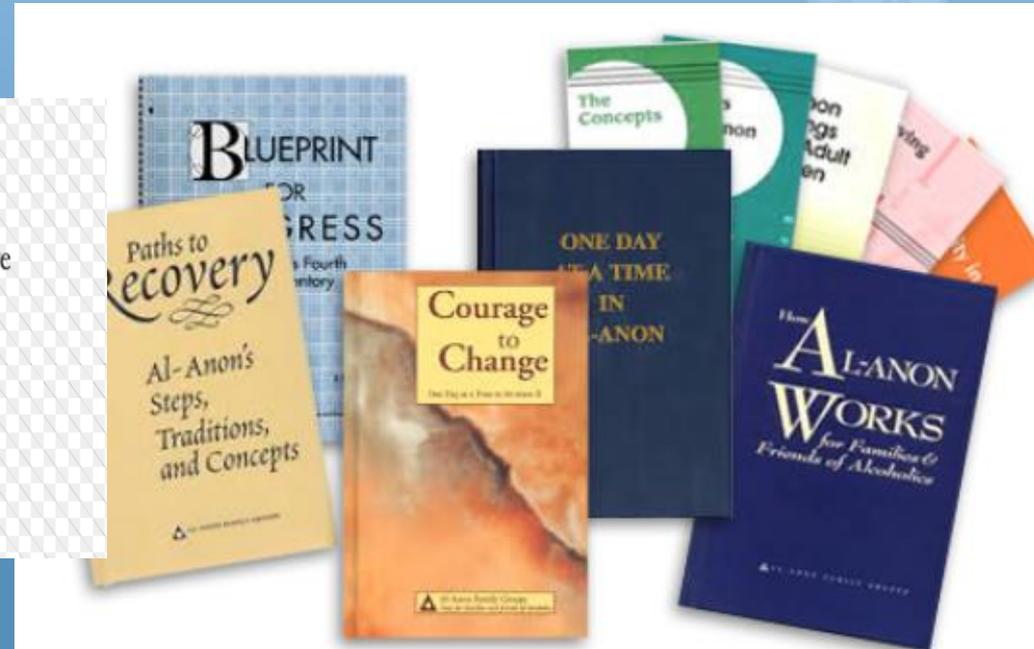


# Conference Approved Literature (CAL)

In any situation in our meetings, we gather information to decide what is best for the whole of AL-Anon as a whole, using and recognizing the importance of CAL, makes sure that the pamphlet Why Conference Approved Literature? (P-35) is always available at the meetings.



God grant me  
*Serenity*  
to accept the things I cannot change  
*Courage*  
to change the things I can, and  
*Wisdom*  
to know the difference.



WSO website



# How Does KBDM works in Al-Anon?

How does this element of KBDM work in our groups?

❖ **Open communication between leadership and membership in the group meeting:**

- ❖ **First, we identify issues:**
- ❖ **What needs our attention?**
- ❖ **Where are the problems?**
- ❖ **What isn't working?**
- ❖ **Where can we help?**





# How Does KBDM works in Al-Anon?

How does this element of KBDM work in our groups?

- ❖ **In our group meeting :**
- ❖ **We exist in a culture of trust.**
- ❖ **When we need to act for our safety, we become reliable, and we rely on others.**
- ❖ **We become truthful and rely on the truth from others.**
- ❖ **Many times, we simply need more information to gain the understanding that lets us lighten our load and experience trust.**

