

FAMILIES ANONYMOUS® BEREAVEMENT MEETING – U.S.

SUGGESTED MEETING FORMAT

INTRO

We welcome you to our Families Anonymous Bereavement Meeting. My name isand I'll be your leader for today. Please mute your phone or computer when you are not speaking and turn off any electronic devices that may interrupt the meeting. To maintain confidentiality and anonymity, please be in a location away from nonparticipants and do not record the meeting.

[Optional]. Shall we have a few moments' silence to remember why we are here?

Families Anonymous is primarily for those who have known a feeling of desperation concerning the use of drugs or alcohol as well as the related destructive behavior of someone very near to them. In our case, our loved one has passed away, and we are meeting to give and receive much needed support through this difficult time. When you come into this room, you are no longer alone, but among friends who have had similar experiences. We will respect your confidence and anonymity as we know you will respect ours.

We will now read:

1. FOUR DESTRUCTIVE FORCES
2. THE TWELVE STEPS
3. THE TWELVE PROMISES

SHARING

If the leader wishes, they may now make a short personal statement and/or suggest an FA-approved reading as a subject for discussion.

The meeting is now open for sharing. So that everyone will have a chance to contribute, we avoid crosstalk and ask that you wait to be recognized by the leader and share with the entire group.

At the end of the hour, the leader may invite those who wish to continue the meeting to stay, and those who need to leave to drop off the meeting. At this point, the leader can ask for a volunteer to lead next month's meeting.

CLOSING

The very essence of our program is that everything is merely suggested. Our progress can be made in our own time and in our own way. As this is an anonymous program, we ask all members and visitors to respect our anonymity. The stories you hear are told in confidence and should not be repeated outside. They are told so that we might better understand this program and ourselves, and to give encouragement and help to all.

Today, when you leave, take with you those thoughts that will be most helpful to you and forget those you cannot accept. And now, for those who care to join us, let's say the Serenity Prayer together:

**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.**



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FOUR DESTRUCTIVE FORCES

To enable our meetings to be truly constructive, it is necessary to recognize and repress four destructive forces that can cause dissension and eventually destroy the group.

The first destructive force is the discussion of any religion. Our program is open to all, regardless of our various beliefs, or lack of belief. Each member's understanding of a Higher Power is strictly a personal, private choice.

The second destructive force is gossip. We are here to share **our** feelings, attitudes, and reactions to our situation—to help us in applying the principles of Families Anonymous[®] to our **own** lives. Careless discussion of other people's personal difficulties is contrary to the principles of our program. What we say here—stays here!

The third destructive force is dominance. FA[®] is based on suggestion, interchange of experience, and rotation of leaders. No member should direct, assume authority, or give advice. Our leaders are chosen, not to govern, but to serve.

The fourth destructive force is dwelling on the past. Harboring painful thoughts and speaking endlessly about hurtful times with our loved ones block our recovery. Besides being detrimental to our personal progress, continuous behavior of this type within the meeting, week after week, is destructive to the group's progress and unity. Such behavior can lead us back to the Third Destructive Force, which is dominance.

Instead, we let go of the past by listening to other members, reading our FA literature, and learning new ways to change our actions and attitudes, thereby improving our lives.



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FAMILIES ANONYMOUS[®] TWELVE STEPS

We have found that our success in this program is determined by how well we accept and apply the following suggested Steps:

1. We admitted we were powerless over drugs and other people's lives—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 whenever 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 a result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.



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The TWELVE PROMISES of Families Anonymous®

(Adapted from A.A. with permission)

These Promises will come true—sometimes quickly, sometimes gradually—as we study and work the Twelve Steps and practice making them a fundamental part of our lives.

1. We are going to know a freedom from worry and a new happiness.
2. We will not regret the past or wish to shut the door on it.
3. We will comprehend the word serenity.
4. We will know peace.
5. No matter what we've been through, we will see how our experiences can benefit others.
6. Those feelings of resentment and self-pity will disappear.
7. We will lose interest in trying to change others, and we will gain an appreciation for those special people in our lives.
8. Self-righteousness will slip away.
9. Our attitudes and our outlook on life will change.
10. Our insecurities and our fear of other people's opinions will leave us.
11. We will intuitively know how to handle situations that used to baffle us.
12. We will come to realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

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