



2ND & 4TH
WEDNESDAYS

7:30 PM ET
6:30 PM CT
HYBRID

Zoom Meeting ID:
828 3685 3203

Passcode:
Birds



BOAF AL-ANON ATL

Hybrid Support for Aviation Families

BOAF Al-Anon ATL offers a supportive space for aviation families and loved ones affected by a pilot's drinking. Members can attend in person or by Zoom, share experience, gain insight, and find encouragement from others who understand the unique pressures of the aviation world. Together, we build connection, coping skills, and hope.



Topic meeting • Conference Approved Literature



Second & Fourth Wednesday of Each Month



International: 22:30 UTC Standard • 23:30 UTC DST



Meeting Location

5355 Hunter Rd
Atlanta, GA 30349


Al-Anon Family Groups
Strength and hope for friends
and families of problem drinkers

TOGETHER, WE CAN SUPPORT OUR AVIATION FAMILIES.

Hope. Strength. Connection.



BOAF Al-Anon ATL — September 9, 2026

Blame & Boundaries

Why do I waste my precious time and energy trying to figure out what makes an alcoholic drink—why he doesn't consider his family, his obligations, his reputation? All I need to know is that he suffers from a disease—alcoholism, the compulsion to drink. Why shouldn't I have compassion for him and his illness when I am so ready to feel sorry for people who have other diseases? Do I blame them? Why do I blame him? Can I cure him by reproaching him? Can I look into his heart and realize the true nature of his sufferings?

Living with an alcoholic distorted my thinking in many ways, but particularly in one: I blamed all my problems on The Bottle. Now I am learning in Al-Anon to look squarely at each difficulty, not seeking whom to “blame” but to discover how my attitude helped to create my problem, or aggravate it. I must learn to face the consequences of my own actions and words, and to correct myself when I am wrong. Accepting responsibility is essential to becoming mature. Whether the alcoholic is drinking or not, I will not look for a scapegoat to excuse my own faults.

We hear about the alcoholic having a “slip,” returning suddenly to the bottle after a period of sobriety. We deplore it when it happens in our family, and most of us must confess that at this point we angrily blame the alcoholic for the lapse. If, however, I think of this as a “relapse,” it will help to remind me that alcoholism is a disease that is not cured when sobriety takes over. I can no more blame the alcoholic than I would blame him for a relapse in any other disease. I, too, have lapses from the Al-Anon pattern I have tried so hard to follow. When I fall into my old habits of self-pity and reproaching, my relapse is just as involuntary and forgivable as that of the alcoholic.

After we have been trying to use the Al-Anon program for a while, one thing becomes clear: we can get unlimited benefits from changing our way of thinking. No realistic, reasonable person would consider this an easy task; indeed, there is nothing more difficult in life! Suppose, just suppose, we were resolved to follow this one idea, expressed by one of AA's founders in an informal talk: “Let's stop throwing blame around.” This one idea could be explored, meditated on, acted upon, from now until the end of our days. What would happen if we stopped blaming anyone for anything? We would experience miracles of tolerance and grace—rich spiritual rewards, reflected in a life of real fulfillment.

How great is the human need for a scapegoat, someone or something to blame for our disappointments. “If she hadn't done that, this wouldn't have happened.”—“Why couldn't he have done what I expected?”—“It's all her fault!” I must realize that every time I feel someone has offended or injured me, at least part of my unhappiness is due to the way I reacted. Actually I am not so vulnerable to being hurt, by circumstances or the actions of other people, as I think I am. Much that happens to me, good or bad, is self-created.

Al-Anon taught me the difference between walls and boundaries. Walls are solid and rigid; they keep others out, and they keep me trapped inside. Boundaries are flexible, changeable, removable, so it's up to me how open or closed I'll be at any given time. They let me decide what behavior is acceptable, not only from others but from myself. Today I can say, "No," with love instead of hostility, so it doesn't put an end to my relationships. I've learned about boundaries from Al-Anon's own set of boundaries: the Twelve Traditions. Although their purpose is to protect Al-Anon, they actually encourage the growth of the fellowship. This is true of my personal boundaries as well. As I decide what is and isn't acceptable for me, I learn to live protected without walls.

Many of us come to Al-Anon confused. We are so focused on our alcoholic loved ones that we may not be able to see where they leave off and we begin. We've lost our sense of what is appropriate. How can we distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behavior when we don't even know what we want or need?

Step 4 – Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

My Fourth Step inventory helped me discover who I am, what my values are, the behavior I'd like to keep, and the things I'd like to change. With this in mind, I am working to establish new behavior that reflects my integrity and expresses my true values. Where in the past I have allowed unacceptable behavior, I now can choose a different response. I must consistently do what I say I'm going to do. Today I have the courage and faith to be true to myself, whether or not others like or agree with me. I must remember that announcing my new ways to others is not nearly as important as knowing what my own limits are and acting accordingly.

Today's Reminder:

If I am convinced that I am to a large extent "the captain of my soul" I can more readily accept the fact that I have the power to ward off misfortunes, disappointments and other troubles. Blaming others for what happens to me would keep me at a spiritual standstill.

"Nothing can work damage to me except myself; the harm that I sustain I carry about with me and never I am a real sufferer except by my own fault." —Ralph Waldo Emerson, quoting St. Bernard, in the Essay on Compensation

Today's Reminder Do my defenses keep me safe, or do they isolate me? Today I can love myself enough to look for healthier ways to protect myself, ways that don't close everyone out.

*"People are lonely because they build walls instead of bridges."
Joseph Fort Newton*

Today's Reminder I will try not to blame the alcoholic. How can I know what he is going through in his struggle with the bottle, the ever-present escape? What can I know of his strivings to improve after he is sober? I will not blame him. I will not blame anybody. I will not blame myself.

"Who is to blame? Whom have I the right to blame? Let me concentrate on keeping my own conduct from being at fault; more I cannot do."

Today's Reminder The bad moments will pass if I do not blow them up into tragedies. An old popular song says: "Pick yourself up, dust yourself off, start all over again." Al-Anon thinking can help me accept these shocks with equanimity and send me on my way to a better tomorrow.

"I wonder if we non-alcoholics have ever realized that a relapse is a lot more painful to the alcoholic than it is to us. Let's not make it worse!"

Today's Reminder There is no advantage, no profit, no growth, in deceiving myself merely to escape the consequences of my own mistakes. When I realize this, I know I will be making progress.

"We must be true inside, true to ourselves, before we can know a truth that is outside us. But we make ourselves true inside by manifesting the truth as we see it." —Thomas Merton, No Man Is an Island

Today's Reminder The fact that I am the spouse, child, parent, or friend of an alcoholic does not give me the right to try to control him. I can only make the situation worse by treating him like an irresponsible naughty child.

"On this day I promise God and myself that I will let go of the problem which is destroying my peace of mind. I pray for detachment from the situation, but not from the suffering drinker who may be helped to find the way to sobriety through the change in my attitude and the love and compassion I am able to express."

Today's Reminder I will remember that knowing my boundaries does not mean forcing others to change; it means that I know my own limits and take care of myself by respecting them. The focus, today, is on me.

"He that respects himself is safe from others; he wears a coat of mail that none can pierce." Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Discussion Questions

1. How has blame affected your peace of mind, your relationships, or your recovery?
2. What is the difference between holding someone accountable and blaming them?
3. When have you tried to control, fix, or manage someone else's drinking or behavior, and how did that affect you?
4. What is the difference between building a wall and setting a healthy boundary?
5. How can boundaries help us show love and compassion without losing ourselves?

Journaling Questions

1. Who or what am I blaming today, and how is that keeping me stuck?
2. Where do I need to take responsibility for my own attitude, words, or actions?
3. What boundary do I need to set or strengthen in order to protect my peace?
4. Am I using walls to keep people out, or boundaries to take care of myself?
5. What would it look like today to detach with love instead of reacting with blame, fear, or control?