# S-ANON CONFERENCE APPROVED SUGGESTED MEETING FORMAT

## SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR S-ANON MEETINGS

**Explanatory Note**: Meetings should open and close on time, but there is no rigid formula for an S-Anon meeting. This Suggested Meeting Format is included because most new groups find a general outline to be helpful, especially if no one in the group has attended any Twelve-Step meetings. The format is printed for your convenience. Because S-Anon groups are autonomous, not every group chooses to plan its meeting in this way. However, this format is Conference Approved, which means that it reflects the experience of a wide variety of S-Anon individuals and groups. We suggest that you try it, and then adapt or vary the format to suit the needs of your group. We ask only that you keep in mind that “adaptation” does not mean substituting readings from material that has not been Conference Approved (Tradition One), or changing any words in the S-Anon Conference Approved suggested readings. **(Literature published by S-Anon, SA, Al-Anon and AA is Conference Approved for use in our meetings.)** Further suggestions for successful meetings can be found in Part 1 of the *S-Anon/S-Ateen Service Manual*. All of the Conference Approved readings for S-Anon and S-Ateen meetings can be found in Part 4 of the *Service Manual*.

#### Will those who care to, join me in a moment of silence, followed by the Serenity Prayer?

[Serenity Prayer is said.]

#### Hi, I’m , your leader for this meeting.

[To open the meeting, The S-Anon Welcome may be read.]

#### The Preamble to the Twelve Steps of S-Anon describes the purpose of our group:

[The S-Anon Preamble to the Twelve Steps may be read by the leader or another member.]

#### Here are the Twelve Steps we follow which are suggested for our recovery:

[The S-Anon Twelve Steps are read. Many groups pass a copy of the Steps around the group and each member reads one (or more) of them.]

#### Our group experience suggests that the unity of the S-Anon Family Groups depends upon our adherence to the following Traditions:

[The S-Anon Twelve Traditions are read; some groups read only the Tradition that corresponds to the month, for example, January – First Tradition.]

1. **Newcomer Welcome**

[At this point in the meeting, many groups have the leader ask if there are newcomers present, and if so, extend a further welcome as decided by the group members, assuring them that they are free to share or remain silent, as they wish. If a Newcomers Meeting is available, that information can be given at this point. Some groups set aside a specific time at the end of the meeting to deal with newcomers’ issues.]

### Introduction by First Name

[Group members introduce themselves by first name. Some groups wait until later in the meeting, after the announcements, to introduce themselves and join in saying the Serenity Prayer, so that those who come in after the meeting has started can be included.]

#### We are seeking recovery from our own progressive illness:

[The short or long version of The S-Anon Problem may be read at this time.]

#### Our recovery depends upon our willingness to adopt new ways of thinking about ourselves and our problems:

[The short or long version of Keys to S-Anon Recovery may be read at this time.]

#### There are three Obstacles to Recovery in S-Anon:

[Obstacles to Recovery may be read at this time.]

#### Our Seventh Tradition states that “every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.” We have no dues or fees for membership. The Seventh Tradition collection is used to cover group expenses and to support local and world services.

[Pass basket. For the benefit of newcomers, many groups say something like, “If this is your first meeting, we would like you to be our guest and not contribute.” Some groups pass two baskets, one for group expenses, and one to support S-Anon Twelfth-Step work at the national and international level. Some groups wait until the end of the meeting to ask for Seventh Tradition contributions.

### Announcements and Secretary/Treasurer reports.

[Leader asks if there are any S-Anon-related announcements or a Secretary or Treasurer’s report. Announcements could also be made at the end of the meeting or during the passing of the Seventh Tradition Basket.]

### Meeting Guidelines

[Before sharing begins, the leader reads the following:]

#### Because our common welfare comes first, here are the guidelines for sharing during our meeting:

***If you wish to share, please wait your turn to share or wait to be recognized by the leader, as there is no crosstalk. That is, we share with the group as a whole, rather than addressing comments or questions to individual members. We limit the length of our sharing so that everyone here will have a chance to speak. Our purpose in sharing is to discuss ourselves, not the sexaholic. Our meetings focus on the S-Anon approach to recovery, so we avoid the mention or discussion of specific titles and authors of publications other than S-Anon Conference Approved Literature. We leave our other identities outside the discussion – other Twelve-Step issues, philosophies, religions, therapies, and occupations. We speak about and from the S-Anon point of view. Each member of the group is encouraged to remind other members, during the meeting if necessary, of our commitment to these guidelines.***

[These are the guidelines that most S-Anon (and other) family groups have found to best serve the recovery of all the members. They provide information to newcomers and serve as a reminder to all group members so that our meetings stay focused on recovery and provide a safe place to share feelings without having to explain or justify them. While all groups may not use these exact words, it is important that the guidelines you *do* use are supported by a group conscience of the members, and that a substantial majority of group members are committed to upholding them.]

### Leader Qualifies (optional)

[Sometimes the meeting leader “qualifies” (talks about his/her membership in S-Anon), with a limit of 5 minutes or less. They tell, from a recovery point of view, what they were like before S-Anon, how they have changed, and generally share experience, strength, and hope in coming to terms with the family disease of sexaholism.]

### Meeting Opened for Sharing

[Leader announces the format of the meeting (for example, a Step or Tradition Meeting) or introduces the topic.]

### Closing Reminder

[When it is time for the meeting to end, the leader reads the following:]

#### This is an anonymous program. We ask all members to respect our anonymity. The stories you hear are told in confidence and should not be repeated outside, including to spouses or family members. They are told so that we might better understand this program and ourselves, and to give encouragement and help to the newcomer, so that we may keep what we have been given.

1. ***Please read the Gifts of the S-Anon Program.***

[The Gifts of the S-Anon Program may be read at this time.]

#### Will those who care to join us in the closing prayer:

[Leader asks someone to lead the group in saying the Serenity Prayer, Third Step Prayer, or other prayer from S-Anon Conference Approved Literature, as determined by the group.]

### KEEP COMING BACK! IT WORKS IF YOU WORK IT!