

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR PERSONAL CONDUCT AND APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR FOR AA MEMBERS



General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous of Ireland

Unit 2, Block C, Santry Business Park,

Swords Road, Dublin 9

Tel: (01) 8420700

Email: gso@alcoholicsanonymous.ie



www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie

05/2019

Suggested Guidelines for Personal Conduct and Appropriate Behaviour for AA members

Many newcomers to AA are not aware of what behaviours are appropriate at meetings and what is not acceptable. Any behaviour that disrupts the ability of the group to conduct its meetings appropriately is not acceptable. Such behaviour threatens the group's unity and therefore the chance for the members present to recover.

“Each member of AA is but a small part of a greater whole. AA must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows closely afterwards.” (Long form of Tradition One).

Aggressive or coercive behaviour of any kind, including all forms of harassment whether ethnic, sexual, or personal whether at meetings or online, is inappropriate and completely unacceptable. Each member attending a meeting has the right to feel that they are in a secure, safe, protective and welcoming environment. This applies equally to any member who is going about AA business in a service role. It is the responsibility of individual group committees, officers and members to ensure that no-one attending the group's meetings or other activities is subjected to bullying in any form, to harassment or any offensive behaviour no matter what form this behaviour takes. Such behaviour is unacceptable to the AA traditions and is in conflict with the AA way of life in recovery.

Group officers must be reasonable and measured in their response to such disruptive behaviours. No member should place themselves in physical danger or allow themselves to get into situations that might leave them open to legal repercussions. Where a situation becomes serious and cannot be handled within the group, then it is appropriate to seek advice and

assistance from outside the group, whether from Area, Intergroup or, if the situation is grave, from Conference. Appropriate authorities such as the Gardai or PSNI ought to be contacted where the situation is considered, by the Group Committee, to warrant this intervention. A member should not make such a decision alone but only in consultation with the group's steering committee.

A properly convened and well-informed Group Conscience may consider it necessary to temporarily exclude a disruptive member from the group. The decision to permit the offending member to return equally rests with such a Group Conscience decision. Should they wish, groups may display a “clear and unambiguous statement” concerning behaviour at meetings. Group officers and members ought to be well informed about how to deal with different types of inappropriate behaviour, and have the full support of the group. It is the group's responsibility to care for newcomers and to ensure that they feel welcome and safe at all times.

Suggestions:

Members who engage in sexually explicit comments or regularly use offensive language may be taken aside after the meeting, where the committee can explain what is and what is not acceptable.

If disruption continues then the secretary should consult with colleagues to decide what action to take.

The common welfare of the group must come before any individual. Meetings cannot revolve around one person.