

# Six-Hour Workshop on Intimacy in All Our Relationships

## Agenda

8:30 am	Doors Open
8:30 am-9:00 am	Registration & Fellowship
9:00 am-9:15	Opening
9:15 am-9:30 am	Introduction (Moderator) Select several attendees to read quotations on intimacy from Conference Approved Literature (See page 2 for quotations)
9:30 am-10:30 am	Intimacy Panel of Four Members (10-15 minutes each) (The panelists will each cover a different aspect of intimacy: The topics were: Intimacy with a spouse Intimacy with a parent Intimacy with a child Intimacy with a Sponsor
10:30-10:45 am	Break
10:45-11:15 am	Breakout Group Using 25 Questions (See page 3 for questions)
11:15-11:45 am	Sharing in Large Group
11:45 am-12:45 pm	Lunch
12:45 pm-1:15 pm	Writing about Intimacy—Introduction (Moderator) (Distribute writing guideline for INTIMACY IN ALCOHOLIC RELATIONSHIPS, pens, and paper)
1:15 pm-1:30 pm	Sharing in Writing
1:30 pm-1:45 pm	Break
1:45 pm-2:25 pm	At this point, attendees can stay in the main room and continue writing or go to a breakout room to discuss one of two questions: <b>In what relationship am I most intimate?</b> <b>What relationship would I most like to improve?</b>
2:25 pm-2:55 pm	Sharing in Large Group
2:55-3:00 pm	Closing (Moderator)

## CAL Quotations on Intimacy

### 1

When we come to Al-Anon, many of us have lived in isolation. Worried about what others would think, we lived our lives cautiously, afraid to let anyone know what was really going on inside. We may even have shut out our family and close friends. Some of us were reluctant to interact with new people and had few, if any, close relationships. As a result, we may have been lonely and felt that no one understood.

In Al-Anon we find many of these experiences are common to others in the program. Eventually we see that the friends we make in Al-Anon can become our confidantes and strong supporters. By sharing in meetings, we start to trust others, to reason things out without gossip, and to earn mutual respect.

Intimate relationships can help us grow. As we become more open with those in our lives, we find we can rely on them to encourage us and to give us honest feedback. Eventually we use what we learn to strengthen our relationships with family members and friends.

*Blueprint for Progress* (Revised, P-91), p. 63

### 2

I think that the fellowship of Al-Anon gives us two important qualities that are lacking in many of our lives as a result of living with alcoholics: intimacy and interdependence. We become very close to other members because they understand our predicaments. After we share our inventory with a Sponsor, intimacy becomes an important element in the relationship. Most of us had never before experienced the closeness that we have in Al-Anon.

Another aspect of fellowship is that we become interdependent in a very healthy way; we learn that we can contribute to the well-being of others and it can have wonderfully positive results. After so many years of trying to make a positive contribution to the alcoholics in our lives, it is rewarding to share with people who are doing their best to improve their lives. And when we are feeling down or lonely, the caring and sharing of other members is the best remedy in the world.

*As We Understood...* (B-11), p. 27

### 3

For the first time in my life, I have chosen a partner who allows me to be me. In my past relationships, I was hypersensitive to the other person's needs and oblivious to my own. With the help of working the Steps and, more significant for me, the Traditions, I have learned how to keep peace and to ask myself "How Important Is It?" Would I rather win or be happy?

I had to get to know and accept myself (and be unconditional in my acceptance) in order to fully love myself just the way I am. When there are issues to discuss, I do my best to remain open and respectful in my listening, which is not always easy. The old triggers from the past rear their ugly heads and that childhood belief comes back again: If I am not right, I am unlovable, and if I am unlovable, I will be abandoned and I will die. When I am able to separate myself from my partner, and allow her to be exactly like she wants to be, I enhance intimacy and set a tone of mutual sharing. I used to think that a healthy relationship had to be a lot of work. I now believe that when I choose the right people, my relationships are balanced and full of grace.

*Discovering Choices* (B-30), p.90-91

## **25 Questions about Intimacy**

(from *Blueprint for Progress* [P-91] and the Intimacy Writing Guideline)

(Cut the questions into slips for use in the breakout groups.)

1. How do I define intimacy?
2. Which of my actions encourage intimacy and help bring me closer others?
3. Where do I get examples of positive, intimate relationships?
4. What kind of examples do my actions convey about the value of close relationships?
5. How have the dynamics of the family illness of alcoholism affected my perceptions of all types of intimacy, including sexual?
6. To what extent, if any, do I accept responsibility for the loss of intimacy in my relationships?
7. In what ways have issues of intimacy within an alcoholic relationship affected my other relationships?
8. When, if ever, have I used sex as a substitute for real intimacy? What was the result?
9. How did I feel when someone I cared about tried to use sex to control or manipulate me? How did I feel when I did the same to others?
10. Describe the impact that issues of self-worth or other character defects have had on my intimate relationships with my Higher Power, the alcoholic, family members, friends, or myself.
11. How has building a relationship with my Sponsor and learning to trust helped me expand my capacity for intimacy?

12. What Al-Anon tools have I used to rebuild trust and intimate relationships?
13. What words would I use to describe the quality of my emotional intimacy with my loved ones?
14. How has my ability to have healthy sexual relationships been affected by alcoholism?
15. What is the difference between a relationship based on love and one based on control?
16. If I stop trying to fix certain relationships, how could I benefit?
17. Do I pause to listen to a Higher Power, instead of reacting immediately to someone else? How can that change my relationships?
18. How honest am I when I share my feelings with others? To what extent do I mask what I truly feel? How much of what I am saying is what I think others want to hear?
19. How are my relationships, as I understand them now, a reflection of my own strengths and weaknesses?
20. How have my attitudes about sex affected my relationships?
21. In my past and current relationships, what has been the balance between giving and taking? Do I have a tendency to do—or to expect—one more than the other?
22. If I went into a relationship expecting someone else to “complete me,” what did I think I was lacking that another person could provide? How did that affect the relationship as it developed?
23. How have my boundaries changed since coming to Al-Anon?
24. What are the rewards—and consequences—of thinking of myself as a victim?
25. How do I express love for myself? My Higher Power? Others?