

AOYL Traditions and Guidelines

The AOYL program has specific guidelines that are suggested to ensure a common thread that connects AOYL groups in communities around the world. These guidelines assure personal privacy, safe thinking and writing haven, and enlightening experiences for the attendees of AOYL workshops and meetings.

Much of the content and guidelines of the AOYL program are built and borrowed from other groups and their Traditions, as they are centered around general principles that provide sustainability to the Workshops and meetings.

These principles are “Notions” or general “rules” for those that attend the workshop and meetings. Violation of these guidelines grant the group power to exclude anyone that does not abide by these rules. Much of the successes of AOYL stem from trusting the process and personal privacy of attendees.

Personal Sharing

“Content” of other attendees discussed and shared in the workshops and meetings should always be considered highly personal and confidential. AOYL, has not political or religious affiliation, the opinions expressed within the group are those of the individual sharing, respected as an opinion however does not reflect the intent nor purpose of the AOYL programs. Attendees in all cases should recognize that opinions of other attendees have not basis in being right or wrong, and any attendee should not judge the program by the opinions of those that contribute to during the AOYL sessions.

These are common guidelines found in other programs, and are for the good of all attendees. Respect of shared content in the AOYL meetings, is paramount, whether agreeing with their point of view or not.

1. The common vision of AOYL, is centered around being a safe place to share personal writings, life experiences and personal talent as the “gift” of communal humanity and thus private, not to be shared or discussed outside of the AOYL programs. Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one authority — a collective consciousness that may be described in several ways: A loving nature and respect for all attendees. One may express themselves in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants—their role is to facilitate, and not govern.
3. The group welcomes all that come to explore their personal psyche, and their personal expression of humanity in who they are, not to be judged by the group. Attendees, when gathered together for mutual aid, may call themselves a part of the AOYL family, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation. The only requirement for membership is that there be want to expand their personal awareness of themselves, and to process personal challenges, using the group and tools provided to explore personal solutions to those challenges.

4. Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or AOYL as a whole.
5. Each AOYL Family Group has but one purpose: to help individuals become at peace with themselves. We do this by practicing generally recognized practices of journaling and by encouraging and understanding human frailty, and by welcoming and giving comfort to attendees.
6. Our AOYL Groups ought never endorse, finance or lend our name to any outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary goal. Although many times sponsored by a church or community organization are always looked to be a separate entity, and not part of any other organization.
7. Every AOYL group ought to be fully self-supporting, sustaining from personal attendees contributions, and declining outside contributions.
8. The AOYL work should ever remain forever non-professional, but our groups may employ or refer attendees to seek professional advise outside of the AOYL workshops or meetings.
9. Our group workshops and meetings, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve as a sustaining group that wishes to continue and advance the personal growth experienced as a result of attending a AOYL function.
10. AOYL Groups have no opinion on outside issues; hence our name ought never be drawn into public controversy, in no way political or religious.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, and TV. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all AOYL facilitators and attendees.
12. Anonymity is the premise of creating a safe and nurturing environment, and of all our Traditions and guidelines, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities.
13. The program is centered that in all events, that attendees attract to them what occurs, that attendees are personally accountable for their actions and interactions with others in the group.
14. Every attendee is welcome to participate or not in any of the exercises the program may espouse, and is free to leave at any point.