



LIFELINES

Newsletter of the RI AFG, December 2009

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Anniversary Celebrations!

Please submit all Anniversary Celebration information to riafg.org

Al-Anon Family Groups Needs your Story

The Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism publication reaches many individuals and professionals who are unfamiliar with our program. They would love for you to share your Al-Anon experience with them to help inform others about the program. Their purpose is to dispel any misinformation or fears people might have about Al-Anon. If you are interested in sharing please write, in 500 words or less, about your reactions, reflections and benefits of the program and send it to the following address.

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.
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1600 Corporate Landing Parkway
Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617
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Pearls of Wisdom



“You learn to speak by speaking, to study by studying, to run by running, to work by working; and just so you learn to love God and man by loving. Begin as a mere apprentice and the very power of love will lead you on to become a master of the art.” Francis de Sales (Courage to Change pg. 317)

Members Share

“Without Alateen I would still be lost.”

Corey O.
Growing Strong Alateen
E. Greenwich

Most days I am numb to everything my father does. Some days I feel like I don't have a father at all in my life. All the time I tell myself "I love my father because he is my father, but I don't like him." Thinking about it, it's not my father I don't like, it's the alcohol, the disease. But tell me this if it's the disease I hate then why does it seem it's him I hate. Is it because the disease has hold of him? I don't know and I don't know if I will find that out. I do have hope I will get the answer in Alateen and from the Alateen members.

McKenna D
Growing Strong
E. Greenwich

You know what one of the best things in my life is? Well I am going to tell you. It is being a member of Alateen. Alateen is a big part of me .It is a place I can go and express my feelings and get the help I need. I feel comfortable in Alateen because I am not the only one who is alone. I can actually be around people who are just like me, so I don't have to be afraid any more. I don't have to be sad, angry or lonely anymore. So I realized there was only one place for me and Alateen is that place.

Devin P
Growing Strong
E. Greenwich

RI Al-Anon Area Meeting
Summary, Sept. 10, 2009

The Alateen coordinator chaired the meeting at the request of the Area Chair who was unable to attend.

After the opening and introductions the Secretary reported on the last meetings minutes. Amendments were made and passed unanimously.

The Treasurer's report included all contributions from January to August totaling \$5,962, with an inflow of \$742 for the month. She stated that there are 10 to 15 groups who donated religiously. Expenditures averaged \$965 per month, to date they total \$8,675 including September. The yearly insurance premium of \$695 was paid and had not increased over the past year. Although she voiced concern over rising costs and smaller donations, she believes the Area will be fine for the coming year considering there is \$4,000 in the account, going into the next year. It was suggested that all members try to donate more than \$1 per meeting to help facilitate more revenue for the future success of the Area programs. Acceptance of the treasurer's report was accepted.

The public outreach coordinator gave his report. He said that there were some very successful endeavors including a presentation at a battered women's shelter where questions were asked and answered successfully. He and the Alateen coordinator had attended a psychology class at URI, per their request, to speak about the program. In addition, a church in Hope Valley had asked for Al-Anon literature, which was promptly sent. Although there is no formal outreach committee, he indicated that he has been able to attain volunteers to get the job done. He also informed the group that the events are fun and people generally enjoy participating in the outreach program.

The Lifelines editor submitted the newsletter for approval. There was some confusion as to the content of the "Pearls of Wisdom" section regarding CAL (conference approved literature) and amendments were made. It was suggested going to past coordinators as links of service. With amendments made, the Lifelines newsletter passed unanimously.

The Alateen coordinator reported on the Area Workshop in place of the Workshop Committee chair who was unable to attend. A flyer was passed around and donations are still needed. Groups are asked to donate a basket for the raffle.

Issues of incorporation, liability insurance, and inventory were also discussed and will need further investigation to be addressed at a later date.

An open Letter of Thanks

Thanks to all of you for your donations to our white elephant table, we made \$165.00. Thanks for inviting us to participate. Special thanks to Betsy W, Steve C, Denise G, Rose B, and Marie G, the Alateen Sponsors, for being there for us. We had a great time and made lots of money too!

RI Alateen.

Note from Marie G.

Thanks to the Alateens you were the best as always. You make my heart sing. I know there were many of you who were unable to attend, thank you for being there in spirit. To those of you who represented us....Alexa G, Amanda, Ashley R, Ashley T, Cassie, Devin P, Gabe W, Julia B, and Scott R, much love and thanks for your participation. Thank-you Alateen sponsors. Special thanks to Sandy (MA Alateen sponsor) and Tory (MA Alateen) for joining us.

Service Opportunities

Anyone interested in service can contact the Area Office at 401-781-0044 or visit our website at <http://riafg.org/> and click on the Service Opportunitites link. There are various positions open and volunteers are always welcome. Please consider service as an opportunity to show your support for our invaluable program.

As We Understood RI AFG Fall Workshop 2009 by: Heather R.

The Fall 2009 Workshop of the Rhode Island Al-Anon/ Alateen Family Groups was held on Saturday, November 7, 2009 at Ray Hall on the Butler Campus. From the moment the registration table opened, Ray Hall was a flurry of activity with people registering, tables being set up (food, literature, White Elephant), and twenty-five donated baskets for the raffle displayed in the auditorium.

Judy opened the meeting at 9:00 A.M. with a moment of silence followed by Marguerite reading the 12-steps. Marie read the traditions and Jenny the anonymity statement. Leah, our Area Chair, shared a few notes and also urged those that could, to volunteer to serve at the Cranston office. There are several slots available.

David, an AA member, was the first speaker. He has been sober since May 23, 1989. While sharing his story, David made several connections to the importance of service. Service, for him, gets him outside his comfort zone. He commented, "Whenever you can give of yourself, it's important." David acknowledged that recovery isn't permanent, but a constant effort. He closed sharing, "I like my life and I see the possibilities."

Next, Scott, an Alateen member for 4 years, shared his moving story. Scott first noticed his family was different in first grade. Years later, in Alateen, he learned that he wasn't the only one with alcoholic parents. When Scott felt like a burden at home, Alateen gave him an outlet to relieve stress. During a weekend trip for Alateen, Scott's point of view on the 12-steps and Alateen changed. During the trip, Scott stated that he learned a lot more about himself and his relationship to his Higher Power. Since Alateen was there for Scott, he continues to go to Alateen, not for himself but to help other teens. He says, "I go to listen and offer advice. It's not about me." Scott demonstrates "Whenever anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen be there. And let it begin with me."

Following the morning speakers were five breakout sessions. I chose to attend the session on "Letting Go" led by David. To help us Let Go, David shared three simple questions. "What do you need to let go of?" "How are you going to let go?" and "Why should you let go?" List both the pros of letting go and the cons of not letting go.

After lunch, the Forever Hope group from West Greenwich performed a skit on "Understanding Anonymity" using Goldilocks and the three bears. They explained the three types of anonymity: personal, within Al-Anon, and outside Al-Anon. They also explained how anonymity changes as you grow in Al-Anon.

Patti from Connecticut was the afternoon speaker. Patti shared her Experience, Strength, and Hope. She said, "You told me if I kept coming back, my life would get better. You kept your promise." As Patti grew in Al-Anon she also grew into service in Al-Anon and began to practice the principles of the 12-steps in other areas of her life. Her growth helped her take on an area role and take risks and chances in other areas of her life. Patti closed saying that she does look back at the past, sometimes, just to see how far she has come.

For the afternoon breakout session, I attended the panel discussion on "As we understood." Kim, AA; Margie, Al-Anon; and Gabe, Alateen were the panel. Each first shared how they came to a Higher Power of their understanding, then took questions from the group.

After the afternoon breakout sessions, the basket raffle was held. The day closed with a "Serenity Walk". The day was filled with fellowship and fun. This was my first workshop, but it won't be my last.



Photo courtesy of Nancy M.

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Lifelines e-subscription: RI_Al-Anon@hotmail.com (type "Mailing List" in the subject line)
Web: www.RIAFG.org

An area newsletter is a vital link in keeping groups and members informed. The purposes of *Lifelines* are to: encourage attendance at service events; communicate local, area, and Al-Anon Information Service news; and attract Al-Anon members into service.

Lifelines submissions may be sent to RI_Al-Anon@hotmail.com or mailed to the office at the address above. The deadline for submissions is the last weekend of the month.

If you wish to receive *Lifelines* and other Area news via e-mail, please e-mail RI_Al-Anon @hotmail.com and type "Mailing List" in the Subject line.