

# Lifelines – Rhode Island

Your Monthly Newsletter  
SEPTEMBER 2012 Edition

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RI Al-Anon/Alateen Family Groups

106 Rolfe Street  
Cranston RI 02910 401-781-0044



### *Invitation to Open House*

Time: 1-4

Date: Sunday September 30, 2012

Place: 106 Rolfe St. Cranston, RI

- Come to your open house
- Do you order books for your group?
- See where your books can be ordered
- Office hotline and answering machine
- Area World Service meetings are held
- Alateen sponsor training/certifications are held
- Meet and greet some of our volunteer members
- Ever wonder where RI AFG office is?
- Love step 12 and service to others?
- RI AFG history is kept in boxes (all our history) @ 106 Rolfe St. Cranston
- Interested in joining us or volunteering?

Please print and pass on to members....see you soon!

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*The next AWSC meeting  
will be Sept. 8<sup>th</sup>, 10 AM –  
12PM at the Rolfe St  
Office in Cranston*

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### 12<sup>th</sup> Step Commitment Opportunity for RI Al-Anon Groups!

The annual RIAFG Workshop with AA Participation will be held Saturday November 17<sup>th</sup> at Butler Hospital in the Ray Conference Center (we were not able to finalize a date with St Mary's in Portsmouth for this year, so we are at Butler again.) The theme this year is:

**Lois & Laughter** - Below is a chart to describe some of the 12<sup>th</sup>-Step opportunities for service commitments for **individuals and groups**. Please email [riafgworkshop@gmail.com](mailto:riafgworkshop@gmail.com) if you are willing to share your talent, time, and energy!

**Also, all area groups – start thinking about your baskets for the raffle!!!!**

Front Stage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Can you act?</u> Can you laugh with the crowd? Would you like to come as a couple dressed as Lois and Bill circa 1950 when Al-Anon was founded and be willing to assist in MC-ing the event? More than one Lois and Bill duo would be even better! Cross-dressing OK too...respectful hilarity!</li> <li>2. <u>Can you organize?</u> We have a potluck at the event and it might be nice to have a district or 2-4 groups coordinate the lunch and snacks for the event this year.</li> <li>3. <u>Are you cheerful?</u> We need a group to work the registration table at the event.</li> <li>4. <u>Musician:</u> Can you create a 5-10 minute meditation with music to begin the event</li> </ol>
Back Stage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Are you "Crafty"?</u> There is a Crafter-noon scheduled on Thursday 9/27 by the 10:00 am Warren meeting to make book covers, bookmarks, aprons, bags, whatever you can make that the Alateens can sell to raise funds for their groups. Please contact Sandy at <a href="mailto:sandyrecovers@gmail.com">sandyrecovers@gmail.com</a> for the flyer and more information!!!!</li> <li>2. <u>Set Up:</u> Is there a group that would be willing to make a commitment for the evening before the event for 2 hours to help set up and be politely guided around by a decorating team?</li> <li>3. <u>Aftercare:</u> Is there a group or two that would be willing to stay for 90 minutes after the event for clean-up and helping folks load cars?</li> <li>4. <u>Diversity in Al-Anon is a key thought area of WSO.</u> Is there a group who would be willing to create a wall hanging that can be used for multiple years to highlight the international and national diversity of AFG?</li> </ol>
Post Stage	<p>Is there a group that can be alert and observant during the event to type up observations about what worked and what could be improved to pass on to next year's workshop committee?</p>

### Thinking Outside the Box

For years, the Al-Anon Board of Trustees and the World Service Conference (WSC) have been exploring ideas for a new structure that might work for all the Al-Anon Areas throughout the U.S. and Canada. At the 2012 WSC, the Delegates were offered this plan: “Formulate and implement a structure in your geographical Area or combination of geographical Areas for a trial period that would enable your groups to have full communication, participation, and representation. In other words, think ‘outside of the box.’ In discussion at the WSC, Delegates cited Lois W.’s criteria—is it simple, is it inexpensive, and would it give equal representation? Another Delegate quoted Lois as believing in the greatest good for the greatest number.”

This also means that the Al-Anon Alateen Service manual, except for the Policies on pages 75-121, is not to be considered the rules and is not binding on the Areas. What works best to provide the needed service to our members should be the goal. Examples of possible changes include such things as shorter terms for Group Representatives (GRs), changing criteria on who can be a District Representative (DR) or Delegate, sending more than one person to the WSC, changing the number of Districts in an Area or whether Districts are needed at all, no longer having Area boundaries defined by state lines, and so forth.



At the July Area World Service Committee meeting, the committee voted to form a “Thought Force” to explore possible Area structure changes that would maximize our ability to serve the needs of the fellowship and I was asked to chair the Thought Force. Barbara H. also volunteered to be on the Thought Force. According to the Al-Anon Alateen Service manual (page 64), a “Thought Force” is a temporary committee established to research ideas and possibilities on a single defined task or activity. If appropriate, they may offer recommendations resulting from their findings. They are “thinkers” not “doers.”

So, if you would like to join Barbara and me in thinking about possible Area structure changes, send me an email at [phyllis.alanon@gmail.com](mailto:phyllis.alanon@gmail.com). I don’t think we need to have formal meetings, but rather can do our research via the internet and share our thoughts/findings via email. If you don’t want to be a “formal” member of the Thought Force but have ideas for our Area that are “outside the box”, I would love to hear from you. I will be reporting our collective thoughts/ideas to the AWSC at a future meeting.

Phyllis H., District 4 DR

The office hours vary depending on volunteer hours. The phone message is changed every Sunday to reflect the availability. Please call before going to the office (401-781-0044). We are always in need of more volunteers to keep the doors of the office open.

**Sometimes**

Recently, I was attending a meeting that was not going all that well for me to begin with. In my opinion there is not enough real Al-Anon discussed there and way too much cross talk occurring. I go because the meeting is convenient and once in a while I hear something that is helpful.

I decided, after last week, that it was my last time to attend that particular meeting. I will find others.

In this meeting, I raised my hand to speak. Before I could start, I was interrupted by a woman who had spoken earlier on in the meeting. Her question was directed to the chairperson. But she pointed to a newcomer who was taking notes and asked the chairperson if she had inquired whether this person would like to share, asked what her response was and asked if the newcomer was a reporter.

I cannot remember the exact words that were used by the woman interrupting me only how her words and action made me feel -- Emotionally unsafe!

I also felt embarrassed for the newcomer. I can only imagine how she felt. In front of 20-25 people she was "called out".

The newcomer responded with grace and explained she wanted to write things down that inspired her. When the newcomer, the interrupter and the chair kind of finished, another Al-Anon member raised his hand, introduced himself and started talking.

The chair interrupted him, asked me if I had my hand up, I replied "yes, but I can wait". The chair ignored me and turned to this man and told him "Mary had her hand up". I interrupted her to say to the man, "Please continue."

I was mortified! I was sent into a tizzy. I was confused and embarrassed. When he finished speaking the chair asked me if I wanted to speak. I did. I said I can only speak my truth, and that was that I felt unsafe. That I felt embarrassed, unsafe and angry. I had forgotten what I raised my hand to say initially and that I was scattered and in shock at what had just occurred. The meeting ended. For the first time since I have been going to Al-Anon meetings I felt worse after the meeting than before the meeting.

For me, Al-Anon is a place for me to feel safe. I did not feel safe and I can only imagine the newcomer did not either. But I'm not sure, because I cannot read her mind.

When I see the "interrupter" next, I will tell her I think her questions would have been better saved for after the meeting and addressed directly with the newcomer instead of calling her out in front of everyone during the meeting. A few women spoke to me after the meeting to calm me down, I think. They shared with me that they were uncomfortable too and felt very heavy after that meeting. It made me feel miserable. I will not go back to that meeting. I have had other issues with this meeting but this was the last straw.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Mary

## Al-Anon

### Web Sites

- ▲ Your local, Area 49 web site  
<http://www.riafg.org>
- ▲ The Al-Anon Members' Web site  
<http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/members>
- ▲ Podcasts <http://al-anonfamilygroups.org/Podcasts/FirstSteps/>
- ▲ Online meetings and outreach  
<http://www.ola-is.org>
- ▲ Public Al-Anon/Alateen site  
<http://www.al-anon.alateen.org>

• **CAL Sample Chapter:** Each quarter, WSO posts a sample chapter of Conference Approved Literature on both the Public Outreach site, [www.al-anon.org](http://www.al-anon.org), and the Members' site, [www.al-anon.org/members](http://www.al-anon.org/members). Through September, the chapter is from *Survival to Recovery* (B-21), and the topic is "What Are the 'Tools' of Al-Anon?" The Sample Chapter on the Members' site also includes a list of where to find this topic in other CAL, an opportunity to share on this topic, and quotations, meeting topics, and discussion questions pertaining to this book.

• **"CAL Corner":** Each month, the "CAL Corner" feature in *The Forum* includes members' sharings on how a particular piece of our literature has enhanced their recovery. September's article celebrates the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the pamphlet *A Guide for the Family of the Alcoholic* (P-7). In service,

Deb E, RI AFG Literature Coordinator

*Remember, when you buy from your local LDC, you support your local services!*

**CURRENT OPEN POSITIONS:**

*Alateen Process Person* - The Area Alateen Process Person (AAPP) serves as the Area's designated Alateen contact with the WSO Group Records Department regarding Alateen forms. Since 2004, every Area has Alateen requirements and has a process to certify Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS), register Alateen groups, and implement the Alateen Behavioral and Safety Requirements at all events in the Area that have Alateen participation. The Alateen Process Person works closely with the Alateen Coordinator; for example, the Alateen Coordinator may be responsible for the training and certification of AMIAS, and the AAPP for submitting Alateen forms, recertifying AMIAS, or verifying certification of members serving Alateen for Al-Anon conventions and other events with Alateen participation.

*Archives Coordinator* - Enjoy scrap booking? The Archives Coordinator preserves the experience, history, and memorabilia of the RIAFG. The Coordinator may head up an Archives Committee, which would be responsible for researching the history of Al-Anon in RI. Our archive materials are currently at the Area office. They need to be organized, dated, catalogued, and preserved using archival methods (e.g., acid free paper, boxes).

*District Representatives for Districts 2 and 5* - The DR is usually any incoming, outgoing, or active past Group Representative who is willing to represent the district at Area World Service Committee meetings and Area Assembly. The DR conveys information to the GRs from the Area World Service Committee, listens to group concerns, and takes any questions or concerns to the Area World Service Committee meetings.

*Group Representatives* - Many groups in Rhode Island currently do not have GRs. The GR receives information from their District Representative to share with their individual groups and attends the RIAFG Assembly meetings to vote on area issues. The GRs are the voice of RI Al-Anon.

*Alternate Area Delegate* - The Delegate attends the annual Al-Anon/Alateen World Service Conference (our world-wide group conscience) and takes to the Conference our Area's viewpoint on matters affecting the entire fellowship. The Delegate then returns to the Area with a broader perspective of Al-Anon worldwide. He/she is the bridge of understanding that links the groups in the Area with world Al-Anon/Alateen to help us continue to function in unity. The Delegate is the servant of Al-Anon as a whole.



Service (planting the seed) -  
Recovery blooms.

The only way the meetings stay alive is by service, we do this by chairing meetings, taking group positions, and taking area positions. The only way to keep what we have is to give it back.

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**"Higher Powered Lunch Bunch" Anniversary Meeting***Tuesday, September 11, 12:00 noon - 1:00 pm*

St. Stephen's Church, 2nd floor, 114 George Street, Providence

Please join us for speakers, food, and fellowship!

**Ridin' into Recovery***Friday - Sunday, September 21-23*29<sup>th</sup> New Hampshire Al-Anon and Alateen Convention with AA Participation - updates to follow.**RI Al-Anon Crafternoon***Thursday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 am-2:00 pm (after regular "Hope for Today" meeting)*

Warren Town Hall, 514 Main Street, Warren (enter basement on Joyce St)

Come help us make Al-Anon crafts for sale at our annual RI Al-Anon workshop. Have no crafting experience? No problem!

**Area Office Open House!***Sunday, September 30<sup>th</sup> 1:00 - 4:00 pm*

RI Al-Anon/Alateen Office, 106 Rolfe Street, Cranston

Come see **your** RI Area World Service office and check out the newly reorganized literature distribution center (LDC)!**Al-Anon International Convention***Friday - Sunday, July 5-7, 2013*

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

The International Convention only happened every five years. Vancouver is beautiful.

Visit the WSO website for more information

<http://www.al-anoninternationalconvention.org/>. WSO has set aside blocks of hotel rooms, so the conference and hotel registration can both be easily completed at the same time through the WSO website.

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*Lifelines* e-subscription: Email to: [RI\\_Al-Anon@hotmail.com](mailto:RI_Al-Anon@hotmail.com) (type "Mailing List" in the subject line) Web: [www.riafg.org](http://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.

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