

# Lifelines

## Rhode Island Al-Anon Family Groups

[www.riafg.org](http://www.riafg.org)

### Monthly Focus Topic

### Step 2

***Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.***

**Why Worry When You Can Pray** is a wooden sign that hung in my mother's home. Faith is very powerful. Alanon invites and encourages members to trust in our higher power. There is no one definition of higher power; but most people would agree that it is a belief in something greater than ourselves. That something greater than ourselves could help us heal, restore sanity, manage worry and obsession, that is what brings us here and makes this program so successful.

#### **Member and Readers' Share Page**

#### **Reflections on Service in Al-Anon**

Service has offered me a multi-dimensional experience in the program. It took me several years to understand the term as it related to my recovery. It was something I saw others do. When I first volunteered for a position, I was anxious and felt trepidation about whether I could meet the requirements and had the skills to do the job. Today I see that the latter was pre- Al-Anon thinking. The doubt, self-deprecation, not being good enough were among those defects of character I had been asking my Higher Power to remove. Suddenly I was being offered an opportunity to change and practice that new behavior. I found my voice and said "yes." Service opened a new world to me. It expanded my mind, opened my eyes to situations I was not seeing and my ears to words I was not hearing. People in the fellowship were kind, offered to help and were non-judgmental in showing me that progress not perfection was the goal. I would never have traveled as far as I did in my journey without the service experience. The program itself is wonderful but service added to it in a way I could not have imagined. As they say in Al-Anon "You don't know what you don't know." So, if and when you can unlock the treasure of service and receive its many benefits on your personal journey go for it!

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### I Found Out Who I Am

Growing up in an alcoholic family, I seemed to have lost my sense of self. I took on everyone's feelings and lived my life according to their moods. My father was an alcoholic, and my mother was very busy taking care of him. In turn, I took care of all my younger siblings. I learned and took on the role of caretaker. That became my profession as well.

I married my best friend, whom I met at a high school dance. He was drunk, and I should have known then. Twelve years later, he confessed he had a drinking problem. At that point, I knew nothing about the disease of alcoholism.

As a child and young adult, I was so afraid to take risks. I simply followed instructions and did what I was told. So, when I was told to go to Al-Anon, I did. At this time, my husband had just left the treatment center. I was handed a card with someone's name on it and a phone number. I called her. My phone felt like it weighed 500 pounds in that moment. She became my first Sponsor, and my journey into recovery began.

I stayed for the miracle. I began the journey of self-discovery. My Sponsor's favorite word to describe me was "willing." I was *willing* to do anything and to learn about this disease. Through this process I discovered who I am, what I want, and what I need. I learned about my passions and my true self. I continue to live the Steps by sponsoring, going to meetings, and reaching out to people on the phone. I accept life on life's terms. I am at peace, experiencing serenity.

My dad was almost 12 years sober when he died. My husband, whom I chose to stay with, has 33 years of sobriety, just like me, "One Day at a Time." My life is full, rich, and serene most of the time.

*By Sarah O., Oregon*

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### A Multigenerational Disease

I came to Al-Anon because of my daughter's struggle with alcohol and prescription drugs. I thought Al-Anon would give me the answers to solve this problem for her. Instead, it has shown me how I have contributed to this situation by trying to fix, control, carry, hide, deny, and obsess over my daughter's problems.

Attending Al-Anon meetings helped me look at myself and try to figure out how I developed these patterns. My grandfather was an alcoholic, and all my life, I have heard from my mother how awful it was. I can see control, negativity, pessimism, anxiousness, and perfectionism in my mother. I now realize she adopted these traits to cope with her upbringing.

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I am beginning to understand how this has affected me and shaped who I am today. I have struggled with anxiety and depression; I am hard on myself and set unrealistically high expectations for myself. I can see now how my traits have affected my daughter. I am starting to put all the pieces together, and I recognize this is a multigenerational disease.

*By Lisa I., Texas*

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### What It Means to Serve Alateen

The importance of becoming involved in service was instilled in me early on in my recovery journey, and for that, I am truly grateful! Like many others, my journey began in my home group, then expanded to the District, and then, eventually, to the Area. With each opportunity came more awareness of our service structure and how simple and complex it was all at the same time. Serving Alateen was a significant opportunity that arose just as the World Service Conference voted to affirm the 2003 Alateen Motion from the Board of Trustees. This motion required the creation of Area Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements (ASBR).

It soon became clear that the ASBR served as the overarching guidance to follow, and that participating in training to serve Alateen was extremely important. After completing my initial certification to become an Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS), my desire to serve Alateen took on new meaning. However, I also realized that convincing my children to attend Alateen meetings would be as difficult as pulling out my own teeth one by one!

I am so grateful that Al-Anon and Alateen focus on attraction. The positive changes in my behavior, resulting from my recovery from the effects of someone else's drinking, have allowed me to support not only my teenaged children but also many others.

Being involved in Alateen service means I have the responsibility of understanding and maintaining my certification status, as outlined in the ASBR. Over the years, I have encountered situations that prompted me to question the processes described in the ASBR. This has led me to collaborate with the links of service to discuss whether it's time to review the contents of the document. Being a part of Alateen service presents opportunities to look at our processes. Consequently, I am on a task force dedicated to updating the ASBR! This is a wonderful opportunity to talk to each other and reason things out and follow the links of service to revise and approve the ASBR. Our goal is to ensure that clear and consistent guidance is provided.

I have come to appreciate that understanding Alateen service is not just the responsibility of AMIASs—it is also the responsibility of every Al-Anon member. I am reminded that Alateen is an integral part of Al-Anon. That does not mean everyone needs to become an AMIAS, but it's important for every Al-Anon member to know how to support Alateen if another member expresses interest and to be able to point them toward their links of service. Here's a question: Does your District offer support for Alateen, whether or not there is an Alateen meeting currently active in the District?

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Serving as an AMIAS goes beyond just supporting a weekly Alateen group. AMIASs are needed to serve as chaperones and to assist with driving teens to events with Alateen participation or Al-Anon group anniversaries. They are needed to support District and Area events where Alateen meetings are taking place. AMIASs also play a crucial role in public outreach. The recently created Public Outreach to Professionals—Alateen Toolkit offers valuable resources such as adaptable letters and presentations that can be shared with a variety of community agencies to let them know that Alateen is here to help teens affected by someone else's drinking. We need AMIASs to carry these messages!

Now, here's the second question: Does your group use Alateen literature in its meetings? You might not know that you can! The readings from the two Alateen daily readers, *Alateen—a day at a time* (B-10) and *Living Today in Alateen* (B-26), offer the shared experience of Alateen members on many of the same topics discussed in Al-Anon meetings. Having sample pieces of Alateen literature available for group use can be just the refresher needed to help a group that may be in a rut! When I found myself struggling with my Fourth Step inventory, I was introduced to *Alateen's 4<sup>th</sup> Step Inventory* (P-64). Using *all* Conference Approved Literature (CAL) in my process of being "searching and fearless" took on new meaning and was a great growth opportunity.

So, if you haven't figured it out by now, I have a passion for Alateen and for service to Al-Anon. As I write this on my last day as a World Service Office (WSO) Staff member, I am reminded of the love that I felt when first entering the rooms of Al-Anon Family Groups. That love has carried me and guided me to share this program with teens affected by someone else's drinking. Many AMIASs have shared this sentiment, which is true for me as well: while my original motive was to "save the children," the Alateens have, in fact, saved me by sharing their love, truth, and honesty in Alateen meetings and events. I am forever grateful to have experienced and shared that love.

*By Sue P., Associate Director—Group Services*

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### **Facing My Struggles with Intimacy**

Having grown up with alcoholism, I learned very early on that it was not safe to talk openly and honestly or to trust what people told me. To survive, I shut down and ignored or denied my feelings. Under those circumstances, it's no surprise that by the time I found Al-Anon, I had serious problems with letting anyone know the real me. Eventually, I didn't even want to know who I was, which is why I put so much focus on everyone around me!

My struggles with intimacy didn't magically vanish in Al-Anon, but the program certainly increased my awareness of how little connectedness I felt with others. Every aspect of our fellowship helped me begin learning how to talk, trust, and feel. While no one insisted I speak at meetings, they gently encouraged me to share myself with them. For the first time in my life, I felt that there were people who wanted to listen to me. As they opened their hearts to me and shared intimately about their own lives, both in meetings and in one-on-one conversations, I began to trust them. My progress was slow (sometimes painfully so), but as I gradually began

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to reveal more of myself and no one at the meetings criticized or rejected me for it, my trust grew. Feeling my feelings took a little longer, but as I listened to others share their feelings, I began to relate.

One of the main reasons that Al-Anon increases my ability to be intimate is that I'm not doing it in a vacuum, or in the case of my childhood, in an environment where intimacy was discouraged or mocked. Everyone else is learning to be intimate too. We're all at different stages of growth, but that's a plus. Those further along give me hope. Those just beginning the process remind me how far I've come and give me the opportunity to pass on the encouragement that I've already received.

My path to intimacy may have its ups and downs, but by practicing "Progress Not Perfection," today I appreciate how connected I feel to the world I live in and to the people around me. It is so much better than I ever thought possible!

*By Tom C., Michigan*

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### Wanted: A Higher Power I Understand

Our Twelve Steps invite us to seek a "Power greater than ourselves" to help us navigate challenges and find serenity. Each person defines that power in their own way and exploring what you truly need from a spiritual connection is a deeply personal journey.

February's blog topic is, "What would you include in a 'want ad' for your Higher Power?" What qualities would you seek? Unconditional love? Compassion? Wisdom? Strength? Humor? Whether you're religious, spiritual, or neither, creating a Higher Power "description" can be a meaningful step toward self-awareness and recovery.

Please share with us at [al-anon.org/member-blog](http://al-anon.org/member-blog)

As always, you can also write about Al-Anon's three Legacies. This month features Step Two, Tradition Two, and Concept Two.

Sharings on the Member Blog may be used in future Al-Anon publications.

New topics are being added each month!

*Do you have a story you would like to share in Lifelines? Send it to [lifelines.riafg@gmail.com](mailto:lifelines.riafg@gmail.com)*

*Each month we will focus on a new topic and share reader responses to the prior*

*month's focus.*

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### Cranston Office News

The Cranston office is now open on Tuesday evenings from 4:00 to 7:00 PM. Our literature coordinator is also there on the 3rd Saturday of the month from 9:00 to 10:30 AM and the 4th Wednesday of the month from 5:30 to 8:30 PM.

Please call the office ahead of time if you are planning to come in. Literature orders can be mailed in using the order form on our website : [riafg.org](http://riafg.org). Please include a check made out for the total of the order including any shipping charges if you want the literature mailed to you. Please include a contact name and phone number. If there are questions about the order, we need contact information to clear up any issues. If you plan on picking up the order, please include a contact name and phone number so we can let you know the status of your request. Please note that the office still accepts only cash or checks.

### Conference Approved Literature (CAL) in RI!

Please check out our literature page on our RI Al-Anon website:

<https://www.riafg.org/literature.html>

Thank you for your continued CAL purchases at our Literature Distribution Center. Due to the rise in Media Mail cost over the last several years (thankfully no increase in 2026), the shipping cost will now be a flat 10% of the total cost shipped.

The increase is still less than orders at WSO because their shipping costs reflect the standard shipping prices.

I'm available for in person CAL purchases the third Saturday of the month from 9:00 - 10:30 AM and the fourth Wednesday of the month from 5:30 - 6:30 PM.

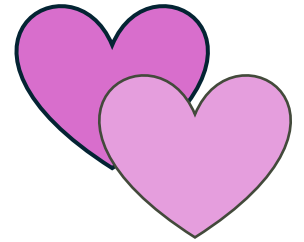
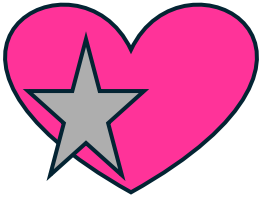
Please consider donating gently used CAL to the Cranston Office. I can set it aside for special literature "give aways".

Jackie W.  
Literature Coordinator

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27<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

**LOVING HEARTS**

**AFG**



**11:00 AM -**

**12:30 PM**

**SATURDAY FEBRUARY 21, 2025**

**AA AND AL-ANON SPEAKERS!**

**FOOD (Pizza Party) AND FELLOWSHIP!**

**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

**AL-ANON IS A FELLOWSHIP FOR FRIENDS AND FAMILIES OF ALCOHOLICS**

**ST JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**49 MIDDLE HIGHWAY**

**BARRINGTON, RI 02806**

**(Use the *back entrance*, which is handicap accessible. Follow Signs)**

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**FOREVER HOPE**  
**Al-Anon Family Group**

Invites You to Join Us As We Celebrate Our

38<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

and

Lois W.'s Birthday

Sunday, March 1, 2026

10:00 a.m.

West Greenwich Town Hall  
280 Victory Highway, Route 102, West Greenwich, RI

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84013128987?pwd=amp2ZTR5UXAzSW5KOGtEQki4VEEx0Zz09>  
Zoom App: Meeting ID: 840 1312 8987 Passcode: 764812

Speakers • Finger Foods • Hot & Cold Beverages • Fellowship • Spirituality

*Come Share the Joys of Recovery with Us*

Park in the large lot to the south (right) of the Town Hall. Entry is at the back via the wheelchair ramp.

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### ALATEEN MEETING

Are you a teen that has been affected by someone else's alcoholism? Do you believe no one could possibly understand how you feel? Do you cover up your real feelings by pretending you don't care? Do you feel neglected, uncared for, or unloved? Do you tell lies to cover up for someone else's drinking or what's happening in your home? There is hope! Alateen is a support group for teenagers whose lives have been impacted by someone else's alcoholism.

#### **You Are Not Alone Alateen**

Meetings every Sunday 6-7pm

Location:

YANA of Newport County  
770 Aquidneck Ave  
Middletown, RI 02842

<https://yananewport.com/events/alateen-meeting/>  
<https://al-anon.org/newcomers/teen-corner-alateen/>

Ages: 13 - 18

*Only Alateen members, prospective Alateen members, and Alateen group sponsors are allowed to attend Alateen meetings. Adults are invited to attend Al-Anon meeting occurring at the same time at the same location. Al-Anon is a support group for anyone who has been affected by or is concerned about someone else's drinking.*

#### **What is Alateen?**

Alateen is a place where teens come together to:

- Share experiences, strength, and hope with each other to find effective ways to cope with problems
- Discuss difficulties and encourage one another
- Help each other understand the principles of the Al-Anon program through the use of the Twelve Steps and Alateen's Twelve Traditions

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### New Alateen Meeting Coming to Cranston!

- Beginning Thursday, January 8<sup>th</sup> 2026 7pm-8pm EST
- Praise Tabernacle Church
- 330 Park Avenue
- Cranston RI 02910

If you're a local teen/preteen whose life has been affected by someone else's drinking then Alateen might be for you!

No dues, no judgment, just a safe space.

Please email [riateen@gmail.com](mailto:riateen@gmail.com) or [rpankiw0727@gmail.com](mailto:rpankiw0727@gmail.com) for more information or any questions



*\*There's an Alanon and AA meeting at the same time for additional flexibility*

### Special note on Tradition Seven Donations Receipts

We are changing how we acknowledge receipt of donations from groups and members. We are doing this as a cost savings measure (postage, paper, toner expenses).

- For group donations, we will email the donation receipt to the “group representative” (GR) or “current mailing address” CMA (which we have on file). If your group prefers that we send the receipt to the group treasurer or someone else, please include a note with the check providing the email for that person.
- For personal, memorial, and appeal donations, please include a note with your email address.
- If you use Zelle to send a donation from your bank account to the RIAFG bank account, please include the email address in the memo/note box.

In gratitude,

Phyllis H.  
RIAFG Treasurer

**Honoring More Than 75 Years of Public Outreach**

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### **Celebrating 75 Years of Al-Anon Family Groups**

As part of our 75th anniversary celebrations, Al-Anon's World Service Office is hosting an Open House, and you are invited! Come visit the "Clearing House," aka Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., founded by Lois W. and Anne B. in 1951. The World Service Office (WSO) has been at the heart of Al-Anon service for 75 years, and we're opening our doors to celebrate this legacy with you!

The Open House is free and open to all members and friends. It will include refreshments, guided tours, displays of treasured mementos from our Archives, and opportunities to fellowship with other members and Staff.

#### **WHEN:**

Saturday, April 25, 2026  
10:00 AM – 3:00 PM Eastern Time

#### **WHERE:**

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.  
1600 Corporate Landing Parkway  
Virginia Beach, Virginia, USA

That evening, a ticketed banquet at the Newport News Marriott at City Center will continue the celebration. Seating is limited.

For complete details, please visit <https://al-anon.org/world-service-office-events/>

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