

LIFELINES

**RIAFG NEWSLETTER 106 ROLFE STREET, CRANSTON, RI 02910
401-781-0044**

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Editor's Corner

I am always amazed when plants have survived another New England winter and push forth to thrive once again in the spring. It's a time to open windows, let some fresh air in, get out in the yard and tend to the gardens. This reminds me of working Step Four: "Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves." Like the spring, Step Four is a time for taking stock, getting rid of old stuff no longer needed or useful, and recognizing the positive qualities I have and want to develop.

It's a time to turn over and nourish the "soil". Thus, I go to meetings, do my daily readings, speak with Al-Anon friends on the phone and run things by my sponsor. It's a time to "weed," digging around their roots to loosen them so my Higher Power can remove them. It's a time to loosen up the top layer so the new life pushing forth has room to breathe and grow. . If it's packed down too much and cluttered with weeds, growth will be that much more difficult.

My talents are the seeds that my Higher Power has planted. I had nothing to do with their being a part of me. They are in every sense a gift. My job is to recognize and develop them. Sometimes this comes naturally and sometimes I have to step outside my comfort zone. This can be a scary process, but, in every case, when I have had to courage to try something new, I have grown. Sometimes I learn what works for me and sometimes I discover that I need to backtrack and seek another direction.

Always, my Higher Power meets me wherever I am. I need to remember to turn to that Power. I don't need to have life all figured out for this to happen. I don't have to have my Higher Power all figured out. In fact, often this Presence is more apparent when I am confused. My job is simple but difficult. I need to be open to what life offers me. I need to hold this life gently with appreciation and a sense of humor, otherwise I am apt to strangle the wonder out of my it and miss the whole point.

A grateful member of Al-Anon,
Elaine H.
Lifelines Editor

You are Invited to Attend
the Parents for Love, Hope & Recovery
3rd Anniversary Celebration
In Support of Parents of Alcoholic Children



When: 7-9 pm, Monday, **April 2**

Where: Four Corners Community Chapel 2110 Diamond Hill Rd
Cumberland, RI 02864 (1/4 mi off Rte. 295 exit 22)

Speakers Raffles Food Fellowship

DISTRICT 2

District 2 is holding a meeting on April 19, 2018 at 6:30 pm. The meeting will be held at the North Kingstown library, 100 Boone st., North Kingstown. The conference room is downstairs towards the back of the room. We will be holding election of our District Representative, Charles. We are looking for an alternate District representative and a public outreach person to help spread the Al-Anon message of recovery for our district. If you are interested please come to our next district meeting to observe the fellowship in action and experience individual growth in recovery through 12th step work. All members are welcome to attend.

Joel C.

FORUM ARTICLE

Taking My Own Inventory

When I came to Al-Anon many years ago, I had been married for seven years, and my husband and I had three young sons. Although his drinking resulted in many negative consequences for the entire family, I stayed in the marriage out of financial and emotional fear.

One recent evening during dinner, I talked with him about my going to Al-Anon. My husband began talking about his experience with A.A. and that, although he liked the meetings, he still didn't believe that he belonged there because he had an attitude problem, not an alcohol problem.

I was shocked. I wanted to scream: *Don't you remember all the nights you came home drunk, stumbling in front of the car or calling to be rescued because your car was in a ditch, or you had been picked up by the police?* I looked at him in disbelief as he stated, "I was actually only drunk once a week from a binge, maybe." I felt that I should set him and his story straight.

But then the things I have learned in Al-Anon flowed into my head and heart and, instead, I quietly walked away without responding. I didn't need to take his inventory or throw his actions in his face after all these years. After all, whose insanity was worse...his addiction to alcohol or my addiction to him? How could I judge him for his denial when I lived in denial of my destructive behaviors for so many years, too?

My Higher Power gives me opportunities to put Steps One, Two and Three into practice over and over again, and this was another one. It used to take me days to let go of such anger. Now I can quickly think through those Steps and then "Let Go and Let God." Instead of staying angry and resentful for days, it takes an hour or so to get back to serenity by reading some literature, calling my Sponsor and saying a prayer like "Bless him, change me."

Through Al-Anon, I have found the spiritual fellowship I had been craving. Today, I choose to stay in my marriage out of love and understanding. My marriage and I are miracles of the program, and I have learned to live happily "whether the alcoholic is still drinking or not."

By Lynn H., Massachusetts

(Reprinted with permission of The Forum, copyright issue January 2018, Al-Anon Family Group Hdqtr., Inc., Virginia Beach, VA.)

****Editor's Note:** Would you like your own subscription to the "Forum?" A subscription form is in the back of all issues. The cost is \$11.00 per year and there is also an online version available.

MEMBER'S SHARE

I have 35 years of Recovery. My life changed the day I walked into the rooms of Al-Anon in 1982. I followed the suggestions made in the meetings. I got a sponsor and worked the steps. Working Step 6, changed my life forever.

By Sandra F.

My Soul Came Up for Air

Tired of turning blue as slate,
My soul came up for air.
The wreckage of the Pequot
Lay tangled in my hair.

I combed out Captain Ahab
and that gold coin from the mast
I can't find Stubb or Starbuck--
Things are happening pretty fast.

Got harpoons in my eyelids,
Seaweed in my ears,
You'll have to listen for me,
I've been under all these years.

By Jon W.

I wrote this just 30 days before joining the Al-Anon fellowship in 2004. Hindsight can be 20-20. Was I trying to name the unmanageability in my life back then? To come to terms with it? It certainly sounds like it. In other words, what's a survivor to do?

What is the meaning behind the "harpoons in the eyelids?" Were these some serious shortcomings that I needed to open my eyes to? Like surveying the aftermath of Captain Ahab's festering resentments? Now there's insanity for you. Alcoholism is a family disease and can destroy even more lives than Ahab did..Resentment turned out to be my first shortcoming in Step Four.

The poem names my soul's life-saving agency in recognizing spiritual suffocation and asking my Higher Power for caring assistance;-after taking some very deep, deep breaths and feeling glad to be alive, of course. It still works today, when things are happening very fast.

NEW WEBSITE

The Website Task Force is excited to announce the launching of our new Rhode Island Al-Anon website. At the Spring 2017 Assembly, the GRs in attendance gave us the task of designing and launching a new website. Based on feedback we received from the GRs at the 2017 Assemblies and also from the members who responded to the Website Survey, we created an up-to-date design that is informative and easy to navigate. We encourage you to explore and enjoy our new website at riaafg.org.

Phyllis H., Barbara H., and Tami K.

ALATEEN SPONSORS' MEETING

Hello Current and Potential Alateen Sponsors:

Ashley and I are writing to you to let you know we have taken on new responsibilities, including continuing as Sunday night Alateen meeting sponsors. We are now also the Rhode Island Alateen co-coordinators. Our former Rhode Island coordinator Megan is still active with other fellowship responsibilities, and Ashley and I feel like we have big shoes to fill.

We would like to continue the tradition and actually comply with the requirement that sponsors meet together three to four times each year. Our first meeting will take place:

When 10-11 am Saturday, April 14

Where Newport Creamery Garden City (401) 944-3397

100 Hillside Road Cranston 02920

Our meetings will offer a great opportunity to:

Share ideas about ways to carry our important message:

What works and what doesn't

Help solve group challenges

Plan goals for the coming year

We would also like you as a sponsor, to introduce Alateen sponsorship to any member of your Al-Anon home group who you think may be interested in becoming an Alateen sponsor, or a co-sponsor. Please invite someone new to join us. We hope to see you at this important first sponsors' meeting of 2018. We know you're busy like we all are, so we promise our meetings will last one hour.

Sincerely,

Joe and Ashley, email: alateen.riafg@gmail.com

SUPPORT OUR NEW DELEGATE

To let our Delegate know how much we love and support her, **please send her a card** while she is at the World Service Conference. Address it in the following way:

Barbara H., (Hold for WSC 4/16-4/20, 2018)

Renaissance Westchester Hotel

80 W. Red Oak Ln.

West Harrison, NY 10694

Use the following for the **return name and address**: Barbara H., RIAFG, 106 Rolfe St., Cranston, RI 02910 (in case it arrives after the conference it will be returned to her at the area office).

Love in Service and Fellowship,

Phyllis H.

Area Chair

Rhode Island Al-Anon

AREA OFFICE NEWS

Service Opportunity: If you are an active member of Al-Anon who has benefited from this wonderful program, please **consider becoming an Office Volunteer or At-Home Volunteer** as part of your own recovery process. We need your help to help others. Please call the area office (401) 781-0044 – and leave your contact info in a message for Jane. We especially invite you to a Saturday morning/midday shift. Currently we are covered for the first Saturday of the month only. Thank you!

Jane A., RIAFG office coordinator

FELLOWSHIP FOLLOW-UP: ATOMIC BOWLING NIGHT!



The RIAFG Fellowship Event organized by District 1 at Lang's Bowlarama on Friday, March 16, 2018 was a whole lot of fun! Almost 20 people attended Atomic Bowling. There were a few strikes, some dancing and more cake than we could eat! Thanks to one of our district one members for donating the sweets! The DJ played great music all night and there was loads of laughter and high fives! Thanks to everyone for coming out. It was fun to get to know each other better!

Looking ahead we'd like your input for other fun fellowship activities we can do together; maybe mini-golf or a Concert Under the Elms at John Brown House this summer? Newport Polo? A hike at Wolf Hill Forest Preserve? A cozy winter game night? Maybe your home group would like a chance to plan an outing?

This is our program, let's have fun and feel connected! Please email to lifelines.riafg@gmail.com with your ideas or suggestions.

"The importance of play for children is well documented. Now researchers are turning their attention to its possible benefits for adults. What they're finding is that play isn't just about goofing off; it can also be an important means of reducing stress and contributing to overall well-being."

Katherine B.

AA Liaison News

The AA conference with Al-Anon participation went very well. I am so grateful for the support I received being new to the AA-Liaison position. I wrote thank you notes to each of the meeting leaders and the Al-Anon speaker and gave them those notes during the weekend, but I also wanted to thank them in this issue of Lifelines. I would especially like to mention Shala, the person who stepped up to speak in Pati S.'s absence. Pati had to cancel because her husband had a heart attack. I am relieved and happy to tell you Pati's husband is home from the hospital and doing well. I wanted to thank Shala for her courage, experience, strength, and hope in stepping up to speak at an event like this one on such short notice.

Thank you also to those of you who were meeting leaders, and to those who participated in reading the preamble and steps during the Family meeting.

I was touched by the incredible support I received from my fellow Al-Anons throughout the weekend. I am hoping they can encourage others to step up in the future.

Thank you, Jackie

RIAFG FALL WORKSHOP:

Save the date! We've set the date for the Fall RIAFG Al-Anon Workshop (w/ AA participation). It will be at Butler Hospital on Saturday, September 29, 2018.

Have you considered **SERVICE** of a different kind? Ever consider what it takes to share the message of Al-Anon on a greater level than your own group? This opportunity could bring a whole new meaning to your program of recovery using the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions & 12 Concepts of Service.

The Workshop Committee is looking for people who are interested in exploring their service talents at the state level! The rewards are amazing. Not only will you help share the work involved in this 1 Day Event, but you will share with other members of AFGs in this small state of RI. You will also learn about the blessings of Service & Fellowship in a meaningful way. By achieving progress with a group doing something that can NOT fail, you will be gaining more self-esteem. That's a win for us ALL. Please consider finding out more about the Fall Workshop just by emailing the coordinator at: workshop.riafg@gmail.com

Thanks for your consideration!
Holly R.

NEWS FROM THE WSO

Dear Al-Anon and Alateen Members,
It is with great pleasure that the Board of Trustees and WSO Staff announce the mailing of a complimentary copy of the newly revised *2018-2021 Al-Anon and Alateen Groups at Work* (P-24) to each registered group throughout the US and Canada. The complimentary copy will be mailed to the Current Mailing Address (CMA). The mailings will be sent throughout the month of March and the first part of April.

In Gratitude
Debbie G.
Chairperson, Board of Trustees
Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.

April is Alcohol Awareness Month. *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism 2018* magazine orders are on their way in time for this nationwide event.

The WSO has mailed the **Annual Group Update Sheet** to the registered groups. Please make sure that the WSO has the current information for your group meeting.

AREA CHAIR'S CORNER

World Service Conference Love Gift

As I walked into the Hospitality Room at my first World Service Conference, I was overwhelmed by the boxes and boxes of “love gifts” that Al-Anon groups throughout the country had sent to their Delegates to share with the other Conference members. It was an amazing example of the love that permeates our fellowship.

If your group would like to send “love gifts” to the 2018 Conference for our Delegate to share, the World Service Office requests that (1) you address the package to: Barbara H., Renaissance Westchester Hotel, 80 W. Red Oak Ln., West Harrison, NY 10694; (2) you include (Hold for WSC 4/16-4/20, 2018) in the address; (3) you put the following as the return address in the event that mail delivery is delayed: Barbara H., RIAFG, 106 Rolfe St., Cranston, RI 02910; and (4) you plan to have the package arrive after April 13th.

Phyllis H., Area Chair

ANONYMITY IN TODAY'S TECHNICAL WORLD

Tradition Eleven reminds us that, as Al-Anon members, we are responsible for maintaining the anonymity of ourselves and others at the level of press, radio, films, and TV. Over the past several years, Al-Anon has interpreted this tradition to also include the internet and social media.

In today's ever-evolving technology, we need to make sure that we do not violate our principle of anonymity. The fact is, web searches on a single piece of personal information (i.e. full name, phone number, email address, home address) may reveal additional information about you and your family.

As trusted servants, it is the responsibility of our *Lifelines* Editor and Website Coordinator to review flyers and other materials submitted to them and when personal information is included to request that the information be removed before printing/posting the information in *Lifelines* and/or in the Events Calendar on the Area website.

Here are some options to use in place of personal information on flyers, etc.

- Google Voice - With Google Voice, you get a free phone number for calls, text messages, and voicemail. Because the “owner” of the phone number is the vendor providing the number, it cannot be traced to you or your other personal information. You can link your Google number to any mobile or landline number (we are not endorsing Google Voice, but merely acknowledging its viability in meeting our need to maintain anonymity).
- RIAFG Area office phone number (401-781-0044) - You should indicate that callers can leave a message and the call will be returned. Area Office Volunteers will collect the information and relay it to you.
- RIAFG Area office address (RIAFG, 106 Rolfe St., Cranston, RI 02910) - Arrange to pick up mail or have it forwarded to you. The Area Office Volunteers will collect the mail and hold or forward to you.

For further information on maintaining anonymity on the internet you can consult the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual 2018-2021*, pages 97 and 101; and the *2016 World Service Conference Summary*, page 70.

Phyllis H. Area Chair Past Delegate, Panel 55

WSO Solicitation for Service Volunteers

Twice a year, Al-Anon solicits service volunteers at the WSO level.

The number of positions available annually is as follows: 3 at-Large Trustees; 3 Regional Trustees (rotated depending on Region); 1 at-Large member, Executive Committee for Real Property Management; 5 at-Large members for each of the following Committees - Forum Editorial Advisory Committee, Literature Committee, Public Outreach Committee; 2 at-Large members, Audit Committee.

If you are interested in learning more about these service opportunities, or know of someone in the fellowship that you think would be a good candidate, please contact me (chair.riafg@gmail.com) or Barbara H. (delegate.riafg@gmail.com), for further information and to receive the résumé form.

Phyllis H. Area Chair Past Delegate, Panel 55

Northeast Regional Trustee -

Every 3 years the Northeast Region, which includes Rhode Island, is asked to submit nominees for a Northeast Regional Trustee. Each Area in the Region collects and reviews Trustee résumés from their respective Areas and the qualifying chosen résumé is submitted to the WSO by the Area Delegate.

To facilitate time to review and choose a candidate, anyone interested in being considered for the Northeast Regional Trustee should submit their résumé to me at chair.riafg@gmail.com by June 30, 2018.

All active Al-Anon members with at least 10 years of continuous membership, who are not also members of AA, are eligible to stand for the position of Trustee.

As a past Delegate, I can attest to the wonderful growth opportunities that Service provides. I encourage all members to give their recovery a boost through Service.

Phyllis H.
Area Chair
Past Delegate, Panel 55 Anonymity on the Internet

Would you like to be on the distribution list for Lifelines? Send an email requesting this to lifelines.riafg@gmail.com. These are sent as “BCC’s” so your anonymity is protected.

Do you have a story or an Al-Anon event to share? Would you like to share why your home group is so special to you? Would you like to share your insights? Do you have an inspirational photo? Please email these to lifelines.riafg@gmail.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Apr 13 -15, 2018 | 2nd Native American Al-Anon Conference
The Lodge at Sante Fe, 750 N. St. Francis Dr., Sante Fe, NM
see the Events Calendar on riafg.org for more details |
| Apr 20-22, 2018 | 42nd Massachusetts Al-Anon/Alateen Convention
Sturbridge Host Hotel, 336 Main St., Sturbridge, MA
see the Events Calendar on riafg.org for more details |
| Apr 28, 2018 | AWSC meeting, 10:00 AM to Noon, 106 Rolfe Square, Cranston. All are welcome. |
| May 22, 2018 | New Beginnings Anniversary, Tuesday 7:30 to 9:00 PM
Speakers, fellowship and refreshments |
| June 9, 2018 | RIAFG Spring Assembly, Park Place Congregational Church
72 Park Place, Pawtucket, RI. More details to come |
| July 6-8, 2018 | International Al-Anon/Alateen Convention, Baltimore, MD
“Celebrating One Day at a Time” Baltimore Convention Center,
Baltimore, MD, see the Events Calendar on riafg.org for more details |
| Sept 15, 2018 | AWSC meeting, 10:00 AM to Noon, 106 Rolfe Square, Cranston. All re welcome. |
| Sept 29, 2018 | RIAFG Fall Workshop with AA participation
9:30 AM to 3:00 PM at Butler Hospital, Ray Hall, 345 Blackstone
Blvd., Providence |
| Nov 17, 2018 | AWSC meeting, 10:00 AM to Noon, 106 Rolfe Square, Cranston. All are welcome. |

AL-ANON MEETING UPDATES

ANNIVERSARY MEETING

Parents for Love, Hope & Recovery is having a 3rd Anniversary Celebration on Monday, April 2, from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at Four Corners Community Chapel, 2110 Diamond Hill Rd., Cumberland, RI. Speakers, raffles, food and fellowship.

MEETING CHANGE

South County Step meeting, Wakefield Baptist Church, Main St., Wakefield has changed its meeting format. The first meeting of the month will be the step for that month; the second meeting, the tradition for that month; the third meeting, the concept for that month; and the rest of the month will be discussion meetings.

A **New Beginning** group, Thursday nights at St Paul's Episcopal Church Hall, 2679 East Main St., Portsmouth, is no longer a women's only meeting.

Hope for the Family Disease group, Friday nights at St. Theresa's Catholic Church, 265 Stafford Rd., Tiverton, is now a ONE hour meeting, 7:30 to 8:30, that coincides with the next door AA meeting.

High Powered Lunch Bunch group at St. Stephen's Church, 114 George St., Providence, is changing its twice-weekly meeting schedule. They are cancelling their Thursday AM meeting and will only meet on Tuesdays, effective February 20th.

You Are Not Alone group, Friday nights at Landmark Hospital, 115 Cass Ave., Woonsocket, has **changed it's starting time to 7:00 p.m.**

Step Up To Serenity, Thursday 10:00 AM **has returned to its regular location**, Anchor Recovery, 890 Centerville Rd., Warwick.

NEEDS SUPPORT

A **New Beginning**, Thursday 7:00 PM at St. Paul's Episcopal Church Hall, 2679 East Main Rd., Portsmouth.

Hope for the Family Disease, Friday 7:30 PM at St. Theresa's Catholic Church, 265 Stafford Rd., Tiverton.

South County Step, Thursday 7:30pm to 8:30pm at Wakefield Baptist Church, Main St., Wakefield

Parents for Love Hope & Recovery, Monday 7:00pm at Four Corners Community Chapel, 2210 Diamond Hill Rd., Cumberland.

Step Up to the Summit, Monday 7:00 PM, Summit Baptist Church, 1176 Victory Highway, Coventry.

Higher Powered Lunch Bunch, Tuesday, 12:10 PM, at St. Stephen's Church, 114 George St., Providence.

First Things First, Monday 7:00PM at VA Medical Center, 830 Chalkstone Ave., Prov.

NEW MEETINGS

Let It All Go AFG Tuesday at 7:30PM, North Kingstown Methodist Church, 450 Boston Neck Rd., North Kingstown

Serenity AFG, Thursday at 8:30 AM, St. Andrews Church Hall, 183 Willow Ave., Little Compton

MEETING HAS CLOSED

The **Block Island Al-Anon group** is no longer meeting.

WEB Sites, Addresses and phone numbers

RI AFG: www.riafg.org Office: 106 Rolfe St., Cranston, RI 02910
Telephone: 401-781-0044. Office hours available by calling this number.

WSO: al-anon.org Office: 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway,
Virginia Beach, VA 23454. Telephone: 757-563-1600

**God, grant me the serenity to accept the the things I cannot change,
courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference.**

Photo by E. H.

