Lifelines
Rhode Island Al-Anon Family Groups

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Monthly Focus Topic
Step 5

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

As a Catholic, admitting my wrongs to God is something I've long understood through the practice of confession. I name my faults, receive penance, and trust in forgiveness. These are often the tangible missteps—moments where I clearly recognize that I've done something wrong, whether I want to admit it or not.

But Step 5 asks something more of me.

It calls me beyond simply listing my actions. It asks for deeper soul-searching, for a level of honesty that can't be glossed over or rushed. This step isn't just about what I did—it's about why I did it, the patterns behind it, and the truths I may have avoided facing.

I believe my Higher Power already knows my wrongs and loves me anyway. That's not the hard part. The challenge of Step 5 is not informing God—it's revealing myself to myself.

There is something powerful about speaking these truths out loud. When I admit the exact nature of my wrongs—to God, to myself, and to another person—I step out of isolation. What was hidden begins to lose its grip. Shame softens. Clarity grows.

Step 5 becomes an act of connection.

It draws me closer to my Higher Power—not through ritual alone, but through honesty. It brings me closer to others, reminding me that I am not alone in my struggles. And perhaps most importantly, it brings me closer to my true self—the person I am when I stop hiding, rationalizing, or minimizing. In that space of truth, there is freedom.

Member and Readers' Share Page

Would you like to share your story in Lifelines?
Send it to 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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Letting Go Saved Us Both

Years ago, I walked into Al-Anon. I had exhausted all my ideas and energy trying to defeat my husband's alcoholism, which I considered a weakness of character. I tried to keep it a secret within our four walls. I lost courage when, to my chagrin, he publicly displayed uncontrolled drunken behavior. My daughter, a medical student, mentioned that if I needed help, I could find it in Al-Anon meetings. I hesitated, and the waiting period was unbearable.

Meanwhile, my husband gradually lost hope of achieving sobriety on his own. Following the advice of one of his sober friends, he checked himself into a rehab program. He didn't last even two weeks. He begged to come home and then relapsed. That's when I began attending Al-Anon meetings. I got a Sponsor and persevered in applying the Steps and slogans. A lot of sleepless nights, tears, and worries continued, but eventually, I started to look at my husband with compassion, viewing him as a helpless person trapped in a bottle. I began to accept alcoholism as an illness. My brain fog started to clear. I found my Higher Power in the Al-Anon rooms and asked for guidance every day through every challenge.

I believe that changing my attitude and focusing on myself contributed to him finally finding sobriety. Today, I continue to attend Al-Anon meetings virtually as well as in person. Thanks to the worldwide fellowship, we are thriving!

By Anonymous

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My Disease

Before Al-Anon, I knew little outside of grief. My relationship with the addicted members of my family had transformed from frustration to obsession. Without realizing it, I had built a prison in my mind, where I was convinced that I was trapped and nothing would ever change.

My mother, who has been in the program for 30 years, listened to me complain, even as it ate into our time together. Finally, she said, "You sound like an addict." Only then did I see how my addiction to control, judgment, self-pity, anger, and dependence mimicked the signs of addiction to alcohol.

I found a meeting and have been going ever since. From the start, I knew it was where I needed to be. Without Al-Anon, my life would be terrible and completely unmanageable. Today I am someone who shares regularly in meetings and sponsors others. I now carry a sense of calm I haven't felt in decades!

By Helena J., Illinois

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Cranston Office News

The Cranston office is now open on Tuesday evenings from 4:00 to 7:00 PM.

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 support and purchases from our Rhode Island Al-Anon Family Groups.

Please visit our office at 106 Rolfe St., Cranston, RI 02910 to browse our Conference Approved Literature (CAL). Volunteer hours are the third Saturday (9:00–10:30 a.m.) and fourth Wednesday (5:30–6:30 p.m.) of each month.

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: www.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.

CAL will be available for sale at the Area Assembly on June 6. If you or your groups would like to place an order in advance, please do so by Friday, May 29. I will bring your items to the assembly and can accept cash or checks. Please note that I will only be at the meeting until 11:00 a.m. due to a prior afternoon commitment.

Additionally, the 2026-2029 Service Manual is now available in hard copy for $11.00. Please help spread the word! You can also download a free digital copy at Al-Anon.org by navigating to the Members page under "Manuals and Guidelines."

Jackie W.
RI Area 49 Literature Coordinator

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Would you like to receive Lifelines in your inbox each month?
Please send an email to lifelines.riafg@gmail.com
with your email address and we will add you to the distribution list.

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New Alateen Meeting Coming to Cranston!

- Beginning Thursday, January 8th 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 rialateen@gmail.com or rpankiw0727@gmail.com for more information or any questions

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

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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 effect 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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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

Step Twelve in Action: Ensure Hope Is Within Reach

During warmer weather, travelers and newcomers often search for Al-Anon support in unfamiliar places. When someone seeks an Al-Anon meeting, whether in person or virtually, accurate information becomes their lifeline. Keeping your group's meeting time, location, virtual links, and Phone Contact for the Public details up to date is Step Twelve in action.
"When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always be there, and—*Let It Begin with Me*."
To update your group's information, please visit: **al-anon.org/update**

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Serenity on Sunday

7th Anniversay

Sunday, May 17, 2026

Potluck @ 5 PM

Showing of "Lois's Story" @ 6 PM

"First Lady" of Al Anon

YANA Clubhouse
770 Aquidneck Ave
Middletown, RI 02842

Questions? Contact Brian
401-924-3274

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SAVE the Date

Rhode Island Al-anon Family Groups

2026 Spring AWSC Assembly

JUNE 6th

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Richmond-Carolina Fire Station

208 Richmond Town House Rd. (Rt. 112)

Carolina, R.I. 02812

Share the Day by Bringing an Al-anon Friend!

Share Your Ideas, Thoughts and Outlook!

Share & Learn the Experience of Area Service!

- Refreshments, Snacks and Deserts provided
- Please bring your own bag lunch or enjoy local eateries
- Parking available
- For More Information or Questions, please contact Chair.riswc@gmail.com

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Charlestown New Life
47th Anniversary!

Please join us as we celebrate

Where: Cross' Mills Baptist Church
4403 Rd. Old Post Rd.,Charlestown
(next to the Cross' Mills Library)

When: **Tuesday, June 9th, 2026**
Food & Fellowship: 6:00 PM
Speakers Meeting: 7:00 to 8:00 PM
Zoom Meeting ID: 741 035 1630 Passcode: RQ9MhT

Potluck will be in the basement of the church.

Speakers meeting will be on the main floor

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RIAFG District 3 Summer Picnic:

- This event will take place at Colt State Park in Bristol, RI **at Site 18**. See the park map for reference (Site 18 is at the end of "Area 1"): https://riparks.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur881/files/assets/documents/map-colt.pdf
- All RIAFG members are welcome, no matter which district you are in. You may bring family and friends as well!
- Please bring a dish or drinks to share. **No alcohol is allowed on state park property.** If you have any allergies, please bring your own food. We will provide plates, cutlery, some refreshments, and trash cans. The park has a carry-in/carry-out policy.
- We have picnic table seating for 60 people. Bring your own lawn chair or blanket if you'd like.
- If you have a pop-up/canopy tent that you can bring, please email Megan at workshop.riawsc@gmail.com
- We will pass the basket to cover group expenses. Any and all donations are greatly appreciated.

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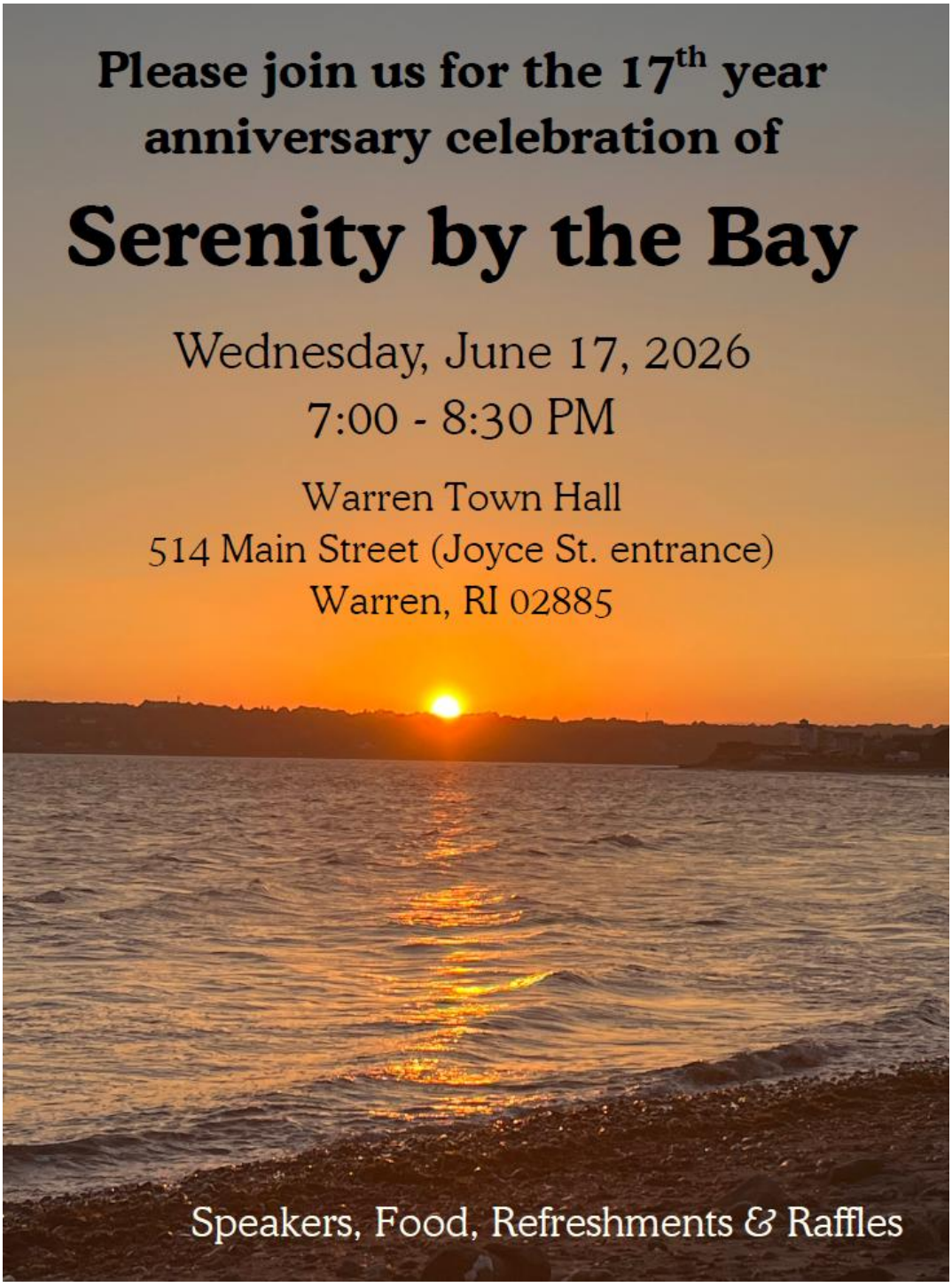

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Sharing Area Highlights – WSC 2026

Rhode Island; Barbara W., RIAWSC Delegate Panel 64

Rhode Island is tiny, 37 miles wide by 48 miles long, and as Area 49, we have 3 districts, 34 in-person/hybrid meetings including one Spanish-speaking meeting and one Alateen meeting, and 10 online meetings. There has been a healthy increase in interest in service at the AWSC level and spirits are high!

Highlights

- RIAWSC Area 49 held two in-person assemblies, one in the Spring hosted by District 3 and one in the Fall hosted by District 1. Five additional AWSC meetings were held via Zoom or in hybrid format.
- RI Area World Service Committee is rocking! All but three service positions have been filled.
- The Budget is out of the red and into the black, thanks to member responses to fundraising efforts.
- Workshop Coordinators planned and held the annual all-day Al-Anon Workshop in October featuring Al-Anon and AA speakers, breakout sessions, and AA participation.
- Alateen Coordinator and Alateen Process Person worked hard to get Alateen up and running again post-Covid. RI has one new Alateen in-person meeting started and one that is in process.
- New Tech Coordinator position was created and filled.
- The Area held a successful Writing Workshop on Zoom and at the Annual Workshop.
- A Task Force for office accessibility has been established.
- The Rhode Island AA Convention with Al-Anon participation was sold out, there was an Al-Anon speaker, several Al-Anon meetings held, and literature available.

Challenges

- We are still looking for an Alternate Delegate, a Public Outreach Coordinator and a Forum Coordinator.
- There was no elected Delegate for 2025 and thankfully our chairperson attended WSC, doing double duty.
- We are working to figure out how to best support our Spanish-speaking group at assemblies and workshops.

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75 Years, One Purpose

Tradition Five is my favorite tradition, it states that Al-Anon's one purpose is to help families of alcoholics and that I can be helped by working the 12 Steps, encouraging and understanding the alcoholic, and welcoming and giving comfort to other Al-Anon members.

By the time I walked into my first Al-Anon meeting in Chicago in 1992, I felt as though I had tried everything I could think of to get my alcoholic husband to act normally, to no avail. I was in deep despair, hopeless and in pain. I reached out for help by walking into that Al-Anon meeting, and it was such a relief to feel open to help for the first time in my life.

I had asked for help before but I never actually wanted feedback. I used my problems and extremely chaotic situations as topics of conversation to gain attention and shock and distance people. The "help" I received was never helpful so I nodded, smiled, and quickly and disdainfully discarded suggestions.

As I attended these early meetings, I realized I had found people who understood and whose sole purpose was to help me! I was gently helped indirectly by listening, sharing, working the 12 Steps, and reading literature. Al-Anon appeared set up to give me no reasons to criticize or reject what I was hearing, and no way to mess it up or fail at it. Al-Anon was my lifeline. Everyone was kind and I began to feel heard, "a part of" despite sharing my great imperfections, and it was a fantastic and new feeling. After a meeting, I felt poured back into my body. I began to understand the disease of alcoholism and that there were reasons for my struggles, and it all made sense. I learned to have more compassion for myself, my family, alcoholics, and friends and families of alcoholics.

Before Al-Anon, helping others gave me a reason for existing. In Al-Anon, I have learned to offer help without strings or resentment. I benefit myself by giving only what I

am able to give, which in turn, benefits others in a healthier way.

Aversion to help is a primary way that I've been affected by the disease of alcoholism. I volunteered as third-year delegate to continue to give service when I can, to develop my ability to accept help from a mentor, a service sponsor and members, to try new scary things and to accept my imperfect humanity. Attending the WSC is yet another opportunity for me to show gratitude for the gift of the Al-Anon program through service.

Barb W., Panel 64
RI Delegate, Area 49
delegate.riawsc@gmail.com