

LIFELINES

NOVEMBER, 2018

RIAFG NEWSLETTER

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Editor's Corner

Step 11: "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

I have heard it said at many meetings that the Steps are numbered for a reason, that they need to be worked in order starting at Step 1 and proceeding from there. I have done this in as much depth as I could. I have also taken a significant issue/problem I am having and worked on that issue by going through each applicable Step.

Now to somewhat contradict what I just said. At Step Study meetings, I have often heard someone say, "Oh, I'm not at that Step yet." However, there are so many kernels of wisdom embedded in all of them that it is a shame, in my opinion, to feel that a Step cannot be used simply because I have not yet "officially" worked it.

I needed prayer and meditation early in my recovery and certainly earlier than after having worked Steps 1 through 10. The courage to walk through the door of my first meeting sprang from Something much greater than me. And I needed to get in touch with that power, and what better way than through a conscious effort.

I am an introvert. I get recharged by my "quiet time." And I accomplish my quiet time by slowing myself down, putting aside all the stuff I have to deal with, and turning the volume down on the noise in my head. In other words, I need to come to the present unencumbered by ruminating over what was and worrying about what will be. Openness cannot exist in a mind that knows no calm. I cannot be present when my mind is racing around everywhere. I need to put my mind where my feet are. And I have come to realize that as my journey in recovery continues, this time of prayer and meditation is vital.

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

PS In an effort to make this newsletter more friendly to those of you who need to print it, I have tried to reduce its size and also to group the info so that you can print only the pages you want to share with your group members. ALSO, there is a lot of good information from the WSO on the approaching holiday season. Don't miss it!

Anniversary Celebrations and Special Meetings:

30 Years of the Gift of Hope

Meeting since December 19, 1998

Anniversary Meeting



Wednesday, November 7th, 2018

7:00pm-8:30pm

Church of the Redeemer (entrance at back of building)

655 Hope St., Providence RI

Speakers, Potluck, Raffle, Fellowship!

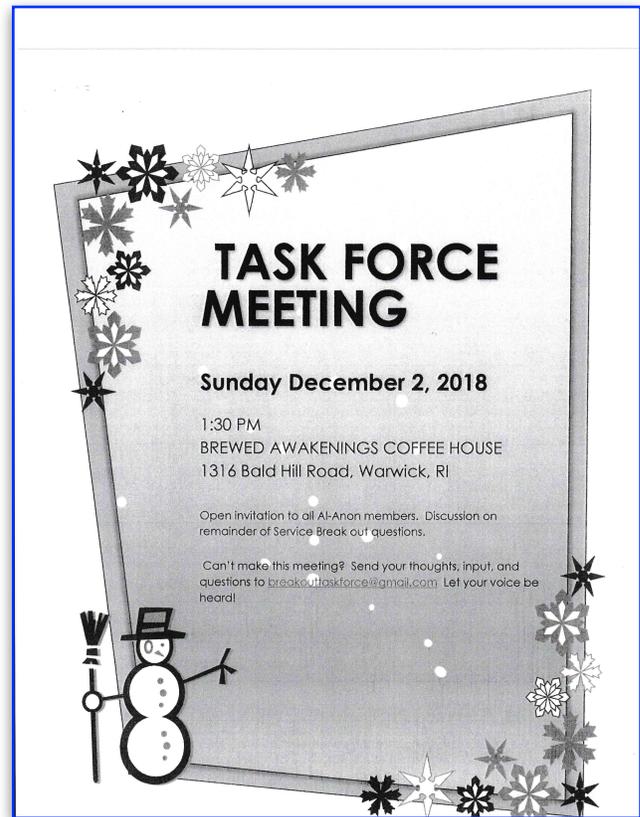
THANKSGIVING MEETING: Thursday morning Portsmouth meeting is still holding their meeting on Thanksgiving. The meeting is at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 324 East Main Rd. (rte. 138) Portsmouth, and begins at 9:30 AM. The topic will be gratitude!

District II Meeting: November 29, 2018 at the Cranston Office, 106 Rolf Square, Cranston from 6:30 PM to 7:30PM. All are welcome.

Breakout Task Force Meeting: December 2, 2018 at 1:30 PM at Brewed Awakenings Coffee Shop, 1316 Bald Hill Rd., Warwick. All are welcome to attend. More Info on following page.

Task Force News:

The spring assembly generated a request from the Group Representatives that a task force be created for further discussion on the service break out questions. These questions affect our RI Al-anon groups. Whether you are a newcomer, old timer, or anywhere in between we invite you to join us for fellowship and input. **The next meeting is December 2, 2018 from 1:30 to 3:30 PM at the Brewed Awakenings Coffee Shop at 1316 Bald Hill Rd., Warwick.** We will be discussing the first three breakout questions: **What works? What motivated you to step up to service? What doesn't work? All are welcome to attend.** For more information email breakouttaskforce@gmail.com



NEW COMMITTEE: RIAFG SAFE MEETINGS PROCEDURE

In Al-Anon we are blessed to have meeting spaces where we can “place principals before personalities” and attend and share safely. Unfortunately, there are rare instances in which meetings are confronted with threatening or unstable behavior that disrupts members’ safety. At the Fall Area Assembly, Group Representatives voted to create a committee charged with drafting a statewide safety procedure to support meetings faced with such situations. While we are fortunate to have some models of other states’ procedures, we want to ensure our procedures meet Rhode Island members’ needs. If you have a suggestion or comment on this matter, please email the committee at riafg.safemeetings@gmail.com so that we can include your experience, strength, and hope in our efforts.

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 yo? Please email these to lifelines.riafg@gmail.com.

District II News:

What's NEWS in District II - August 2018

Once a month, District II meets for about an hour at a named location to unite the individual groups within the district. Topics range from informing groups of news from the Area or World Service levels to planning program-related events for fun, fellowship, and sometimes fundraising. District meetings also coordinate service and public outreach projects and as such are a great way to learn more about or get involved in service. As a start, District II is bringing its news to you!

Back in August, District II met at the North Kingstown Library to discuss 3 main agenda items: (1) the importance of being heard at the monthly District Meeting when issues are presented; (2) Al-Anon Family Group guidelines around voting at group business meetings; and (3) rotating our District Meeting amongst the 18 district groups.

To address the importance of being heard at meetings, a motion was made and unanimously accepted to study the District Meeting Guidelines from the Al-Anon.org website and give feedback at next month's meeting. The hope is to encourage increased attendance and learn ways to help promote stronger, more interesting, and more effective District II Meetings.

To address voting at group business meetings, the group referred to several pages from our Al-Anon 2018-2021 Service Manual and agreed to distribute the information to their home groups for those interested in learning more about voting at group meetings.

To encourage participation and service, the group discussed rotating the District Meeting location and what that would look like. Some Group Reps (GRs) had asked their individual home groups if they are open to the idea of hosting a District II Meeting either before or after their regular meeting. It was also agreed that the District II Meeting members would attend the host Al-Anon meeting. A motion was made and passed to rotate the meeting for the next two months. The September District Meeting was held at South County Step in Wakefield on Thursday, September 13th one hour before the regular meeting. The October District Meeting was held at Forever Hope in West Greenwich on Sunday October 28th directly after the regular meeting. Members headed to lunch afterwards to enjoy some fellowship.

Before closing, GRs were (1) reminded to ask groups to consider donating a raffle basket for the RI Al-Anon Fall Workshop which took place on Saturday September 29th and (2) asked to remind their home groups that September is Recovery Month and to consider public outreach to help spread the word about Al-Anon. For outreach ideas, it was suggested to reference the Public Outreach Service Guidelines G-10 available at Al-Anon.org.

If any District II groups would be willing to host a future District Meeting, please contact the District II Rep. Our next District II Meeting will be on Thursday November 29th at 6:30pm at the RI Area Office in Cranston. We hope to see you there!

Links of Service

Member + Member = **Group**

Group + **Group** = **District**

District + **District** = **Assembly**

Assembly + **Assembly** = Conference

District Meeting Guidelines • Al-Anon.org • G-15

Did You Know?

What are the RIAFG Area policies, procedures, and guidelines?

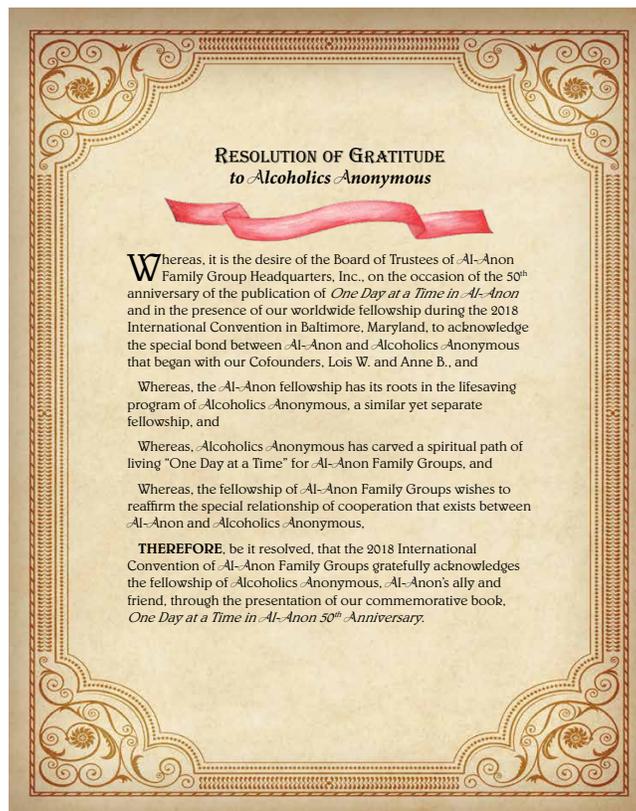
Members can easily access all of the Rhode Island Al-Anon Family Groups approved Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines on the Area website. Just go to <http://www.riafg.org/area-business.html>; click on AREA POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES; and then click on any document to read, download, and/or print it. Also, there is a Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines binder for viewing in the Area Office. Members are welcome to stop by the office when it is open.

Love in Service and Fellowship,
Phyllis H.
Area Chair
Rhode Island Al-Anon

Area Chair's Corner:

Below is the Resolution of Gratitude that was presented to AA by Al-Anon at the 2018 Al-Anon International Convention in Baltimore.

Love in Service and Fellowship,
Phyllis H.
Area Chair, RIAFG



AA Liaison:

Five Al-Anon meetings will be available. Please consider leading one – a great way to serve! Meeting leaders are responsible for the \$25.00 registration fee. Registration: <https://aainri.com/convention/>

SPECIAL NOTE: ELOY M., our AL-ANON guest speaker will give his talk on Sat., Mar. 23 at 10:15 am.

Al-Anon Meetings CAL = Al-Anon/Alateen Conference Approved Literature

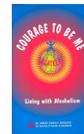
Sat., Mar. 23 at 9:00 am: **Understanding Ourselves and Alcoholism**
Suggested CAL - Understanding Ourselves and Alcoholism pamphlet

Sat., Mar. 23 at 11:30 am: **How Al-Anon helped save my life?**
Suggested CAL - You pick and share your personal story.

Sat., Mar. 23 at 2:30 pm: **Al-Anon Slogans - How they help us.**
Suggested CAL - Any daily reader, How Al-Anon Works pgs. 65 -75

Sat., Mar. 23 at 5:00 pm: **Al-Anon Fellowship -Breaking Our Isolation**
Suggested CAL - From Survival to Recovery pgs. 13, 18, 23, etc. or Concept Four

Sun., Mar. 24 at 8:30 am: **How I practice the Al-Anon Twelve Steps in My Daily Life.**
Suggested CAL - Paths to Recovery, Daily Readers or How Al-Anon Works



If you would like to lead a meeting, please contact Jackie G. by email: aa.riafg@gmail.com or leave a message at our Area Office phone number, (401) 781-0044.

Parking is FREE and available at the hotel, though it's limited. The hotel offers valet parking @ \$20.00 per night. We have a FREE trolley that runs from the Newport Visitors Center parking lot (there will be a sign) 23 Americas Cup Ave from, Friday, March 22, 6-8:00 pm, 9:30-midnight & Saturday, March 23, 8am-8pm, 9:30-midnight: <https://www.discovernewport.org/about-newport/visitor-center/>

Area Literature News:

Due to demand another order of the new Intimacy in Alcoholic Relationships has been placed. Please call the area office in Cranston to find out when they will be available for sale.

Anne-Marie,
RIAFG Literature Coordinator

Area Office News:

The Area Office still needs volunteers! Please consider giving back by volunteering for hours in the office or as a volunteer from your home. Both positions have training.

Office volunteers responsibilities:

Greet anyone who calls the office

Greet visitors to the office. They are usually coming for literature.

Retrieve recorded messages, return calls and record them in our log.

Open and distribute the mail

Fill literature orders for in-person purchasers.

At home volunteers responsibilities:

Access the Al-Anon voicemail account from their home phone, retrieving messages

When the caller leaves a message and a number, the at home volunteer calls them back

Mailing a meeting list or referring the caller to riafg.org

Keep a brief written log of calls returned and communicate with the Office Coordinator

Please call the office for more information and/or to volunteer!

Jane A., RIAFG office coordinator

We currently have 4 Volunteers: Here is the schedule:

Sunday		
Monday	12:30-2:30 PM	Phyllis H.
Tuesday		
Wednesday	12:30-2:30 PM	Paul B.
Thursday	6:00 PM-7:30 PM	Jane A.
Friday		
Saturday		
**At-Home Volunteer	(Tuesdays)	Clara R.

Meeting Notices:**NEEDS SUPPORT**

Cranston/Warwick Day Time Al-Anon, Tuesday at 10:00 AM at Edgewood Congregational Church 1788 Broad St., Cranston.

South County Step meeting, Thursday from 7:30 PM to 8:30 PM needs your support.

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

HOLIDAY CHANGE

The Al-Anon at Noon group in Westerly at Christ Episcopal Church does not meet on Monday Holidays

The 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, & 12 Concepts Study Group in Portsmouth at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, **WILL MEET** on Thursday, November 22nd for the Thanksgiving Holiday

Upcoming Events:

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Nov 17, 2018 | AWSC meeting, 10:00 AM to Noon, 106 Rolfe Square, Cranston. All are welcome. |
| Nov 29, 2018 | District II meeting, Cranston Area Office, 106 Rolfe Square, Cranston, from 6:30 PM to 7:30PM. All are welcome. |
| Dec 2, 2018 | Service Task Force Meeting from 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM at Brewed Awakenings Coffee House, 1316 Bald Hill Rd., Warwick. All are welcome to attend. Discussion on remainder of Service Break out questions. |
| Mar 22-24, 2019 | Rhode Island AA Convention with Al-Anon participation. See flyer. |

Forum Article:

Compassion and Choice

One night recently I was full of confusion, doubt, despair, and self-recrimination over the feelings that I was having and the mess that my life appeared to be in. I was doubting the choices and actions that had brought me to the present, and I was confused, yet full of grim determination about what choices and actions to take to get me out of the situation. Thanks to Al-Anon, I knew the first choice to make was which tool to use.

I felt that I needed the help of another Al-Anon person to break my negative thinking, so I looked at the tools that would put me in contact with Al-Anon people. It was impossible for me to call my sponsor or another Al-Anon person because I had laryngitis. It was too late to go to a meeting. I realized that I would have to rely upon direct guidance from my Higher Power, whom I now choose to call God. Thank God I had been in the program long enough to know and practice the Second Step. I certainly didn't have that belief when I came in. I chose to write a letter to God. In my letter I ranted, raved and complained. I said *poor me* this and *poor me* that (and meant it)! I asked God if I should get professional help. Maybe I should take a Fourth Step. Now there's the answer, I thought. But how? Should I write out my life story, or just start with the most recent event? Should I use the Blueprint for Progress or write out a list of resentments?

I was about to get out every piece of Al-Anon literature on the Fourth Step (at 11:00 PM) when I recognized that I was feeling anxious. That was my clue to stop and slow down. I remembered the afternoon's Al-Anon meeting and the sharings on comfort, compassion and choices. I questioned myself as to whether I was making a compassionate choice, whether it would bring me comfort. Clearly the answer was *no*. I was physically sick, emotionally distraught and spiritually shaky. I needed to slow down, remember easy does it, keep it simple and treat myself with compassion. I was at Step One - powerless over alcohol with my life unmanageable - not at Step Four! Finally humility set in and I simply said to God, "Show me." I said that I would take care of myself physically and asked Him to take care of me emotionally and spiritually.

I made myself a cup of herbal tea, lit a candle and sat in a comfortable chair to unwind before going to bed. As I sat, I tried to still my thoughts and actually listen to God. I realized that it had been a while since I had been able to just listen. What came to mind was the thought for the day on a page of the ODAT. I picked it up and turned to the page - January 9. I read it and wrote out the thought for the day so that I would remember it.

I realized that the way to clear my confusion and find new direction was to acknowledge Him. I decided to adopt an attitude of gratitude and thank Him for the times during the day when He had restored me to sanity, instead of concentrating on where my disease had brought me - fearful, doubtful and insecure. I thanked Him for His presence in the moment and for His help in the future whether I really believed it or not, or whether I really felt grateful or not. I had learned in Al-Anon that faith was not a feeling but rather a decision to turn over our will and lives. I blew out the candle and went to bed, finally able to relax and sleep.

The next morning I woke refreshed - feeling better emotionally, spiritually and physically. My morning meditation reminded me of the guidance from the previous night so that just for that day I would continue to acknowledge Him in every way.

Jane M.J., Massachusetts

Reprinted from The Forum, issue November 1990, 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.

News from the WSO:

Thinking Ahead to the Holidays Public Outreach

Step Ten helps me reflect upon my life in the past 273 days of 2018. Thanks to Al-Anon, I am taking care of myself physically, emotionally and spiritually. But that is about me. What about others? There are 92 days left in 2018, which amounts to 132,480 minutes. Surely, I can find a little time to offer help and hope to families and friends of alcoholics who have yet to attend their first Al-Anon meeting. *Ala-what?* a newcomer might say. Carrying our message doesn't have to be complicated or time consuming. Here are just a few things we can do:

Let the member who works at a hospital take our group's copies of *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* magazines to the emergency room.

Give a copy of *How Al-Anon Works for Families and Friends of Alcoholics* (B-22) to the church library where our group meets each week.

Follow the Al-Anon World Service Office social media posts. With one like or share, we can let our friends and contacts see the hope that one graphic image - or meme - can offer on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter.

Take *What Can You Do When Someone Close to You Drinks Too Much?* bookmarks (M-76) to the library.

Write a thank-you note to the TV or radio station that broadcasts Al-Anon's public service announcements.

Leave a copy of an Al-Anon or Alateen book if the library offers a book sharing program.

I remember how lonely I was as a child and as an adult when I was on the outside looking in at the holiday displays in stores, TV commercials and movies of family gatherings. It only takes a few minutes to think ahead to November and December and how we can take a few moments to reach out to others.

by Claire R., Associate Director - Professionals

Reprinted with permission of the Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., Virginia Beach, VA, *The Forum*, October, 2018.

Order Now: Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism 2019 (AFA)

The WSO is now accepting orders for *AFA 2019* second printing magazines. You can get yours by:

Placing orders on line from the WSO store at al-anon.org/afa2019

Downloading an order form at al-anon.org/afaform

Faxing the WSO at 757-563-1656 or

Mailing to 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617

This is your opportunity to carry and share the message of hope with families and friends of alcoholics.

Request for Sharings for Newcomers

Please consider writing an article for people who are considering attending their first meeting, but uncertain as to whether they qualify for membership in Al-Anon. In 300 words or less, please share what it was like for you as a newcomer. You may wish to focus on: What it was like before Al-Anon and what led you to your first meeting; The first slogan or program idea that had particular significance for you; What kept you coming back after your first meeting.

Whatever brought you to Al-Anon, let your story benefit someone else who has yet to experience the gifts of hope and peace that Al-Anon offers

Please submit your sharings to *The Forum*, 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617; or to wso@al-anon.org, or to al-anon.org/18forumshare.

Are You Ready? – “Newcomer Preparedness Checklist”

With the holiday season on the horizon, October through December is the busiest time of the year for many people. It is also a period of added stress, especially for families and friends of alcoholics. It is an opportunity to remind us to prepare ourselves and our groups to welcome newcomers who find their way to Al-Anon..

“Newcomer Preparedness Checklist”

The holiday season can be a challenging time for families and friends of alcoholics, and even more so for those who have not yet found Al-Anon. Putting a plan in place to welcome newcomers throughout the season will help both newcomers and members alike.

Here are a few things to keep in mind for your “Newcomer Preparedness Checklist”:

- Specific meeting location instructions:
 - Is there a special door to gain access to the building?
 - Is there a sign pointing to the right room for the meeting?
 - Are parking instructions needed?
 - Are special instructions needed for late arrivals, e.g., “After 7:00 pm, ring buzzer by door.”
 - Are instructions clear enough for out-of-town visitors not familiar with your community?
- First contact: Is there a volunteer from the group to be a “greeter” for those attending your Al-Anon/Alateen meeting for the first time?
- Al-Anon Newcomer Packets: Is there an ample supply?
- Al-Anon/Alateen pamphlets and books: Is it time to reorder? Check supplies.
- Public outreach materials: Always a good idea to have a few *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* magazines on hand.
- Meeting schedule: Is it updated? Are there enough copies available?
- Most importantly, please make sure that your **meeting information** is up to date, not just on the local meeting schedule, but on the AIS, Area and WSO websites as well. When newcomers, looking for help, call or search online for meeting information, they will know where and when to find your group. We want everyone to feel welcome in our Al-Anon and Alateen meetings!

This Is Who We Are—

The 2018 Al-Anon Membership Survey Results Are Now Available

A record 13,395 members participated in the 2018 Al-Anon Membership Survey. Some of the key findings are:

- 76% of the members with 0 to 1 years of Al-Anon attendance report improvement in their mental health.
- 56% of the survey participants were 25-48 years old when they first attended Al-Anon.
- 7 in 10 members have been affected by alcoholism spanning two or more generations.
- More than 1 in 4 members first heard about Al-Anon from professionals.
- 78% of the survey participants sought professional counseling or therapy.

A complete overview of the survey results is available at al-anon.org.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the survey!

Be on the Lookout!

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.

Expanding Our Horizons with Conference Approved Literature

Are you ready to step beyond the comfort of our daily readers, but don't know where to start? With 20 different Al-Anon/Alateen Conference-Approved books, 8 booklets and 38 pamphlets to choose from, there is an abundance of options. However, the range of choices can feel a little overwhelming. Fortunately, the **Al-Anon website includes samples of several Al-Anon/Alateen books that can be "taste tested"** to determine what to read next. Just go to al-anon.org and click "Members" and then "Literature."

Help Make Al-Anon's Next Daily Reader Something Special

Al-Anon's three Legacies: the Steps, Traditions and Concepts of Service, are the foundation of our program. Please help the New Daily Reader, working title, be the first Al-Anon daily reader to include sharings on all 3 by submitting your thoughts on any of them.

Type al-anon.org/sharing in your browser to submit your sharings.

New WSO Position Job Posting

The World Service Office (WSO) is excited to announce a newly redefined staff position: "Group Services Specialist – Meetings," a vital role within the Group Services Team. Group Services is information central for Al-Anon and Alateen members and potential members. The position requires 5-7 years continuous Al-Anon membership with service experience at the District or Area level and the ability to work onsite at the World Service Office in Virginia Beach.

Please click on this link to see the job description al-anon.org/employment-at-al-anon

If you enjoy offering understanding while answering member and potential member questions, please submit your resume and cover letter per the guidance at the end of the job description. If you are not interested but know someone who qualifies and shares a passion for our program and its members, we would be grateful if you would take a moment to share the link with them personally. Thank you for your service!

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**



photo by T.H.

**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.**