

LIFELINES SEPTEMBER 2020



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Editor's Corner:

I miss seeing faces and receiving hugs at meetings. However, I am grateful for the technologies that have allowed meetings to continue on line and on phones. I am grateful that many of these services are free.

I am also grateful that I am retired. I have had some time dealing with what to do with my time. Al-Anon has helped me tremendously. When I feel impatient and angry, I can recognize it and turn it over to my Higher Power. Then I can move on with my day.

Lately my anger seems to be ever present. It seems to be popping up all over the place. I do not like being in a state of "limbo." I can see no end in sight and no light at the end of this pandemic tunnel. I have to be alert to my emotions, feel them, accept them, and then release them to my Higher Power. This is difficult but achievable as long as I use the tools of the Program.

I did not cause this pandemic. I cannot control it. And I certainly have no means to cure it. I can only be responsible for myself and my actions. Does that have a familiar ring to it? The three C's: I didn't cause it, I cannot control it, and I cannot cure it. The three C's help me be truly humble. They help me be realistic about what I can and cannot do. They help me be in a realistic relationship with my world and my Higher Power.

In some cases I did cause a situation and in those cases I might have some way to control it, but so far in my experience the only "cure" I have had any good results with was to consciously place it in my Higher Power's hands. And then to Let Go and Let God.

This takes practice. I make a conscious effort to use the tools of the program. Even when I think they may not work, I still trust that they could. So I do it anyway. I look to the success you all have shared in using the tools of the program in your lives. These success stories encourage me to continue even if I don't feel like it. I lean into what I have heard you say at meetings and in conversations. I cannot do this alone, and I don't have to. I am grateful for the many insights you have shared with me.

Gratefully in service,
Elaine H., Lifelines Editor

If you are able to, please consider making a donation to our RIAFG and to our WSO. Our new virtual meeting world has had a serious impact on their finances.

Now could be the time to finally write and submit your recovery experience to Lifelines and *The Forum*.

***DEADLINE FOR THE OCTOBER ISSUE IS SEPTEMBER 28TH.**
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 an upcoming Al-Anon event to announce? - an inspirational photo?- a personal share? - etc. Please email these to lifelines.riafg@gmail.com

MISSOURI AREA AL-ANON/ALATEEN 52nd CONVENTION via Zoom:

The Missouri Area would like to invite the Rhode Island Area to our 52nd Annual Convention which will be held on Zoom.

Missouri Area 52nd Al-Anon/Alateen Convention (with AA participation)

Seeing Clearly in 2020, Saturday September 26, 2020, 9:00 am-10:00 pm

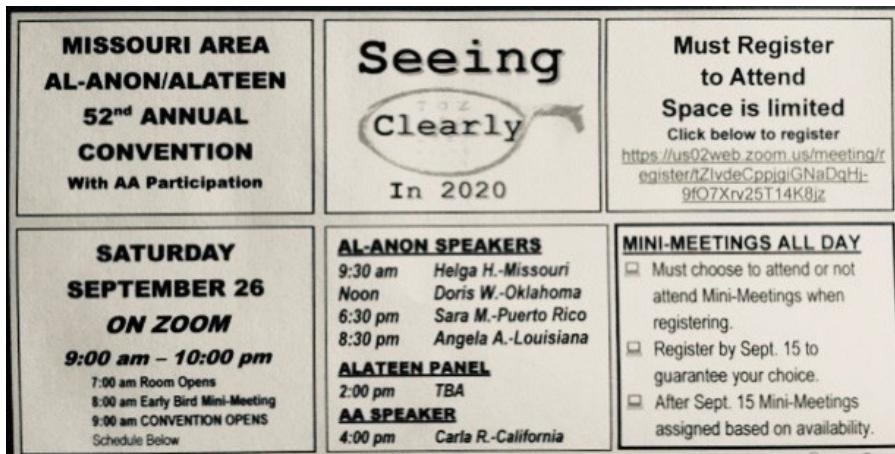
To register click <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlvdCpjgiGNaDqHj-9fO7Xrv25T14K8jz>

Grateful in Service.

MO Area Events

Sue K., Communications Chair

(**If you would like the schedule of events, please email lifelines.riafg@gmail.com requesting this and I will be happy to send that information to you. You will need to register to be able to attend and that info is below and on our Events Calendar.)



2020 EVENTS CALENDAR:

(At this time, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, please check the riafg.org website for updated information.)

September 26 Missouri Area 52nd Al-Anon/Alateen Convention, 9:00 AM to 10:00 PM. See notice on page 3

October 3 AWSC meeting from 10 AM to Noon. Location Zoom info to follow.

November 14 Rhode Island Area Assembly. Information to follow in the upcoming months. See Flyer on page 4.

MEETING NOTICES:

***Please consult riafg.org for the latest information regarding groups who are transitioning back to in person meeting, and for the conference bridge numbers and zoom information for the temporary virtual meetings.

***For the WSO meeting list, please refer to <https://al-anon.info/MtgSearch/PhoneMeetings.aspx?language=EN>

Holiday Notice:

The North Providence Step Meeting will not be meeting on any holiday that falls on a Thursday.

Meetings returning to In-Person:

Monday 7:00 PM, Self Discovery Al-Anon, Emanuel Lutheran Church, 9 New London Ave., West Warwick

7:30 PM, Step Up to the Summit, Summit Baptist Church, 1176 Victory Hwy, Coventry

Wednesday 8:00 AM Serenity at Sunrise, St. Rose & Clement Church, 111 Long St., Warwick

7:00 PM Let Go and Let God, St. Aidan's Church, 1460 Diamond Hill Rd., Cumberland. Park in back of the church, enter via rear door. **Hybrid meeting** - To join Zoom meeting, paste this in your browser:

<https://zoom.us/j/88189707610>. To join manually, go to zoom.us in your browser, enter the meeting ID# 88189707610, password 483079.

AREA CHAIR'S CORNER:

Did you know ... Displaying Al-Anon Literature in Zoom Meetings

WSO policy allows members to copy and share Conference Approved Literature (CAL) in our face-to-face meetings, without written permission.

In recognition of the need for groups to meet virtually during the pandemic, WSO is allowing groups to display a passage of CAL on the screen with the following requirements:

- The meeting Chair or Host can share the screen while members read, provided that the material being shared is only visible for that individual meeting.
- Attendees are asked not to take screen captures of CAL and share with others.

While displayed, the passage should include the following credit line: "From _____, copyright 20_____, by Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. One-time reprint permission granted by Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc."

Phyllis H.
Area Chair

Opportunities to Serve on At-Large Committees of the Al-Anon's Board of Trustees

Have you ever thought about doing Al-Anon service above the group and/or Area level, but were concerned about the time or travel commitment? The WSO is currently looking for volunteers to serve on the following four At-Large Committees:

- **Forum Editorial Advisory Committee** (5 At-Large members) - This Committee recommends editorial policies for our monthly magazine; considers articles for publication and seeks to place *The Forum* in the hands of every AlAnon and Alateen member.
- **Public Outreach Committee** (5 At-Large members) - This Committee assists in the development of educational tools for our members to use with a variety of outside audiences and in the oversight of national and international public outreach projects that enhance AlAnon's public image.
- **Literature Committee** (5 At-Large members) - This Committee seeks to aid recovery by creating new and revised Conference Approved Literature (CAL) and seeks ways of encouraging members to enhance their recovery through increased awareness and the use of our literature and service materials.
- **Audit Committee** (2 At-Large members) - This Committee works with the auditor to ensure that the financial affairs and business controls of AFG Inc. are in order. At-large members of the Audit Committee are required to have financial expertise including an understanding of generally accepted auditing principles and accounting standards, as well as an understanding of internal controls and procedures for financial reporting.

For more information about applying to serve on one of these committees and the online résumé form, go to <https://al-anon.org/for-members/board-of-trustees/wso-volunteers/at-large-committees/>.

The deadline for submitting résumés is January 1, 2021. Applicants will be reviewed, approved, and notified by April.

Phyllis H.
Area Chair

RI Area Fall Assembly

RI Al-Anon Family Groups invites you!

- RI Area Fellowship
- Past Assembly minutes approval
- Area Service position Elections
- Task Force Reports
- 2020 Area Budget & Finances

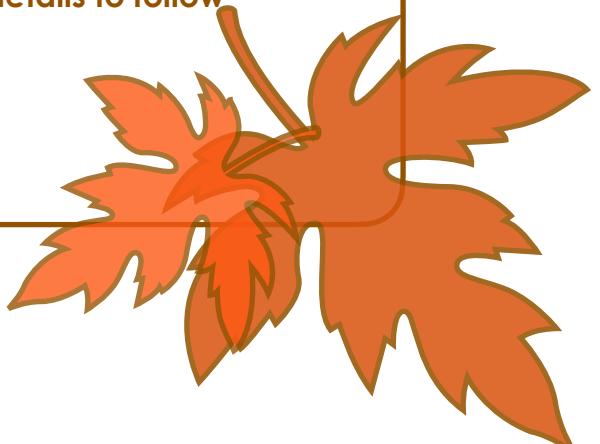


Virtual Meeting by Zoom

November 14, 2020

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

More details to follow



FALL ASSEMBLY: OPEN SERVICE POSITIONS:



Are you willing to grow your recovery by being a trusted servant to RI?

The following positions will be open for elections at the Fall Assembly.

Delegate (3-year term) The Delegate represents the Area at the annual World Service Conference (WSC) and serves as the primary communication link between the World Service Office (WSO) and the Area and Groups within the Area. He/she is a channel through which information and concerns flow from the Groups and Area to WSO, and from WSO back to the Area and Groups. The Delegate monitors and participates in AFG Connects, the WSO's communication and document sharing tool. At the Spring Assembly, the Delegate provides a comprehensive WSC report to the Area. The Delegate attends the Northeast Regional Delegates Conference (NERD) each year prior to the World Service Conference, to discuss and receive information on Al-Anon issues within the Region. Throughout the

term of service, he/she participates on WSO committees, task forces, and/or thought forces, provides Area information to WSO, and responds to requests from WSO. The Delegate is expected to attend each Area World Service Committee meeting, and needs to work well with the Area Chair. He/she is expected to get to know other Delegates and share information on Area issues. As the point person for information of trends and developments in Al-Anon, the Delegate is expected to be proactive in making suggestions to the Area and Groups for constructive changes to further the Al-Anon purpose. The Delegate is encouraged to consider standing for Area Chair at the completion of his/her term. The information learned as Delegate can then be used to support the new Delegate and the Area as a whole.

Alternate Delegate (2-year term) If the Delegate is unable to finish his/her 3-year term, the Alternate Delegate steps in to complete the term as the new Delegate and represents the Area for the remainder of the term at the annual World Service Conference. The Alternate Delegate works along with the Delegate as much as possible in communicating with the groups. He/she can also provide valuable service to the Area by visiting Area groups and districts; assisting Area committees; developing Alateen groups, encouraging Al-Anon members to sponsor them, and setting up Alateen workshops; other responsibilities as assigned by the Area.

Area Chair (3-year term) The Chair ensures that Area business is conducted at regular intervals, facilitates all Assemblies and Area World Service Committee meetings, and oversees the functions of the Area. The Area Chair should have leadership and organizational ability. He/she must be able to plan an agenda and conduct business meetings in an orderly manner. Communication and cooperation with others are key elements for this position. Additional responsibilities include participation on the RI Alateen Safety Guidelines Committee and serves on the Area Budget Committee. If an Area officer or coordinator resigns or for any reason is unable to serve, the Chair can appoint an interim replacement until an election can be held to fill the vacant position(s).

Area Treasurer (3-year term) The Treasurer is the primary budget officer for the Area and serves on the Area Budget Committee which is charged with preparing an annual budget to be submitted at the Fall Assembly for approval each year. He/she maintains the Area bank account, makes deposits of Area funds, and pays all bills for expenditures approved by the Area World Service Committee. The Area has a checking account with Washington Trust Bank. The Treasurer prepares and maintains the Area Income & Expense Report, the Group Donations Report, and the Area Appeal Report (currently on Excel spreadsheets). The records are kept on a thumb drive, which is passed along to the next Treasurer. Donations are sent to the Area office and are forwarded to the Treasurer by the office volunteers. The Treasurer makes quarterly financial reports to the Area and Assembly.

AA Liaison (3-year term) The AA Liaison (Al-Anon member) is a link between Al-Anon and AA in the spirit of cooperation between the two programs. He/she attends the monthly RI AA Convention Committee meetings as a voting member in all affairs except "finances" and attends the RI AA Convention. The AA Liaison obtains the Al-Anon main speaker, coordinates travel and accommodations (including communicating the speaker's needs to the Committee), and hosts the speaker for the weekend. He/she works with the Literature Coordinator to ensure that Conference Approved Literature (CAL) is available at the Convention, assists with the set-up of the Literature table, and communicates the Literature Coordinator's needs to the Committee, i.e. number of tables, chairs, etc. The AA Liaison provides the Al-Anon meeting schedule and topics (to coincide with the AA meetings at the convention) and coordinates Al-Anon members to chair the scheduled Al-Anon meetings. He/she provides the Al-Anon information for the participant packets (1200). At the Liaison's discretion and schedule, he/she provides assistance in the Convention mailing and stuffing of participant packets. He/she informs Al-Anon/Alateen groups in the Area about the convention and cooperates with AA in publicizing the convention within the fellowship including posting the flyer and registration forms on the Al-Anon website and in the *Lifelines* newsletter and emailing flyer/registration forms to the RI Area Al-Anon DRs for distribution to the GRs and to the Area World Service Committee members. If requested, the AA Liaison will assist in the Al-Anon Workshop including obtaining the AA Speaker and arranging for the AA Outreach Coordinator to set-up an information table at the Workshop.

Alateen Coordinator (3-year term) The Alateen Coordinator is the vital link of communication between the WSO and the Area on matters relating to Alateen. This coordinator is a resource for Alateen at all levels of service. He/she is responsible for the training and certification of Al-Anon Members involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS). The Alateen Coordinator works with the Alateen Process Person to submit all required forms to WSO, manages the recertification of Al-Anon members involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS), and verifies certification of members serving Alateen for Al-Anon events with Alateen participation. He/she serves as Chair of the RI Alateen Safety Guidelines Committee. The Area Alateen Coordinator is required to be certified AMIAS.

Literature Coordinator (3-year term) The Literature Coordinator carries the message of recovery and unity through Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature (CAL) to the Districts, Groups, and members in the Area. He/she manages the Literature Distribution Center at the Area Office, maintaining inventory, updating the order sheet, ordering new literature, and making donations from the proceeds to the Area treasury. This Coordinator reads and becomes familiar with each piece of Al-Anon literature, encourages its use in meetings and program events, works with volunteers to display CAL at Area events and the RI AA Convention, develops literature donation projects, and encourages members to write sharings for ongoing and new CAL projects.

Public Outreach (2-year term) The Public Outreach Coordinator informs the general public through the media, professionals, facilities and organizations who we are, what we do, and how to get in touch with us. Our goal is to attract to our program those whose lives are or have been affected by someone else's drinking, so that those who need our program can find the help and hope we offer. He/she serves as a communication link between the WSO and the Area, making presentations or holding workshops at events in the Area and the general community; distributing service projects and information from the WSO to Area Assemblies, Districts, and Groups; encouraging the Area, Districts, and GRs to carry project ideas and information to the groups; and continually educating the fellowship about the need to attract those who are still suffering to our program. The Public Outreach Coordinator also contacts Area TV and radio stations encouraging playtime for Al-Anon Public Service Announcements.

Workshop Coordinator 2021 (1-year term) The Workshop Coordinator heads the Workshop Committee, which plans our annual Fall Workshop. The purpose of the Workshop is to allow members to enjoy a day of recovery while participating in giving back to the program (Participation Is the Key to Harmony). All proceeds help the Area as a whole, which allows us to be self-supporting. The Workshop Coordinator chairs periodic committee meetings and secures volunteers who take on responsibilities for registration, decorating, hospitality, master of ceremonies, speakers, meetings, food, craft table, Alateen participation, AA participation, Literature table, and Public Outreach table. This person troubleshoots and supports these tasks as necessary.

The **District Representative (DR)** is usually any incoming, outgoing, or active past Group Representative who is willing to represent the District at Area World Service Committee (AWSC) meetings and Area Assemblies. He/she should have knowledge of Al-Anon traditions and concepts as well as how they are applied. The District Representative meets and/or communicates with Group Representatives in his/her district to provide the GRs with information from the AWSC, encourages members' subscription to the *Forum*, listens to group concerns, and takes any questions or concerns to the AWSC meetings. He/she maintains an email group list to send out messages and announcements to GRs within the District. Also, the DR may choose to offer an orientation meeting for new GRs upon rotation. The DR is elected by the District's GRs.

District Representative for District 1 (1-year term) Northern RI includes Burrillville, Central Falls, Cumberland, East Providence, Gloucester, Johnston, Lincoln, North Providence, North Smithfield, Pawtucket, Providence, Smithfield, and Woonsocket.

District Representative for District 2 (3-year term) Middle and Southern RI includes Block Island, Charlestown, Coventry, Cranston, East Greenwich, Exeter, Foster, Hopkinton, Narragansett, North Kingstown, Richmond, Scituate, South Kingstown, Warwick, West Greenwich, West Warwick, and Westerly.

District Representative for District 3 (2-year term) East Bay includes Barrington, Bristol, Warren, Tiverton, Portsmouth, Little Compton, Middletown, Jamestown and Newport.

AREA WORLD SERVICE COMMITTEE: RETURNING TO FACE TO FACE MEETINGS:

As we continue to go through the Rhode Island phases of reopening, groups are discussing how and when to go back to face to face meetings. Below are the results from the AWSC committee. As we all get more experience in this process, please feel free to share your own groups insights and experiences with all of us. Please submit them to lifelines.riafg@gmail.com.

THINGS FOR GROUPS TO CONSIDER WHEN DISCUSSING RETURNING TO FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS

As your groups begin conversations and come to a group conscience about moving forward with having face-to-face meetings here is a list of things to consider.

Group conscience decisions must take into account all voices especially the minority voice. Each opinion is critical to "making decisions that keep risk factors as low as possible." Plan outreach to absentee group members. Groups determine by group conscience vote whether to return to face – to – face meetings. (Traditions 2, 4; Concepts 4, 5, Warranty 3)

Meet with the host facility regarding their "reopening plan". Determine what physical space will be available including restrooms, adhere to their protocols, and capacity. Does the facility allow for sufficient social distancing? Restroom facilities - post on entrance(s) a request for "only one person at a time "social distancing" even if multi-person capacity. If restrooms are gender designated consider whether they can be considered gender neutral during the meeting time frame. (Tradition 1, 2, 4; Concept 3, 4)

R.I. Phase III indoor limit of 25 can be accommodated using the 6 foot social distancing mandate. If needed, will group members commit to set up tables / chairs accordingly? Will groups make an effort to establish a second location for overflow if necessary?

Will the facility require the Al-Anon group to disinfect/clean the space after the meeting? Are members willing to commit? Will the facility or the group be responsible for supplying cleaning supplies? Does the group have adequate resources to provide extra masks, sanitation and cleaning supplies to be used prior to the start of the meeting and when the meeting ends? (Tradition 1, 2, 4; Concept 3, 4)

When the decision has been made to go back to meeting in person, notify the Area office [(401) 781-0044 or alanon.riafg@gmail.com] and the Area Website Coordinator (webmaster.riafg@gmail.com) of the change so the website can be updated and the office volunteers will be able to direct people accordingly. (Tradition 9, 10)

Group openings/closing need to take into account face-to-face group modifications, protocols, and requirements due to COVID-19. (Tradition 1, 2, 4; Concept 3, 4)

Determine meeting format and use of shared materials: if literature (CAL) will be used, consider having some members/attendees commit to bringing their own books and volunteer to do the readings per topic/ format chosen. (Tradition 1, 2, 4; Concept 3, 4)

Will the group display and sell literature and, if so, how will this be done?

Does the group need additional service positions to accommodate the additional needs of the group (signage, sanitation, greeters to monitor adherence to face masks and room occupancy limit)? Need ongoing trusted servant to maintain group member sign up list with accurate email and phone contact information. (Tradition 1, 2, 4, 9; Concept 3, 4, 9)

Schedule and announce group conscience discussions regarding what's working and what's not working. What concerns do the members have about anonymity, especially if the group decides to meet outdoors? Do our decisions serve our primary purpose of helping families of alcoholics? (Tradition 5, 12)

Group conscience decision made to offer newcomer a seat if meeting at capacity. Will newcomer packets be available or newcomer can sign up to have packet mailed? How to handle newcomer meetings? (Tradition 1, 2, 4; Concept 3, 4)

Group conscience decision made regarding noncompliant members (refuse to wear mask or social distance). Group Conscience may dictate a meeting will be ended anytime anyone is in non-compliance for masking and/or social distancing. (Tradition 1, 2, 4, 9; Concept 3, 4, 9) (cont. on next page)

Create a process to facilitate contact tracing if a member becomes ill (i.e. sign-in sheet, phone list, etc.) and ensure that everyone in attendance is on the list. Tracing members will interfere with personal anonymity. Groups will have to take this into consideration. (Tradition 1, 12; Concept 1, 3)

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Tradition Seven: Have a drop box/basket for individual contributions (avoid passing basket). Designate a member to receive contributions for the group. Provide information for those who wish to mail contributions/donations to RIAFG and/or WSO.

Group Donations: Giving to group's treasurer decided by conscience decision

Donate to the Rhode Island Area AFG by sending a check to:
 RIAFG
 106 Rolfe St.
 Cranston, RI 02910

Donate to the World Service Office online at <https://al-anon.org/contributions/> or by sending a check to:
 AFG Inc.
 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway
 Virginia Beach, VA 23454

Outdoor meeting – Phase III limit of 50 people (Concept 1; Tradition 12)

- a) Anonymity is paramount.
- b) Consider members with outdoor allergies, hearing limitations (further exacerbated by social distance), and lack of restroom facility.
- c) Restroom facilities - post on entrance(s) a request for "only one person at a time" "social distancing" even if multi-person capacity. If restrooms are gender designated consider whether they can be considered gender neutral during the meeting time frame.
- d) Weather will always be a factor.

Hybrid meeting (Tradition 1, 4, 5, 9; Concept 2, 3)

- a) Technological savvy person present to handle computer requests.
- b) Wi-Fi connections will vary.
- c) Call-ins accepted.
- d) Financial and equipment resources to handle hybrid meetings.
- e) Auditory considerations for those participating electronically.
- f) Provide list of alternative Zoom and or electronic meetings occurring simultaneously if location reaches capacity.

Signage: Follow all Rhode Island Department of Health Guidelines (visible on used entrance(s). The CDC website has downloadable print information that could be used as signage. (Concept 1, 3)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/toolkits/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/COVID19-social-distancing-cloth-face-coverings-poster.pdf>

By your decision to attend this indoor face-to-face meeting you accept all risk "known and unknown" regarding COVID19. Here are other examples if groups decide to fund and create their own signage.

- a) DO NOT enter this facility/meeting if you have any of the following symptoms as outlined by Center for Disease Control guidelines: fever, chills, cough, problem breathing, fatigue, headaches, body or muscle aches, new loss of taste and/or smell, sore throat, congestion, runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.
- b) Masks are mandatory and must be used to cover both nose and mouth.
- c) You must adhere to 6 foot social distancing for all attendees regardless of your personal relationship to another attendee.
- d) Exception to letter c. If family members and or people who live together sit together at meetings, it may/will allow greater space to adhere to safe 6ft social distancing, while providing more room for other members. We allow this at my parish and it is working.

AREA TREASURER'S REPORT:

A special **Thank You** to all who have been able to make donations to our RIAFG office. Your support is greatly appreciated.

The RI Area understands all the uncertainty during this pandemic. This is one of the main reasons why the Area has decided to postpone the Annual Appeal for now.

Thank you so much for your continued support and I wish you good health and serenity!

Tami K.
RI Area Treasurer

When you send in donations on behalf of your group, please include the group number or the group name.

\$ HOW YOU CAN HELP RIAFG AND WSO \$

Keep the Wind in Our Sails



TRADITION SEVEN: EVERY GROUP OUGHT TO BE FULLY SELF-SUPPORTING, DECLINING OUTSIDE CONTRIBUTIONS."

Thank You for your support during these difficult times! When it is possible for you to do so, please support our RIAFG and WSO to keep the “doors” of Al-Anon open to all who need it, either personally or through your home groups.

- Make a personal donation to the Rhode Island AFG by sending a check to:
RIAFG
106 Rolfe St.
Cranston, RI 02910
- Make a donation to the World Service Office online at
<https://al-anon.org/contributions/> or by sending a check to:

AFG Inc.
1600 Corporate Landing Parkway
Virginia Beach, VA 23454

*Let it Begin with Me.
When anyone anywhere reaches out for help, let the hand of Al-Anon and
Alateen always be there, and - Let it Begin with Me*



Photo by TH

FORUM ARTICLES:**The Healing I Didn't Expect**

I didn't grow up in an alcoholic family. I grew up in an alcoholic *world*. Every grown up I knew drank too much — it was the norm. Of all the immediate family, my mother, a mean drunk, was the only one to admit to her sickness. As a result, she spent almost a year in an institution and became a “dry drunk.” Of course, Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon were foreign words in my family — after all, if we didn't acknowledge the problem, we certainly didn't need any help.

Five years ago, my sister was literally dying of alcoholism. To prepare for a visit to her, I dropped by an Al-Anon meeting to get the magic cure. This, of course, was the wrong reason, but fortunately I kept coming back and found that I was the one who needed help. I had finally found a sanctuary in which to learn how to forgive and forget the demons instilled in me in my youth. I'm certainly not perfect yet, but the program is stronger than I am, and I can see the progress taking place in my soul. The best part of Al-Anon is that it has no graduation. It's a program about life — for life.

by Toby F., Rhode Island

(Reprinted with the permission of *The Forum* (August 2020 issue, page 26), Al-Anon Family Groups, Virginia Beach, VA)

Reclaiming My Hope For the Future

Growing up with an alcoholic father, all the dysfunction seemed so normal. Only recently did I realize everything I experienced growing up was anything but that. The fighting, hiding, escaping, trying hard to fade in the background, and feeling scared to come out weren't things that happened to everyone, even though I thought they were.

I only recently started going to Al-Anon, and it has been one of the best decisions of my life. As I read over short phrases such as, “Keep It Simple,” and even “Think,” I look back and reflect on how my childhood was anything but simple — we often just reacted without thinking. I'm excited to be here in a community where I feel 100 percent understood by a group of people I don't even know. I'm excited to grow in understanding my past, to work on building a healthier lifestyle for myself, and to keep getting better. For the first time in a while I am genuinely happy for the future and what it holds.

by Jenae

(Reprinted with the permission of *The Forum* (August 2020 issue, page 28), Al-Anon Family Groups, Virginia Beach, VA)

My Lifelong Recovery Tool

Detachment was the topic of my very first Al-Anon meeting so many years ago. My son was 18 years old and I was frightened for his health, safety, and future. He was living on his own, renting a small room in a household of young people who partied all the time. I had distanced myself from him because it hurt too much to watch him slowly kill himself with alcohol.

I was angry and resentful that he was turning out like his father. I remember feeling stunned to learn at Al-Anon that I had been detaching from my sick son in a very unloving manner. The kind members of my new home group very gently let me know that I could learn to practice detaching with love. This was a new concept that took many years for me to understand. At the time it hurt too much to even spend time with my son and see him drunk.

I have learned that instead of cutting my son off from my life and my heart, I can love him without loving the disease of alcoholism. I used to think he was weak and selfish. I lost respect for him. Today, I no longer judge him or criticize his drinking. I have turned him over to his own Higher Power, and I can just be his mom who loves him unconditionally.

He has had periods of sobriety, sometimes even years, but at the moment he is drinking again. I simply have to detach with love (and not even think about changing him). I know that no one would choose the disease of alcoholism, and that gives me compassion. I pray each day for peace, using the Serenity Prayer as my guide.

by Liah H., Hawaii

(Reprinted with the permission of *The Forum* (August 2020 issue, page 11), Al-Anon Family Groups, Virginia Beach, VA)

MEMBERS SHARE:

Mind led like a bull in a china shop
 Wreckage of my past
 Becoming more clear-ly
 Lie after lie
 I told myself.

Never- knowing
 Even when given choices
 Patterns seemingly too great to ignore
 "Learn to do it differently this time?
 Choose consciously."

At this moment
 This exact dimension in space
 Time slows
 The choice is before me.

I hear the old familiar trigger
 As distant church bells.
 They come and they go.
 Beauty in the moment
 embodied -sound

The choice is mine.
 By some miracle
 Trusting the planting.
 I can see a choice where I
 Had been blind-
 Blind rage.

I did not heed the call.
 Trigger and church bells faded -
 To a whisper.
 I smile and gaze up.
 Recognition, realization-
 Something otherworldly
 Had occurred

Forgiveness. by Anonymous

Hope, once affected by alcoholism, seems like a long, lost friend. Remember a time when life was a future horizon of dreams to achieve? Your confidence, determination, and passion carried you through succeeding at one challenge after another.

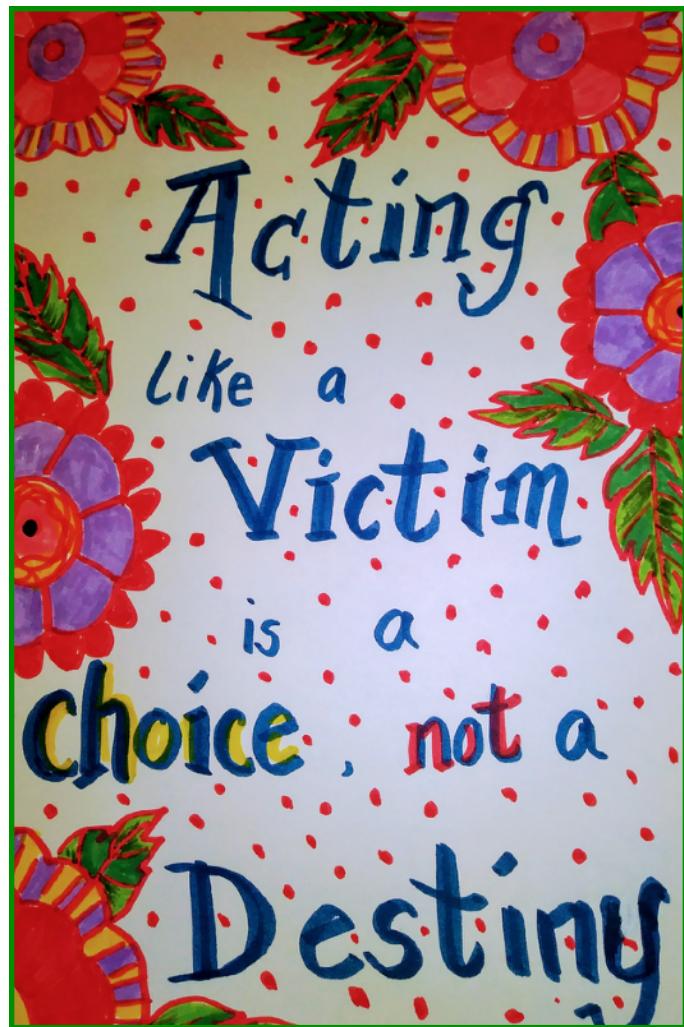
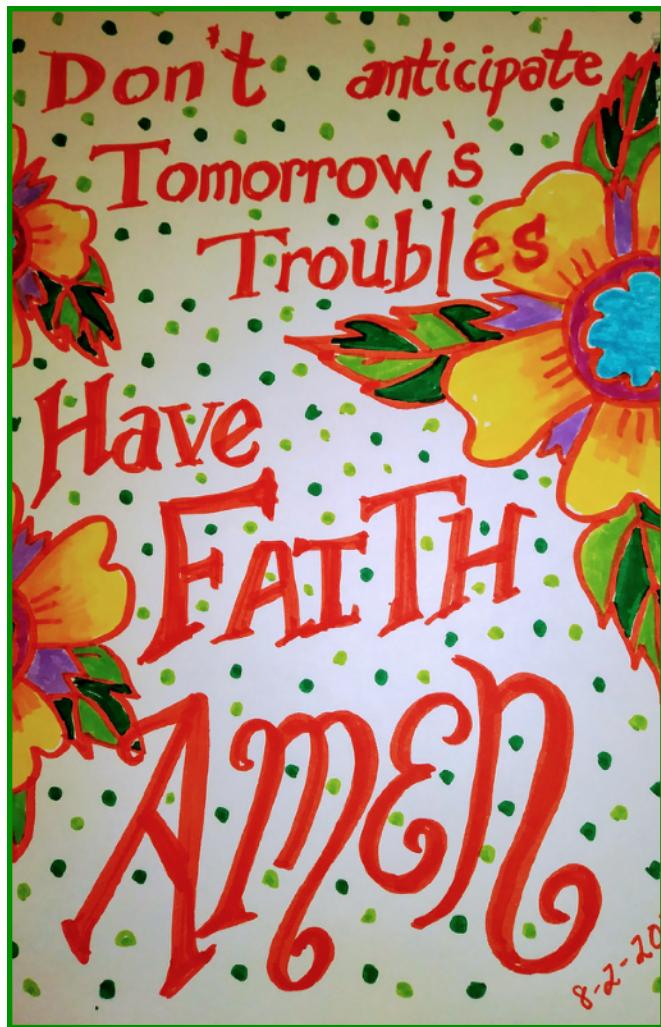
Then it happens. That relationship with an alcoholic seems to become the focus of one's life. Hope to live those dreams diminishes as the disease of alcoholism takes over the life of your loved one as well as yours. Eventually life hits some kind of bottom. The pain is unbearable.

Someone suggests Al-Anon. Al-Anon? I am not the person with the problem! The alcoholic is the one with the problem! But you see the love and concern in their eyes. Maybe this Al-Anon can help?

So you go to a meeting. You feel something; a sense of hope that life can get better! You go to more meetings. More hope. And so it goes on. Then everything that you imagined that would happen doesn't. What's going on? I thought that life with "the alcoholic" was going to have a "happy ever after ending". So you stop going to meetings. Then the pain returns. Someone from Al-Anon reaches out. You talk. They share a similar story. This member tells you how their next round of Al-Anon kept the focus on themselves!

Hope is rekindled. A new perspective on recovery. The perspective that keeps you coming back. Hope that life will become manageable again. Hope that some of those dreams long forgotten could happen. Hope that a happy life IS on the horizon.

Ann H.

MEMBERS SHARE (CONT.);

Spending a few moments each day on these drawings has helped me to stay positive and hopeful.
by Barbara E.

NEWS FROM THE WSO:**Our Three Legacies**

The threefold guides of Al-Anon point the way to a normal, useful life for the individual. They also are a framework within which the groups can carry on their affairs in harmony.

RECOVERY: Through the Steps
UNITY: Through the Traditions
SERVICE: Through the Concepts

WSO Job Opening for Magazine Editor

Dear Newsletter Editors and Al-Anon Members,

Please see the attached position description for a summary of the job duties and position requirements for the Magazine Editor role. The Magazine Editor ensures that Al-Anon magazines have content that supports the strategic goals and spiritual principles of Al-Anon Family Groups. The Editor also implements promotional activities for The Forum and Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism. This position requires five or more years of membership and service in Al-Anon. To apply for this position, please forward your resume and cover letter to HumanRes@al-anon.org.

Kind regards,
Natalie M
Associate Director, Administration & Strategies
Al-Anon Family Groups

Reduced Shipping Costs for Literature from WSO

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, many groups are not meeting in person. Therefore, it has become difficult for members to obtain literature through traditional methods. In an effort to enhance the affordability of literature for members, the flat rate shipping cost of \$10 has been reduced to \$5 for individual orders under \$50 in the US, Puerto Rico, and Bermuda. Shipping costs for orders in Canada will be reduced to \$10 for individual orders under \$50. This special shipping rate will be available for a limited time.

Niketa W., Director of Finance & Operations

WSO's Website: A Blog for Members!

Al-Anon hosts a blog for members to share their experience, strength, and hope on a variety of topics. New topics will be added each month. August's topic was "What has been the most meaningful reward of being a Sponsor or having a Sponsor?" **The topic for September will be in the September issue of *The Forum* and on the Blog.** Visit al-anon.org/member-blog for more information. Member sharings on the Member Blog may be used in future Al-Anon publications.

Al-Anon's First Official Mobile APP

This mobile APP marks the next evolution in Al-Anon Recovery. Now, with just a couple of taps in the app, English-, Spanish-, and French-speaking Al-Anon members and newcomers from around the world will be able to come together for Al-Anon recovery.

What it is:

- A social app for Al-Anon members to connect with one another to share our experience, strength, and hope
- A new platform for electronic meetings
- A way to connect with your Al-Anon family in private chats
- A place to create and update a digital Al-Anon Journal
- A place to stay informed on the latest information from the WSO

What it is not:

- It's not a face to face meeting list.

For more information and links to download the app in iTunes and Google Play, visit al-anon.org/mobileapp

How Has Conference Approved Literature Helped You

Please share how *As We Understood* (B-11); *Opening Our Hearts, Transforming Our Losses* (B-29); or *Intimacy in Alcoholic Relationships* (B-33) helped you. Send your sharings by **September 15** to *The Forum*, 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617, Attention: "CAL Corner"; at wso@al-anon.org with "CAL Corner" in the subject line; or at al-anon.org/forumshare.

Mobile APP OTP Emails

As we warned at the launch, we knew there were bound to be more "growth opportunities" with the mobile app rollout and many of you have already experienced the next one-delays in receiving the "OTP" (One Time Password) registration code verification email from the mobile app.

Apparently being new has its challenges and for us this has meant email servers such as Gmail and AOL are cautious when a new entity, such as our mobile app IP, starts sending many emails all at once to their subscribers. This raises a flag for them about possible spam and can lead to blocking all of our emails to new subscribers. So ... we have learned that we need to throttle back the pace of our emails so these servers will not block us.

What this means for you and other Al-Anon members joining the mobile app is that the OTP email may be slow in arriving. Please be patient. As soon as we build trust with the various email servers and ISP's (Internet Service Providers) we will be able to speed things up. In the meantime, due to the possibility of a delayed email, you have about 10 minutes to enter the verification code, sent during registration, which we hope allows for successful registrations during this "warming up" period.

Vali F
Executive Director

Where Can I Read More About Sponsorship?

The following materials can provide helpful information on being a Sponsor and being sponsored:

Sponsorship — Working Together to Recover Bookmark (M-78)

Sponsorship, What It's All About (P-31)

Service Sponsorship: Working Smarter, Not Harder (P-88)

Discovering Choices—Recovery in Relationships (B-30); "Learning by Example" pages 133-147

How Al-Anon Works for Families and Friends of Alcoholics (B-32); "Sponsorship," pages 36-38

These are available from our local Literature Distribution Center in the Cranston office or at al-anon.org/onlinestore.

Connecting with Professionals on Social Media

LinkedIn is a social media platform many people use to connect with their professional colleagues in all types of fields, including addiction and mental health.

The WSO maintains a LinkedIn page for Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. to attract professionals, an important source of referrals to Al-Anon, to our worldwide fellowship. Professional articles and videos are regularly posted to provide more insight into our program for families and friends of alcoholics. Through this professional networking platform, we are able to reach current and future mental health, addiction and medical professionals.

Members can help increase awareness of Al-Anon and Alateen on LinkedIn by following the Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. LinkedIn page, connecting with local professionals through LinkedIn, and sharing the article and video posts with their connections.

LinkedIn accounts are free and easy to setup. Be sure to protect your anonymity by not referring to yourself as an Al-Anon member. You can view AFG's LinkedIn page by visiting al-anon.org/linkedin.

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**

STEP NINE: *Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.*

TRADITION NINE: *Our groups, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.*

CONCEPT NINE: *Good personal leadership at all service levels is a necessity. In the field of world service, the Board of Trustees assumes the primary leadership.*

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

Photo by T.H.

