

Sincerely Al-Anon

STEP ONE

WE ADMITTED WE WERE POWERLESS OVER ALCOHOL—THAT OUR LIVES HAD BECOME UNMANAGEABLE.

“Admitting my powerlessness over someone else’s disease allows me to use my energies to change what I can—my own life. Realizing I can be my own person again is a powerful gift—one I am receiving in Al-Anon.”

—A Little Time for Myself-A Collection of Al-Anon Personal Experiences, p. 214

The above is a powerful statement. Admitting I cannot help the alcoholic stop drinking or get them healthier can be a hard pill to swallow. I can’t do it for them; I can learn how to make myself healthier by working the steps. So now, time to focus on my own recovery.

I always like to start with a disclaimer. If I say something that rubs you the wrong way, please call your sponsor, and if you don’t have a sponsor, please do yourself a favor and get one. Sponsors are the people who help you walk through the steps. In my experience and belief, the steps cannot be done alone. I work the steps with my sponsor. I like what she said during meetings and how she lives her life.

I add to the step that I am powerless not only over alcohol but also people, places, and things. When I am overly concerned about other people, places and things is when I’m not staying in my own hula hoop. When I believe or think I know better than another, I am superseding my trust in my Higher Power. People have their own Higher Power that will take care of them. I am powerless over their actions and behavior. Sometimes their unmanageable actions and behaviors produce consequences which are not favorable. They have a right to their actions whether I agree or not. To trust a Higher Power and stay in my hula hoop, I use the tools of Al-Anon. Calling my sponsor, going to a meeting, reading my Al-Anon books, and reaching out to the newcomer help me get out of myself. I also pray. One simple prayer is “God bless (insert name)”. At times, I need to pray for the willingness for the other person. One of my go-to prayers is “I will be ok no matter what!” The feeling of staying in my hula hoop can be uncomfortable because it’s new! I know that my Higher Power will take care of me and my fellow human beings.

Learn more about the steps by reading from this list of Al-Anon books: Daily readers — One Day At A Time In Al-Anon, Courage to Change, Hope for Today, and A Little Time for Myself-A Collection of Al-Anon Personal Experiences; Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions, Paths to Recovery, How Al-Anon Works, Reaching for Personal Freedom, Discovering Choices, From Survival to Recovery, In all Our Affairs, As We Understood, The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage, Living with Sobriety, Intimacy in Alcoholic Relationships, and Opening our Hearts Transforming our Losses.

“When I keep my focus on what is mine to do, I find my responsibilities are more manageable. Taking care of myself begins with me.”

—A Little Time for Myself-A Collection of Al-Anon Personal Experiences, p. 8



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Website: www.stl-al-anon.org

Speakers Bureau: Call 314-645-1572

Public Outreach Coordinator: Cathy W., 314-645-1572

IR (Intergroup Rep) Meeting: Held the **first Thursday of each month**. All members are welcome. Virtual meeting information will be shared the week of the meeting.

To be Added to our Contact List and receive *Sincerely Al-Anon* as well as meeting & event updates, please email your name and email address to: aisoffice@stl-al-anon.org

AIS Office Hours & Literature Sales

The office is open and masks are optional. Our hours are:

MONDAY-FRIDAY, 9am-5pm

To Order Literature

Call the office to place an order or purchase on-line. Pick up inside or have your order shipped to you. Credit or debit card payments are accepted by phone. Checks (**made payable to “AFG-St. Louis”**) and exact cash are also accepted at the time of pick-up. Stop in and visit us soon!

MO Al-Anon Website: <https://www.missouri-al-anon.org>

WSO Website: <https://al-anon.org>

TRADITION ONE

OUR COMMON WELFARE SHOULD COME FIRST; PERSONAL PROGRESS FOR THE GREATEST NUMBER DEPENDS UPON UNITY.

“Focusing on what I have in common with others helps me see each of us as equals, regardless of our differences.”

—A Little Time for Myself-A Collection of Al-Anon Personal Experiences, p. 191



The definition of unity is “the state of being united or joined as a whole.” When I read that statement, it brings to mind that the first step begins with “We.” I cannot and do not want to do this recovery alone. My way hasn’t been working. I attend meetings to learn how to live a life of serenity. Common welfare in Tradition One gives us guidelines on how to keep our fellowship healthy. It can be a fine line between what is best for me or for the whole. I have to be careful not to push “my way or the highway” on others. I need to listen to others with an open mind. The group has given me a new way of thinking and a life of peace. Have I been a team player? Do I share about Conference Approved Literature? Do I respect member’s anonymity? Have I taken a turn in service work positions: chairing a meeting, serving as a treasurer, secretary, Intergroup Representative (IR), Group Representative (GR), attending District meetings and Area Assembly? These bits make the whole of Al-Anon. Without unity there would be no Al-Anon Family Groups (AFG).

I can also use Tradition One in all areas of my life (home and work). Do I listen to my co-workers and my family with an open mind? Do I show kindness when I don’t get my way? When I get frustrated do I pause and try to listen without judgement? With kindness do I say what I mean and mean what I say but don’t say it mean? (This statement can be difficult but with time and practice it does get easier.) I remember that I’m human and it is ok to make mistakes.

There are questions on Tradition One from *Paths to Recovery* and *Reaching for Personal Freedom* (Conference Approved Literature). Also, in Al-Anon’s *Twelve Step & Twelve Traditions (revised)*, there are great stories and examples of how the Traditions work in Al-Anon members’ lives.

“The Traditions and Concepts help people live and work together harmoniously in our groups, in Al-Anon service, and in our daily lives.”

—A Little Time for Myself-A Collection of Al-Anon Personal Experiences, p. 357

—In Service, Susan C., Friday Night Fellowship

A Member Speaks...

MY FIRST MEETING

It was my first Al-Anon meeting. I was scared because I didn’t know anyone. I was terrified that someone would know me. I never said a word during the whole meeting.

I have only one memory from that first meeting. After a continuous barrage of invective from the alcoholic about how his drinking was all my fault, I heard these words: “You did not cause the drinking; you cannot control it; and you cannot cure it.” Those words became my mantra. Over and over, with each repetition, I felt lighter and lighter. I felt I was shedding the weight of my world.

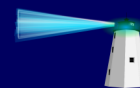
On the way home, I needed to stop at the grocery store—my “cover” excuse for going out that evening. As I gripped the handle of the grocery cart, I had a vision of myself floating above the aisle. It felt as though that grip was the only thing keeping me from floating away. I had found hope! I knew I would be coming back to Al-Anon.

—By Ellen V., Arkansas, The Forum, January 2024

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

Public Outreach Beacon

. . . Greetings to all from YOUR PO Team!



Has Your District or Group Completed a PO Project?

The *PO Toolkit* includes many of the projects listed in *The Best of Public Outreach*, but we need your help to keep it current with the latest ideas. We have heard about some truly innovative and exciting outreach projects taking

place from many of our members. If you have been involved in a PO project and have experience, strength, and hope to share, **we want to hear from you!** Please contact AFG Headquarters at 757-563-1600.



[Public Outreach Toolkit from WSO](#)

Help Keep CAL in Libraries

District 14 has been interested in placing our books in public libraries. Several years ago, Southside AFG put most of our hard bound books into the Buder Branch City Public Library where we met, and I found that seven of them are still available.

I understand that books that aren't checked out are sometimes removed from the shelves, so it appears that those books have been checked out from Buder Branch over the years. Three other Al-Anon books are listed to be checked out in other city libraries. The St. Louis City and St. Louis County Public libraries work together so I think of them as one system. Our district Public Outreach effort was ready to put more books into those libraries, but we found out that donations are not accepted any more. So here are two things we CAN do:

- **Check out our books – and even read them – so the library system keeps them!**
- **If you are a cardholder in either system, you can request that a book be bought.**

The St. Louis City Public Library where I check out books has a website. At the bottom of the page other services are listed including Request a Book Purchase. This form asks a lot of questions but all one needs to input is the title of the book. I imagine that the St. Louis County libraries have something similar. I don't know what the Clayton and Richmond Heights libraries do. That is something some of you can find out for us.

—Laurie K.

Reprinted with permission of Al-Anon Sense From the December 2023/January 2024 from District 14 newsletter.



How Will Al-Anon Help Me?

Many who come to Al-Anon/Alateen are in despair, feeling hopeless, unable to believe that things can ever change. We want our lives to be different, but nothing we have done has brought about change. We all come to Al-Anon because we want and need help.

In Al-Anon and Alateen, members share their own experience, strength, and hope with each other. You will meet others who share your feelings and frustrations, if not your exact situation. We come together to learn a better way of life, to find happiness whether the alcoholic is still drinking or not.

—Source: <https://al-anon.org/newcomers/faq/>

Gaining and Maintaining My Freedom



When I came into the program, I was filled with despair and anger. I felt like a prisoner and a victim. My husband's alcoholism had (I thought) destroyed my life and ruined all my dreams for the future. When I heard it said that Al-Anon was a way to personal freedom, I could not understand it. How could I be free when my partner was an active alcoholic?

But as I stayed in Al-Anon and started to work the program, I did find freedom: freedom from my obsession with someone else's choices, freedom from my constant failure to control someone else's behavior, freedom to improve my own life, and the life-changing freedom of no longer being a victim, of realizing that I always have choices.

Through the years, I have gained more and more personal freedom by working this program. I have gained freedom from shame and guilt. I now have freedom from what other people may think of me. In addition, I have the freedom to know who I am and what I am called to do in my life—the freedom to do what's right for me. And, finally, I have been given the freedom to stand tall and to know that I am a beloved child of a loving and caring Higher Power.

The freedom I receive in Al-Anon doesn't mean I'm always happy in every area of my life or that other people's choices don't sometimes disturb and concern me. But this freedom does mean that, in spite of other people's choices, I feel at peace with myself, and I am given the strength to live my life in a way that's congruent with my values.

My freedom is not free, however. There's a price to be paid, and it's an ongoing price. To maintain my personal freedom, I have to keep working my program.

My defects still can (and do) take me captive sometimes. The same defects I came into the program with are still present in my life (though greatly reduced!). People-pleasing, trying to control the uncontrollable, thinking of myself as a victim, and obsessing about things that can't be changed or things I've done wrong can still derail me (when I choose to let them).

Luckily, the remedy is always at hand. Going back to Steps One through Three, getting to a meeting, getting back to my prayer and meditation time, calling my sponsor or a trusted Al-Anon friend... all of these simple tools, once I choose to use them, bring me back to a life centered in my Higher Power's loving care and guidance and in which I once again feel the blessed freedom of the program.

—By Luann C., Illinois, *The Forum*, April 2023

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Al-Anon Slogans

"Unlike some of Al-Anon's practices and principles that take a while to learn and apply, the Al-Anon slogans are easy to learn and remember. You may have heard some of these slogans hundreds of times before without ever taking them seriously or trying to put them to work. After all, they are clichés, and easy to disregard. But it is their very simplicity that makes them so powerful."

—*How Al-Anon Works for Families & Friends of Alcoholics* (B-32), p.65

[The Al-Anon Slogans from WSO](#)

KEEP IT SIMPLE	KEEP COMING BACK
LIVE AND LET LIVE	ONE DAY AT A TIME
EASY DOES IT	
GOD GRANT ME THE SERENITY	H A L T
FIRST THINGS FIRST	
LET GO AND LET GOD	BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD

The Three C's:

We Did Not **CAUSE** It.

We Cannot **CURE** It.

We Cannot **CONTROL** It.

January Quotes

In the New Year, never forget to thank your past years because they enabled you to reach today! Without the stairs of the past, you cannot arrive at the future! I hope you realize that everyday is a fresh start for you. That every sunrise is a new chapter in your life waiting to be written.
—Unknown

“Begin doing what you want to do now. We are not living in eternity. We have only this moment, sparkling like a star in our hand and melting like a snowflake.”
—Francis Bacon Sr.

“The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new.” —Socrates

“You are never too old to reinvent yourself.” —Steve Harvey

“Just when the caterpillar thought her life was over, she became a butterfly.” —Unknown

“We must be willing to get rid of the life we’ve planned to have the life that is waiting for us. The old skin has to be shed before the new one can come.” —Joseph Campbell

“Although no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending.”
—Carl Bard

What Are Chosen Agenda Items?

Chosen Agenda Items are topics and issues of concern affecting Al-Anon groups and members worldwide that have been submitted for possible discussion at the World Service Conference (WSC). In some Areas, the Delegates choose a topic or two to submit, while in other Areas, the Delegates ask their Area members for topics. In addition, each year the Conference Leadership Team (CLT) invites all voting Conference members (delegates, members of the Board of Trustees and Executive Committee, and voting members of the World Service Office administrative staff) to submit topics for discussion at Conference.

After all topics have been submitted, the CLT then invites Conference members to vote on which topics are most important to them. The Conference discusses the two topics with the most votes—these are the Chosen Agenda Items. These discussions have been taking place at Al-Anon’s annual WSC since 1976. Through the years, the process for submitting questions or topics and the name and format of the sessions have changed.

—The Forum, December 2023

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November 2023 Revenue

District/Meeting	Contrib.
Dist. 13 Creve Coeur	✓
Dist. 02 District 02	✓
Dist. 09 Freedom Friday AFG	✓
Dist. 15 Wednesday's Child	✓
Dist. 15 Friday Night Fellowship	✓
Dist. 17 Blueprint for Progress AFG	✓
ZOOM Serenity Sisters AFG	✓
Dist. 09 North County Parents	✓
Dist. 15 Focus on Solutions Adult Children	✓
Dist. 02 Serenity Seekers	✓
Dist. 15 Grateful Everyday	✓
Dist. 14 How AFG Works	✓
Dist. 14 Southside AFG	✓
Dist. 17 Journey to Recovery	✓
Dist. 15 Serenity Rising Women's AFG	✓
Dist. 13 Fully Relying on God (F.R.O.G.)	✓
Dist. 28 District 28	✓
Group Contributions	1,889.90
Literature Sales	3,748.04
Journal Sales	96.00
Birthday Contributions	25.00
Dollars & Sense	5.49
Misc. Contributions	493.00
Memorial Contributions	20.00
Processing Fee Income	136.22
TOTAL	\$6,413.65

Our Al-Anon Declaration

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.





View Al-Anon Event Flyers On-Line

Check out upcoming Al-Anon events. Ctrl/click link below:

<https://www.stl-al-anon.org/> then click **EVENTS** to see the flyers.

EVENTS

January 5 & 6 — Winter Workshop D-9

January 6 — Comedy Night & Potluck

February 16-17 — 2024 Five Corners Convention with Al-Anon Participation

April 19-21 — 2024 Spring Fling

DISTRICT MEETINGS

District 02

District 14

District 15

(If you want your District meeting listed please call the AIS Office.)

NEWSLETTERS

Sincerely Al-Anon

District 14 Al-Anon Sense

Missouri Round Robin

AL-ANON FUNDRAISERS

My Journey Journal

AIS Office Sustaining Support Campaign

Pearls of Wisdom Calendar

WE NEED YOUR UNWANTED JEWELRY

**FOR OUR JEWELRY SALE at the Annual
AA/AI-Anon Picnic – June 2024**

You can drop it off at the AIS Office Monday – Friday 9-5 pm

**THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE AI-Anon Family Groups of
Greater St. Louis.**

Any questions? Please call the AIS Office at 314-645-1572.

