

# Sincerely Al-Anon

## STEP 6 — “Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.”

### Things to Think About

**“If I want to get rid of my defects, I have to stop making excuses and be willing to apply Step Six. When I’m ready, my Higher Power will give me the help I need.”**

*—Living Today in Alateen p. 207*

From my fifth step I had gotten my list of defects of character, meaning the areas of my personality I need to change one day at a time. When I’m entirely (completely) ready I’m asking for help from my Higher Power to change or do things differently. For me I want to live life on life’s terms and accept life on life’s terms. I once heard in a meeting “Patience is the art of accepting situations over which you have no control with a quiet mind.” I no longer want my character defects to get in the way of a life of peace.

This is one way I do it. When I’m in a situation I try to do the opposite. If I were crabby towards my family for things that are out of my control, next time I keep my mouth shut. My sponsor once told me “You keep your mouth shut until there is a callus on your tongue.” Like when my kids would call me wanting to complain (she called it “verbal diarrhea”). Even though my controlling sense of “knowing it all” or “wanted to rescue them” would kick in, I would keep my mouth shut and just listen. Like me, sometimes people just need to be heard and not given unsolicited advice, which is classic co-dependency. That is one way I deal with a character defect. We love our families and friends but when we don’t let them grow and make their own mistakes, we are stunting their emotional maturity. I learn through my mistakes, and I should allow others to do the same thing, remembering that I can work on my defects one at a time, just like one day at a time.

Another way I deal with my defects is when I’m going to a family gathering (which my sponsor calls “Al-Anon field trips”). It is very easy to expose my buttons (things that upset me) when I’m around family when I don’t use my Al-Anon tools. Around family my character defects will rear their ugly heads. Going to Al-Anon is how I learned what buttons I let my family and friends push. I use the tools of Al-Anon to cover those buttons. Here is my Top 10 list:

10. Read my daily meditation books.
9. Call my sponsor.
8. Call an Al-Anon member.
7. Go to a meeting before the event.
6. Stay in the moment while at the event.
5. Accept them where they are in their life.
4. Have low to no expectations going to a gathering.
3. It’s only a guilt trip if you accept it as one.
2. Keep praying for guidance from my Higher Power.
1. My number one tool on how to cover my buttons is... come late and leave early.

*(cont. on next page)*

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**To Contact:** Call 314-645-1572 or email us at: [aisoffice@stl-al-anon.org](mailto:aisoffice@stl-al-anon.org)

**Website:** [www.stl-al-anon.org](http://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. Next IR meeting is: **JUNE 2 @ 7:00 pm**

**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](mailto:aisoffice@stl-al-anon.org)

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

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

### AIS Office Hours & Literature Sales

The office is open. Masks must be worn when entering the building and one person is allowed at the office door at a time. Our hours are:

**MONDAY-FRIDAY, 9am-5pm.**

#### To Order Literature

Call the office to place an order or purchase on-line. Pick up inside, curbside, or have your order shipped to you. Credit or debit card payments are accepted by phone. Checks and exact cash are also accepted at the time of pick-up. Visit us soon!



(STEP 6, cont. from prior pg.)

This list didn't happen overnight. It took time, patience, guidance from my sponsor, and going to LOTS of Al-Anon meetings. I try not to think of my whole list of faults (unhealthy behaviors), but just take each situation one at a time. Remember the God of your understanding loves you and the fellowship of Al-Anon will be there if you ask.

### Things to Think About

***"Step Six is my chance to cooperate with God. My goal is to make myself ready to let go of my faults and let God take care of the rest"***

### Al-Anon 7th Tradition

Our 7th Tradition states:

***"Every group ought to be full self-supporting, declining outside contributions."***

There are several ways an Al-Anon member can contribute to Greater St. Louis Al-Anon Information Services:

[Contribute Now](#)

To pay by mail:

Send a check or money order made payable to AFG, Inc. and mailed to 14 Sunnen Drive, #144, Maplewood, MO 63143. If you are making a group contribution, please be sure to clearly provide your group name or number on the payment. Members can designate their contribution as "group," "appeal," "memorial," "birthday," or "individual."

**Thank you for supporting the Al-Anon Family Groups of Greater St. Louis!**

## Public Outreach Beacon

. . .Greetings to all from YOUR PO Team!



### Literature on Wheels



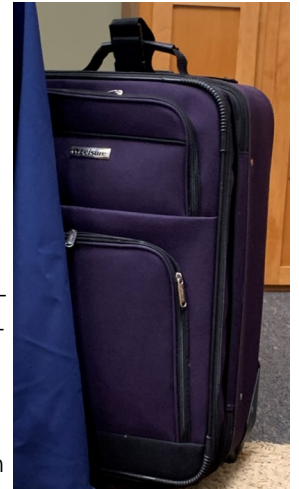
An Al-Anon event isn't too special if you're not prepared for it. Next time your District has an Al-Anon sponsored event, don't forget to request the rolling "suitcase" from the AIS office. The suitcase contains an assortment of basic CAL approved by the WSO for use in outreach. Also, you'll be able to borrow the blue Al-Anon tablecloth which is

perfect for displaying literature as it only adds to the professional look of the Al-Anon literature table.

Recently an Al-Anon member, Helga H., had the opportunity to attend the Spring Fling Convention and sold Al-Anon conference approved literature to attendees. According to Helga, "Our AIS office made it so very

easy. I called the office, spoke with Susan and told her what

literature I thought would be good to have. She also made several great suggestions and then put all the literature in the wheeled carry-on suitcase. The Al-Anon literature table at the convention looked so professional with the blue Al-Anon tablecloth, a rack to hold pamphlets and a wide variety of CAL. Having literature available to sell at an event is super easy to pick up from the AIS office, transport it and is a great way for members to carry the message!"



Please notify the AIS office staff of your event date and they will see if the suitcase is available. You can also arrange for pick up and drop off at this time. The cost of the literature used at the event is usually charged to the sponsoring District but if this is an issue, please discuss it with the office as there might be alternate funding suggestions.

Carrying the Al-Anon message to your event is easier when you don't have to think about what to bring. Let the AIS office help make your event worry free — and.....take the suitcase!



## THE TRADITIONS COME ALIVE AT THE MOSC (Missouri State AA Convention) with Al-Anon Participation

July 29-31, 2022

***THEME: Unified in Recovery and Fellowship — In Person at Capitol Plaza Hotel  
415 W. McCarty Street, Jefferson City, MO 65101***

The Missouri State AA Convention (MOSC) held yearly since 1951 is one of the longest running AA state conventions. It is organized by a joint committee from the Western Area (39) and Eastern Area (38) of MO AA as a statewide event.

The Missouri State AA Convention is unique from other AA convention because It is organized by elected committee members from the Two Missouri Areas of AA's Service Structure. Since its inception Missouri Area AFG's Service Structure has been invited to participate. One of my service responsibilities as the Missouri Area Alternate Delegate is to represent the Missouri Area's commitment to participate in MOSC as the Al-Anon Liaison. By participating in MOSC the Missouri Area lives out Tradition Six, which include the following words: *Although a separate entity, we should always cooperate with Alcoholics Anonymous.*

This cooperation has grown over the years and MOSC for the last three years has invited Missouri Al-Anon Family Groups to provide two Al-Anon speakers, This year our speakers will both be from Missouri — Erin G. from Peculiar, MO will speak Friday night. While I don't know Erin's exact age, I can tell you she is younger than the average Al-Anon Member. She will give her unique perspective of working a program as a younger person in Al-Anon Family Groups. On Saturday our speaker will be Michael C. from Pineville, MO. Michael is currently serving as the Missouri Area Chair. It is always interesting to hear the recovery story of our Area Trusted Servants.

This year there will be three opportunities to meet with other Al-Anon members attending MOSC including a Friday night drop-in on the Al-Anon Meet Up which will be an informal gathering to see old friends from across the state and to make new ones.

We'll have two Al-Anon meetings this weekend (see the following highlights for details). One presentation that I am sure you will not want to miss is the Stepping Stones visit to the MOSC featuring a video tour of Stepping Stones and a presentation by a volunteer archivist. As we know, in Al-Anon Lois played a huge role in keeping Stepping Stones as a place where AA members and Al-Anon members can visit and see the history of our programs come to life.

### WEEKEND HIGHLIGHTS

#### FRIDAY, July 29

- 6:30 pm — The Convention Kicks Off
- 6:45 pm — YPAA Speaker-WAMO-Dustin R., Springfield MO
- 8:00 pm — AA Speaker Ashley O., Des Moines, IA
- 9:30 pm — Ice Cream Social
- 9:45 pm — Al-Anon Meet-Up. Come connect with Al-Anon members from all over the state and get to know each other in this informal get together.

#### SATURDAY, July 30

- 9:00 am — Al-Anon Meeting -The 36 Principles Found in Our Legacies
- 10:15 am — AA Speaker Sally C.T.-Stepping Stones
- 1:00 pm — AA Speaker Carla R.-Tujunga, CA
- 2:15 pm — Al-Anon Speaker Michael C.- Pineville, MO
- 3:15 pm — Al-Anon Speaker Erin G.- Peculiar, MO
- 4:30 pm — A Visit from Stepping Stones
- 6:30 pm — Banquet
- 7:30 pm — Sobriety Countdown
- 8:00 pm — AA Speaker Doug R. – Tujunga, CA
- 9:30 pm — Ice Cream Social
- 10:15 pm — YPAA Speaker EAMO Gabe E-Columbia MO

(cont. on next page)

(MO STATE AA CONVENTION, cont. from prior pg.)

### **SUNDAY, July 31**

9:00 am — Al-Anon Meeting What If ????: A Spiritual Journey of Recovery

10:15 am — AA Speaker Doug O.-Des Moines, IA

As you can see Tradition Five comes to life at MOSC with this unique opportunity to practice our "one purpose to help families of alcoholics." The AA Speakers and open AA meetings help us to understand our alcoholic relatives. Providing Al-Anon Speakers and meetings provide an opportunity to give comfort to families of alcoholics and practice the Twelve Steps ourselves.

To register for the Convention just click here: <https://mostateconvention.org> and you can download a registration form to mail in or, you can register on-line.

Even if you can't make the whole weekend please consider coming Saturday — Jefferson City is just a two hour drive from St. Louis. Hope to see you all there!

## **STEP TWO -- CAME TO BELIEVE THAT A POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES COULD RESTORE US TO SANITY.**

I didn't know how to trust. That makes it hard to believe. I also didn't know what sanity is. As stated in Paths to Recovery, this Step doesn't restore us to sanity, it introduces us to it. My Higher Power (HP) was intimidating and punishing. Now, when I realize I'm sliding down that slippery slope of denial or shame, I can intentionally stop and think without fear. Although I am powerless, I am not helpless. I now believe my Higher Power is good and able to consistently care for me more than I could ever dream. When I get out of the way, trust my HP, work the Steps, share with others, attend meetings and mind my own business, my sanity can be realized! It's up to me to TRUST AND CHOOSE TO BELIEVE that there is a Higher Power that cares.

These are some of the "tools" that help me stay sane and improve my faith: GRATITUDE, POSITIVE SELF TALK, JOURNALING, PRAYING, MEDITATING, READING, SHARING.

- ***I can acknowledge the discomfort of change and know it's worth the effort***
- ***I can say yes or no when needed and I can accept other people's choices without approving them.***
- ***I can discern what I can and cannot change: The Serenity Prayer works!***
- ***I can read Conference Approved Literature (CAL) like Paths to Recovery***
- ***I can remember 3 Cs: I can't CONTROL others, I can't CAUSE others to act the way they do, and I can't CURE them of the consequences of their decisions AND the "good" 3 Cs: CHOICES, CHANCES, and CHANGES.***

While recovering from growing up with a "functional alcoholic" family, Step 2 encourages me to believe in a positive Creator who helps people become healthy, courageous and SANE. The more I am able to accept and admit my need for recovery and a Higher Power, the more I can change for the better. I'm a work in progress. I am human! When I find myself in a tizzy, it's usually because I'm NUTS (Not Using the Steps)!

-- In Service, A Grateful Member of Al-Anon

### ***From A Grateful Al-Anon Member: What They Heard Through the Grapevine***

- **You can't be hateful when you're grateful.**
- **You don't have to be careless, you just have to care less.**
- **If you don't want to be a doormat, get off the floor!**
- **I don't have to light myself on fire in order to keep you warm.**
- **When one door closes, another one opens. It's the "waiting in the hallway" that sucks!**
- **True humility should not be humiliating.**
- **And my personal favorite that I just heard last night: *Back the Truck Up!!***



## TRADITION 6

*Our Family Groups ought never endorse, finance or lend our name to any outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim. Although a separate entity, we should always cooperate with Alcoholics Anonymous.*

*"If I forget my focus, I may fail to achieve my primary spiritual aim."*

*"...If Al-Anon were to involve itself in every worthwhile cause, where could we draw the line that would keep our fellowship intact to do its job?"*

*—Hope for Today, page 229*



When I came to Al-Anon I had no direction, let alone a spiritual aim. What is my spiritual aim? I know this is a "we" program, and I cannot and do not want to do this alone. I have been alone too long in my head and heart because of the disease. I have learned by reading the Al-Anon material and attending meetings that I can have a Higher Power of my choice.

I have come to love the Al-Anon way of life. I like peace and balance in my life. So today my spiritual aim is do what my Higher Power wants me to do. Today I enjoy staying out of people's lives and letting them find their own way without me interfering (staying in my hula-la -hoop), and only being there when needed.

Al-Anon is its own entity and if Al-Anon would get involved in other business it might do things differently which would cause problems for our primary purpose. To me my primary purpose is to be happy, joyous and free so I can help the newcomer. Think about our meetings. We have many groups who rent rooms from churches— but the church doesn't control our meeting. Just think how a new person would feel if the meeting would follow the practice of the church, which might exclude certain people or ideals. We need to keep the focus on helping each other and learning to live our lives following the principles of Al-Anon and A. A.

I remind myself everyday to lead with my heart and my Higher power. I do not want my action or words to exclude or hurt anyone in Al-Anon or my fellow human beings.

### Things to Think About

**"I can learn a lot from Al-Anon and A.A. members. They can help me understand my parents and share with me their ideas about working the program. They can learn from me, too. It all starts with cooperation, the kind that comes from trying to practice Tradition Six. It's the beginning of communication."**

*--Alateen --A Day at a Time, page 169*



## Tools of Recovery: Sponsorship

Quote from Lois W. (1891 – 1988)

Our Founder

1967 Conference Digest



“The practice of sponsorship has been greatly neglected in Al-Anon. It’s importance in the approach to newcomers should not be overlooked by us. When an older member takes a newcomer under her wing and gives her friendship and understanding, the new member can respond to the program more quickly and many a doubtful prospect can be encouraged to continue her interest in Al-Anon who otherwise might go away disheartened.”

“There is another phrase the Sponsor should explain if necessary, but not use, as it gives the wrong impression. “This is a selfish program.” Our program, of course, is not a selfish one. Generally, what the users of this phrase are trying to say is that the program is one of self-development and improvement, in order to be of more use to others.”

“When we try to sponsor newcomers, aiding them to live by the Al-Anon program, we are not only benefiting them but strengthening ourselves as well.”

Thank you, Lois W.

—Al-Anon.org

### Important NEWS About Meetings — Please Read!

**New Al-Anon Group Registration Form Instructions for Groups with an Electronic Meeting Location**  
[For Groups with an Electronic Meeting Location](#)

**Al-Anon Group Record Change Form Instructions For Groups with an Electronic Meeting Location**  
[Change Form-Electronic Meetings](#)

**Al-Anon Electronic Meetings**

[Al-Anon Electronic Meetings](#)

## APRIL 2022 Group Contributors

District # & Meeting	Contrib.
Dist. 02 Joe’s Place	✓
Dist. 02 Parents Path to Recovery	✓
Dist. 15 Lifeline	✓
Dist. 15 Webster Groves Parents	✓
Dist. 09 Steps to a New Life	✓
Dist. 15 Spiritual Winners	✓
Dist. 14 How Al-Anon Works	✓
Dist. 09 Freedom Friday	✓
Dist. 17 Hope for Today	✓
Dist. 14 How AFG Works	✓
Dist. 14 Hampton	✓
Dist. 15 Friday Night Fellowship	✓
Dist. 15 Glendale Thursday Morning	✓
Dist. 02 Care and Share	✓
Dist. 02 Wed. Child Adult Children	✓
Dist. 14 Easy Does It	✓
Dist. 15 Everyday Grace	✓
Dist. 17 Solutions of Harvester	✓
Dist. 18 Illinois Monday Night Serenity	✓
Dist. 28 Just for Today	✓
AIS Office Dollars & Sense	✓
<b>TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>\$1,801.13</b>

### OTHER

April Annual Appeal	\$ 60.00
April Dollars & Sense	\$ 61.95

### We Would Love to Have You Write Something for Sincerely Al-Anon — Will You Consider?

You just never know who might benefit from reading what you have to share. Guidelines are: we reserve the right to publish or not publish submitted material due to content and/or length, and in accordance with the Three Legacies & the Principles of Al-Anon, all submissions will be reviewed for typos and/or grammatical errors, articles should be 300 words or less; deadline is the 15th of the month at noon.

## HERE ARE A FEW THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND AT YOUR FIRST MEETING

Al-Anon is a mutual support group. Everyone at the meeting shares as an equal. No one is in a position to give advice or direction to anyone else. Everyone at the meeting has experienced a problem with someone else's drinking.

You are free to ask questions or to talk about your situation at your first meeting. If you'd rather just listen, you can say "I pass," or explain that you'd just like to listen.

Every meeting is different. Each meeting has the autonomy to be run as its members choose, within guidelines designed to promote Al-Anon unity. Al-Anon recommends that you try at least six different meetings before you decide if Al-Anon will be helpful to you.

Al-Anon is not a religious program. Even when the meeting is held in a religious center, the local Al-Anon group pays rent to that center and is not affiliated in any way with any religious group. Your religious beliefs—or lack of them—are not a subject for discussion at Al-Anon meetings, which focus solely on coping with the effects of someone's drinking.

It will take some time to fully understand the significance of anonymity to the Al-Anon program. But at its simplest level, anonymity means that the people in the room will respect the confidentiality of what you say and won't approach you outside the room in a way that compromises your privacy or the privacy of anyone who attended an Al-Anon meeting.

The meeting will likely begin with a reading of the Twelve Steps of Al-Anon. It will take some time to fully understand how the Twelve Steps can be a helpful tool in recovering from the effects of someone's drinking. But Al-Anon gives you the opportunity to grow at your own pace.

-- From Al-Anon.org

### Please Remember .....

Al-Anon Family Groups of Greater St. Louis (the official name) was started in 1965. The first office became a reality in 1974, and the group was officially incorporated in 1975. The AIS Office continues to serve our Al-Anon groups and individuals in a number of ways, including but not limited to:

- *Answering inquiries from those seeking help, even after hours.*
- *Providing public outreach to schools, mental and health care professionals, police officers, fire fighters, prisons, and others.*
- *Acting as an information exchange for all regional groups.*
- *Maintaining a supply of Conference Approved Literature and offering it for sale.*
- *Maintaining an office with paid staff and volunteers.*
- *Publishing a monthly newsletter, [Sincerely Al-Anon](#).*
- *Maintaining a public outreach focused and informational website: [www.stl-al-anon.org](http://www.stl-al-anon.org) with an updated listing of meetings.*
- *Maintaining a speakers bureau.*

Because of a decline in donations caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, a decline in literature sales, and an inability to have in person fundraisers, the AIS Office has been operating at a deficit over the last year, and is in need of funds to maintain its prudent reserves. Please help us raise at least \$8,000 this year to maintain the office going forward.

### How can you contribute to help keep our AIS Office thriving?

- Send a check (either individual or from your group) payable to AFG-STL and mail to: *Al-Anon Information Services,*
- *14 Sunnen Drive, Suite 144, Maplewood MO 63143.* Please write "Annual Appeal" on your check.
- Contribute at a meeting in an Annual Appeal envelope that will be passed around through the end of June.
- Log on to our website: [www.stl-al-anon.org](http://www.stl-al-anon.org) and simply click on "Contribute" on the home page - it will easily walk you through the steps.

All contributions made by individuals are tax deductible. Thank you for supporting our local AIS Office.

--The AIS/AFG Board of Directors

## ALATEEN PREAMBLE, REVISED AT LAST!



In September 2017, the Literature Committee received requests for revisions to the Alateen Preamble, while at the same time the Associate Director—Group Services at the World Service Office initiated a similar inquiry. Concerns were that the existing Preamble was not welcoming or reflective of many potential Alateen newcomers. The ensuing discussion resulted in a recommendation to the Policy Committee, which led to the creation of a Task Force which included Alateen and Area-certified Alateen trusted servants to compose specific wording that would address these concerns.

After considerable research and collaboration, new wording was unanimously agreed upon by the Task Force and proposed to the Policy Committee. After the Policy Committee review, the new wording was recommended for 2021 World Service Conference (WSC) approval. Following discussion by the WSC, a motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the changes to the Alateen Preamble. The new Preamble will appear in the next Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27), as well as in Conference Approved Literature as it is reprinted. More information, including the WSC motion, can be found in the 2021 WSC Summary. -- *The Forum*, May 2022

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

### Suggested Alateen Preamble to the Twelve Steps

*Alateen, part of the Al-Anon Family Groups, is for young people who have been affected by alcoholism in a family member or friend. We help each other by sharing our experience, strength, and hope.*

*We believe alcoholism is a family disease affecting everyone emotionally and sometimes physically. Although we cannot change or control the alcoholics in our lives, we can detach from their problems while continuing to love them.*

*In Alateen we focus on our own program rather than outside issues such as religion, politics, social media, or other Twelve Step programs. There are no dues for membership. Alateen is self-supporting through its own voluntary contributions. Alateen has one purpose: to help young people affected by someone else's drinking. We are careful to protect each other's anonymity as well as that of all Al-Anon and A.A. members.*

*By applying the Twelve Steps to ourselves, we begin to recover from the effects of the family disease of alcoholism mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. This allows us to encourage our alcoholic relatives and friends, and to give hope to other teens.*

-- 2022-2025 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, page 12

## Have You Recertified as an AMIAS?

### Have you Verified Your Alateen Group Information?

Every year, each Area in the World Service Conference Structure is required to take part in the Annual Alateen Recertification process in order to continue to use the Alateen name. This is explained in the Alateen Policy and the 2003 Alateen Motion from the Board of Trustees. The recertification process is two-fold:

- To verify that every registered Alateen group has:
  - \* current Area-certified Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) as group Sponsor(s)
  - \* current Area-certified AMIAS to serve as the Alateen group Current Mailing Address (CMA) and as a phone contact for the public
- To certify all new AMIAS and recertify AMIAS already in service to Alateen.

#### **The Annual Alateen Recertification deadline for all Alateen groups and AMIAS is June 15!**

Contact your Area Alateen Coordinator, Area Alateen Process Person, or District Representative to verify the process in your Area. Don't miss out on this opportunity to share your recovery with teens and younger members!

-- *The Forum*, May 2022

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## PERSPECTIVE

### *FROM A GRATEFUL MEMBER OF AL-ANON*



Over the past several weeks, as I have spoken with others in the program, and not in the program, my mind has been drawn to this word, or concept of PERSPECTIVE. Rarely do two people see any situation exactly the same. During these conversations, others commented on my life or at least their perspective. From what I heard, and from my perspective, I concluded they didn't have the full picture. And with that perspective, I realize, I don't have the full picture of anyone else's life.

So, how does that affect my life? What must I do to grow from this realization? I turned to "How Al-Anon Works" (H.A.W.). I love selecting a word, and then doing a word search on my e-book to see how the words of Al-Anon describe for me, guide, or enlighten me... or change my perspective.

I found it funny when I did my search that, the first reference was in Chapter 2, in our "Suggested Al-Anon Welcome", which my Group reads every week. But do we hear it and really consider the implications? *"We urge you to try our program. It has helped many of us find solutions that lead to serenity. So much depends on our own attitudes, and as we learn to place our problem in its true perspective, we find it loses its power to dominate our thoughts and our lives."*

We don't come into Al-Anon intentionally fooling ourselves or refusing to see the reality of our situation. But in Chapter 5, "Struggling With Reality" in the section "Becoming Aware" we learn that our personal current perspective may be a coping skill. I know it was for me. I had blinders on about my situation. I loved the alcoholic in my life, and my sole mission was to help them. However, I soon learned: *"Life is unmanageable whenever we lose perspective about what is and is not our responsibility. We take offense to actions that have nothing to do with us or take inappropriate action for others and neglect our obligations to ourselves."*

Yep, that was me. When my life was completely unmanageable, or at least I wasn't getting the results I wanted despite all my best efforts, I turned to Al-Anon for answers. As I moved further into my word search, I found my story continued to be told.

I learned in Al-Anon, we don't give advice. We are not to TELL anyone else what to do about their own private situation. SO, I thought, what good are you going to be to me? Someone must have the answers I am looking for.

I was told as a newcomer that, I shouldn't make any major decisions for quite some time. In fact, I was told a year. And I found the reason well stated in H.A.W. in chapter 4, "Searching for Answers" in the section "Understanding Ourselves and Alcoholism. ".....because we find that our perspective on our circumstance undergoes a dramatic change during that time. By waiting, we often find options we had not considered previously and discover that over time, we become better able to make decisions we can live with."

We don't give advice, because we don't know what is best for another person, but we DO share our Experience, Strength and Hope and encourage members to take what they like and leave the rest.

For me, the change in perspective was moving me from focusing on the alcoholic and trying to take responsibility for his behavior and his need for change, to myself. I had to accept it is a disease, the drinking is but a symptom of the disease. If the alcoholic does stop drinking, that doesn't cure the whole disease and other problems can present themselves.

That was true for me. Yes, I am grateful my loved one is sober and works a strong program. It definitely makes life easier, but not perfect. From the outside someone might have the perspective that we have it made. But the truth is, we are like any other couple with our own struggles and issues. Many which showed up after sobriety.

*(cont. on next page)*

*(PERSPECTIVE, cont. from prior pg.)*

For example, it turns out my loved one is an introvert. I always thought they were more of an extrovert, and very social. We had an active social life prior to our hitting our bottoms. Through their program they are learning to be true to themselves and I must focus on me and how I choose to respond to this new, truer perspective of them and the impact that has on our relationship.

That brings me back to my word search. In chapter 7, "Breaking our Isolation" *"Recovery from the effects of another's alcoholism involves our changing old attitudes that don't work for us and replacing them with attitudes that do work, replacing attitudes that encourage us to feel badly about ourselves and others with those that allow us to view the world more positively. We learn to see several options where we once saw none at all, and we begin to look at our lives in a new and exciting way. Such a major transformation cannot happen overnight, and none of us, even the most dedicated, can do it alone. We need help, guidance, and a fresh perspective. Most of all, we need to practice what we learn. Before trying a new approach to a problem, we may want to talk it over with another Al-Anon member..... This helps us clarify our thinking and boosts our confidence."*

What really helped me to practice a change in my perspective on a situation was the slogans. And that is exactly where my word search took me:

**"Keep it Simple"** — helps me to not look too deeply or far down the rabbit hole. I don't have to get all caught up in a situation if I don't want to... in fact, I learned "No" is a complete sentence.

**"Easy Does It"** — reminded me not to force solutions, but to let things evolve until my perspective clearly defined my role and my solution to the issue.

Many other slogans helped me when I was new and still help today. **"First Things First"** for when I get overwhelmed. **"Just for Today"** or **"One Day at a Time"** helps me to stay in the present and not look back at the past or project into the future. The Slogans are all covered in H.A.W. and it gives some great descriptions on how we can apply the slogans to our lives.

So, my word search took me further into the book, but I think I covered what I wanted to as I reflected on my conversations with others over the past several weeks. I hope I have succeeded in sharing a bit of my Experience, Strength, and Hope. Please feel free to take what you like and leave the rest. But I do encourage you to see if a changed attitude can help place your problem in its true perspective.

## View Al-Anon Event Flyers from Our Website!

Instead of including pdfs of the event flyers in *Sincerely Al-Anon*, please go to <https://www.http://www.stl-al-anon.org> to see flyers for these events:

June 11 — Day in Service (Raffle Flyer)  
 June 11 — Trivia Night Fall Classic with Al-Anon  
 June 25 — Ice Cream Social District 28  
 June 26 — District 14 Picnic (Revised 5-2)  
 July 14 — Writing Workshop  
 July 29 -31 — MO State Convention  
 August 13 — District 15 Recovery Picnic (Revised 5-15)  
 August 19 -21 — Summertime in the Ozark Convention  
 August 21 — Ice Cream & Serenity Event District 13  
 September 8 — Knowledge Based Decision Making  
 September 23-25 — MO Al-Anon & Alateen Convention  
 October 15 — District 25 Serenity Walk  
 November 10 — Dist. 4 Business Meeting & Workshop TBA  
 District 15 — Business Meeting Dates  
 New Meeting: Monday Meters  
 We're Back!! Dreams to Reality— Alateen Meeting