

Sincerely Al-Anon

STEP FOUR

MADE A SEARCHING AND FEARLESS MORAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES.

**"F-E-A-R has two meanings: 'Forget Everything And Run' or 'Face Everything And Rise.'
The choice is yours." —Zig Ziglar**

You know I believe that I cannot work the steps without a sponsor. Al-Anon is a "we" program, and we can't do this alone. Before Al-Anon I felt hopeless and that it was me against the world. Today I know people in Al-Anon have my back and my wellbeing at heart. Before I was ready for step four, I needed to have the foundation of the first three steps. When I work with my sponsees I ask these questions as we work the steps together. 1. Do I really believe that I am powerless over people, places, and things? 2. Do I have a loving Higher Power? 3. Do I have trust that a Higher Power greater than myself will help with people, places, and things?

I want to look at the wording of the step. Searching-- *to look into or over carefully or thoroughly in an effort to find or discover.* If I want change, I need to learn about myself. Fearless--*a defender of freedom, bold, brave, or courageous.* My sponsor heard this at a meeting: "Fear is the dark room where we go to develop our negatives." I do trust my sponsor and I do trust my Higher Power, knowing that I will be Ok No Matter What when writing my fourth step. Moral— *concerned with the principle of right (healthy) and wrong (unhealthy) of human character or behavior.* I am willing to look at all of myself in a healthy and kind way. With that in mind I need to be gentle with myself, remembering that I am human, and I have made mistakes. Inventory-- a complete list of what is found. I can make a list. As a matter of fact, I love to make lists. There are plenty of ways to do a fourth step. I like to keep it simple.

My list is: I fear....., I resent, Wrongs I have done to others..... From this list I get my defects of character and shortcomings, the people, places, and things I need to pray for, and my list of all persons I have harmed. Once I started writing it was very freeing to get it all out. It was worth it and felt good. The fourth step will help me be a better person and be able to live life the Al-Anon way of kindness and love for others. I know this can be scary because we look ahead to the fifth step. Stay in the moment and do not look ahead. If you are paralyzed with fear, go back to the third step and review it with your sponsor. I have done this many times with all the steps. Also remember you are not alone. Many Al-Anon members have done this step and you can do it too.

With the help of your sponsor please review other ways to complete a fourth step by reviewing Al-Anon literature, such as: *How Al-Anon Works (B-32), Blue Print for Progress (P-91), Paths to Recovery (B-24), Paths to Recovery Workbook (P-93), Reaching for Personal Freedom (P-92), From Survival to Recovery, The Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions (P-17 & B-8), Alateen 4th Step Inventory (P-64), The Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions for Alateen (P-18).*

"Whether the alcoholic is still drinking or not, I am still responsible for my part. Today I will focus on what I can change--myself."

"We take responsibility for ourselves and respect the rights of others."

"How can I take responsibility for my expectations?"

—A Little Time for Myself-A Collection of Al-Anon Personal Experiences, p. 108

—Susan C., Friday Night Fellowship

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To Contact: Call 314-645-1572 or email us at: aisoffice@stl-al-anon.org

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>

The Family Situation Can Improve



One morning I was riding my bicycle with a group of friends and really enjoying the beautiful day. I have found that little "Aha!" moments sometimes happen unexpectedly when I'm on my bike and my mind is in a peaceful and serene place.

For so long I had felt, as so many do, that I needed to "help" my son get sober. After being in the Al-Anon program for a few years, working the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Service, and trusting my Sponsor, I finally understood that my "helping" was hurting him, and my son needed to get himself sober. He needed to want it. I am so grateful that that miracle has happened!

I shared in meetings that I had nothing to do with my son getting sober, that it was all his doing, which to a very large extent is true. However, on my bike ride that day, it came to me that I had helped—just not in the way I was trying to or thought I should or would.

Here's how I actually helped: 1) I started getting help for myself; 2) I always let my son know I loved him no matter what; 3) I stopped enabling him like I had been doing; 4) I prayed and still pray for him every day; and 5) I let him make his own decisions and choices even though they might cause me a degree of anxiety.

To accomplish those five things, I had to learn deep down to "Let Go and Let God." I'm so grateful for the insight that the family situation can improve when I apply the Al-Anon ideas.

—By Sally M., Iowa, The Forum, April 2024

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Want to Step Up Your Service Commitment and Meet Some Great People, Too?

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS FOR THE SPRING FLING CONVENTION APRIL 19-20 AT THE AIRPORT HILTON

We need volunteers to help with a variety of tasks for this annual convention for 1-2 hour increments on Friday, April 19 and Saturday, April 20. Any help you can give is appreciated.

The Al-Anon luncheon speaker is Catherine K. from Dallas TX. You will love her! I was so blown away by her talk at the International Al-Anon convention last summer that I just had to invite her to Saint Louis. We need volunteers to man the literature table, collect luncheon tickets, and chair a meeting. Please call, text or email us if you are interested.

Yours in service,

Gina G., Chair, 314-504-5163, gillardi.gina@gmail.com
Lisa V., Co-Chair, 636-544-9264, vaughanlisa66@yahoo.com



First Annual Spring Al-Anon Serenity Walk

After attending District 25's fall Serenity Walk, District 13 now invites you to attend a spring Serenity Walk at Robertsville State Park on **Saturday April 13**. We'll gather at 1:00 pm at Shelter A with the 2 1/2-mile hike beginning at 1:30 pm. Reviews on All Trails indicate it is a moderately easy hike that will take about 60-90 minutes to complete. If you want to sit back at the shelter that works too. Bring your water bottle and join us for s'mores and fellowship after the hike. —Cathy W.

For more information see this flyer:

[District 13 Serenity Walk](#)

2024 District Business Meetings

District 2

Hybrid Meeting every other month – third Wednesday at 6:30 pm—8:30 pm. Remaining 2024 Dates: May 15, July 15, September 18, November 20. St Paul's United Church of Christ, 5508 Telegraph Rd., Saint Louis, 63129. Adult Lounge: rear entrance by small play area. Zoom ID: 865 8553 6855, Passcode: 072722

District 13

Holds meetings every third Saturday of the year, except for the months of July and December. The meeting's physical location is at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 13014 Olive, Creve Coeur.

For information on Zoom please email:

district13business@gmail.com

District 14

Holds meetings on the second Thursday of odd numbered months. It is an in-person meeting with an electronic component. Zoom ID: 816-821-7954, Passcode: 7594

Redeemer Evangelical Church, 6450 S. Kingshighway.

May 9 – July 11 -- September 12 – November 14 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm.

For more information email modistrict14dr@gmail.com

District 15

On Zoom - Saturday July 20, October 5 & December 7 from 9:30–11:30 am.

Zoom ID: 884 2614 2383, Passcode: 910615

Email modist15dr@gamil.com for more information.

See flyers on AIS website for more details.



Join Us

Ctrl/Click this link for information about Al-Anon events!

[FLYERS & EVENTS](#)

Ctrl/Click this link for a current list of meetings in the St. Louis metro area

[Find A Meeting - ST. LOUIS AL-ANON \(stl-al-anon.org\)](http://stl-al-anon.org)

What is Detachment with Love?

Detachment is not isolation, a wall, indifference; shutting out love for oneself or the alcoholic. It is not cold, rejecting or avoidance.

Detachment is allowing God to care for the person, allowing the alcoholic the privilege of being themselves, allowing your loved one the dignity of being responsible for failure and knowing the joy and self-confidence of personal success. Detachment focuses on your well-being, on choices available, on actions to take. Detachment frees you to own what is yours and allows others to own what is theirs.



Learn to detach by "taking a moment" before reacting. Slogans used

right away can be a calming reminder that the situation is not impossible and that we have choices. Use "Think" and ask if the behavior is the person or the disease. "First Things First" to consider your well-being or immediate safety. "Let it Begin with Me" to change your attitude and stop blaming and criticizing and remember that person is a child of God deserving respect and love. "Let Go and Let God" to let go of the problem, the obsession with the person, and let God take care of it.

Offer every part of the situation to your Higher Power.

By detaching with love you are responding with choice rather than reacting and looking at the situation realistically and objectively, putting the focus back on yourself, stepping back from the problem and stopping any attempt to solve it or fix it.

Detachment is a skill that can move us out of suffering and into serenity. It's a tool and it takes practice. Detachment won't be mastered overnight - it takes time, patience, love and support to change old habits.

—Elaine P.

Blast from the past – Source: November 2018 Sincerely Al-Anon

NEW PUBLIC OUTREACH CAMPAIGN!



The PO committee's next campaign is providing Alateen packets to give out to all who work with students. We will be looking to the districts for ways to distribute the Alateen packets.

The PO Committee is always looking for new ideas to spread the word about Al-Anon. Email or call the AIS Office with your ideas!

Tradition 4

Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or AA as a whole.

“Learning to find the right balance of our autonomy and someone else’s is the mature alternative to the loneliness of total freedom or absolute control.”

“What does autonomy look like to me today?”

—A Little Time for Myself-A Collection of Al-Anon Personal Experiences, p. 10

As a member of Al-Anon I also think of the newcomer and how my action or the group action would make them feel “a part of” or “not a part of.” We need newcomers — they are our future; without newcomers Al-Anon would die. I was so confused and distraught when I arrived at Al-Anon. I was learning what my part was in the dysfunctional family disease. I didn’t know it at the time, but what I wanted was balance in my life. I have since learned that my actions can affect others, which is important for me to remember with the newcomer. When I first attended meetings, I got a sense of belonging because I knew what was going to happen at the meetings. Examples are: same readings, the use of conference approved Literature (CAL), taking turns sharing, not commenting on other people shares (which makes me feel safe) and service work at the meeting level. I knew I was getting the same message of recovery. Even though individual members had their own take on how they worked the program. The use of CAL literature keeps us in positive and solution-finding recovery shares. Nothing is perfect, occasionally a member would go on a tangent. I pause. Remember that we all came to Al-Anon for help and we are all at different stages of our recovery. I start praying for them instead of silently judging them. I know in time they will understand how what we say and do might affect the group as a whole. Learning to be kind and loving is the Al-Anon way.

At the group level we are autonomous in that we can decide what works best for our group. Examples are: where and when to have the meeting, what is our format (open or closed, women or men only or mixed.), what our opening or closing will be, how our monies are allocated (7th Tradition), how we spend it, what literature we purchase, and our prudent reserve amount. Autonomy gives the group members a voice which has been an important part of my recovery on how to be a healthy member of Al-Anon and a member of my community.

“On a personal level, Tradition Four reminds us that although we have a right to do what we believe is best for us, so do those around us. We need to be considerate of others and not infringe upon their freedom.

With this understanding comes not only independence, but also mutual respect and dignity. It can be summarized by the slogan “Live and Let Live.”

—How Al-Anon Works for families & Friends of Alcoholics, p. 112

—Susan C., Friday Night Fellowship

Inside My Hula-hoop



We frequently hear in the program, “that’s outside my hula-hoop”, meaning it’s not my issue or problem, and that if I want to have any sanity or serenity, I won’t try to manage or control it.

That is so true — one of the fastest ways I can make my life unmanageable is to try to control or manage things that are not mine to control and manage.

Another way to make my life unmanageable, though, is to not manage the things that are inside my hula-hoop. Growing up with alcoholism, I didn’t know it was my business to take care of my business.

Somehow, I got the idea that if I could make others change, then I would be happy. I was very busy trying to get them to change and being hurt and mad when they didn’t. I never took care of what was mine to take care of, whether it was eating well, socializing, advocating for myself, buying new shoes, or finding a pathway to peace. (cont. on page 8)

Al-Anon Governance

World Service Conference Structure Graphic



Members in a group elect a **Group Representative (GR)**.



The **GR** is the liaison between the group and the District and the group and the Area Assembly.



The **GRs** in a District elect a **District Representative (DR)**.



The **DR** represents the District's groups at Area World Service Committee (AWSC) meetings.



The AWSC consists of Assembly Officers, which includes the Chairperson, Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Treasurer, and Secretary; **DRs**; Coordinators (such as Alateen Coordinator and Literature Coordinator); and liaison members (such as Al-Anon Information Service Liaison).



The **GR** attends the Area Assembly to elect the **Area Delegate**, hear reports, and participate in Area service projects.



The **Area Delegate** attends the annual World Service Conference (WSC) and is the link between the groups and the WSC and the groups and the World Service Office (WSO).



World Service Conference

The composition of the WSC includes the **Area Delegates**, Volunteer members of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee, and voting members of the WSO administrative Staff.

Ultimate Authority

Delegated Responsibility



A March Celebration for Lois held in District #28 !!

What a way to hold a district meeting with great attendance from all the groups and guests! Geri W, District Representative, started with the idea of celebrating Lois' March birthday at the District Meeting to try and get more interest in service. She asked the groups from Franklin County District 28 to collaborate and organize a birthday celebration. Thinking of Lois, we knew she appreciated talking about service, the gifts of Al-Anon, fellowship, and outreach to others. So with those ideas a meeting party developed.

We read paragraphs from the service manual about the concepts of service. Geri explained the **World Service Conference Structure Graphic**, showing the service structure of the Groups, GR, DR, Delegate, Chair, Officers and the area meetings. Then a short district meeting was conducted.

We talked about the brochure *The Joys of Service* and everyone who held a service position explained their position and shared their growth while in that position. Now for the GIFTS! The attendees all received a wrapped gift, a symbol of gifts we receive in Al-Anon. Each gift had a phrase inside it and as each person unwrapped the gift, they explained how the phrase related to their Al-Anon journey and gifts they received. It was a joyous occasion.

Then we celebrated by serving a delicious cake dedicated to Lois. It said "Happy Birthday Lois" decorated with pictures of Lois and several high heel shoes on the cake. It was a fabulous district meeting and a grand ending by spending time in fellowship.



April Quotes of Note

There's nothing like rejection to make you do an inventory of yourself.

—James Lee Burke

Take inventory of what you have to offer. Place a value on it. Respect it - because if you don't respect what you have to offer it's hard for other people to.

---Nancy Pelosi

If we don't take inventory every once in a while, and give thanks to God for the great things He has done for us, we get totally out of perspective.

--David Jeremiah

If you truly want to be respected by people you love, you must prove to them that you can survive without them."

— Michael Bassey Johnson

As the sun crosses the celestial equator, we are reminded that balance is the key to a fulfilling life.

—Insight Timer Team

A man sees in the world what he carries in his heart.

—Von Goethe

We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.

—Epicetetus

FEBRUARY 2024 Revenue

District/Meeting	Contrib.
Dist. 1 Fresh Start	✓
Dist. 15 Friday Night Fellowship	✓
Dist. 13 Fully Relying on God (F.R.O.G.)	✓
Dist. 14 Hampton WSO	✓
Dist. 25 Wednesday Tranquility	✓
Dist. 02 Care and Share	✓
Dist. 14 How Al-Anon Works	✓
Dist. 28 Just for Today	✓
Dist. 02 Learn 'N Love	✓
Dist. 17 Blueprint for Progress	✓
Dist. 13 Backdoor Children	✓
Dist. 15 Webster Groves Parents	✓
Dist. 09 Banner Online	✓
Dist. 02 Serenity Seekers	✓
Dist. 09 North County Parents	✓
Dist. 15 Serenity Sisters	✓
Dist. 14 Friends in AFG	✓
Dist. 17 Climbing Higher	✓
Dist. n/a Courage to Find Serenity (ZOOM)	✓
Dist. n/a) Guest	✓
Group Contributions	2,132.50
Annual Appeal	75.00
Literature Sales	3,232.30
Journal Sales	24.00
Misc. Contributions	416.65
Dollars & Sense	42.21
Miscellaneous	332.70
Processing Fee Income	109.91
TOTAL	\$5,948.62

SERVICE MANUAL UPDATES AVAILABLE

To update your **printed** copy of the **Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual**, please download the replacement pages (Ctrl/Click on link below), print, trim to size, and insert over the current pages.



[REPLACEMENT PAGES](#)

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.



(cont. from page 4)

I think of my hula-hoop as a room to which I have the key. Before coming to Al-Anon, I spent my time in my hula-hoop hiding, afraid of being hurt, afraid of being found out as a failure, never venturing out, and always lonely. I peeked through the blinds looking for horrible things that might appear on the horizon. My hula-hoop world was decorated in shades of dark blue and brown and gray.

There was so much in my hula-hoop that needed taking care of. Step Four was the opportunity to look inside my hula-hoop, and see what was there. Much of it was pretty grim and dusty. A lot of the furnishings were broken, ugly relics from generations past. The fourth step let me see what was good, what might be worth keeping if it was cleaned up and renewed, and what should just be taken out to the curb. Through talking with my sponsor and friends, and listening at meetings, I learned how to furnish my hula-hoop with thoughts, ideas, and actions that made me happy. The tenth step helps me keep the inside of my hula-hoop orderly and enjoyable.

These days, my hula-hoop is spacious and gracious, decorated with things that make me feel good, and filled with colors that light me up. Now I know there's sunlight outside my hula-hoop, and the blinds are often open so I can look out. Today I have a choice to open the blinds to let the sunlight in, or close them if I need some quiet downtime with my Higher Power. And, I have a choice today in who I invite into my hula-hoop. Some people I wave to from a safe distance. Some people I invite in for tea. And my Higher Power is always in residence, and always welcome in my hula-hoop.

—Anonymous

**WE NEED
YOUR
UNWANTED
JEWELRY**

FOR OUR JEWELRY SALE at the
ICE CREAM SOCIAL
Sunday, August 18, 2024
1pm - 4 pm
Central Services Office
14 Sunnen Drive, Suite 144
Maplewood MO 63143

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

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

Any questions please call the Office at 314-645-1572



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

April 13 — D-17 Workshop & Potluck

April 13 — D-13 Serenity Walk

April 19-21 — 2024 Spring Fling

April 27 — D-2 Potluck

June 1 — D-15 Potluck Picnic

June 22 — 2024 MO Area Day in Service

July 28-30 — 2024 MO State Convention with Al-Anon participation

October 12 — D-25 Serenity Walk

October 11-13 — Al-Anon IL State Convention

DISTRICT MEETINGS

District 02, 13, 14, 15

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