NOVEMBER 2024

Sincerely Al-Anon

STEP ELEVEN

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

"The spiritual exercise suggested by the Eleventh Step is a powerful force for good in my life. May I always make time for it. I will not deprive myself of its precious help."

—Healing Within Our Alcoholic Relationships, p. 25

My very first Sponsor told me early on "Prayer is talking to our Higher Power and meditation is listening to our Higher Power." Meditating can be hard for me with a mind that is flowing with a river of dysfunction. Sitting still for a period of time is frightening at first. After listening to other members and doing my own research I came to realize that like living one day at a time, I can meditate one moment at a time.

I found an app that is for meditations. It states that it is ok when your mind wanders – just stop and bring it back to what you were doing. I also can get distracted by noises. Instead of getting upset, I listen to the noise, find the cadence and meditate to the sounds. Listening to quiet music or sounds of nature like rain, ocean waves, or walking in the snow have helped me stop my mind from going to places it does not need to go.

I start with five minutes and set a timer. I can do anything for five minutes. Some days I am better with my meditation and some days I forget to do it entirely. I must remember that it's baby steps. I am human and it is OK not to be perfect. When we were shut down from the pandemic I consistently started to meditate daily. I was told that if you meditate for six weeks a physical change happens in the brain. After the six weeks I could tell I was better. My Sponsor said she saw the change in me. I was more at peace with my surroundings.

There are many different meditation types. The following is a Centering Prayer Meditation that a friend uses:

1. *Choose a sacred word that is one or two syllables (examples: faith, trust, peace, silence, ocean, love).*
2. *Turn off all interruptions (phone, TV, computer).*
3. *Set a timer with a gentle alarm for 10-20 minutes. Start out with 10 minutes and then increase to 20 minutes and eventually 30 minutes if you would like a longer meditation.*
4. *Sit comfortably with your feet on the floor, close your eyes, and be still.*
5. *Begin by saying your sacred word to yourself and then just sit with your thoughts.*
6. *Do not judge any thoughts or try to stop thinking; just observe your thoughts and let them pass through your mind.*

(cont. on next page)

Published by: Al-Anon Information Service, 14 Sunnen Drive, Suite 144, Maplewood, MO 63143

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

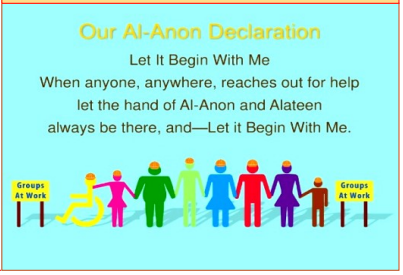
AIS Office Hours

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!



(cont. from previous page)

7. *When you become aware of repetitive thoughts, painful feelings, or uncomfortable images or associations, simply return to your sacred word, which is your anchor.*
8. *Remember that this is not an exercise in concentrating or focusing your attention on something such as a prayer or a mantra.*
9. *When the timer goes off, say a favorite prayer, such as the Serenity Prayer, to end your meditation.*

Make a commitment "one day at a time" to meditate for five minutes. We can all take five minutes for ourselves a day. You are worth it.

"Do I pray for the specific outcomes that I have decided are best for me, or am I willing to hear answers from a Power greater than myself."

—Healing Within Our Alcoholic Relationships, p. 25
—A Grateful Member of the World Wide Fellowship of Al-Anon

Pearls of Wisdom Desk Calendar 2025 Now Available!

The Pearls of Wisdom calendar is a daily tear-off calendar with 365 days of Al-Anon Wisdom in a "One Day at a Time" format.

The calendar was the brainchild of an Al-Anon member many years ago and has become the main fundraiser for District 13 in Area 31. The calendar sayings are sourced from the experience, strength, and hope spoken around the tables of Al-Anon.

The calendars are available for purchase September 1 through January 1 on CheddarUp. If you need delivery prior to the holidays please order by December 1. Click on the link below to place your order:

https://2025-pearls-of-wisdom-calendar.cheddarup.com/

Public Outreach Chair Needed

We are still in need of a Public Outreach Chair for the AIS Office. Please call the office for more information at 314-645-1572.

G-10 Public Outreach Guidelines

Sept 2024 Revenue

District/Meeting	Contrib.
D-15 Everyday Grace	✓
D-15 Friday Night Fellowship	✓
D-10 Serenity Sisters AFG	✓
D-15 Webster Groves Parents	✓
D-02 Six O'clock Serenity	✓
D-02 Parents Path to Recovery	✓
D-14 Southside WSO	✓
D-15 Journey to Serenity Adult Children	✓
D-13 Male Stumbling Blocks	✓
D-04 Focus on Solutions AC	✓
D-17 District 17	✓
D-15 Serenity Rising Women AFG	✓
D-09 North County Parents	✓
D-14 Men's Thursday WSO	✓
D-14 Women in Recovery Adult Children	✓
D-14 Powerless Rangers IL	✓
Group Contribution Total	$1,189.43
Dollars & Sense	8.61
Unrealized Gain/Loss	473.21
Literature Sales	2,524.69
Fundraising Revenue	79.00
Misc. Contributions	401.85
Interest Income	71.31
Gift Certificates	30.00
Services	87.50
TOTAL REVENUE	**$4,865.60**

AIS OFFICE HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Thanksgiving:
- closed Nov 28th & 29th

Christmas:
- closes 1 pm on Dec 24th, closed Christmas Day, Dec 25th

New Year's:
- closes 1pm on Dec 31st, closed New Year's Day, Jan 1st

Comfort in a Rough Place

"You are in a rough place right now," my Sponsor said as we walked together before our meeting. I had asked him to meet me 30 minutes early to help me find some firm ground. My brother had died four days earlier, and my partner was spiraling into a drunken bottom of her own. Violence and chaos dominated my home life. Neither I nor my son felt safe in our home. I just wanted space for our shared grief and could find none. Even though I'd been in Al-Anon eight years, I now found myself facing a new version of this baffling, cunning, and powerful disease at a time when I had no emotional energy to cope with it.

Still, my Sponsor's simple words helped me find a little light and brought together all I had learned in Al-Anon. Tradition Five states that Al-Anon's one purpose is "to help families of alcoholics" by welcoming and comforting them.

He welcomed me into the conversation by setting aside time on short notice to meet early. I mattered to him. He let me share what I was facing, just like we do at our meetings, without interruption. I rambled and cried, and he just let me. I felt comforted by his listening. He heard my pain and responded with how he saw me: "You are…" But he did not give me advice or tell me what to do. His quiet comfort gave me a little power in a situation where I felt powerless. I felt less alone, too—a key reason why we "Keep Coming Back" to our meetings.

At the time, I did not realize that his last two words were also crucial: "right now." That period of time felt like forever while it was happening. It was overwhelming to feel so much all at once. But feelings aren't facts. My Sponsor knew my feelings would pass eventually. They did. It wasn't easy, but I bounced back better because of my program and its purpose of "welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics." *--Charley B., The Forum, October 2024*

DID YOU KNOW?
(from Al-Anon/Alateen Public Outreach)

The AIS Public Outreach Committee is a group of members who meet once a month to share ideas on how we can spread the word about our wonderful program!

- You can receive the monthly Sincerely Al-Anon newsletter via email. It has program information as well as stories, updates and the latest happenings in the area.
- The most recent Public Outreach effort is the "Back to School" Campaign which is targeting high schools and local colleges. Are you able to share the name of a counselor, teacher, or another parent who would like a packet of Al-Anon information?
- You can be the person who makes a contact to explain our program! The AIS Office will mail a free newcomer packet to that special individual or one of the "Back to School" Campaign packets to school contacts.
- You may also help by distributing Al-Anon posters.
- The PO "ask" is simple – are you able to make one contact?

Call the AIS Office for information on any of the above ideas or to share your email address for our mailing list.

Al-Anon Family Groups of Greater St. Louis
14 Sunnen Drive Suite 144
Maplewood MO 63143

Phone: 314-645-1572 **Office Hours: 9a-5pm** **Mon-Fri Email:** aisoffice@stl-al-anon.org

"Let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always be there and let it begin with me!"

TRADITION 11

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, and TV. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all AA members.

"As I make changes in my own life, my family members and friends may be encouraged to seek recovery for themselves. The principle of anonymity gives me the opportunity to offer love, support, and understanding to others without violating their privacy or destroying their trust." *—Healing Within Our Alcoholic Relationships, p. 34*

When I first got into Al-Anon I wanted to yell it from the roof tops, because I was feeling so good. I knew that others would benefit from Al-Anon too like I did. I called it the "Moses syndrome." Lucky for me I didn't offend too many people before I heard at a meeting about "attraction rather than promotion." It is best that non-Al-Anon members see the change in you and ask "Why or how you have changed?" When people ask a question, they are ready for the answer. That is the best time to share about our program. When we start preaching most people will turn you off. Then you are just promoting. Another way to look at it is that you may be the only person they come into contact with who attends Al-Anon. I would hate to have someone I meet in the world see me behaving badly and then they walk into a meeting and recognize me. This happened to me a very long time ago. I was at an intersection, waiting to make a left turn into oncoming traffic. To this day I don't know what I did (maybe I was too far out in the intersection???), but as the car made a left turn in front of me they gave me the finger. As they passed by I saw that they were a member of Al-Anon. It was a good reminder that I do have a responsibility to be kind out in the world. I never saw this person again but it made a lasting impression on me and my future behavior. I held no anger towards this person. I knew they must be having a bad day. When I think of this lesson I do pray for that person that they are well and happy.

Another way to look at anonymity is it keeps my EGO (Easing God Out) in check. Like when I have the need to overpower the conversation instead of waiting for my turn to share or talking way too much and not allowing others to be a part of the conversation. That is my EGO being loud. When I'm listening, my EGO is quiet. When my EGO is quiet I'm able to hear my Higher Power. When I'm sharing with another member and then the next thing I know the conversation turns to them, I know they are just into themselves and do not realize that I need to be heard. Sometimes people just need to be heard, without any comments from you or about your life. I always go back to the idea that we all have our own journey and it is what it is. That behavior just reminds me that we are human and we all, including me make mistakes. That is another reason why I'm so grateful to the Al-Anon program which gives me the tools to do better.

It is pretty cut and dried for me not to break others' anonymity. Once when I was at the grocery store and saw a member who didn't acknowledge me, I just let it go. Whatever their reason was, I respected their privacy. I could tell by the way they avoided me once they saw me that I shouldn't say anything. Another time I was at a funeral of a parent who I met at my children's school. When I arrived at the funeral parlor one of her college friends was a member of the program. When we saw each other she ignored me. I wasn't upset. My friend introduced us and I acted like I have never met her before.

With my personal anonymity I have to remember that if I listen to my Higher Power, and I have this feeling that it is the right thing to do (like a spiritual experience), then I share about the Al-Anon program. I go back to my 10th step trick:

1. Is it kind? ***2. Is it necessary?*** ***3. It is true?***

I have learned to apply the tradition to my personal life, not just at Al-Anon meetings. It has made me a better person and helped me to look at the world with a more loving and kinder heart.

"Can I simply set a good example for others, rather than try to convince, persuade, or prod?"
—Healing Within Our Alcoholic Relationships, p. 34
—Susan C., Friday Night Fellowship

To the Care of a God as We Understood Him

We would love to hear from our members about your personal experience of the God/Higher Power of your understanding. Just submit a short story by the 15th of each month. As my sponsor says, "Lucky is God's most commonly used nickname."

11th Step Prayers

Higher Power Prayer: Higher Power, as I understand You, I pray to keep my connection with You open and clear from the confusion of daily life. Through my prayers & meditation I ask especially for freedom from self-will, rationalization & wishful thinking. I pray for the guidance of correct thought & positive action. Your will, Higher Power, not mine, be done. "In this moment, I quiet my thoughts and open my mind and heart to God's guidance for me. In this moment, I feel the gentle peace that conscious contact with God allows. If I am troubled and in doubt or joyful and serene, I turn to God. I know my path will be revealed and the way to my highest good will be made known." *—CoDa*

A Prayer On Awakening: "God please direct my thinking and keep my thoughts divorced from self–pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives. Please keep my thought life clear from wrong motives and help me employ my mental faculties, that my thought-life might be placed on a higher plane, the plane of inspiration." *—World Wide Web*

A Morning Prayer: "God, should I find myself agitated, doubtful or indecisive today, please give me inspiration, help me to have an intuitive thought or a decision about this problem I face. Help me not to struggle, instead, help me to relax and take it easy. Help me know what I should do and keep me mindful that you are running the show. Free me from my bondage of self. Thy will be done always." *—World Wide Web*

A Morning Prayer: "God, please show me all through this day what my next step is to be and please grace me with whatever I need to take care of the problems in my life today. I ask especially that you free me from the bondage of self -will." *—World Wide Web*

11Th Step Nightly Review Prayer: "God, help me to constructively review my day. Where was I resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid? Do I owe an apology? Have I kept something to myself which should be discussed with another person at once? Was I kind and loving toward all? What could I have done better? Was I thinking of myself most of the time? Or was I thinking of what I could do for others, of what I could pack into the stream of life? Please forgive me for my harms and wrongs today and let me know corrective measures I should take." *—World Wide Web*

Prayer of Saint Francis: Lord, make me a channel of Thy peace; that where there is hatred, I may bring love; that where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness; that where there is discord, I may bring harmony; that where there is error, I may bring truth; that where there is doubt, I may bring faith; that where there is despair, I may bring hope; that where there are shadows, I may bring light; that where there is sadness, I may bring joy.

Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort than to be comforted; to understand than to be understood; to love than to be loved.

For it is by self forgetting, that one finds. It is by forgiving, that one is forgiven. It is by dying, that one awakens to Eternal Life. —Amen.

New Parent Meeting — Parents Courage to Change AFG

Salem United Methodist Church

1200 S. Lindbergh Blvd.

St. Louis, MO 63131

Every Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. In person only

Enter through the back entrance at the rotunda double doors. Meeting is on 2nd floor.

HEALING WITHIN OUR ALCOHOLIC RELATIONSHIPS

A Collection of Insights from our Shared Journey

Learning to Live the Legacies

What follows is a series of introductory questions that we can answer about our relationships by applying Al-Anon's three Legacies—the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of Service. These "yes," "no," or "maybe" questions can "Keep It Simple," so that if we are unfamiliar with the Legacies, we can acquire a preliminary understanding. As we become familiar with their use, we can avail ourselves of other resources for deeper study; books such as *Al-Anon's Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions* (B-8), *Paths to Recovery* (B-24), and *Reaching for Personal Freedom* (P-92) may be helpful. In time, we may find that the Steps have helped us to learn how to love ourselves, the Traditions have helped us learn how to love others, and the Concepts have helped us learn how to love the world.

How the Twelve Steps Apply to My Relationships

Here are some questions to ask myself about my relationships, suggested by the Twelve Steps of Al-Anon.

STEP ONE

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.

- Have I really accepted the fact that I cannot control another person's drinking?
- Am I willing to carry this acceptance a step further and admit I am powerless over anyone but myself?
- Do I realize that alcoholics are individuals? That alcoholics have ways of reacting to daily happenings that are different from mine?
- Can I realize that my trying to change anyone only brings resistance in the form of hostility or hidden resentment? If I do, can I justify my criticism and condemnation of alcoholics?
- Am I resentful when others refuse to be and do what I want?
- Can I learn how to stop trying to change the alcoholic or anyone else?
- I will remind myself that I am powerless over everyone, and that I can live no life but my own. Changing myself for the better is the only way I can find peace and serenity. I will remember that a change in my attitude can smooth out many of my difficulties.

We sell *Healing within our Alcoholic Relationships (P-95)* at the AIS Office for $4.50 each. The above excerpts are from pp. 18-19.

What Does AFG Stand For?

You may have seen the initials AFG and wondered what they stand for. It's simple! AFG stands for Al-Anon Family Groups. You will find these initials used throughout the fellowship in:

- Group Names: All Al-Anon groups are registered with the letters AFG in their name.
- Mailings: Look for AFG, Inc., on envelopes from the World Service Office.
- Financial Transactions: AFG, Inc., will appear on your bank or credit card statement after an order or contribution.

What Does AIS Stand For? Al-Anon Information Service

Our Mission

Greater St. Louis Al-Anon Information Service (AIS) is a spiritually based organization that helps families and friends of alcoholics connect and support each other through meetings, information, and shared experiences.

Core Purpose

Helping families and friends of alcoholics find hope and encouragement to live joyful, serene lives.

MISSOURI AREA ALATEEN
COME BE A TEEN
STEP ELEVEN FUNDRAISER!!

Join Us For A Moment of Silence To Be Followed By Meditating

All you need to do is send a Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope to the address below. In return you will receive instructions along with a tea bag for your use.

Proceeds will benefit:
CBAT (Come Be a Teen), MO Area Alateen Conference
Please send all donations and a self-addressed stamped envelope no later than 11/8/24 to ensure enough turnaround time.
Make checks and money orders out to
Missouri Area AFG and Note Step 11 CBAT Fundraiser on Memo Line
Send To:
Carole Wolz, 1903 Birchwood Drive
Barnhart, MO 63012

Can't afford a donation at this time? Please send SASE anyway! Unity and participation is more important than money. Send questions to carole_wolz@yahoo.com

HELP WANTED!

We are looking for a new part-time AIS Office worker. This is a great opportunity to support the Al-Anon effort in our area. The Office is staffed Monday through Friday from 9:00a to 5:00p.

The new employee will work 4–12 hours per week in the AIS Office located at 14 Sunnen Dr #144, Maplewood, MO 63143.

Applicants must:

- Have a firm foundation in Al-Anon (at least a year of experience)
- Have worked the 12 steps and are familiar with the 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts
- Have a sponsor and attend meetings on a regular basis
- Answer phone calls from veteran Al-Anon members as well as from newcomers
- Assist customers with the purchase of Al-Anon literature
- A working knowledge of Microsoft Word and Excel is a plus.

Employees will use QuickBooks to record sales.

Training will be provided by existing personnel using the Office Policy and Procedures Manual.

You will be given a regular schedule for ½ to 1½ days per week. Flexibility in work schedule is required to cover vacations, sick time, etc., for other employees.

Please call the AIS Office at 314 645-1572 if you are interested or need more information.

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!

November 16th — District 15 Holiday Workshop

A Holiday Recovery Workshop-D-15

November 2-3th — MO Area Assembly

MO Area Assembly

February 21-23th — AMIAS – Training

AMIAS Recommended Training

July 3-6th — AA International Convention with Al-Anon Participation

International Convention

August 1-3th — 75th Annual MO State Convention w/Al-Anon Participation

MO State Convention

DISTRICT MEETINGS: D-02, D-13, D-14, D-15

SEE OUR WEBSITE & SINCERELY AL-ANON

https://www.stl-al-anon.org/

Missouri District 15 AFG presents

A Holiday Recovery Workshop

Saturday, November 16, 2024
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Webster Hills United Methodist Church
Christian Life Annex Building
1333 W. Lockwood, Webster Groves, MO 63119

Games, Give-a-ways And Fellowship

Light Breakfast With Beverages

2 Al-Anon Speakers

Questions? Contact Jenny K at 314-420-8718 or modist15dr@gmail.com