



Al-Anon Family Group KwaZulu-Natal

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

Dear Al-Anon Family,

As we said goodbye to June, we also bid farewell with profound sadness to a loving friend of Al-Anon KZN, the late Deena M. I had the privilege to hear Deena share his experience, strength and hope at various rallies and combined meetings. He was undoubtedly one of my favorite AA speakers, always ready to provide advice and perspective on any issue. His valuable contributions touched the lives of so many people and it was evident at his funeral service where the hall was filled to capacity and with many more people waiting outside to pay their final respects. The key note message echoed in the various tributes delivered was that, Deena was a man of integrity and humility.

Al-Anon's recovery program is fully based in humility but **what is humility?** Author C. S. Lewis wrote *"True humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less."*

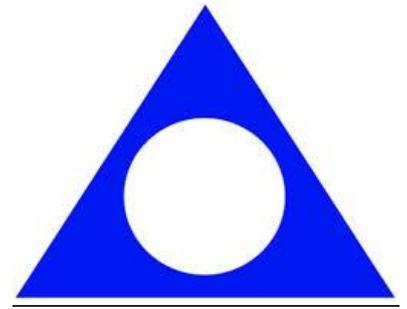
Some people believe that being humble means to be subservient to others and to set their needs aside for other people. In doing so they think less of themselves, put themselves down, and start sacrificing their well-being. That is not true humility; it is poor self-esteem. In Al-Anon we learn that we can and should, think highly of ourselves but we should not think solely of ourselves. We must have confidence in ourselves and our abilities but should not allow our self-confidence to turn into arrogance and vanity.

"In humility we possess self-esteem, accept ourselves as we are, assets and defects alike, and extend the same acceptance to others" (Paths To Recovery pg 72). Humility is being honest about our own shortcomings and that's what brought me to admit my powerlessness in Step 1. I was surprised to realize that my powerlessness over alcohol, over people places and things is not a weakness, but a strength.

The essence of humility is knowing that there is a God, and I am not it. When our well-meant attempts to help the alcoholic and others are futile, our own lives becomes unmanageable. Setting aside pride, ego and arrogance, we can accept Step 2 and the spiritual idea that we can depend on a "Power greater than ourselves" for help in solving our problems and directing us to serene beneficial channels and achieving peace of mind. *"True humility is based upon letting go of self-will and relying instead upon the will of our Higher Power."* (How Al-Anon Works pg 57).

"When we are humble, we are totally willing to accept God's help, knowing that without it we cannot progress further." (Paths To Recovery pg 72). Before I could take Step 3, I needed to trust my Higher Power. That meant to be totally humble and surrender myself over to the care of God. It took quite a while before I actually could come to a humble acknowledgement of my total dependence on this Power but today I live one day at a time trusting Gods will. I know that although our hearts may plan the way it is God who establishes our steps.

Service to others is the greatest form of humility. In Al-Anon we learn to put our common welfare first to achieve the greatest good for the greatest number. I learnt humility by putting principles before personalities as I perform Al-Anon service work. *Anonymity teaches us humility. We are encouraged to act accordingly to our own conscience rather than seeking the praise or attention of others (How Al-Anon Works pg 123).* Through service work I experienced growth and recovery. When you put your focus on others, and do your best on the task at hand, you are not focused on how great you are or how important you seem to others, you are instead focused on helping others and how much difference you can make in the lives of others.



KZN Upcoming Events

13 July 2019: FOOD FAIR – Frere Rd Church Umbilo

20 July 2019: ASC MEETING – Manning Rd Methodist Church

10 August 2019: WOMENS DAY – Arena Park, Regional Hall, Chatsworth

Al-Anon ... There is No Standing Still



*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.*

In order for us to have faith in the Al-Anon program, we need to see that it really works and that's where the experience, strength and hope of all members matter.

It would be wonderful to have an interactive newsletter and I look forward to receiving your share (it can be anonymous). Kindly email any suggestions, stories, queries and feedback to

angelbechoo@gmail.com

Words of Wisdom



*Pride is concerned
with what is right,
Humility is concerned
with what is right.*

So be humble, keep doing good work and if no one acknowledges it, don't be disappointed... *For the sun every morning is a beautiful spectacle and yet most of the audience still sleeps.*

Humility is one of the greatest virtues we can possess. We all have the ability to give up pride and still retain our dignity. In the wise words of Mother Theresa, **"If you are humble nothing can touch you, neither praise nor disgrace, because you know who you are."**

Warm regards
Angel



SHARING is CARING

**Thank you beautiful family for sharing your experience, strength and hope.
The received shares will be featured in forthcoming issues.**

LET GO AND LET GOD

I have been in the program for nine years. During my early days in Al-Anon, the slogan **Let Go and Let God** was extremely difficult for me to practice. When I found myself in a difficult situation, I would pray to my Higher Power and then when things did not go as to my plan, I would try to fix it myself. As I continued making meetings, hearing other members share and reading extracts from Al-Anon literature, it starting to make sense and gradually I learnt that in order to Let Go And Let God, I needed to completely surrender to my Higher Power. I learnt that everything happens as per God's will and not mine. Over the years as much as I learnt how to practice this slogan, sometimes situations make me doubtful and then I need to remind myself of complete trust and faith in my Higher Power.

Just to share how this slogan has worked for me recently... A month back, I fell ill and was hospitalized. Several tests were done and the outcome of the endoscope and MRI scan showed ulcers, gastritis and gallstone. This all happened a week before the 2019 Al-Anon National Conference where I as one of KZN area delegates was to attend. I was discharged on Monday and I was having mixed feelings about attending my first conference. The Wednesday afternoon, I prayed to my Higher Power asking my Higher Power to take care of this trip. *"God if this trip is meant to be, I will go and if it's not your will, I will accept."* I packed my bags and left it at that.

Thursday morning by the grace of God I woke up and before I knew it I was on that plane to Cape Town. It was indeed the most amazing weekend of my recovery in Al-Anon and the power of my Higher Power working for me. When we first enter the fellowship we hear that *things beyond our wildest dreams will materialize*, this was one of mine.

On the 25th of June, I removed my gallbladder. Once again I handed this operation to my Higher Power and by grace of God, everything went well and I'm recovering well one day at a time. So my message is Do not despair, Let Go And Let God, Everything happens as per God's will. **{Submitted by Selvam K, Township Park AFG}**

MY EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH AND HOPE

I remember how uncomfortable it was for me to ensure there was no alcohol at home and to guard products so that they do not contain alcohol. Towards the end of my life with my ex-husband, I hated to be an enabler. I recall before my maternity leave, I often went to Germany from my office to instruct. Once when already in Prague I felt terrible. My big fear was that he will drink. Instead of enjoying the corners of Germany, I was sitting in the hotel room, smoking slowly and shaking with fear.

Even before it all started, I felt like I was living on a strange planet. It came slowly and inconspicuously, I started to get rid of people, make excuses for why I can't meet my friends. I was shaking every day at work, I was continuously anxious and I would hurry home. At home, I screamed, begged, beaten. I stopped being interested in the world outside, outside of my marriage. I stopped being myself. I let me manipulate myself and began to suffer mentally and physically. I even refused to go to Germany, so I made a really idiotic decision and resigned from my job.

When I came to Al-anon, I never did the program for myself. I wanted to change, not to be myself again but to stop his drinking. For years I had been in the program for a wrong reason. I know it today and now I'm slowly finally realizing that no one is more important than me (I don't count my son, that's something else).

I am divorced. I am trying to stop checking my ex, stop overthinking and starting to live. I feel grief every day. I feel helpless, bad but not alone and abandoned. I am lazy. I do not want anything. I do not enjoy anything but I can overcome and slowly invent where to go, what to do, how to find a friend. I have a new boyfriend who is not an alcoholic and never was. He has his own demons, who hasn't? But we love us. Finally, I know how it is when somebody loves me.

Every day I feel happy for a while. Every day something happens to please me. Even if it's just rain or sunshine, a hug or kiss. Yes, I still have my bad days when all is black and I am ridden with my ex drinking but I am trying to let it go...

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you **{Submitted by Lucia J, Loner member - Havířov, Czechia}**

Please visit our national website www.alanon.org.za. It is updated regularly with various newsletters, Loners letters and other interesting information.
The opinions expressed in this Newsletter were strictly those of the person who gave them. Take what you like and leave the rest.

TRADITION 7 : Every Group ought to be fully self-supporting declining outside contributions

Al-Anon has no dues or fees but we have expenses. **Contributions are voluntary.** Give what you can, if you can't give just keep coming back. We need you more than we need your money. Al-Anon is spiritually rich - our members are our abundant resource.

Should you wish to send a gratitude donation, our bank details is as follows:

**Bank name: ABSA
Account name : Al-Anon Family Groups Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN)
Account number : 4074787557
Branch name : Musgrave
Branch code : 632005
Reference: Your name / WoW**