

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS CAPE AREA ECHO

ISSUE NO. 08 OF 2021 (August)

IMPORTANT

Due to Covid-19, many of our Al-Anon groups are meeting electronically instead of face-to-face.

*****LATEST NEWS: NEWCOMERS ZOOM MEETINGS*****

NEW GROUPS – for newcomers, newer Al-Anon members or those struggling with active alcoholism

(Welcome to Newcomers - <https://www.alanon.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Introduction-to-Newcomers-Meetings-Website.pdf>)

Cape Town: Wednesdays 5pm

WhatsApp message: 082 895 6815

Gauteng: Sundays 5pm

WhatsApp message: 082 316 3673/082 626 0262

KwaZulu Natal: Thursdays 7pm

WhatsApp message: 083 411 6683

For information regarding online meetings please contact one of the numbers below or refer to the 'List of Meetings' at <http://www.alanon.org.za/meetings/>

CAPE AREA OFFICE: WhatsApp 082 212 1878/072 258 0986 / Telephone 021 595 4517 / Email: alanonct@iafrica.com

The opinions expressed here are strictly those of the person who gave them. Take what you liked and leave the rest.



SECURITY IS OUR CURE

We always close our meeting by asking our Higher Power for serenity to accept what we cannot change, courage to change what we can and the wisdom to recognise which is which. This assures me that as I am humbly asking for these gifts, I will be helped to recognise and accept the means to obtain them.

I have heard it said that no prayer goes unanswered, even though the answer may not be when and how I would like or expect it. The means to lubricate the changes is also specified – serenity is the oil that eases my acceptance, the development of my courage and the growth of my wisdom. So, the recipe is clear – I must do all I can, with help, to increase my serenity and to protect it from being lost. Serenity is a gift for which I am fully grateful.

The Al-Anon program also provides me with many means to stay healthy in mind and body. Of the many tools available, I believe serenity is by far the most powerful and effective and, wonderfully, it is free. I just need the humility to ask for help, which can be very difficult. Sharing in confidence helps me achieve the humility I need for that serenity.

I came to Al-Anon looking for assistance and support because of the alcoholism and disturbed behaviour of my youngest son, then in his early thirties and still living at home.

The program was a godsend for the whole family. My son still drinks, occasionally to excess, but for many years now has never been out of control or aggressive. His behaviour at home improved greatly during the first two to

three years of my time in Al-Anon despite the frustrations of severe dyslexia and autism which prevent him from holding down jobs.

I feel enormous gratitude to Al-Anon, my Higher Power, and to the members of my home group.

By Derek, Norfolk, Al-Anon Today

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Limited space available. Contact Gail at the office to book your spot at alanonct@iafrica.com or 021 595 4517.

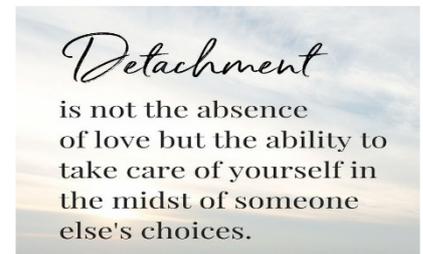
HUMILITY & PATIENCE-ALLOWING GOD TO CHANGE US

"In the humility of surrender we find ourselves. We become able to see our God-given good qualities, too.

All progress must grow from a seed of self-appreciation which is as far removed from conceit and pride as day is from night.

Let me realise too, that self-doubt and self-hate are defects of character that hinder my growth."

From The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage (B-04), p.86



DIARY OF AN ALCOHOL SURVIVOR

Yesterday again
He could well have killed himself
Driving home drunk.

I do not know yet
Whether rock bottom is near
For me it feels close.

It feels like fate says
He must go so very low
That there are sharp rocks.

He must tear his feet
Batter his body still more
Destroy his spirit.

And then do the same
Again and again without
Getting any better.

I feel fairly calm
I know I must handover
Let go and let God.

And I must hold fast
To clear, healthy boundaries
Detaching with love.

I have to risk that
I have to believe in hope
And hugs, nothing more.

A Poem by Giles G., Courage to Change



NEVER TOO OLD TO LEARN NEW WAYS OF THINKING

I first heard about Al-Anon from a pizza restaurant owner I did not know. When I placed my order, he looked at

me and said, “Who is this for?” Before I could answer, he spoke our foster son’s name, L, and then asked, “Where is he?”

“In the hospital,” I answered. We talked briefly, and I learned that L – in his 20’s – was a regular customer, and the restaurant owner was a recovering alcoholic. I told him that L was getting over a serious needle infection, and my husband and I were helping him get back on his feet. As I walked out with the pizza, the last words I heard were, “You both need Al-Anon.”

Before we had a chance to explore what that meant, however, L got kicked off a Greyhound bus for drinking and threatening behaviour, then walked to a nearby casino where he continued to drink and was again told to leave. In trying to return to the bus stop/gas station in the dark, he got lost, fell into a water-filled ditch, and drowned. The following evening, two policemen came to our house to deliver the shocking news.

Fast forward 20 years to the day our 23-year-old grandson, after finding his way to A.A., asked his parents, and my husband and me, to go to Al-Anon. This time, there was no hesitation. And now, three years later, our grandson remains in recovery, and we continue to benefit from the knowledge we have gained and the support and friendships we have found here.

Initially, we felt a little like fish out of water, since neither of us had grown up in nor married into alcoholic or drug-addicted environments. But we quickly learned about the far-reaching generational effects of addictive behaviours and began to realize that Al-Anon would help us focus on recovery from the dysfunction in our own extended families. For my husband, this has meant addressing physical and emotional abuse, and for myself, emotional detachment – behaviours we learned to live with and respond to for most of our lives.

Now we are being introduced to new ways of thinking, responding, and living. We are learning to set limits (with loving detachment). We are discovering our own personal meaning of a Higher Power—an entity we can turn to for love and guidance. And both of us are practicing the “novel” idea of asking for help, knowing we no longer have to deal with our problems alone.

In closing, I’d like to say thank you: to our grandson, who pointed us in the direction of Al-Anon, and to the many

people who have been and are accompanying us on this journey of recovery. My husband and I, at 82 and 72 and in retirement, thought there wasn’t much more for us to learn in this lifetime. We were wrong.

By Joyce, Washington, The Forum, July 2021

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FINDING A BETTER WAY TO LIVE

As a child, I felt I could do nothing right. My father was impatient and critical. I thought, “When I’m grown up, I’ll get it right.” My father’s parenting style was to point out everything that I did wrong, and nothing that I did right. I believe he thought he was helping me become a better person. Of course, I never got everything right, but it didn’t stop me from trying. I demanded too much of myself in striving for my father’s approval. This determination carried over into my roles as a wife, a mother, and an employee.

When I came to Al-Anon, I heard many slogans and sayings: “Easy Does It,” “Let Go and Let God,” “Progress Not Perfection,” “expectations are resentments waiting to happen,” and “put your oxygen mask on yourself first.” They were perplexing. But I knew there had to be a better way to live, so I kept an open mind, listened at meetings, read Conference Approved Literature, and eventually found a Sponsor.

Once I realized I was expecting too much of myself, I eased up, threw away my lists, and became less pushy. I renounced my endeavours to be perfect. My change in attitude allowed me to forgive myself for my shortcomings. Then it became easier to let go of my expectations of others, and I was also able to forgive them for being human. It was a relief to begin making different choices in my life.

This domino effect led me to find serenity, and my peace of mind and happiness continued to escalate. My faith in Al-Anon also increased, and I began to understand that my old slogans, such as “where there’s a will,

there’s a way,” no longer served me. I recognized that I and others each have our own Higher Power, and I’m not it. My Higher Power started as Al-Anon, and now it’s something more. “Keep Coming Back.”

By Shelley H., Pennsylvania, The Forum, September 2016

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The Cape Area has the following vacant service positions. Discuss in your groups and nominate members. Elections will be held at the Annual General Meeting/Elections on 21st August 2021.

- *Area Chairperson
- *Policy and Planning Coordinator
- *Member Services Coordinator
- *Alternate Finance
- *Alternate Fundraising
- *Alateen Co-ordinator
- *Delegate
- *Alternate Delegates
- *District Reps – Northern & Southern Districts

Nominations forms are available from the Area office. Please complete the forms, get the nominee to sign and email to alanonct@iafricacom. Contact Natalie B. for further information.



Hope and Help for Young People who are the relatives and Friends of a Problem Drinker

ALATEEN – THERE IS HOPE

One of my students wrote a moving essay about his experience with Alateen and how it is helping him deal with alcoholism in his family.

As a teacher, I can almost see the future for children who are carrying heavy burdens that get buried, but not forgotten. These burdens are so much harder to work through as more time goes on, and they can manifest in self-destructive ways when unresolved.

I am so happy for my student that he has Alateen and can process his experience with others, and then express it in his writing. I hope that Alateen can help others find hope and comfort, and [then] use this to break the cycle of alcoholism in their lives.

By Lynne Carrick, Sixth Grade Teacher, Washington, Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism 2013

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ALATEEN
 Hope and Help for Young People who are the relatives and Friends of a Problem Drinker

Alateen, part of the Al-Anon Family Groups, is a fellowship of young people whose lives have been affected by alcoholism in a family member or close friend. We help each other by sharing our experiences, strength and hope.

When: Thursday
Time: 6 to 7 pm
Where: Online
 Contact 084 547 2804 for login details.
Age Group: 12 to 17 years.

Alateen can help.

Al-Anon Helpline 0861252666 * www.alanon.org.za

HUMILITY

"The simplest definition of humility is truth. Knowing who we are—our good points & bad, our strengths & weaknesses, our abilities & our limitations—that's humility."

al-anon.org/for-alateen

Humility was a tough concept for me to comprehend – taught from childhood to place the wants and needs of others always above my own. I equated humility with taking care of others and ignoring my own feelings and needs. In Al-Anon I have learned that true humility is not degrading, it does not require that I neglect my own needs. In fact, humility is not measured by how much I do for other people, but my willingness to do my part in my relationship with the God of my understanding. I begin to learn about what is, and what is not my responsibility. As this becomes clear, I am better able to do my part, for myself and for others, and better able to ask God to do the rest. Courage to Change

"Humility will help us see ourselves in true perspective and keep our minds open to the truth." – Alcoholism the Family Disease (P-04).

By Pearl N., Public Outreach Coordinator

We cannot tell what may happen to us in the strange medley of life. But we can decide what happens in us – how we can take it, what we do with it – and that is what really counts in the end.

"Have courage for the great sorrows of life and patience for the small ones; and when you have laboriously accomplished your daily task, go to sleep in peace. God is awake." Victor Hugo

Al-Anon Family Groups
 Courage to Change—One Day at a Time in Al-Anon II



AUGUST – WOMEN'S DAY, PUBLIC SECTOR & WORKPLACE

"I'm looking for a time when women are changing the nature of power versus power changing the nature of women." Bella Abzug

- *August is Women's Day month.
- *Target Government Provincial departments, correctional centres, women's shelters, and prisons.
- *Drop off bookmarks, business cards or literature wherever you go.
- *Have information tables with volunteers available to answer questions and literature at events celebrating Women's Day in your neighbourhood or town.
- *Invite clergymen, counsellors, others who work in rehabs or medical facilities to attend meetings.
- *Invite professionals who work with abused women or in shelters to attend a meeting.
- *Start planning Public Outreach opportunities in your Al-Anon Groups.
- *All literature is readily available form your Area or GSO office.



SUGGESTED CAL FOR AUGUST

- "When you cease to make a contribution, you begin to die." Eleanor Roosevelt
- J-1E Tell me about Al-Anon.
 - J-1A Vertel my van Al-Anon.
 - M-1 Are you concerned about someone else's drinking.
 - M-10 Just for today cards.
 - M-76L PO & Crying house bookmarks
 - P-01 Al-Anon is for men.
 - P-07 Guide for the family.
 - P-09 How can I help my children?
 - P14 So you love an alcoholic.
 - P-10 What do you do about the alcoholics drinking?
 - P-48 Understanding ourselves and alcoholism.
 - P-62 Does she drink too much?
 - P-67 Dear Mom and Dad.
 - P-82 Living in a shelter.
 - S-17 Al-Anon is for you! 20 questions.
 - S-20 Alateen is for you! 20 questions.
 - S-25 Did you grow up with a problem drinker?

- S-63 Help for employees.
 - S-69 Al-Anon welcomes adult children of alcoholics (free).
 - S-70 AFG welcomes gays & lesbians. Own Business cards.
- Al-Anon contact details:
 Helpline no.: 0861 425 2666
 GSO email: alanongso@iafrica.com
 Area email: alanonct@iafrica.com
 Website: www.alanon.org.za
 Members' website: www.alanon.org.za/members/

A CALL FOR FUNDRAISING IDEAS

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

Calling all members to come forward with fundraising ideas. We need your help, your ideas, your fresh outlook. Send your ideas to the Area office at alanonct@iafrica.com or WhatsApp to 082 342 2102. We're waiting to hear from you. Your voice, your ideas, are important, we can't do this on our own. Participation is key.

Fundraising is the gentle art of teaching the joy of giving.

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.*

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.



NOTICE BOARD

CAPE AREA FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS & E-MEETINGS

Excerpts from letter from the General Service Board, dated 26th July 2021, Covid-19 Update:

“... address by the President on Sunday 25th July 2021 has reference. Our country has now moved to Alert Level 3 which means that gatherings (with limitations) are now permitted.

This allows us to resume face to face meetings under the COVID protocols. Venue capacity is a crucial aspect of the guidelines for gatherings. We lovingly urge you to take all precautions and observe all protocols when resuming your meetings. The COVID 19 Dossier has the required documentation.

Please note that our GSO continues to make the Zoom platform available as a resource to the fellowship...”

Zoom meetings continue, and details can be found at <https://www.alanon.org.za/meetings/>

WHERE DO I BUY CAL?

Order your literature by visiting the office, email alanonct@iafrica.com or telephonically on 021 595 4517. Payment options are direct deposit, EFT, Snapscan, Payfast or cash.

Specials available on some locally printed literature. Pick up yours today. Limited stock. Check your email for more information.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- *Area Annual General Meeting/ Elections Sat 21 August 2021
- *Fundraiser – Food Fair September 2021
- *Service Committee Sat 18 September 2021
- *RSS (Regional Service Seminar) Sat 9 October 2021 – Limited space available – book your place.

NEXT ISSUE

The topic/theme for the next issue is **Gratitude and Abundance**. “Acknowledging the good that you already have in your life is the foundation for all abundance.” Eckhart Tolle.

Please share your experience, strength, and hope on this topic or any other that may be on your heart, by sending your shares to alanonct@iafrica.com or WhatsApp to 0823422102.

TRADITION SEVEN ~ Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

A gentle reminder to all members to pay group contributions on a regular basis. The Area needs every member’s contribution to continue to keep its doors open.

Every member and group are part of the solution.

Thank you to all who continue to pay their contributions and to the groups who fundraise among their members during these somewhat difficult times.

Bank: ABSA

Account Name: Al-Anon Family Group Cape Area

Account No: 407 321 5579

Branch No: 632005

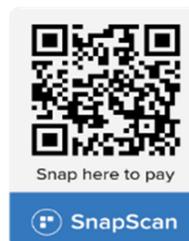
Type: Cheque

Ref: GC, Group Name, Member’s Name

Payfast link: Click on or copy and paste link and select the amount or manually enter the amount you want to contribute and follow the prompts.

<https://www.payfast.co.za/donate/go/alanonfamilygroupscapereaa>

SnapScan:



Snap here to pay

SnapScan