



Al-Anon Family Groups

Help and hope for families and friends of alcoholics

Good day Loners,

We are half way through March already with Easter round the corner. The Easter Weekend on the Al-anon/AA Calendar is, of course, our National Convention which will be held in Port Elizabeth this year. Sadly I don't get to Conventions anymore and must say I really miss them. Convention is a very special time spent with friends from all over South Africa .I went to my first Convention in Durban when I was in the Fellowship 3 months. It was in the Durban City Hall 1979 and I could not believe

there were 'so many' Alcoholics in SA 😊
Port Elizabeth Convention is very special for Bob and I as he found his Sobriety that

Easter 28th March 1982 celebrating 42 years this year, by The Grace of God. 🙏
KZN Face to face meetings are doing well again after many of them closed during 2020. Sadly a few of the oldest groups in Durban like Sea View and Umbilo have not

opened up again 😊

I'm grateful that the Zoom meetings have continued as I'm one of the Longtimers that thoroughly enjoy them.

If you would like to join a Zoom meeting in KZN the details are as follows:

Meeting I.D. 5356775411- Password 127700

Monday- 12 pm

Tuesday -11 am and 19:30pm

Wednesday- !9:30pm

Thursday- 19:00pm and AAC 20:15 pm

Friday- 20:00pm

We have many overseas visitors who are regulars in our Zoom meetings.

The meetings are usually an hour long and vary from Speakers sharing ESH to discussion of our 3 Legacies and using our CAL for Specific Topics.

South Africa printed the New Daily Reader called, 'A little time to myself' which is selling for R294 available from our Office in Durban. Please call on 031 3041826 and speak to Nisha.

Our other Books are still selling well, we now have 4 Daily Readers so we're never alone with our literature and our Higher Power just a prayer away.

My favourite Book at moment is 'Discovering Choices'.....(as the title explains) You never too old to know you have Choices...You have to make the decision to Change, to grow, to move forward with Peace and Serenity.

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In our meeting last night we discussed Step 3 and how important God is in our life. GOD my Good Orderly Direction, and how EGO Eases God Out....when we think we in control and we don't rely on Him to work for Us.

Our Book 'Paths to Recovery' and 'Reaching for Personal Freedom' are excellent for helping us through The Steps. I know for me, my Recovery can only come through working the 12 Steps on a daily basis especially Step 10.

In another Awesome book 'How Al-anon Works' Chapter 9 on The Slogans:

JUST FOR TODAY.....I will be Happy

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT....Helps us gain perspective

LET IT BEGIN WITH ME....We are responsible for our actions and behaviour

ONE DAY AT A TIME.. .Making most of today and EASY DOES IT

The Daily Reader HOPE FOR TODAY...Page 3, Thought for the day, Says....Al-Anon is helping me navigate life ease, dignity and hope. Today I will share my Hope with others.

MARCH is the Month of celebrating our Co-founder, Lois's birthday 🎂 She was born on 4th March 1891 and we remember her as our Mother, Mentor and Friend.

Evelyn from KZN (who now lives in UK) had the privilege of meeting Lois ❤️ We remember her in memories written in the book 'Lois Remembers'. The book about her and Bill's life together, through the awful journey of active alcoholism. She says, "I'm sure you will understand that Bill was my life" and I so identify with their journey. How She loved Him so much. The Movie "When Love is not enough" is

their life story 🙏

God Bless you all over this Easter Season. For those Christians celebrating the

Death and Resurrection, may you find Peace 🙏

Love and hugs

Lindsay S
Loners Co-ordinator

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How Step 1, 2 and 3 worked for me

My life before Al -Anon was a very interesting one. I thought I was the most together person. When life dealt me a blow (which was quiet constant) I just got up, dusted my knees and carried on with life. I accepted that this was my lot in life and carried on. Not realizing that by ignoring my feelings I was doing myself the biggest injustice ever. Instead of crying, grieving, forgiving and loving myself, I hardened up and started laying bricks around me to protect me from the outside world, not seeing that I was locking myself away.

Just to give you an idea on how insane I was, I have been marred 4 times, the last one to the alcoholic in my life. I went around rescuing and fixing people because it was so much easier to help others than look into the mirror, besides people knew I was a people pleaser with no boundaries.

Fortunately my Higher Power got tired of me holding the reigns and directing my life and placed people into my life that led me to the rooms of AL-ANON. and that is where the magic started.

Of course when it was first suggested to me that I go to Al-Anon I was horrified. Why should I go, I wasn't the one with the problem, besides I have everything under control, I am managing just fine! But I went anyway because who knows maybe I would be given the secrets for how to plead, cry or hide the booze better to get my husband to stop drinking. At first I thought I had entered the twilight zone. These women were happy, hugged each other and only talked about themselves. But there was something in those rooms being with these crazy ladies that kept me coming back. I felt loved and accepted unconditionally for the first time in my life. It wasn't long after joining Al-Anon did it dawn on me as to how sick I was. Probably sicker than my alcoholic husband. Now that was a thought! Then came the steps:

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Step 1 – We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable. This was a hard step for me to swallow and took some time. To me in the beginning I felt I was managing life well and I had all the power over everything especially alcohol, I mean surely if you love your family enough you can just put it down? Oh how blind and naïve was I?

For me the answer came to me when I started to understand that alcoholism is a disease, that not only affected my husband but also us as a family, did I really start seeing how powerless I am, not only over the alcohol but in every aspect of my life. I can only control ME, my emotions, my reactions or responses to situations, people or places. When I discovered that, it felt like the ball and chain had been taken off my ankles. I was free. So many things had been taken off my to do list. I was free to look at me. I mean if other people don't have to power to make me happy, sad or angry how could I have that power to do it to them? It was my reactions or responses that determined the outcome for me. What a relief it was. And the best part by just keeping the focus on me, my life started to be manageable.

The best part is I don't need to plan the manageability for the next 10 years. I just have to focus on today. Am I managing life in this hour?

Step 2 – Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Now the first part was easy for me. I grew up with a religious upbringing so I was fortunate that I had faith and belief in a Higher Power. But where things changed for me was my God growing up was a fearful one. If I stepped out of line I knew I would be punished etc. so when I left home I kind of turned my back on my God I Forgot to have a relationship with him, besides I was too busy causing chaos in my life because I was in control. When I came into the fellowship, my perception and idea changed with my God. He became more loving and accepting that made it easier for me to have a relationship again with Him. Wow! to hand the reigns of my life back to Him was incredible. I could be a human again and not super human. I can make mistakes and its ok. I am still loved and accepted for who I am.

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The second part of this step was a little harder for me, why? because I was not insane so how can I be restored to sanity? I didn't need a strait jacket or to be committed to a loony bin?

But let's be honest here, what sane person watches another person constantly? Tells them how they should live their lives? Hides or throws the booze away, screams, shouts and cries when they don't get their own way. To me, that was not a sane person. So I had to admit that maybe I was a bit insane, but again that was ok because now that my God was back in the driving seat I don't have to behave that way. Yes I am human so now when I become aware that I am loosing the plot slightly, I can look at my life and when that happens, it more than often is because I am trying to sit behind that steering wheel of life. And when I see that I know I need to lump into the passenger seat again.

Step 3 – Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God as we understood him

In my early days of AL-ANON, I tried very hard to hand things over to my God. My husband back then would love to disappear to the beach over the weekend to recharge for the next week. But I know it was to recharge his liquor intake. As he would leave I thought I was handing him over to his Higher Power but could understand why he would be away the whole day and come back home so drunk. It was only when I realized that I had not hand him over completely. I kept watching the clock, phoning every hour to see what he was up too. I was still trying to control. I had kept my fingers onto the corner of what I had handed over. You see I had trust issues. So how could I trust God entirely with my problem? He may not do it as quickly as I could, or maybe the outcome wouldn't be what I wanted. It was only when one day I envisioned putting my husband into Gods hands and walked away from the problem and busied myself in the garden and forgot to look at the time and phone, did my husband come home earlier and more sober. That was when I realized that I could start handing things over to my Higher Power.

Today I am getting better at handing things over. But I am still human so sometimes my hand is still on the corner. But when I visualize actually placing my problem into my Gods hands, do I find it easier to let go. And yes sometimes the outcome is not what I want, or the problem takes a little longer to be resolved. But I have learnt to

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trust that no matter what the outcome is, it's the right one for me. And if it comes with pain that is ok because it means I need to grow.

Thank you for letting me be of service and sharing my story with you.

My name is Sioban, and I am a grateful member of Al-Anon

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