



Al-Anon Family Groups

Help and hope for families and friends of alcoholics

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help - let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always be there, and Let It Begin with Me.

January 2025



Hi Dear Loners!!!

WELCOME 2025

As we step into the New Year it is the perfect time to reflect on the past year and embrace new ideas, resolutions and make a fresh start.

It is a New Year, but we have to understand that the New Year is not going to change us. The only way there will be change is if we are willing to go within and make the change for ourselves. How beautiful is our Al-Anon programme that we have the tools to heal ourselves.

December came with challenges as all my children relocated at once.

Returning to an empty, quiet home was lonely, depressing and heartbreaking.

When I get Busy I get Better, so I took pen to paper and started this Letter which brings me great comfort. It is refreshing to return to meetings and the familiar faces of my Al-Anon family. I started my New Year with Step 1, 2 and 3 and the Serenity Prayer. Dear God, I can't, You can and I will let You. My children have their own Higher Power, and I surrender them in His care.

Working my steps inspires me to start my daily routine of Prayer, meditation and conscious contact with my Higher Power.

One Day At A Time I Let Go of negative, fearful thoughts and Let God take charge of me.

I live every day in deep Gratitude for this amazing programme which is my gift from God.

Let us make 2025 a year of Spiritual growth. Keep our doors and phone lines open to welcome new members.

I pray this year brings you, Serenity, Joy in your Heart and Peace in your Soul as you Let Go Let God and embark on this incredible journey of Self Love.

Let It Begin with You, Take your Soul on a vacation, Smile, give yourself a Hug and say I Love You.

January being the first month of 2025 we concentrate on the 1st Step, Tradition and Concept.

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS KZN AREA

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STEP 1 - *We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.*

Once I took step1 and admitted I was powerless over alcoholism my journey in recovery began. As I work the steps, I find hope and comfort and become powerful over myself.

I no longer feel hopeless and afraid. Step 1 also helps me understand that alcoholism is a disease, to detach with love and put myself first.

TRADITION 1 – *Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends on unity.*

The Tradition unites our groups and allows us to grow and progress. We support and respect each other as we all benefit from our beautiful programme.

I am learning to contribute to the unity in my home. Our lives are more peaceful when I stop reacting and Think before I speak. It saves a lot of misunderstandings. How important is it to disturb my peace?

CONCEPT 1 - *The ultimate responsibility and authority for Al-Anon world services belongs to the Al-Anon groups.* Allows me to trust in my Higher Power and keep the focus on my recovery. I take responsibility for my own life and allow others the respect and dignity to take responsibility of theirs. As I Let Go and Let God, I find balance and peace in my life.

Thank You

God Bless You all

Sending Love and Warm Hugs

Valerie M. (Loners Coordinator)



How Important Is It

These simple words have become one of my favourite slogans which have played a huge part in my recovery in Al-Anon.

From someone, who used to make everything so big and so important, this slogan has given me a completely new perspective on me, the things that happen in my life and the choices I make.

Pre-Al-Anon it was often the little inconsequential things that happened that caused me to overreact. My overwhelming need to be right caused many a fight, with me standing my ground to the bitter end – even with someone who was intoxicated and who would not even remember the fight in the morning. But I did ... and it would fester in my mind for days afterwards.

How often did I take someone's unkind word so personally that it ruined my whole day or even a couple of days - not realising that I might have misunderstood what was said or why it was said. Using this slogan helps me to see things for what they are, and to understand that the people around me are not doing things 'to me' I have the choice to 'take' what I am given.

When I use this powerful slogan, it gives me time to pause and think – I get to breathe and to take a step back. I've learned that I don't need to have the last word and that I can walk away or offer a neutral response – one of my favourites is "You might be right".

The reading for 31 January in 'A Little Time for Myself' highlights the question "Do you want to be right, or do you want to be happy?", now THAT really gave me another way to look at the choices I can make. The reading also gave me a great tool to use when I am feeling overwhelmed with a big project or challenge, and that is to break it down slowly, step by step and ask "How Important Is It" at each step rather than tackle it all at once.

"How Important is It" has a way of pulling me back to the present moment when I become fearful or want to jump in and control a situation. Connecting with the God of my understanding helps me to know the difference and gives me a new perspective so that I can stop over thinking things and focus on what is important here and now, and in that moment be grateful for what I have, right now! I have found that using "How Important Is It" has helped me to focus on what IS important, and that I have so much to be grateful for. There is a beautiful line from How Al-Anon Works "celebrate the extraordinary richness and wonder that life offers" and that is what I try to do each day.

Paradoxically, this slogan has made me aware of how I had previously used it as an excuse to avoid conflict and or not deal with issues, by saying to myself "It is not really important, is it?". I now try to make good choices about what is important and what is not. It is important for me to communicate in a positive manner where another person has behaved badly – I owe that to myself, as I now recognise that I am worthy. So, there are times when the answer is "Yes – it is Important" but even then, I can ask - is it important now, today, this minute?

I love the reading for 24 October from 'A Little Time for Myself' which gives a practical checklist to use when a situation upsets me; First I ask, "How Important Is It", then I examine my motives – am I offering something helpful to the situation, am I being spiteful or reacting out of self-defence. This puts the situation into perspective and allows me to take action that is fair, thoughtful, honest and kind.

Making a big deal, out of a little situation is a waste of my time and energy. I can use my energy to THINK before I act or speak and to try to see the situation for what it really is by asking the God of my understanding for guidance with this. Only then do I take appropriate action.

This slogan has most definitely helped me to see that things in my life are not always black and white but rather shades of grey or even the beautiful colours of the rainbow. Also, that it is not always 'my way or the highway' and that I can be flexible. These days, I find that I have a better perspective on all the things that touch my life. I can easily let go of resentments, and that leaves me more time and energy to fully enjoy everything about my life, as I *celebrate the extraordinary richness and wonder that life offers me*.

Peggy G (Hillcrest Group)

TRADITION 7: Every Group ought to be fully self-supporting declining outside contributions. In keeping with Tradition Seven, I would like to humbly encourage members to continue honouring their monthly financial obligation to our Area Office. Contributions are voluntary.

Should you wish to send a gratitude donation, our bank details are 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 / Group