

# Al-Anon Family Groups CAPE AREA ECHO

For information regarding meetings please contact one of the numbers below or refer to the 'List of Meetings' at

<https://www.alanon.org.za/meetings/>

CAPE AREA OFFICE: WhatsApp 066 158 0234 / Telephone 021 595 4517 / Email: [alanonct@iafrica.com](mailto:alanonct@iafrica.com)

NEW SITE, NEW LOOK – Visit Al-Anon South Africa's new website at <https://www.alanon.org.za/>

## ISSUE NO. 5 OF 2025 (MAY)

\*\*\*NEWCOMERS ZOOM MEETING\*\*\* Group for newcomers, newer Al-Anon members or those struggling with active alcoholism. Welcome to Newcomers <https://www.alanon.org.za/welcome/>

Cape Town: Wednesdays 5pm

WhatsApp: 066 158 0234

Al-Anon is a mutual support program for people whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking. Alateen, a part of the Al-Anon Family Groups, is a fellowship of young people (mostly teenagers) whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking whether they are in your life drinking or not. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to Al-Anon as a whole. Members share their personal experiences and stories and invite other members to 'take what you liked and leave the rest', to determine for themselves what lesson they could apply to their own lives

|        |                            |                                        |                                   |
|--------|----------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Page 1 | What's on in the Area?     | March forth into service               | Searching for a Higher Power      |
| Page 2 | Mistakes and perfectionism |                                        |                                   |
| Page 3 | Alateen literature is CAL  | Together we can make it                | Alateen notice of meeting         |
| Page 4 | The three-legged stool     | Let it begin with me: A call-to-action | Courage to change through service |
| Page 5 | Concept Five               | Literature News                        | Declaration and Serenity Prayer   |
| Page 6 | Notice board               |                                        |                                   |

### Recovery - Through The Steps

The threefold guides of Al-Anon point the way to a normal, useful life for the individual. They are also a framework within which the groups can carry on their affairs in harmony.

### Unity - Through The Traditions

### Service - Through The Concepts

## WHAT'S ON IN THE AREA/S

See  
you  
there

### Al-Anon Birthday Rally



Registration: 8.30am  
Meetings: 9.30 - 3.30  
All Open Meetings  
Registration: R 60.00  
Lunches available

**Saturday 10 May 2025**  
**Richwood Community Hall,**  
**28 Richwood Avenue**  
**Richwood**

Including the handing in of  
our Gratitude Envelopes.



For more information,  
contact Annalise at the Office:  
Monday to Thursday: 9.30 - 2pm  
Phone: 021- 5954517  
WhatsApp: 0661580234  
E-Mail: [alanonct@iafrica.com](mailto:alanonct@iafrica.com)

Please can all groups bring  
a plate of tea time treats

Book  
your  
place



## RSS

Regional Services Seminar  
at Schoenstadt Retreat &  
Conference Centre

## SAVE THE DATE

Saturday 19 July 2025

Approximate cost R250.00

You are welcome to pay off in instalments

#### Banking Details:

Bank: ABSA

Account Name:

Al-Anon Family Groups Cape Area

Account No: 4073215579

Branch No: 632005

Type: Cheque

Ref: RSS, Name, Group

For more info contact Annalise at

the Office:

Monday to Thursday: 9.30 - 2pm

Phone: 021- 5954517

WhatsApp: 0661580234



### March Forth into Service

Al-Anon Family Groups' cofounder, Lois W., would be celebrating her

130th birthday on March 4, 2021. One of her familiar quotations is, "It takes only one person to start something, but many others to carry it out." With our Legacies – the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of Service – we are well-guided to continue to "carry it out."

After Lois died in 1988, the Board of Trustees approved "March 4th into Service" as the 1989 World Service Conference theme. Affectionately describing the act of supporting the fellowship through service, "March Forth" became encouragement to step up to service. But different members "March Forth" in different ways. Some group service positions don't feel like service at all – putting out chairs, displaying Conference Approved Literature, or welcoming members.

Other times, though, a bit of creativity is needed in meeting the needs of the group. Electronic Meetings may have use of a helping hand – managing technical features, staying on before or after the meeting to give a personal welcome to newcomers, or sharing resources for literature.

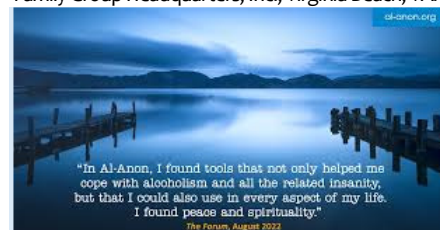
My own path to service was somewhat reluctant at first. Certain that other members would ensure the Al-Anon program's future by doing all the work, I was content to stay on the sidelines, plodding along in my recovery. Eventually, I stepped into service simply to spend more time with others who were in recovery by attending District and Area meetings. Little did I know that it would help break down my walls of isolation, self-reliance, and insecurity. Members from other places welcomed

and valued my input and helped me broaden my understanding of our Legacies. As I began to acknowledge the incredible improvement in my life that was so affected by alcoholism, I felt a greater need to carry Al-Anon's message of help and hope in any way I could.

As a Senior Group Services Specialist at the World Service Office, I hear firsthand how members embrace service and "March Forth" with courage and care. Many have displayed the courage to help others be obedient to the unenforceable and provide care to keep the program clear and consistent. Some members take their time to step into service, while others jump right in. No matter how, when, or why we get involved, we know that we can "March Forth" together.

**By Christa A., Senior Group Services Specialist, The Forum, March 2021**

Reprinted with permission of The Forum, Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., Virginia Beach, VA.



### Searching for a Higher Power

"Lead or follow but get out of the way!" is a proverb that I have known for many a decade. I have always liked this because it has a sense of equality.

What I never realised until now, being a member of Al-Anon for six years, is the truth for me of that proverb, that I am the person who is in the way. Okay, at least sometimes.

Getting across the threshold of Al-Anon the first time, was of course in itself admitting the powerlessness over alcohol. That new knowledge was a bit of a relief on the one hand of not having the responsibility of getting the alcoholic off the bottle. But what then?

The alcoholic being my male same sex partner and in the very first few meetings I attended, it immediately became clear I do not have the power to stop him from drinking. As it became obvious to me, I didn't cause it, I cannot control it and I cannot cure it.

That I needed a Higher Power and only having that would help became clear, if anything could help at all. At first, I thought, well nothing easier than that, since I believed in God having grown up in a Christian environment. Only when I started to hear how others struggled with a Higher Power, I became more and more aware of my own situation questioning my beliefs, stemming from traditional religion. Remembering what I knew from terrible own experience in my thirties, that I was condemned forever.

Due to the problems I encountered in the early eighties, I turned to a Christian pastor whom I revered, who was the older brother of a friend. That ended in a disaster.

It seemed to me that LGBTQIA+ were condemned by many faiths. So, what about a Higher Power? Where is this God proclaimed by all to be gracious and full of mercy for us human beings?

While trying to figure out how a Higher Power could perhaps help me, I started to realise that the Al-Anon program and especially the fellowship was doing me quite a lot of good. And I started to realise, that I had to recalibrate my beliefs and find "true faith", whatever that may be.

After only a few meetings, the Al-Anon groups in the larger Munich region in Germany held its annual retreat. It was suggested that I join. I had nothing to loose, and my partner was still drinking, so I went to this place which used to be an Alpine Mountain pasture farmhouse in Austria. The topic was Step Four – the inventory.

Being so new then I had no idea of Step Four, but I was able to follow the shares and all that came up. Interestingly one lady shared her experience over many years of observation, that it can take four years for a newcomer, after joining Al-Anon, to tackle Step Four with Conference

Approved Literature (CAL) and all the stirring questions.

So, the last meeting with a lightning round at the end of the four days came up and we were all asked to comment on the retreat and how we felt. Being sixty-five already at the time, when it was my turn, I explained that I will probably be sixty-nine when I start with Step Four, to roaring laughter.

Trusting a Higher Power, trusting God, finding a new faith, that helps me in accepting everything that life throws at me and trying to figure out that all is to my best, is my greatest challenge. Especially me being very aware, that contradictory to common beliefs, I need help from above in this life, not being compassionately patted on the back with expectations for the next life, which to me seems to be an unknown bag of promises.

But having the fellowship as such and experiencing so many people from so many different walks of life and Al-Anon members accepting me unquestioningly is the wealth and richness that I take with me. My strength and hope!

The shares are so valuable, and I take very much from the meetings. There is a lot I can relate to, be it topics from childhood, or anything related to behaviour of the alcoholic or my behaviour. Al-Anon and the thirty-six principles are highly inspiring and even those principles, that seem a bit "administrative" at first, are at a closer look, good guidelines for my own life.

The quite terrifying world we live in would definitely be a better place if all decision-makers in politics or economics and elsewhere would heed the morals and ethics we see in the Al-Anon program.

**By Carlo O., Cape Area**



### **Mistakes and Perfectionism – What I've learned in Al-Anon.**

I grew up in a strict home and a fundamentalist church. This was at least partly instrumental in my becoming an absolute perfectionist, a pain both for myself and surely for my family too. I had an awful fear of making mistakes, so that I would often be riddled with self-doubt, procrastination in case I did the wrong thing, as well as guilt and shame.

Recently, I inadvertently made a mistake that had serious consequences and gave me a real shock. I immediately dropped everything, prayed to my Higher Power for help in knowing how to best correct matters and turn around the effects of my decision, apologized to the person concerned and then I worked as best I could to remedy the situation. To my surprise, the effect of the resultant work that I needed to do, was better than if I hadn't made the mistake in the first place.

I am extremely grateful for this, not that I would repeat it, but this incident left me with a shadow of guilt and self-doubt again and that is what led me to re-visit the whole matter of **making mistakes, its polar opposite viz perfectionism, and it's two companions, guilt and shame.**

"How Al-Anon Works" (B-32), p.43 in the introduction on the Steps says "Taking the Steps is an ongoing learning experience in which every action brings us a new awareness of ourselves. Even our mistakes offer great riches because they can lead to meaningful insights."

Wow, **what a different perception of mistakes** from what I'd learned as a child! The flip side of the fear of making mistakes is of course, trying to do everything **perfectly**.

Once I'd learned in Al-Anon to be a bit calmer overall, I started trying to be a bit more relaxed about certain things, for example having the house perfectly clean, tidy and organized when we were expecting visitors, as anyone who's had small children knows it is a nearly impossible task.

Once when I'd managed to handle life in a more relaxed way and we had a visitor for dinner, things were okay-ish but certainly not perfect and overall, the evening was lovely. So, I managed to get the principle "right", but I didn't feel at all comfortable about it. When I told my sponsor this, she said, "Don't worry about it. The feeling of needing things to be perfect is so deeply ingrained, it might take some time to disappear – it might never go completely. But if you're learning to be more serene, that you do have choices and you can **do** life less stressfully, that's all that matters". I still remember this with gratitude when things don't go quite as well as I'd ideally like them to and my perfectionist tendency creeps up on me yet again. In essence, "fake it till you make it."

And of course, if I did make a mistake, I'd beat myself up over it, feel **guilty** for ages or I'd feel ashamed. And again, I learned in Al-Anon how to deal with guilt. If I notice that I'm feeling guilty I need to examine the reason. If I've hurt someone, I can apologise and make amends.

Sometimes however, that's not the case and I realise I'm feeling guilty because someone expects something from me that isn't my responsibility, I can acknowledge the feeling for what it is and ask my Higher Power to help me let go of it.

I made so many mistakes in dealing and interacting with close relatives who had alcohol challenges. I enabled instead of helping, pandered to their manipulations, judged them where I should have been more understanding and tried to control until I learned better. With the love and gentleness of the Al-Anon program I learned to do many things differently.

At any stage of our lives, we do the best we can with the knowledge and insight that we have at that point. Once we learn better, we can do better. Then the challenge becomes learning to forgive ourselves for past wrongs. Not always easy and I still catch myself ruminating over the past and regretting many incidents and then I need to pull myself back to the present and remind myself that I cannot change the past.

This incident I mentioned at the beginning also reinforced for me how important it is for me **to keep coming back**, to keep working the program, because the principles seep right down deep into my bones and when I need it in an emergency, I can call on the principles of the program almost instinctively: I knew to ask my Higher Power for help; to apologise to the person concerned; do my best to correct the error and make amends; and finally, to forgive myself.

I am forever grateful for our Al-Anon program. In Al-Anon I've learned to view mistakes as an inevitable part of being human, and a contribution to growth. Al-Anon taught me to be gentle and forgiving of myself and showed me that failure is an EVENT and not a person.

In "Hope for Today" (B-27) p.335: "Thought for the day: A mistake a day keeps my perfectionism at bay. Today I will endeavour to enjoy my humanness."

There are many helpful readings in our Conference Approved Literature

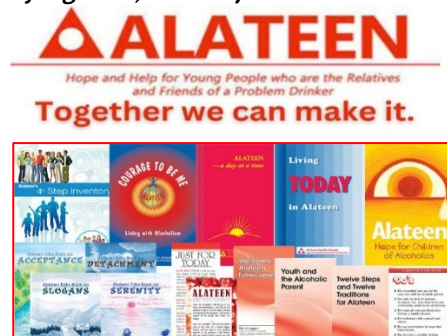
(CAL) on these topics: "How Al-Anon Works", p.61, last paragraph on Step 10. Mistakes: "Courage to Change" B-16, p.57, 60, 71, 236, 284

Perfection: "One Day at A Time" (B-6) p.358

"Hope for Today" (B-27) p.195

Guilt and shame: "A Little Time for Myself" (B-34) p.22, 49, 244

By Sigrid K., South Africa



### Alateen Literature Is Conference Approved Literature

Some time ago in the weekly Al-Anon meeting that I attend, the topic scheduled was the Second Step. The meeting was quiet – nobody wanted to participate. That day I had one of my favourite daily readers with me – Alateen – a day at a time (B-10: the little red book) – and decided to read from page 97 and share about one of the pages related to the topic:

When it's raining or foggy, it seems as if the sun has gone away. But I know it's only hidden by the clouds. I have faith that the sun is always there. Because of alcoholism in my home, sometimes it feels as if love has disappeared. I search hard to find it, but I can't see it. It's clouded over by my bad feelings. When that happens, I have to try hard to believe that love, just like the sun, is always there. It's not easy to have that kind of faith, but the program gives me Step Two as a beginning.

#### Things to Think About

Alateen has helped me to have faith in things I can't see. I found a Higher Power in Step Two. When I believe in that Power, I can believe in Love.

Once I finished my participation, I noticed how this page motivated other members to share their experience, strength, and hope. It turned out to be a great meeting. At the end, some members expressed their desire to include Alateen literature in future topics in meetings. The Program Chairperson took note, and weeks later we all learned more about the disease of alcoholism and how it affects families and friends of

alcoholics in the chapter "Understanding Alcoholism" from Alateen – Hope for Children of Alcoholics (B-3). We also went over the Daily Checklist of Myself (S-6) in our Step Ten meeting and continued reading and enjoying pages from the two Alateen daily readers.

It's great to know that Alateen literature is also Conference Approved Literature and that Al-Anon members can benefit from it as well as from the rest of the Alateen materials. For a complete list of Alateen literature and materials, please click here [https://ecomma.alanon.org/EN/Topics/Alateen\\_Essentials](https://ecomma.alanon.org/EN/Topics/Alateen_Essentials)

By Sergio Z., Senior Group Services Specialist – Alateen

Reprinted with permission of The Forum, Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., Virginia Beach, Virginia, USA.

Alateen is for teenage relatives and friends of alcoholics. Alateen is part of Al-Anon Family Groups. For information about Alateen meetings contact the Area office or the Alateen Coordinator.

Office contact details:

Email [alanonct@iafrica.com](mailto:alanonct@iafrica.com)

Tel 0215954517/WhatsApp 0661580234

Although you cannot stop anyone else from drinking, you can get support for yourself in an Alateen meeting.

Although you cannot stop anyone else from drinking, you can get support for yourself in Alateen meetings.



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 experience, strength and hope.

When: Thursdays  
Time: 6 to 7pm  
Where: Online

WhatsApp 084 502 2542 for login details.

Age group: 12 to 17 year olds

Al-Anon helpline 086 125 2666

Visit [www.alanon.org.za](http://www.alanon.org.za) for more information.



#TogetherWeCanMakeIt  
"By sharing their experiences, the Alateen members show that no one is alone in this struggle. Just one hand reaching out in empathy is often enough to push open the door of fear and isolation."  
The Forum, May 2004

[www.alanon.org.za](http://www.alanon.org.za)

**"Together we can make it."**

I have been part of Alateen for five years, and I am extremely grateful for that. I have met tons of amazing people who are going through the exact same things I am, and together we get through it. My Alateen group has helped me learn how to cope with my feelings and not blame the alcoholic in my life. One of my favourite sayings I learned in Alateen is that, when it comes to the disease of alcoholism, I didn't cause it, I can't control

it, and I can't cure it. I am extremely thankful for everything this program has done for me.

**By Anonymous, The Forum, October 2019**

*Reprinted with permission of The Forum, Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., Virginia Beach, Virginia, USA.*



Many years ago, I remember seeing a school pupil who was leaning back, balanced precariously on two legs of a science laboratory stool. The floor was highly polished, and it wasn't long before the stool tilted and there was an almighty crash!

The same illustration can apply to my recovery in Al-Anon too. Through working the Twelve Steps with a Sponsor, my quality of life improved greatly.

I began to cope much better in my day-to-day life with an alcoholic. That was effectively the first leg of my recovery.

Unity is built into my home Group, District and Area by our adherence to the Twelve Traditions, thus providing my recovery with a second leg on which to stand. Those two legs seem solid and balanced, but for the long-term stability of my recovery I need a third leg.

Service provides that for me, and the good news is that there are lots of service opportunities available - initially in my home Group, then District, Area, and at a national level too. Whatever my abilities, there is a Service role which will enhance my recovery. Whether it's something as simple as opening up a meeting venue or setting out chairs and Literature. All Service positions are valuable.

Taking the next step into Service in my District and Area has brought me into contact with others with strong personal recovery and demonstrated my 'gratitude by action'. I gained confidence and my self-esteem grew.

Through a Service Sponsor, I learned how various Service roles are conducted. Additional information about all kinds of Service positions can be found in ... Service Manual.

I don't want to take the risk of balancing on just one or two legs for my recovery. It is much too precious to lose.

**By Isobel, Truro Monday Group, Al-Anon Today, Autumn 2022**

*This is the property of Al-Anon Family Groups UK & Éire, who retain full editing rights, and may be used in whole or part - in print, on the internet or any other media - to develop Al-Anon and Alateen material.*

## **"Let It Begin with Me": A Call to Action**

### *The Al-Anon Declaration*

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

To some, these words may sound like a prayer. However, unlike a request for support from a Higher Power, a declaration is a formal statement, often made to assert something purposefully. The Al-Anon Declaration is more than just a statement of hope - it's a pledge and a promise to be there for others so that no one faces this struggle alone.

The 1974 World Service Conference theme, "Let It Begin with Me," resonated deeply with Al-Anon members. It became the foundation for the Declaration, which was introduced and adopted the following year. First printed as a wallet-sized card, the Declaration appeared in Al-Anon literature and early public outreach materials. Since then, members around the world have recited it. It reminds us of our personal commitment to recovery and acts as a call to action to help others.

For me, the Declaration not only reminds me to remain committed to my own recovery but also invites me to serve others. Reaching out, offering support, and extending a hand to those who are struggling is my way of fulfilling that promise. It's a living, breathing declaration that requires me to act. I must do more than just hope; I must reach out and help those who are still suffering.

One of my first experiences with public outreach was when I spoke at a local treatment centre. A fellow Al-Anon member had arranged for the inclusion of Al-Anon in their family orientation program, and I volunteered to share my story. As I spoke, I recalled sitting in the same chairs as those attending, feeling the same overwhelming emotions of anger, confusion, and heartbreak. I shared how Al-Anon had been a balm for my pain, offering hope through the example of others in recovery.

A few weeks later, I ran into a woman at my home group who seemed familiar. She mentioned that she had been at the treatment centre and had heard me speak. "You told me to come here," she said with a smile. It was a moment that touched my heart. Knowing that my words had helped her take that first step toward healing reminded me why we do this work. It's not just about sharing our

stories; it's about offering hope and showing others, they are not alone.

The Al-Anon Declaration reminds me that while recovery is a shared journey, it begins with each of us committing to help. "Let It Begin with Me."

**By Heather S., Associate Director - Community Relations, The Forum, April 2025**

*Reprinted with permission of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., Virginia Beach, Virginia, USA.*



Bome herinner my aan voortsetting en hoop, gegrond in die verlede en florerend in die hede. Dit gee my 'n gevoel van gerusstelling en verwondering, in die wetende dat toekomstige geslagte dit ook sal geniet lank nadat ek weg is.

Al-Anon bied my ook die gerusstelling met die wetende dat hierdie wonderlike program baie geslagte voor my gehelp het, en sal voortgaan om dit te doen vir die komende geslagte. Sonder die saaiers, besproeiers en tuiniers, sal Al-Anon nie kan voortgaan om te groei nie: Diens is noodsaaklik tot die voortsetting daarvan. Selfs al is iemand nie baie lank in die program nie, kan die aanvaarding van diens 'n groot verskil maak in herstelling.

Ek ontdek dat om diens te doen help my om te groei in die program. Dit gee my iets om op te fokus en gevolglik het ek 'n nog groter groep vriende wat my angste verstaan en my aanvaar soos ek is.

Dit is 'n ware eer om 'n klein rol te speel om toe te sien dat die toekoms van die "saailinge" verseker word, en dat ons boodskap van hoop 'n steeds wyer gehoor bereik.

**Deur Wendy, Al-Anon Today, Spring 2025**

*This is the property of Al-Anon Family Groups UK & Éire, who retain full editing rights, and may be used in whole or part - in print, on the internet or any other media - to develop Al-Anon and Alateen material.*

**Translated by Margie D., Cape Area**

## **Courage to Change through Service**

I have taken on a number of Service roles and, being a perfectionist, try to get it right first time, but I am learning to accept that perfection is my interpretation.

I started with small Service roles such as making tea and coffee at Group meetings and getting the chairs out. However, I know that if I take on too much it's not fair on others, and I become overwhelmed and I don't want to control.

I have been accused of that by my problem drinker when I thought I was caring.

The Serenity Prayer helps reiterate I am not responsible for people, places and things, only myself.

Doing Service has helped me to realise it's 'Progress not Perfection' as I continue to grow, also 'First Things First' and 'One Day at a Time'.

For me, taking on Service roles no matter how small has really helped my growth and understanding of Al-Anon.

#### By Barbara, Al-Anon Today, Autumn 2022

This is the property of Al-Anon Family Groups UK & Éire, who retain full editing rights, and may be used in whole or part – in print, on the internet or any other media – to develop Al-Anon and Alateen material.



#### Concept Five

*'The rights of appeal and petition protect minorities and ensure that they be heard.'*

Before Al-Anon, I felt I didn't have a voice. Concept Five assures me that I do. Growing up we were taught not to disagree or argue. When something needed to be said we would carefully 'pick our moment'. When my dad was arrested for drink driving, we didn't speak about it. I interpreted this as not being allowed to express my opinion or my thoughts and feelings.

By the time I married, I already had very low self-esteem, and I never felt good enough. The man I married drank a lot and my mission was to love him like he'd never been loved before. On the eve of our wedding, my mum said, 'I don't know how you could be marrying a man like your father!' But the cloak of denial was already around me, and I nestled in and raised the hood. Increasingly, sharing my thoughts or opinions lessened. I was afraid to disagree; I didn't have the tools required for speaking up and became a doormat.

As a child, God blessed me with the gift of music and years later, I recognised I was also graced with a singing voice. Music became the way to express myself and feel worthy. However, I was still unable to communicate using my voice. The more I stuffed down my thoughts and feelings, the worse things became.

Later God blessed us with three beautiful children, but my voice was still silent. Sometimes, I believed God gave me laryngitis and took my voice away, so I couldn't speak! I became angry and unhappy and had many duvet days off work, with my cloak of denial tucked neatly around me.

I remember talking to the children about their dad who was serving a prison sentence for his second drink driving offence; they were embarrassed and ashamed and I knew how that felt. One of my children said, 'we don't want drink in our house mum, you have to tell him'. I couldn't even speak to my own children about their feelings. I couldn't voice it to their dad either; fear stopped me. Al-Anon changed all that because 'you' taught me that I have a right to use my voice; to speak up in meetings, to share my thoughts and my feelings and to be heard without being judged. Our closing says there is no place for gossip or criticism, and I can reason things out with someone else.

I learnt early in my recovery that I had choices. Some days it was as simple as being happy or not worrying about how I was going to feel when I heard the key turn in the door. I no longer had to make excuses for someone else's behaviour, whoever it was. I could take off my cloak of denial and face the truth about me, my attitudes and my stinking thinking! It was a revelation to me that I could choose whether to speak at meetings.

I could choose to embrace Step One. I didn't have to fix anything or anyone anymore! My recovery was my choice, I could speak again, and I was going to be okay, a day at a time, I learnt that there were tools for everything, Slogans, Steps and solutions that I hadn't even thought about. I began to believe in myself and respect that others were entitled to do the same.

Today, years on, I can sit with the people whose drinking affected me and not point fingers or blame or be a victim. I can do this because I accept the things I cannot change and change the things I can! It brings me such tremendous gratitude that I can use my voice today to say, 'I love you'. I can say that to my children, to their children, my mum, and to my 'today husband!' And, I could say that to my dad before he died.

The gift of music I spoke of earlier came from my dad, and this gift has led to many wonderful Service opportunities in

Al-Anon. Many conventions have included a sing song, I love it. And, because of Al-Anon, I recognise it as a gift today.

#### By Annie Area 28, Al-Anon Today, Spring 2024

This is the property of Al-Anon Family Groups UK & Éire, who retain full editing rights, and may be used in whole or part – in print, on the internet or any other media – to develop Al-Anon and Alateen material.

#### LITERATURE NEWS



#### New Conference Approved Literature (CAL) Available!

**"Healing within Our Alcoholic Relationships"** (P-95) – This 48-page booklet captures the essence of the Al-Anon program in a series of brief but powerful messages of timeless wisdom, adapted from Al-Anon literature on relationships, including The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage (B-4). It is perfect for newcomers or anyone needing to "Keep It Simple" and get back to basics.

Contact the Area office for more information or visit the literature desk at the Birthday Rally on 10 May.

#### 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.

#### Serenity Prayer

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

"Service in Al-Anon allows us to stretch ourselves and to practice the Al-Anon principles while we connect with others with whom we can be ourselves. It is an opportunity to attempt something we actually can achieve and to gain self-esteem by doing something of value." How Al-Anon Works (B-32) p.100

"'Putting love into action' is one way of describing service. Without love and service, there could be no Al-Anon program." Service Sponsorship: Working Smarter Not harder (P-88)

<https://www.alanon.org.za/service-in-recovery/>

"...Service also gives me an opportunity to give back to the [Al-Anon] program that saved my life... If it weren't for those that came before me in service, I would not have found a path to recovery..."  
*The Forum, January 2003*

al-anon.org

# NOTICE BOARD

**NEW SITE, NEW LOOK** – Visit Al-Anon Family Groups South Africa's NEW website at <https://www.alanon.org.za/>  
Visit Al-Anon Family Groups South Africa **NEW ONLINE BOOKSHOP** at <https://online.alanon.org.za/>  
**CAPE AREA OFFICE CONTACT DETAILS:** Tel 0215954517/WhatsApp 0661580234 / Email [alanonct@iafrica.com](mailto:alanonct@iafrica.com)

## WHERE DO I BUY CAL (CONFERENCE APPROVED LITERATURE)?

Order your literature by visiting the office, email [alanonct@iafrica.com](mailto:alanonct@iafrica.com), telephonically on 021 595 4517 or 066 158 0234 or visit the online bookstore at <https://online.alanon.org.za/>. Payment options are direct deposit, EFT, Snapscan, SnapStore, Payfast or cash.  
Visit the literature desk at upcoming events to view CAL available. Our friendly literature coordinators will be happy to speak to you.

## IN-PERSON & ELECTRONIC MEETINGS

Visit <https://www.alanon.org.za/meetings/> for up-to-date meeting information. Inform the Area office of any changes in group's information. Please contact the office for more information.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### MEETINGS

**\*AREA ASSEMBLY** – Saturday, 17 May 2025 at 9.30am (electronic). Workshop – Concepts 3 & 4 – don't miss it. All members welcome.

**\*SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETING** – Saturday, 21 June 2025 at 9.30am (in person).

**Date to be reviewed as clashes with National Conference weekend.**

### RALLIES / CONVENTIONS

### SAVE THE DATE

**\*AL-ANON BIRTHDAY RALLY & GRATITUDE PARADE (AL-ANON RALLY WITH A.A. PARTICIPATION) THEME: ABUNDANCE**

Date: Saturday, 10 May 2025

Venue: Richwood Sport and Recreation Centre, 28 Richwood Ave, Richwood

Registration fee: R60

More information to follow.

**\*REGIONAL SERVICE SEMINAR (RSS)**

THEME: MOVING FORWARD, EMBRACING CHANGE

Date: Saturday, 19 July 2025

Venue: Schoenstatt Retreat & Conference Centre

Registration fee: R250

More information to follow.

### FUNDRAISERS / GROUP NEWS

### SAVE THE DATE

Is your group celebrating a special occasion, holding a combined meeting, arranging a fundraiser? Advertise here. Email details to [alanonct@iafrica.net](mailto:alanonct@iafrica.net) or WhatsApp to 0823422102. Visit <https://www.alanon.org.za/meetings/> for meeting details.

**\*RONDEBOSCH AA GROUP'S 77<sup>TH</sup> AT HOME (second oldest group in the Cape) OPEN MEETING**

Date: Wednesday, 7 May 2025 from 7.30pm

Venue: St Michaels Catholic Church, Rouwkoop Road, Rondebosch. Al-Anon members welcome to attend.

**\*FUNDRAISER – THE BARNYARD – “IT’S MY LIFE!”**

FAMILY AND FRIENDS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND

Date: Sunday, 31 August 2025 at 2pm (doors open 12pm)

Venue: The Barnyard, Tygervally Centre, Bellville

Ticket price: R160 each **Book a table or seat by contacting the Annalise at the office.**

More information to follow.

## NEXT ISSUE

## Send Your Shares

## Submissions due by 17 May 2025

For the next issue the topics are:

- Alateen** – June is Youth month in South Africa. We're extending an invitation to the Alateens across South Africa and beyond to share their experience, strength and hope since joining an Alateen group. How has Alateen helped you in your everyday life?
- The Al-Anon Members in Alateen Service (AMIAS) support and work closely with Alateen groups. Share your experience, strength and hope on doing service in Alateen?
- 36 Principles – How has Step 6 Tradition 6 or Concept 6 helped in your recovery process?

*“Sharing our truths can provide the opportunity for great healing.” —Kristen Noel*

Please share your experiences, strength and hope on these or any other topic, by sending your shares to [alanonct@iafrica.com](mailto:alanonct@iafrica.com). We'd also love to have your input on topics for future issues. Send your suggestions to [alanonct@iafrica.com](mailto:alanonct@iafrica.com). How long should my sharing be? (<https://www.alanon.org/pdf/writing-guide-for-the-forum-F1.pdf>) - Most sharings are 300 to 400 words long but can range from a sentence or two to a 1,200-word personal recovery story.

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

We have no dues or fees; according to our Seventh Tradition, "Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions." This Tradition suggests that Al-Anon is fully self-supporting at all levels of service - in our groups, Area Office, and General Service Office. We contribute in gratitude for what we have received from Al-Anon. We do this through our own voluntary contributions by passing the basket to cover group expenses, including rent or platform fees, purchase of literature, and support of our service arms.

A 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.

*“By taking care of our own needs, we can remain free from outside influence.” How Al-Anon Works for Families & Friends...*

**Bank:** ABISA, **Branch No:** 632005 **Type:** Cheque

**Acc Name:** Al-Anon Family Group Cape Area

**Account No:** 407 321 5579 **Ref:** GC, Group, Name

**SnapScan**

<https://pos.snapscan.io/qr/SSWA0763>

**SnapStore Pro card machine**

