

# 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. 6 OF 2025 (JUNE)

\*\*\*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

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### 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

Book your  
place

**Al-Anon**  
Regional Service Seminar  
**RSS**

*Moving Forward,  
Embracing Change*

**Saturday, 19 July 2025**  
**8.30am - 4pm**  
**R250.00**

**Schoenstatt**  
Retreat and Conference Centre  
Constantia Main Rd,  
Constantia

**Banking Details:**  
Bank: ABSA  
Account Name:  
Al-Anon Family Groups Cape Area  
Account No: 4073215579  
Branch No: 632005  
Type: Cheque  
Ref: RSS, Name, Group

Only 50 places available.  
To book your place, contact  
Annalise at the Office:  
Monday to Thursday: 9.30 - 2pm  
Phone: 021- 5954517  
WhatsApp: 0661580234

### Al-Anon Service

*Did someone else's service  
strengthen your program?*  
Consider giving the same gift to others!

## Cape Area Service Opportunities

Candidates for service positions needed. Nominations due by 16 July 2025. Elections on 16 August 2025 at AGM/Elections meeting. Job descriptions available. Contact the office for details.

### Service positions available:

- Chairperson (3-year term)
- Alternate Chairperson (3-year term)
- Policy & Planning Coordinator (3- year term)
- Alternate Policy & Planning Coordinator (3-year term)
- Alternate Public Outreach Coordinator (3- year term)
- Alternate Delegate (4-year term)
- Fundraiser and/or Event Facilitator

If you're not ready to take on a service position, why not join a committee in your

area of interest. Contact the office for more information.

**ALATEEN**  
Hope and Help for Young People who are the Relatives  
and Friends of a Problem Drinker  
**Together we can make it.**

**We invite you to join us in celebrating  
Alateens and sharing their stories.**  
Visit <https://www.alanon.org.za/alateen/>  
for information.

Alateen, a part of Al-Anon Family Groups, is a peer support group for teens whose lives have been affected by someone else's problem drinking.

Alateen members meet virtually online and face-to-face in church halls, school rooms or other suitable places (usually in the same building as an Al-Anon group, but in a separate room). A list of Alateen meetings in South Africa can be found here:

[www.alanon.org.za/meetings](https://www.alanon.org.za/meetings)

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

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

**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](https://www.alanon.org.za) for more information.**

**Alateen is a place where members come  
together to:**

- share experiences, strength, and hope with each other to find effective ways to cope with struggles in their lives.

- discuss difficulties and encourage one another.

- help each other understand the principles of the Al-Anon program using the Twelve Steps and Alateen's Twelve Traditions.

### Alateen members learn that:

- compulsive drinking is a disease.
- they can detach themselves emotionally from the drinker's problems while continuing to love the person.
- they are not the cause of anyone else's drinking or behaviour.
- they cannot change or control anyone but themselves.
- they have spiritual and intellectual resources with which to develop their own potential, no matter what happens at home.
- they can build satisfying and rewarding life experiences for themselves.

### Alateen Online Teen Corner:

A place just for teens affected by someone else's alcoholism, can be safely accessed at the Al-Anon World Service Office website online: <https://al-anon.org/newcomers/teen-corner-alateen/>. Members can browse Alateen literature, get information on international Online Chat Meetings and read shares from other Alateen members from all over the world.

### Alateen Talk

Members can subscribe to a quarterly newsletter Alateen Talk or view excerpts from the magazine: <http://al-anon.org/members/alateen/for-alateen-members>

### Local Alateen stories:

There are many videos and podcasts available on YouTube and on Local media – they will help you understand how Al-Anon and Alateen can help.

[www.alanon.org.za/podcasts-news/](https://www.alanon.org.za/podcasts-news/)

## Alateen Literature:

Alateen books and pamphlets are written by and from the perspective of teens to offer experience, strength, and hope in order to recover from the effects of someone else's drinking. They share not only the heartache that the family disease of alcoholism can bring, but also how they have learned to live a happy, peaceful life regardless of their loved one's drinking.

Source: *Al-Anon South Africa website*

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



## Friendships in Alateen

I was the Zoom host at a recent Alateen meeting. What a fabulous meeting it was too. A long term Alateen member was chairing the meeting, and we had a newcomer. At our meetings, all the topics are chosen by Alateens.

The first meeting topic was friendship. The teens shared about their special friendships made in Alateen, and how other teenagers just 'get' each other. Sometimes friendships can be hard too, especially for teenagers.

Many of the Slogans we learn in Alateen and Al-Anon like How Important Is It? or Let Go and Let God, help us to detach with love. Listening to the sharings at the meeting reminded me how important this fellowship is to those young members who find us, and who make life-long friends in the rooms, both in-person and online.

The second topic was decisions, and again the wise words spoken in the meeting was that "deciding to not make a decision was actually making a decision" and that it's OK to think about a decision and to say, "we need to think about it."

**By Anon, Al-Anon Today, Autumn 2023**

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## I learned to leave my fears behind

After my mother assaulted me because I would not allow her to drive while she was intoxicated, I lived in fear. Until that moment, my mother had never laid a hand on me or my siblings. I feared that she would assault me again, and therefore I did not want to be around her. I changed my life around so that I would be around my mom as little as possible, especially when I knew she would be

drunk. I also feared that what my mother did to me was my own fault, and that I deserved it.

Another fear that I had was how my mother was going to act in the future. I did not know how she felt about going to prison. I found it hard for me to express my fears to my family and friends because I was not sure that I had anything to fear.

After going to Alateen, I realized that nothing that happened was my fault – it was the alcohol. I also realized that I could not dwell on the past or fear the future. I had to take "One Day at a Time." I also picked up on a saying from the program "pain is inevitable, suffering is optional."

My pain was what I experienced on that traumatic day, and the suffering was that I continued to fear and worry about everything that had happened that day happening again. I learned that it was holding me back. I had to leave my fears in the past and keep my focus on the person that I wanted to be.

I've used this experience to help me grow. Without Alateen, and the people in my group, I would still be living in fear.

**By Rachel P., Connecticut, The Forum, December 2015**

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## Continuing to Look at Ourselves with the Help of Alateen

When the 2018 World Service Conference approved the development of a Just for Tonight bookmark (M-81), I was excited that I would have another Al-Anon tool to "continue to take personal inventory" as I practiced Step Ten. Three years later, after using the bookmark each night, I was even more excited when the Conference voted to develop a similar bookmark suggested by Alateen members. As a frequent reader of Alateen literature and a past Alateen Group Sponsor, I was already a big fan of the raw and unfiltered honesty of Alateen members. Because of their ability to "Keep It Simple" and get directly to the point in their literature, I looked forward to keeping both bookmarks ready on my nightstand. But first, the bookmark needed to be developed!

A call for sharings was announced to Alateen members, and soon, over 100 responses were received and reviewed by the Literature Committee. The highest-rated sharings were formatted into a manuscript, which went through two drafts before getting the unanimous approval of the Committee. It was also

approved by an Alateen Task Force, the Director of Programs, the Policy Review Task Force, and the Executive Director. Once designed, translated, and printed, it made its debut to the fellowship last September.

There wasn't room on the bookmark to include all the wonderful sharings received, but here are some of the runners-up. Hope you enjoy them!

Just for tonight I will accept that I am kind, brave, and loved unconditionally – not only by my Higher Power, but also by many in the Alateen fellowship.

Just for tonight I will accept where I am and not try to control everything in my life. I will accept others as they are and treat them with respect and kindness. I will take everything a day (or a night) at a time.

Just for tonight I will acknowledge that I am not alone. I will ask for help and learn to start feeling comfortable in my own skin. I will review the progress I have made today, knowing that I don't need to be perfect for myself or anyone else.

Just for tonight I will respect myself. I will not allow myself to get caught up in family chaos. I'll take some time for myself and focus on my own recovery and not my family. I will let myself be who I am and let them be who they are.

Just for tonight I will remember that everything takes time. My relationships will not heal in a day, so I will apply "Easy Does It" and take "One Day at a Time." I will turn over all my worries, frustrations, and hurt feelings to the God of my own understanding.

**By Tom C., Associate Director – Literature Emeritus, The Forum, June 2024**

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## Supporting Alateen Members Moving on to Al-Anon

As a certified Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) and an Alateen Group Sponsor, I see how the Alateen program benefits our younger members. As an Al-Anon member, I share my experience, strength, and hope with the teens with the same love and compassion as I do in an Al-Anon meeting. The teens' understanding of how they have been affected by someone else's

drinking and how Alateen helps them unfolds for them in the same way it unfolds for us in Al-Anon.

My experience with Alateen members aging out has been that many do not immediately come to Al-Anon. Many go off to college, which interrupts consistent attendance at meetings. Those who do not go away to college also tend not to show up in Al-Anon meetings. I can't help but wonder whether young people in Alateen are being encouraged to continue with Al-Anon and guided to find those Al-Anon meetings that are right for them.

Each one of us needs to feel comfortable and safe in a group where we are regarded and respected as individuals, not as some other member's grown child. I imagine it may be difficult for that young Al-Anon member to come to meetings if their anonymity is compromised because it's connected to a family member already in attendance. We all need to encourage our younger members to find their safe space.

We who are privileged to serve Alateen members in weekly group meetings can start having conversations about continuing in Al-Anon. Reading and talking about the pamphlet *Moving On! From Alateen to Al-Anon* (P-59) is a great place to begin.

Tech-savvy young people also need to know that Al-Anon meetings take place on a variety of online platforms. Consider discussing the Al-Anon Family Groups Mobile App and helping teens download it to their devices. Older Alateen members can access more than 100 Al-Anon meetings in the Mobile App, and there are five in-app Alateen meetings that are well-attended! You can also refer them to the meeting search on [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org) where Global Electronic Meetings are displayed. You may even join in on one of the online Al-Anon meetings as a group.

Let's make sure that the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen is always there by offering extra support to our young people making the sometimes-difficult transition from Alateen to Al-Anon. "Together We Can Make It!"

**By Sue P., Associate Director – Group Services, The Forum, June 2024**

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### *Alateen's a safe place for me*

For the first time I feel accepted. I've learned to take the emphasis off the alcoholics and put it on me. I am changing old behavior patterns and learning new ways to resolve my problems. I can see now how everyone in the family is affected by the drinker.

[al-anon.org/for-alateen](http://al-anon.org/for-alateen)

## **Van Alateen na Al-Anon, Natuurlik**

Voordat ek na Alateen toe gekom het, kon ek skaars verder sien as die probleme en wrok wat alkoholisme in my lewe gebring het. My vader was nugter in A.A. en my moeder was in Al-Anon. Dit was duidelik dat hulle aan hul herstelling gewerk het. Ek was egter nog steeds ongelukkig, bang en gegrief. Ek het selfs 'n wrok gekoester teen my ouers se geluk en kalmte.

Gedurende die drinkjare was ek bang en skaam om vriende huis toe te bring. Ek het eensaam en afgesonderd geword.

Ek is toe tydens 'n samekoms aan Alateen voorgestel. Hier het ek mense ontmoet wat my verstaan, en ek het gevoel dat ek daar behoort. 'n Groep van ons, wat kinders was van lede van A.A. en Al-Anon, het 'n Alateen-groep in my tuisdorp begin. Ek het nie meer afgesonderd gevoel nie, en het vriende in die kameraadskap gemaak. Ek is dankbaar dat ek op so 'n vroë ouderdom aan die program voorgestel is.

Omdat die kameraadskap so 'n belangrike deel van my lewe geword het, was dit natuurlik dat ek van Alateen na Al-Anon geskuif het, toe die tyd reg was. Toe ek klaar was met kollege, en begin werk het op 'n dorp, ver van die huis, en waar ek niemand geken het nie, het ek by 'n Al-Anon groep aangesluit en gou tuis gevoel.

Al-Anon het my die gereedskap gegee om as mens te groei. Ek is geseënd om 'n Sponsor te hê wat my vreugdes en uitdagings deel. As ek struikel en glip, luister sy sonder om my te veroordeel en lei my terug na die program en gemoedskalmte. In my vroë dae in die kameraadskap, sou ek nooit vrywilliglik diens gedoen het nie. Ek het nie die selfvertroue gehad nie. Vandag is ek gewillig. Ek leer nuwe goed en maak nuwe vriende, en dit is pret.

Die belangrikste, is dat ek 'n diep persoonlike verhouding met my Hoër Mag ontwikkel het. As kind het ek vir God gevra om my gesin te help, en toe hy nie op my instruksies op my tydsbepaling reageer nie, het ek geloof in hom verloor. Soos ek in die program gegroei het, het ek besef dat die God waarin ek vertrou verloor het, moes los om die God volgens my begrip te vind. My Hoër Mag is by my, deur al die vreugdes, hartseer en uitdagings van my daaglikse lewe.

Vandag is ek dankbaar vir die Groepe waaraan ek behoort, my liefdevolle

Al-Anon vriende, en die program wat die grondsteen van my lewe is. Dit is die kosbare geskenke wat ek het in Alateen en Al-Anon ontvang het.

**Deur Miriam H., Ierland, Al-Anon Today, Winter 2024/25**

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Vertaal deur Margie D, Kaap Area, Mei 2025



What an honour, blessing and privilege to have been able to attend this convention!

My fellow travellers will agree that the convention started in our minibus on our twenty-two-hour journey to Benoni! Being together with members of different parts of our fellowship and a driver who had no idea what was waiting for him, was a bag of fun waiting to happen. Stories were shared, both hilarious and others that were really food for the soul.

The theme of the convention: love and tolerance, was evident in the minibus, long before we reached our beautiful destination. A case in point was how an agreement was reached on how loud the music in the van should be. This was done so lovingly and amicably.

The first highlight of the convention, was meeting, greeting and hugging friends, who we have come to love, appreciate and cherish. I cannot find the words to describe the exuberance of that special moment of reunion.

No effort was spared to make this convention as comfortable and welcoming to each person, from the youngest Alateen to the oldest long timer. We were met by helpful parking attendants as we entered the grounds, then the efficient registration, the practically set out tea and snack area, the spacious meeting venues, the crafts and memorabilia for sale. Loving leadership was manifested in every aspect, and notably, with the human assistance being so warm and caring.

Then, the real essence of convention: the sharing of experience, strength and hope, each share leaving an indelible mark on my heart.

I heard and will certainly remember: "My grandkids deserve a present grandma." "I must become closer to my Higher Power, so that when I go to heaven one day, He will know me." "It's better to live in truth, than to die in silence." "In the realm of love, therein lies forgiveness." Just to mention a few of the precious nuggets.

The topic of my share was "A power greater than myself". I would like to mention a few aspects that affected my life.

When my mother had the wisdom to reach out for help 53 years ago, a seed was planted in my thinking, that there is a power greater than my human capacity. The realization that I am not alone in whatever I experience, is such a wonderful source of comfort, really confirming the power of the meeting. I took away from another meeting that if I want to build on my self-esteem, I must do esteem-able things! I used the quote from a reader "Truly believing I deserve abundance takes a courage I had never known..." to emphasize that I am worthy and deserving of kindness to myself. I referred to a valuable nugget I heard in a meeting: "God sees me!" whenever He provides me with something I needed just at that very moment.

Lastly, I used an analogy I heard on the radio "Just as a certain drug may be the gateway to the hard narcotics, so is a little white lie a gateway to serious untruths." I then explained how I too succumbed progressively from not speaking up, to not having the courage to be true to myself until Al-Anon, being the power greater than myself helped me to show up for myself.

The messages of closing meeting were both powerful and heart-wrenching. The emotion-filled notes of "Amazing Grace" marked the end of Convention 2025.

The sadness of bidding farewell was short lived, when excitement filled the room with the announcement of the 2026 KZN CONVENTION. That is when we will all meet again, through the power of our Higher Power.

**By Margie D, Cape Area, April 2025**



### Birthday Rally – 10 May 2025

The Area held its third Birthday Rally on Saturday, 10th May 2025, with A.A. participating. The theme was Abundance, covering topics like Hope in Abundance, Spiritual Abundance, and Living in Abundance. Members arrived early to set up the venue, demonstrating strong cooperation between the two fellowships.

Meetings began at 9:30am with Glenda W. of Constantiaberg as MC. New members shared their stories in the first meeting. In the second meeting, we held a gratitude procession, placing decorated gratitude envelopes in a box and quietly reflecting on how Al-Anon had changed our lives.



At the third meeting, the speaker panel shared their recovery experiences and discussed how the concept of abundance has positively influenced their lives. This concluded the rally, after which participants assisted in packing up. Farewells and embraces were exchanged in a spirit of camaraderie. The theme of abundance was evident throughout the event.

**By Fatima D., Cape Area, May 2025**

### Abundance

Living in abundance means experiencing life with a mindset – and often the reality – of plenty, rather than lack. It involves recognizing and appreciating the riches already present in your life, whether that's in the form of relationships, health, opportunities, time, creativity, or material resources.

Abundance is about:

- **Gratitude** for what you have.
- **Generosity** in sharing with others.
- **Confidence** that there's enough for everyone.
- **Openness** to receiving and growing.
- **Living fully** and intentionally, not fearfully or from scarcity

It's more a perspective than a possession.

#### Living in Abundance:

Living in abundance is a complete way of being. It's about approaching life with the belief that there is more than enough love, joy, opportunities, time, energy, and resources to go around. It's a shift from survival mode to thriving mode, from scarcity to sufficiency and overflow.

#### Key Dimensions of Abundant Living:

##### 1. Mindset of Plenty:

- Abundance begins in the mind. When you believe life offers opportunities, growth, and joy, you're more likely to notice and act on them.
- It means rejecting thoughts of worry, competition, and lack, and embracing trust, creativity, and resilience.

##### 2. Gratitude as a Foundation:

- Gratitude transforms what we have into "enough."
- By regularly focusing on and appreciating what's good in your life, you train your mind to recognize abundance, even in small or difficult moments.

##### 3. Emotional and Spiritual Wealth:

- Emotional abundance includes having fulfilling relationships, inner peace, love, and joy.
- Spiritually, it means feeling connected to a higher purpose, nature, others, or something greater than yourself.

##### 4. Generosity and Flow:

- Abundance grows when it flows. Generous people often report feeling richer, not because they give away excess, but because giving affirms, they have "enough."

- When you give time, attention, kindness, or resources, it creates a cycle of trust and connection.

##### 5. Purposeful Living:

- Living in abundance means living intentionally, aligning your time, energy, and decisions with your values and long-term fulfilment, not just short-term gains.
- It's about thriving, not just surviving.

## 6. **Open to Receiving:**

- Many people block abundance because they struggle to receive, help, praise, love, or resources.
- Abundant living involves being open and receptive, trusting that you're worthy of good things.

## 7. **Resilience and Growth:**

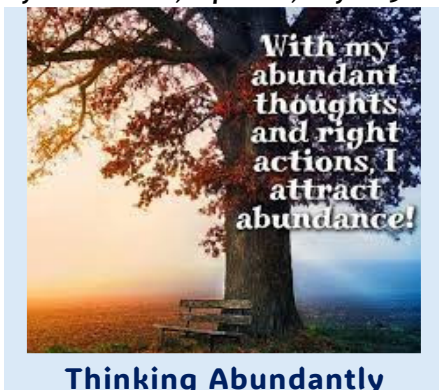
- People living abundantly don't deny challenges, but they see setbacks as opportunities to learn and grow.
- They trust that life can bounce back or even improve after difficulty.

## 8. **Simplicity Over Excess:**

- Contrary to popular belief, abundance doesn't mean having more stuff. In fact, many find abundance in simplicity owning less but living more fully.
- True abundance is often about depth, not volume.

Living in abundance is less about changing your external circumstances and more about transforming your internal world. When that shift happens, outer changes often follow.

*By Madelein O'B, Cape Area, May 2025*



I want to start off with a little story: I was helping my granddaughter with her project about bees. I found a bar of honey soap and proceeded to cut it in half, keeping the other half for my own use. After cutting it, I realized that I still act and behave from a position of lack and scarcity.

I acknowledge that this fear of not having enough doesn't come from my childhood days, but from the first seven years of my marriage, when my husband would use all our money for alcohol and I was too much of a coward to object.

I have been thinking about abundance ever since it was decided that it would be the theme for our Birthday rally. It's upon reflecting on where I come from, which is a place of poverty – spiritually, materially, maturity, and in terms of wisdom and

strength, I was completely bankrupt. It is because if I remember where I have been, that I am aware, and appreciate the abundance of these qualities I have today.

The soap story is one of many examples of its kind and I can't believe the extremes that I went to not to waste, to save or to hold on to. For example, one morning my mother had a fit when she saw me eating my husband's leftover cereal. When we moved into our new house, I was so afraid of poverty, and I remember asking the dirt collector to bring me the used black bags. I would go into a state of panic when my husband invited people over, and I also lacked the courage to stop him.

It was in 1985 when my Higher Power spoke to me through a very assertive friend and I became a bit stronger in terms of many aspects of self-care. I started slowly realizing that I can do much better on a material level and started feeling better about myself. In 1994, my confidence, self-esteem, and efficacy really grew when I was surrounded with people both inside and out of Al-Anon who inspired me to stretch and to become the best that I could be.

There were many firsts for me in 1998, and it was also then that life just became more beautiful and more bountiful for me. It was at my first Convention in 1998 that I decided to attend my first Namibia rally, and since then I've attended a total of eighteen Namibia rallies, and God willing this year will be my nineteenth. What has grown out of this has been the most beautiful, lifelong friendships, mutual love and a deep spiritual connection. My heart really felt so warm this morning as I was writing about it. I feel so proud of the service I've done and continue to do at these rallies. Nothing is ever too much. I'm driven by love and gratitude and these memories fill my heart with joy.

I think that the scarcity mindset gradually made way for an abundance mindset. Then besides the Namibia rallies, I've attended Conventions and meetings in Africa, Europe and America. This is not about having loads of money. For me it was believing in abundance and believing that my Higher Power will make provision, because I believe I deserve what I see as blessings. I have a fond memory of arriving early at a meeting in Geneva. It was my second or third time there, and I began setting out the chairs. There was such a happy surprise when

the members started arriving, and I felt like a celebrity.

I would like to share more about my travels, but I must do that in conjunction with a reading from A Little Time for Myself (B-34) on page 345. Besides my Al-Anon travels, I have also travelled to many other countries. Initially it took courage to believe that I really deserved it. Days before a departure, I was filled with regret for allowing myself such privileges. I rehearsed how I would break the news to my son, not to sound too joyful about my trip. Thank God that I am not there anymore. I have the courage to accept what my Higher Power has to offer me.

This morning at 6am I received a loving message from an Al-Anon member based in Colorado in the US, and my heart was filled with gratitude, with the abundance of love, spirituality and compassion there is out there for us to give and to receive. I have seen abundance of kindness when a member in Kenya travelled a significant distance, taking five busses to come and welcome us.

Today I have compassion and understanding for the addict and alcoholic, with a grateful heart for the many years of recovery that my son has. Whenever I hear of an unfortunate experience of an addict or an alcoholic, my heart is filled with empathy, but also with the knowledge that it could have been my son, but for the Grace of God. The opposite is also true, today I have gladness in my heart when I hear of the prosperity of others, no longer is there envy, because I believe there is enough possibilities for everybody.

More about friendship and receiving unconditional love from so many people: I have a big birthday coming up and I would love to have all those who have stood by me, to share in my gratitude on that day, but in practice it won't work as there are too many, and why is that? I can say with all humility that it's because of what I give, and what others find in me.

About my son: I'm so proud of my son, for the kind of father he is to my two precious grandchildren. He is there for them. My heart burst with joy when my granddaughter said her dad is the funniest man on earth. These two children bring out the inner child in me. I had so much fun in Kirstenbosch last week when we had to dodge the rain, and I was in wonder about the questions they

asked the beekeeper, of which one was whether the bees were friendly. My Higher Power, who loves me, offers me these precious gifts of being in awe of giving to the child in me what I lacked while I was a child. It's just for me to open my mind and be receptive.

About my faith: My Higher Power has continued to give me reason to have faith in Him. I am thinking of when we do our annual planner and how much faith goes in there that all we are planning will come to fruition. There is the recovery of a family member, and I hold her up to the abundant grace of our God.

I would like to mention the power of the meeting. Recently I shared about my obsessive thinking at times, especially when it comes to the well-being of my son. So many members could identify with me telling me that I am not alone, that I belong here. And of course, alongside the meeting is the abundance of wisdom we find in all our Conference Approved Literature (CAL).

It was mentioned that to improve self-esteem, one must do esteem-able things. On Saturday, I transported the Al-Anon items to the rally and felt responsible for being entrusted with these tasks.

Another gem that appeals to me is God sees me. He sees me whenever I read or hear something that I just needed at that moment. God saw me through my GPS a while ago when I was directed home diverting me from a very dangerous area. My awareness told me that My Higher Power cares for me.

Lastly, there were many instances where I did not have the courage to be true to myself. I could not stand up for myself, so the little pretences were the same as the little white lies.

Today, I am finding myself in a very sad situation. That is the relationship between my son and me. Here is also the pretence that all is okay, while in the meantime there is deep seated hurt, judgements, and ignorance. My son looks at my deeds that I am ashamed of, but not at my defects and distorted thinking that caused my behaviour. On the one hand I am asking my God about whether it is necessary for my son to know the truth about me. My son has a program, which gives me hope that our Higher Powers with His infinite mercy and grace will one day bring us to a point when there is complete truth and openness between us.

*By Margie D., Cape Area, May 2025*

**The finest gift I can give to ensure my continued recovery is willingness. Each demonstration of willingness, each meeting attended, each Al-Anon tool used, is a mark of my success.**

COURAGE TO CHANGE

### Willingness

"If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it, then you are ready to take certain steps." – Alcoholics Anonymous, p.58

Alcoholics and addicts of all kinds in recovery know that they must be willing to go to any length on their journey of recovery. This has made me think: Am I willing to go to any length for my own recovery? Or am I still holding on to some resentment, some cynicism, some fear?

When I came to Al-Anon it was thanks only to the gift of desperation. I felt so terrified and trapped that I became willing to reach out into a big unknown to ask for help. (I still don't know what made Al-Anon come to mind – I must have read or heard about it somewhere, I knew nobody in the fellowship. And that today makes me so grateful for whoever carried a message to a place I could hear it and remember it decades later when I needed it.)

Al-Anon made me willing to let go of all my preconceived ideas and opinions. As an agnostic, I had to suspend my resistance to all the references to a Higher Power. But the gift of desperation made me willing to do this! I got the advice: Just believe for now that I believe in a Higher Power. That was easy!

I had to become willing to let go of so many things. Resentment. Despair. Control. Self-pity. Later, my old patterns of thought and behaviour.

I had to become willing to open myself up to change. To be teachable – willing to listen, willing to ask for help.

I had to be willing to keep my mind open but also keep my heart open. I became willing to have compassion towards the alcoholic in my life, towards my fellows and towards myself, and to extend my compassion to everybody – because everybody is fighting battles they don't necessarily talk about.

I had to be willing to be grateful – that in itself made me let go of resentment and self-pity because you can't be grateful and feel sorry for yourself in the same breath!

I had to be willing to go to any length. To show up every morning to do my

prayer (yes, I now pray to a God of my understanding) and meditation; to go to meetings even when I'm feeling down; to care for myself and for others; to study and apply the Twelve Steps in my life.

I had to be willing to embrace discipline as a kind of freedom – making changes one step at a time and not expecting anyone else to do the hard work for me.

I am so grateful for Al-Anon for the spiritual path I've been able to embark on. And I can't be grateful for Al-Anon without also being grateful that the pain of dealing with alcoholism has come into my life. And so, I am willing to view all things in my life differently – as lessons and opportunities I might not yet see the value of.

I have to remain willing to grow. The journey towards becoming my best self is never done.

*By Grateful Al-Anon Member, May 2025*

### 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 Regional Service Seminar (RSS) on 19 July 2025.

### 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.

# 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

- \***SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETING** – Saturday, 7 June 2025 at 9.30am (in person).
- \***53<sup>RD</sup> NATIONAL SERVICE CONFERENCE**– 19 to 22 June 2025 at Schoenstatt Retreat & Conference Centre (in person).
- \***AREA ASSEMBLY**– Saturday, 12 July 2025 at 9.30am (electronic). Workshop – Concepts 5 & 6 – don't miss it. All members welcome.

### RALLIES/CONVENTIONS

### SAVE THE DATE

#### \*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.

\***TIME TO REFLECT (TTR) DAILY READERS MEETING – 4TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION WEEK**, Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2025 at 4pm (SA time), one hour meeting. Zoom ID 96409449744, Passcode 920940.

#### \*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, Tygervalley 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 June 2025

CAPE AREA ECHO NEXT ISSUE - Send Your Shares - Submissions due by 23 June 2025

For the next issue the topics are:

- Reflect on your Al-Anon birthday, whether as a newcomer or longstanding member, and describe your recovery journey. Explain how you learned about Al-Anon, which tools you initially used, and how your approach has evolved over time.
- 36 Principles – How has Step 7, Tradition 7 or Concept 7 helped in your recovery process?

“The gift is your life. The way you share the gift of your life is only two ways – story or communication. Communication is the ultimate human skill.”-Brendan Borchard

We invite you to share your experience, strength, and hope on these or any other topics by sending your contributions to [alanonct@iafrica.com](mailto:alanonct@iafrica.com). Your input can be brief—a sentence, a paragraph, or even a page. We value your insights and would appreciate your suggestions for topics in future issues as well. Please email your recommendations to [alanonct@iafrica.com](mailto:alanonct@iafrica.com).

How long should my sharing be? (<https://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:** ABSA, Branch No: 632005 Type: Cheque

**SnapScan**

**SnapStore Pro card machine**

Acc Name: Al-Anon Family Group Cape Area

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

**VISA** 

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