



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.

November 2025



Dear Loners

Welcome to the November 2025 issue of Loners Letter.

As the weather becomes warmer here in South Africa, we are fast approaching the holidays and festive period. The holidays come with spending time with friends and family, partying, food and alcohol. For those who are in the program, this time is a blessing. For those experiencing active alcoholism, this can be a time of anxiety, fear, and stress. Many people feel desperate over the holidays so, in the spirit of sharing let's reach out to the still suffering by giving families the gift that will last a lifetime. Let us keep our doors and telephone lines open so no one feels alone and in despair. We can be in a party mood and continue with Al-Anon work.

By offering a smile and a warm welcome you are providing a special service to those still suffering. If you are struggling don't isolate yourself. Always remember that you are never alone, when you get busy, you get better. Reach out to your sponsor or a close friend in the fellowship, get to a meeting, or use our conference approved literature for guidance. The Serenity Prayer is a powerful source of comfort. If your loved one is drinking remember to put the focus on yourself, your own recovery and your own peace. You can love someone without getting absorbed in their chaos, Let go and let God be in control. Their journey is not yours to keep, and your journey is Serenity. It's ok to skip a party or leave early. When you feel lonely or emotions run high practice the 'pause', breathe and reach out. Having conscious contact with God is always a reminder that you are never alone. You are guided by your Higher Power and our amazing fellowship.

As the year comes to a close, I reflect on my journey in Al-Anon with gratitude. Al-Anon is a safe place for me. I am grateful to my sponsor, the members who attend our in-person and electronic meetings, our vast literature, and the many tools Al-Anon provides for our recovery. My peace is my priority. One day at a time, I'm stronger than I used to be. This holiday I choose peace over chaos. One moment, one prayer, and one meeting at a time. May we experience blessings filled with serenity, gratitude and joy in our hearts.

Attending the Long Timers Tea in October was one of the highlights for me for 2025. It was well attended by newcomers and long timers. The event was well planned, well-co-ordinated and a huge success. There was fellowshiping, fun, food and interacting with members from all districts. Excitement built up as we were led onto the dance floor by our beautiful and vibrant Lindsay.

The Valentine's Dinner and Dance takes place on 14 February 2026. Please contact the Area Office for tickets. Planning for Convention 2026 is ongoing and excitement is building. Please take part in our fundraising events. Souvenir T-shirts can be purchased at all events.

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS KZN AREA

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There are many wonderful ways to be involved in service. Remember when we get busy, we get better.

"Just for tonight, I will accept that I have done the best I could, remembering that my goal is spiritual progress and not perfection. I will let go of any expectations I had for this day, as well as any disappointments, shame or guilt I felt for not being perfect today. "

We are in the month of November, so we focus on Step 11, Tradition 11 and Concept 11.

STEP 11

SOUGHT THROUGH PRAYER AND MEDITATION TO IMPROVE OUR CONSCIOUS CONTACT WITH GOD AS WE UNDERSTOOD HIM, PRAYING ONLY FOR KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WILL FOR US AND THE POWER TO CARRY THAT OUT.

Step 11 helps us to stay spiritually connected and deepen our relationship with our Higher Power.

As I Let Go and Let God, I put God in charge and in control of my life. The Serenity Prayer helps me to surrender to God's will, asking for courage and strength to face my challenges. As one meal is not sufficient to sustain me the entire day, constant contact with God guides me through the challenges of the day. Step 11 also helps me focus on the solution and not the problems. As I meditate, clear my mind of all fears and pray, I find comfort. Conscious contact with God suggests that I seek an ongoing relationship with my Higher Power through prayer and meditation.

Morning meditation sets the pace for the day, quietens the chatter in my mind and gives me peace

TRADITION 11

OUR PUBLIC RELATIONS POLICY IS BASED ON ATTRACTION RATHER THAN PROMOTION; WE NEED ALWAYS MAINTAIN PERSONAL ANONYMITY AT THE LEVEL OF PRESS, RADIO, FILMS, AND TV. WE NEED GUARD WITH SPECIAL CARE THE ANONYMITY OF ALL AA MEMBERS.

"In Al-Anon, we learn that we cannot change others or force them to live differently." ref Reaching for Personal Freedom. Pg 112. Living with the effects of alcoholism, we try to control and change others. In Al-Anon we learn that we cannot force them to change; instead, we keep the focus on ourselves. As we make changes in our lives, they start making changes in their lives. Tradition 11 tells us that we do not promote Al-Anon. As others see our progress and recovery by applying the Al-Anon principles to our lives, they too want to seek help. This tradition emphasizes the importance of anonymity. We do not violate their privacy or destroy their trust in us. We share our experience and strength with each other, not on any public platform. We protect the privacy of everyone in our groups.

CONCEPT 11

THE WORLD SERVICE OFFICE IS COMPOSED OF SELECTED COMMITTEES, EXECUTIVES AND STAFF MEMBERS.

In Al-Anon we are all trusted servants. We do not control; we treat everyone as equal and learn from each other. We all have different skills; we allow each one to carry out their tasks to the best of their ability. We focus on our task and trust everyone to do their best.

This edition comes with a share from Devan G, who hosts our Men in Al-Anon meetings on a Sunday evening and is also the KZN Literature Coordinator, as well as a share from our dear Lindsay S, who is a beacon of light to all of us. We have the gift of being inspired by someone who walked this path of recovery with courage, humility, and service for many years.

Being the last Loners Letter for the year, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all members a blessed and safe festive season. May 2026 bring you peace, joy and an abundance of blessings One Day at a Time.

God Bless you all. Love and blessings,

Valerie M (Loners Letter Coordinator)

Recovery in Service

My name is Devan G, and I'm a grateful member of the worldwide fellowship of Al-Anon. My journey started in the chaos of alcoholism when my wife, who is my qualifier, got affected by the nasty disease. I say nasty because I witnessed the love of my life and the mother of my children transform rapidly due to alcoholism. This disease changed a woman who spent all her life devoting it to her family and loved ones. It brought her to a state where she eventually got to the point where she stole from her loved ones to get her fix of alcohol. What was once a happy and serene home became a war zone with chaos every day. I never thought that I would ever experience that kind of chaos. But as time went by, this chaos became a normal part of life and I watched my whole family, including myself, become sick with this disease.

I tried different things to help my wife. I first thought that she could not be an alcoholic, so I tried controlling her drinking, which failed. Then I tried to cure it by forcing her into AA and rehab, and there too I failed, and then I started blaming myself for causing her to drink. My failures made me act irrational, crazy, and violent because I could not accept my failures and that my wife was an alcoholic. When a couple comes into AA, the wife is quickly directed into the rooms of Al-Anon, but in my case I was accompanying my wife for over 3 months until I found out there was Al-Anon. When I asked some of the guys in AA why they had not told me about this program for family members of alcoholics, the response I got was, "You would not feel comfortable, as there are only women in the program." I then started researching the program and spoke to my wife about it because at the time I was so desperate, not only to help my wife but to help myself, because by that time I had accepted that she was an alcoholic and that she would not change. I wanted to know how to control my emotions and temper every time I found my wife intoxicated. At this point I became an abuser; I treated my wife so badly and even turned my kids against their own mother.

The first time I walked into the rooms of Al-Anon, my wife gave me the go-ahead. By that time I think she was so fed up with the abuse and her inability to stop drinking, and she wanted me to get help. That was the best decision I made, because at my very first meeting I felt like I belonged. I felt a sense of calm come over me for that moment. But it took me long to even receive an ounce of serenity, because as soon as I left the rooms, I went back to my old ways. Then the ladies who people thought I would not feel comfortable around worked with me; some treated me like a mother would treat a son, and the others like a sister would treat a brother, and they started feeding me with Al-Anon. One of the members went as far as giving me her old literature, which I treasure to this day. I was made to feel so comfortable in the program that I started doing meetings at different groups and meeting Al-Anon members from different areas and countries. After a year I was asked to be a secretary in my home group, which I was guided into, and that's where my service in the program started. I then started sharing my experience, strength, and hope at group birthdays and rallies, and the more I gave myself to service, the more I gained recovery.

On June 25th 2024, my wife celebrated her first year of sobriety, and when I asked what was different, she told me that this time she was doing it for herself, and with me being in recovery and not trying to control everything, it made it easier for her to grasp her program. Then I thought, what can I do to make a difference and get more men into the program because at every event that I attended, I was the only man. The 14th of June 2024 was the birth of the Men in Al-Anon meeting. I had this vision, and my service sponsor helped me to set up the platform. The first meeting started with just 4 men attending, and now, over a year later, we have anything between 15 to 20 men attending. We also have a WhatsApp group with 45 men. Now I don't feel so alone. I attend to calls from members daily and speak to new members that have been referred to me on an ongoing basis. We have now created a platform where men can come in and listen to shares of other men. Men can come in and break down if they need to, they can be open and not hold back because they can feel comfortable knowing that we are there with a common problem.

I have also been attending a 12-step workshop for the past 3 years now. I have realized because of the workshop that my recovery was held back because of the shame I felt, the shame of having an alcoholic wife, and the shame of the person I became. But then, if a butterfly looks back at its life as a caterpillar in shame, it would not enjoy the beauty of the present. It had to go through the caterpillar stage to

reach the stage of a beautiful butterfly, so too is my life's journey; I had to go through those crazy times, and it's part of my journey that I must accept in order to enjoy the present.

Since August of this year, I have been elected as the Literature Coordinator for KZN. I attend regular meetings, and I am learning the operations of the program and meeting people that selflessly give their time in service. This position has given me a sense of responsibility, and it brings joy to me to know that I am contributing to my recovery and to other still suffering members. The book How Al-Anon Works is my bible; it is my big book, and every member in Al-Anon should have a copy of this book, as it outlines the program and has everything one would need to know about the program. I am a work in progress, but attending regular meetings and being involved in service helps me grow daily.

Regards,

Devan G

Share by Lindsay

I'm approaching my 75th birthday on Christmas Day, which most people think is a very special time to be born, and I'm always reminded that Al-Anon was born the year after me, so Our Wonderful Fellowship will be celebrating its 75th birthday in 2026.

I think God had a plan for me and knew I would need help one day, so he organised the Al-Anon program within a few months of my birth 🙏 It most certainly makes me feel special.

As the Silly Season approaches, I'm also reminded of the families that are still apprehensive about what Christmas will be like with the active drinker.

This brings me to how Grateful I am that I don't have that stress anymore.

I no longer have knots in my tummy from November already.

An extra bonus in 2026 is that KZN will be hosting the National AA Convention in Durban, with Al-Anon participation, over the Easter Weekend, so we will get to celebrate Al-Anon's 75th Birthday with many of our Friends from all over South Africa 🙏

I have found Peace and Serenity through our program, One Day at a Time and I'm truly grateful to the God of my understanding for blessing me with 43 years of HOPE and loving people who care and love me unconditionally.

My 12 Step program has to work in and through me, or I will not cope. My Serenity Prayer keeps me from reacting. I have to do Step 10 daily, or my self-will takes over, and I become difficult to live with. Thank God that this is a lifelong program of recovery, and its progress, not perfection that is important.

I will take this opportunity to wish you all a very Peaceful and Happy Festive Season. May God bless you and your family in whichever way you celebrate.

God Bless you

Lindsay S (Al-Anon KZN Long timer)

TRADITION 7:

Every Group ought to be fully self-supporting declining outside contributions. In keeping with our 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:
Bank name: ABSA **Account name:** Al-Anon Family Groups Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN)