

Loners' Letter • **Gauteng & Districts** •

Together we can make it

January 2026

Dear Loners

Looking through the eyes of a Power greater than myself, is not a once off occurrence or happening. It is something that is becoming a *Living Practice* and not just a belief. It is becoming a lifestyle, something I practice on a regular basis, especially when old patterns resurface in my life.

I am now learning to look at situations and people from a higher perspective. I have come to realise that, when I change the way I look at things, the things I look at change. My healing and recovery have been exactly that – making a shift in how I see.

Addressing Old Habits, Behaviours and Attitudes

Before coming to Al-Anon, I didn't bother myself that much about old behavioural patterns I lived in. I am currently working to eliminate two specific habits: gossip and manipulation.

Gossip didn't seem like a very harmful behaviour to others. It used to feel like I was just connecting, sharing and or venting about whatever was going on in my life and around me. However, looking through my Higher Power's eyes, I am learning to pause, and to ask myself, is talking about someone loving? What I am talking about, is it necessary? Is this information mine to carry?

I realise that when I engage in gossip behaviour, I am focusing on what is happening in other peoples' lives instead of my own healing and recovery. I also realise that gossip creates an environment of being judgemental and it robs others of the opportunity to express themselves freely. Discussing other peoples' matters without their consent is counterproductive for everyone concerned and, I now feel uncomfortable when I engage in such. This awareness has brought me greater peace.

Repeating something over and over to my loved one with the hope that it would help them change their minds or act differently has never appeared to me as being problematic. In my mind, I thought I was being responsible, proactive, showing some love and being helpful. But when I look honestly, I realise that much of it comes from the fear I have and the urge to want to control outcomes in other peoples' lives.

I now recognise that behaviour as manipulation. Manipulation is not about helping the other person; it's about me wanting to feel safe in my current situation. Letting go of manipulation is becoming an important and a new practice for me. Al-Anon is helping me to see that, control is not the same as care.

Trusting in a Power Greater than Myself

Before Al-Anon, trusting and total surrender to a Power greater than myself, had been a struggle. I didn't know how to "*Let Go and Let God*".

Al-Anon has taught me to rely on a Power greater than myself. Today looking at the progress I have made on my journey, I realise that these principles and slogans could actually be used in all aspects of my life regardless of whether there is a problem of alcoholism or not.

I am beginning to practice in my life two important concepts which are: *acceptance* and *surrender*. Accepting the reality of my situation in life and surrendering my well-being to a Power greater than myself has been the greatest challenge for the longest time for me. Today I understand that *acceptance* helps me to be okay with whatever is taking place in my life. *Surrender* gives me an opportunity to have an outlet where I can offload my pain or any difficult situation I'm faced with. It teaches me to hand over total control to my Higher Power.

Learning to Live for Myself

The slogan "*Live and Let Live*" has taken a deeply personal meaning in my life. For a long time, I existed primarily to make sure that other people were okay in life.

One of the biggest shifts for me since coming to Al-Anon is learning that I don't need permission to live and I don't need to wait for my alcoholic loved one or any other person to be okay before I can start living. I am learning that I have a responsibility to myself to stop putting my own life on hold so that others can be comfortable. I have my own life to live and others have their own lives to live too. I now understand that choosing to live my life to the best of my ability is not betrayal or abandonment of my loved ones, but it's a way of honouring the love I have for myself and for them.

"*Live and Let Live*", teaches me to allow other people to have their journeys, including the person who is my qualifier. I don't have to manage, fix, or control other peoples' lives but to love them unconditionally. What I need to do is to focus solely on my own recovery so that I can be in a better position to provide support and encouragement to those who are still struggling.

Looking through my Higher Power's eyes helps me to replace fear with trust in a Power greater than myself and to replace control with compassion for people around me and holding space for love.

I Am Not Alone

At some point in time in my life, the kind of a relationship I had with my Higher Power was very casual. I would mostly interact with my Higher Power as and when a need arose.

Since coming to Al-Anon, my relationship with my Higher Power has been growing stronger every day – not because my life is perfect, but because I no longer have to face life alone.

When my vision becomes clouded by fear, despair, or old ways of thinking: attending meetings and interacting with my sponsor brings balance to my life. This reminds me that recovery is a shared and supported process which is sustained by staying connected to my Higher Power. This reminds me that, *I am never alone*.

For me, a living practice is about applying the lessons which I continue to learn from the programme. Through which I am able to change the way I look at things, people and situations. When that happens, I experience an internal shift which is necessary for my own recovery.

Best wishes

Anonymous

▪ How Al-Anon Works ▪

Al-Anon is a group of people who have been affected by the drinking of a family member or friend. We share our experiences with others like ourselves and share what has or has not worked for us. Having a common experience enables us to have insight into how we are being affected or have been affected, and what has helped us.

Al-Anon Meetings: In-person meetings and Zoom meetings are held throughout the week in South Africa and internationally. [Click Here to Find A Meeting](#) or phone our office on 063 270 2535.

Alateen Meetings: We hold Zoom meetings for young people (9 – 17 years) who have been affected by someone else's drinking. We help them to understand that they are not at fault and help them to keep a healthy focus on themselves and their own responsibilities.

Al-Anon Books: We have a range of Al-Anon books which detail the experiences of other Al-Anon members and what they have found works for them. Some suggested starter books are:

- *How Al-Anon Works for Families and Friends of Alcoholics* [B32ZA]
- *Courage to Change* [B16ZA]
- *Discovering Choices* [B30]
- *Alateen - Hope for Children of Alcoholics* [B03ZA]

These books and others can be ordered from the Gauteng Al-Anon office: alanontvl@absamail.co.za

Free Downloads: We also have a range of Free Downloads available on the Al-Anon website. <https://www.alanon.org.za/free-downloads/>

▪ Tradition Seven ▪

Every group ought to be self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

*At Al-Anon we support ourselves. Please contribute towards our operating expenses so
that we can continue to help ourselves and others.*

Al-Anon Information Services

Bank Details

ABSA Bank, Oakdene, Current Account No: 1118881482 Branch code 632 005.

Please send proof of payment to alanontvl@absamail.co.za and use your **name, group and/or event** as the reference.

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