



Al-Anon Family Groups CAPE AREA ECHO

CAPE AREA OFFICE:
WhatsApp 066 158 0234
Telephone 021 595 4517
Email alanonct@iafrica.com
Website <https://www.alanon.org.za/>

For information regarding meetings, please contact the numbers below or refer to "Find a meeting" at <https://www.alanon.org.za/find-a-meeting/>

NEWCOMERS ELECTRONIC 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 at 5pm
WhatsApp for login details: 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 for young people aged 12 to 17 years, 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.

ISSUE NO. 04 OF 2026 (APRIL)

Page 1	What's on in the Area/s	I'm very grateful to be here			
Page 2	Die gereedskap van Al-Anon slagspreuke	Being nicer to myself			
Page 3	Learning to receive help				
Page 4	Constantiaberg Morning Al-Anon Family Group - What makes us great?				
Page 5	When I found balance, happiness followed	How the Slogans work for me	Just for today	Principled... The Concepts	
Page 6	Concept Four - Participation	Alateen - The Alateen story			
Page 7	Alateen meeting Literature news	Public Outreach news	Reflection from WSO archivist...	Self-worth	Declaration & Serenity Prayer
Page 8	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

GROUP AT-HOME

Rondebosch Group's 78th At-Home



THIS IS A BIG DEAL!

WEDNESDAY, 29TH APRIL 2026 - 7:30 PM
ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
ROUWKOOP RD, RONDEBOSCH

BOTH AN AA SPEAKER
& AN AL-ANON SPEAKER!

JOIN US TO CELEBRATE THIS AMAZING MILESTONE
AS THE SECOND OLDEST AA GROUP IN THE CAPE!
WE INVITE ALL MEMBERS OF AA, AL-ANON, AND VISITORS,
ESPECIALLY THOSE WITH HISTORY AT THE RONDEBOSCH GROUP,
AND THOSE WHO STARTED THEIR RECOVERY JOURNEY
TO CELEBRATE WITH US!
BRING PLATES AND SNACKS TO SHARE - EVERYONE'S INVITED!
WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU AND SHARING
THIS INCREDIBLE EVENING TOGETHER!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS



Al-Anon Cape Area
Birthday Celebration
Gratitude Parade
Family Fun Afternoon

Open Meeting Event.
Bring family and friends along

THEME - PROGRESS NOT PERFECTION

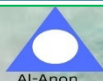
When: Saturday 9 May 2025

Time: 10.30am to 4pm

Venue: Lions Club Hall, Dorrey Street, Protea Heights,
Brackenfell

Cost: R50 registration fee
Lunch and lucky draw available.

OFFICIAL FLYER TO BE CIRCULATED LATER THIS WEEK



RSS

Regional Service Seminar
29 August 2026
R300.00

Save the Date

To book your place -
Contact Annalise at the Office:
Monday to Thursday: 9.30 - 2pm
Phone: 021- 5954517
WhatsApp: 0661580234
E-Mail: alanonct@iafrica.com



I'm very grateful to be here

I actually found my way to Al-Anon while I was in a treatment centre in South Africa. I had already been struggling for more than half a year with burnout and depression, and this clinic also offered treatment for burnout and depression alongside addiction treatment.

So, I wasn't there because of an addiction of my own, but being in that environment brought me into close contact with people who were struggling with addiction and that opened my eyes in a new way.

For the first time, I really started seeing certain patterns clearly. I saw denial. I saw minimizing. I saw blaming others. I saw how hard it can be for someone to really look honestly at the impact of their behaviour.

And while I was seeing that around me, something clicked, because I realized that I knew these patterns. I knew them from home.

My mom has been an alcoholic for many years. She's what people would probably call a quiet or functioning alcoholic. She drinks every day, usually a few glasses of wine, often a bottle, and to her that seems normal. And I think that made it extra confusing for me for a long time; because she functions; because it's not loud or dramatic from the outside; because it doesn't always fit the picture people have in mind when they hear the word alcoholism.

So, for years, I think I questioned myself a lot. I wondered if I was making too much of it. If I was too sensitive. Even if I had the right to be so affected by it.

But the truth is that it has affected me deeply.

Especially in recent years, I've really struggled more and more with my mother's drinking. Not only because of the drinking itself, but because of everything around it too. The denial. The minimizing. The blaming. The feeling that something very real was happening, but somehow it was never really allowed to be named.

And what I also see more clearly now is how much I fought to try to fix it.

For a very long time, I adapted myself around her drinking. If she had been drinking, I would avoid her. I would pull away. And I also stopped telling her certain things about my own struggles, because I was afraid that if she knew how badly I was doing, she would take that on and drink even more.

So, without really realizing it, I started carrying responsibility for her drinking. I became careful. I became watchful. I started holding things in. I wasn't just dealing with my own feelings anymore; I was constantly thinking about what my feelings might do to her.

And that has cost me a lot.

Because even when I was struggling, I still felt busy managing her. Trying not to make things worse. Trying to say the right thing or not say too much. Trying to protect her, while also being hurt by her.

That's one of the reasons Al-Anon has meant so much to me.

When I came to my first meeting, I received such a warm welcome. And after that first meeting, people reached out to me straight away. And that touched me deeply.

Because when you've been carrying something painful and confusing for a long time, and then you walk into a room where people just get it... that means so much.

I didn't have to explain from the beginning why this affected me so much. I didn't have to prove that it was serious enough. I didn't have to defend my pain.

There was warmth. There was recognition. There was understanding.

And honestly, I think one of the most healing parts for me was that this was finally being acknowledged. That I could talk about it. That people understood. That I wasn't crazy. That it actually makes sense that this has affected me so deeply.

That was such a relief.

Because for a long time I think I carried a lot of self-doubt around this. Like maybe it wasn't bad enough. Maybe I should just accept it. Maybe I was overreacting.

But in Al-Anon I started to understand that the impact on me is real. And that that matters.

I'm also slowly learning what it really means when people say alcoholism is a family disease. Because it doesn't only affect the person who drinks. It affects everyone around them. The emotional atmosphere. The trust. The safety. The roles people take on. The ways they learn to survive.

And I can really see that in my own life.

One of the hardest but most important things I'm learning here is that I am powerless over my mother's drinking.

And that is not easy for me. Because part of me still wants to fix it. Part of me still wants her to really see it, to acknowledge it, to stop denying it, to stop blaming others, and to understand what it has done to me.

But I'm learning that I can't force that. I can't control her drinking. I can't control her insight. And I can't make my healing depend on whether she changes.

That is painful. But it is also freeing.

Because if I am powerless over her drinking, then maybe I can slowly stop carrying something that was never mine to carry in the first place.

I think that's what Al-Anon is starting to give me. A way back to myself. A way to take my own feelings seriously. A way to stop doubting my reality. And a way to begin healing from the impact all of this has had on my life.

I'm still learning. I still feel grief. I still feel sadness. I still feel anger sometimes. And I still find it painful that my mother may never fully see what this has been like for me.

But something has shifted.

I feel less alone. I feel more understood. And I feel less like I have to keep questioning whether my pain is real.

So today I mostly just wanted to share my gratitude. Gratitude that I found my way here. Gratitude for the warm welcome I received from the beginning. Gratitude that people reached out to me. And gratitude that I found a place where I could finally speak about this and be understood.

That has meant a lot to me.

Thank you for letting me share.

By Elina, Cape Area, April 2026



My man is die alkoholis in my lewe. Gedurende die jare van aktiewe drinkery, en voordat ek Al-Anon gevind het, het ek in voortdurende vrees en paniek geleef oor wat met hom gebeur. Ek het gereeld groot, lewensveranderende besluite oorweeg, soos of ek hom moet verlaat; nie omdat ek hom nie liefgehad het nie, maar omdat ek gedink het dit hom dalk sou help om sy laagtepunt te bereik en hulp te begin soek. Ek kon myself egter nie sover kry om dit te doen nie, en dan het ek myself verwyte oor my swaakheid en besluiteloosheid. My selfbeeld het al hoe laer geword, en uiteindelik heeltemal verdwyn.

Toe ek die eerste keer die kamers van Al-Anon ontdek, was dit wonderlik om in 'n stil, rustige plek te sit, omring deur vriendelike mense wat hul stories deel. Die stoele was in 'n sirkel gerangskik, en in die middel was 'n paar eenvoudige slagspreuke waarna ek graag gekyk het terwyl ek geluister het:

• Hou Dit Eenvoudig • Vat Dit Rustig • Een Dag op 'n Slag • Net vir Vandag • Laat Los en Laat God • Dink • Hou 'n Oop Gemoed • Eerste Dinge Eerste • Leef en Laat Leef • Hoe Belangrik Is Dit? • Laat Dit by My Begin • Luister en Leer.

Op daardie stadium was dit net mooi klein frases om week na week na te kyk en het dit nie veel vir my beteken nie. Maar 'n dreigende krisis het my gehelp om te sien hoe nuttig hierdie slagspreuke kan wees.

My man se drinkpatroon het verander na episodes van oormatige drink, afgewissel met pogings om op te hou en deur verskriklike onttrekkingsimptome te gaan, of deur 'n ontgiftingsproses te gaan. Elke keer as nog so 'n episode begin het, het sy gedrag al hoe meer wisselvallig, dreigend en vreesaanjaend geword. Op 'n dag het hy begin om dinge in die huis te breek en die vensters te probeer inskop. Ek was baie bang en het weer daaraan gedink om hom te verlaat. Ek het 'n Al-Anon-vriendin gebel vir ondersteuning en haar van my dilemma vertel oor om hom te verlaat. Sy het vir my die mees behulp same ding gesê wat ek kon hoor. Sy het gesê:

“Onthou 'Net vir Vandag'? Jy hoef nie nou besluite oor die toekoms van jou huwelik te neem nie; jy hoef net te doen wat vandag nodig is. En as dit beteken jy verlaat vandag die huis en bly vir die nag

weg, dan is dit wat jy doen. Jy kan môre oor môre besluit.”

Wat 'n verligting was dit nie om dit te hoor nie! Dit het gevoel asof 'n las van my skouers gelig is. Deur so 'n eenvoudige slagspreuk op my situasie toe te pas, het daardie verskriklike besluiteloosheid wat my vir jare geteister het, begin verdwyn. Ek het daardie dag vertrek en die volgende dag teruggekeer, wat vir my reg gevoel het om te doen.

Vandag, danksy Al-Anon, het ek geleer dat die toepassing van die slagspreuk 'Net vir Vandag' 'n noodsaaklike deel van my daaglikse lewe is. As ek begin om “Wat as”-gedagtes te kry (soos: wat as ek my werk verloor, wat as die hond sy been breek en 'n groot veeartsrekening opbou, wat as my man weer begin drink), herinner ek myself dat alles net vir vandag reg is en dat daardie dinge nie nou gebeur nie. Ek sal dit hanteer wanneer dit wel gebeur.

Deur Andrea, Al-Anon Today, Lente 2024

Dit is die eiendom van Al-Anon Family Groups UK & Éire, wat volle redigeringsregte behou, en mag in geheel of gedeeltelik – in druk, op die internet of enige ander media – gebruik word om Al-Anon en Alateen-materiaal te ontwikkel.



The other day I caught myself thinking about what my 20-year-old self would say if he could see me today – overweight and unfit. There are definitely areas in my life I think he'd be proud of... but those wouldn't be on that list.

And that got me thinking about what it really means to be nice to myself.

For a long time, I misunderstood that idea. I thought being nice to myself meant not being too hard on myself... letting things slide... giving myself a break when it came to things like diet and exercise. In other words, I confused kindness with softness. I confused self-compassion with a kind of quiet self-neglect.

But I'm starting to see it differently now.

Being nice to myself doesn't mean going easy on myself. It means treating myself like someone I actually care about.

And if I really care about myself, then I don't just chase short-term comfort. I start making choices that are good for me in the long run – even when they're uncomfortable. I start asking a different question. Not, “What do I feel like doing right now?” but “What would be a loving thing to do for myself today?”

For me, that shows up in simple, practical ways. Getting up and exercising

when I don't feel like it. Making better choices with what I eat. Practising a bit of discipline where I used to be soft. And I'm beginning to realise... that's actually what love looks like. Not always easy. Not always comfortable. But choosing the next right thing – just for today.

In a strange way, this too is about receiving help. Because when I stop treating myself like an afterthought, and start treating myself like someone worth caring for, I'm receiving the help that discipline, structure, and self-respect can offer me. I'm no longer abandoning myself under the banner of "being nice." I'm learning that real kindness sometimes looks like accountability.

At the same time, I'm also learning that being nice to myself isn't about perfection. Because I still fall short.

There are still days when I choose comfort over discipline. Days when I know better and still don't do better. Days when the old patterns creep back in. And when that happens, being nice to myself doesn't mean beating myself up. It doesn't mean adding shame to struggle. It means getting back up, without judgement, and trying again. That balance feels important to me.

Being disciplined enough to do what's good for me. And compassionate enough not to tear myself down when I fall short. That, for me, is part of recovery too.

Because for many years I thought strength meant pushing through, holding everything together, expecting more of myself, demanding more of myself, and never letting up. But Al-Anon is teaching me that real strength has a different quality to it. It is steadier. Kinder. More honest. It allows room for effort, but it also allows room for grace.

And maybe that's part of learning to receive help as well – accepting that I am someone who needs care, not just someone who gives it.

Just for today, that means I can try to treat myself the way I would treat someone I love: with honesty, with encouragement, with patience, and with enough discipline to choose what is truly good for me.

By Eddie, Cape Area, April 2026



**Learning to Receive Help
(Instead of Being the Strong One
All the Time)**

"What does it feel like to let others support me – emotionally or practically?"

I didn't come into Al-Anon because I struggled to give. If anything, that was my strength. I was the one who stepped in. The one who carried. The one who made a plan, fixed the problem, held things together. I took pride in being reliable... capable... steady... strong. At least, that's how I saw it.

What I didn't see – or maybe didn't want to see – was that my version of strength came with a cost. Because while I was very good at giving help, I was almost completely incapable of receiving it.

The identity of "The Strong One"

Being "the strong one" became part of how I defined myself. It showed up everywhere.

- At work – I solved problems.
- At home – I managed situations.
- In relationships – I adapted, absorbed, and carried more than my share.

I didn't ask for help. Not because no one was willing, but because, deep down, I didn't believe I should need it. Needing help felt like weakness. Like failure. Like I wasn't coping properly.

So, I told myself things like: "I've got this." "It's not that bad." "Other people have it worse." "I just need to push through." And on the outside, it often looked like I was coping, but inside, it was a very different story.

What it feels like to carry everything alone

Living that way feels heavy. Not always in a dramatic way – sometimes it's quiet, subtle. A constant background pressure. Like holding your breath without realising it. There's a tension in the body... a tightness in the chest... a sense that you can never fully relax because you're always "on duty."

Emotionally, it becomes isolating. Because if I'm always the one who is "fine," then no one ever sees when I'm not. And if no one sees it, no one can respond to it. So, I become surrounded by people but still feel alone.

The belief that stops me asking for help

There's another layer to this for me, and I've struggled to put words to it. I'm not entirely sure why this is so difficult for me. But many times, when I think about asking for help, there's a thought that comes up almost automatically: "If I ask for help, they're only doing it out of obligation and not because they really want to."

It's as if I imagine the other person thinking: "I wish I didn't have to do this." "I'd rather be doing something else." "This is inconvenient." And that belief often stops me before I even ask. Because I would rather struggle on my own, than accept help that I think is being given reluctantly. Even if that belief isn't true.

A mirror I didn't expect

A friend of mine recently had some car trouble. We've known each other for almost 40 years – he's more like family than a friend.

He was on his way home from work one Friday afternoon when his car just stopped. He managed to push it to the side of the road, out of traffic. Now, what I would have expected him to do... what I would have hoped he would do... was call me. Let me know he's stuck. And I would have gone out to help him without hesitation.

But that's not what happened. Instead, he walked. Seven kilometres. In 40-degree heat. He walked home and then made arrangements to have the car towed. I only found out about this later that evening. And I was angry. Frustrated. I couldn't understand it. Why hadn't he called me? Why hadn't he reached out?

The following week he came to visit, and I told him exactly how I felt. I said, "We're friends... why couldn't you just call me? I would have come to help you." And he kept saying, "It's fine... it wasn't a problem... I sorted it out." And in that moment, I couldn't accept that. Because to me, it was a problem. And he didn't let me show up for him.

The moment of clarity

Later that evening, my wife said something to me – very quietly. She said: "I know it really bothered you that he didn't call you, but how is what he did any different from what you would have done?"

And my first reaction was to push back. To defend myself. To explain why it was different. But the more I sat with it, the more I realised that she was right. That is exactly what I would have done. I would have rather suffered on my own, than asked for help.

The question beneath the behaviour

That moment forced me to ask a deeper question: Why? Is it pride? Is it ego? Is it fear? Why is it so difficult for me to accept help, even when it's freely available?

Al-Anon helped me see that it's not just one thing. It's a combination of beliefs and habits that I've carried for a long time:

- The belief that I should be able to handle things on my own.
- The fear of being a burden.
- The discomfort of being seen as vulnerable.
- The need to stay in control.
- The assumption that others don't really want to help.

And none of those are facts. They are just stories I've come to believe.

What Al-Anon taught me about receiving help

In Al-Anon, I started hearing something different. People spoke about:

- reaching out
- leaning on others
- sharing honestly
- trusting a Higher Power
- not doing it alone

And slowly, something began to change. Because I realised the same generosity I felt toward others, is the same generosity others feel toward me. When someone asks me for help, I don't feel burdened. I feel useful. I feel connected. I feel trusted. So why would I assume it's different for them?

I heard an Al-Anon member say in a meeting recently that when I help someone, it makes me feel good. It really lifts my mood. If I don't ask for help, I'm depriving someone of the good feeling I get when helping. The reframing of this idea was instrumental to changing my perspective. It's not only for asking for help but it's also about allowing others the opportunity to experience the joy of giving that help.

What it feels like to let others support me

Letting others support me still doesn't feel natural. But it feels different now. At first, it feels uncomfortable. There's a moment of hesitation. A pause before I speak. A voice that says, "Don't do it, just handle it yourself." But when I move through that and I reach out anyway, it feels like the pressure eases. Like I'm not holding everything together on my own anymore. It feels like connection. Like I'm part of something, instead of separate from it.

Practical and emotional support

I've also come to understand that support doesn't always look the same.

Sometimes it's practical: someone helping solve a problem; offering time or resources; stepping in where I can't.

And sometimes it's emotional: someone listening; someone understanding; someone simply sitting with me where I am.

Both matter. And both require the same thing from me: Willingness.

The role of my Higher Power

This is where my Higher Power comes in. Because ultimately, receiving help is not just about other people. It's about letting go of the belief that everything depends on me. It's about trusting that I am not alone in this life. That there is guidance, support, strength, available to me – If I'm willing to receive it.

A new definition of strength

Today, my understanding of strength has changed. Strength is no longer: carrying everything alone; having all the answers; never showing weakness.

Strength is asking for help; being honest; allowing myself to be supported; trusting others and trusting my Higher Power.

One Day at a Time

Like everything in Al-Anon, this is not something I've mastered. It's something I practice. Some days I still default to old patterns. But now I notice it. And just for today I can choose differently. Just for today, I can Ask→Receive→Trust→Let go. And that's enough.

What does it feel like to let others support me?

At first, it feels uncomfortable. But over time it feels like relief. Like connection. Like being part of something instead of apart from it. It feels like I don't have to carry life on my own anymore. And maybe most importantly, it feels like I can finally put down the role of "the strong one" and just be me living, growing, and healing.

By Eddie, Cape Area, April 2026



CONSTANTIABERG MORNING AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP What Makes Us Great?

When I challenged our amazing group to express what made the Constantiaberg Morning Group the (self-proclaimed) "best" group, they did not disappoint. Herewith the summarised feedback I received from our members:

We love the safety of predictability in our meetings, something we don't have living with an alcoholic. This predictability stems from the boundaries that we create within the group such as:

- Following a meeting format, which is read at the beginning of each meeting. These repeated phrases reinforce our minds with their repetition, and we have come to love the messages there-in. Reading this format, gives us time to switch the noise off in our heads and ground ourselves in the meeting and in our healing.
- We use only CAL approved literature and include a reading or two in every meeting.
- We try to cover one Step, one Tradition and one Concept each month.
- No individual dominates our meetings, and everyone gets to share or pass in a round robin fashion.
- We adhere strictly to the Al-Anon Principles with no interruptions or cross talk, and we listen intently to each share. We know there will be an "Aha" moment meant just for us when we do.

- There is no pressure to attend, and no-one needs to make excuses when they don't attend.

These boundaries and predictabilities allow for newcomers to get into it fast, without getting lost and they build core group cohesion.

We also ensure that regular business and group conscience meetings are held to review what is working and what needs to be adjusted in respect of our meetings.

When it comes to our shares, we have a schedule of Chairpersons, who are rotated weekly and they either pick a Step, Tradition, Concept or topic of their choosing to talk about. Whatever they choose is always related back to their personal experiences (so it does not feel like a lecture) often ending with a question for the group to ponder and then each member gets their turn to share. The shares in our group are inspired by an almost spiritual environment of love with no judgement that allows openness, honesty, willingness and courage to be completely vulnerable and authentic. Invariably someone puts into words what we are feeling. We have created an environment where we are able to share when we are doing well and when we struggle. It is in these shares that we feel our healing begins.

We are blessed to have several long-time members within our group, who attend regularly, are willing to sponsor and who use their wisdom and warmth to guide us in our healing as well as the creation of an environment of service and loyal responsibility to recovery not only in ourselves but in others. There is a true sense of commitment to each other.

One member wrote that the meeting is their GPS guiding their week in the right direction with tried, tested and proven routes. Many of our members no longer live with an active alcoholic and yet keep coming back – a powerful testament to Al-Anon.

Our group is without doubt a family that makes us feel held, bolsters and maintains our serenity. It is where we are safe and no longer alone. One member, who has been absent from the group for 13 years and who has recently returned says, "I came home!"

Our greatness lies in the emotional and spiritual safety we experience within this group.

We meet every Monday, 11 am to 12:30 pm at St Martin's Church, 17 Silverhurst Way, Bergvliet. Our doors are open to everyone.

By Tanja, Cape Area, April 2026





When I found balance, happiness followed

As the “Just for Today” bookmark (M-12) says, “Most folks are as happy as they make up their minds to be.” I now believe this statement to be true. For many years, however, I was only as happy as the situation was that day.

Was my daddy drunk? Was my husband on another weekend binge? Was he at the bar with the boys after work? How was he going to act towards the kids and me when he came home? Later, when the kids grew up, I worried about them. Are my boys out drinking or doing drugs? What’s going to happen

to them? Does my daughter think her drinking is social? I hope she reaches out for help. These thoughts ran around in my head constantly.

When things were in total chaos, I pretended to other people that we had the best home life. Half the time, I was in denial myself that my spouse even had a drinking problem. In the early years, and as time went by, I would go into survival mode so I could cope with the abuse and the weekly drinking bouts.

Sometimes it was everyday drinking, and sometimes it was binge drinking. Life was unpredictable and I was on edge. I was trying to balance something that could not be balanced.

The line from the Al-Anon Suggested Welcome, “Our thinking becomes distorted by trying to force solutions, and we become irritable and unreasonable without knowing it” summarized it best. I became a nagging, pleading, crying, enabling, and controlling woman who was out of touch with reality. I was irritable and unreasonable without knowing it—and sometimes knowing it. I thought I had to find a way to get the alcoholics to stop drinking, then Shangri-La would appear, and we would be the family I wanted in childhood.

I’ve heard it said that the person affected by alcoholism is sicker than the alcoholic. That’s debatable because I think we both share a rough road. Each one deals with life and death. In my case, when I was not going into depression, I was developing things like fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue. My health went so far down that I developed an autoimmune illness that almost took my life.

There is more than one way to die. Alcoholism is one, and living a life of turmoil

is another. In time, it will take you down. I no more wanted to live like that, than the alcoholics in my life did. Nothing was intentional. I realize that now, but I did not always realize that.

My thinking was really distorted after so many years of trying to love people back to health. Now it’s my time to live life fully, the kind of life I would want for myself and for anyone else I love. The Al-Anon programme has set me free. Life isn’t perfect, but it sure beats the one I lived before Al-Anon. I got involved in service work for Al-Anon and began to see the results of working the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in my everyday life. I am very thankful to all those who listened to my woes and had the patience to let me develop at my own pace. They are a treasure.

I have been working on my programme for many years. I feel much happier than I once did and no problem is bigger than my Higher Power. None! I just need to hand my problems to Him, do my part, and have some faith.

When I entered the doors of Al-Anon, I was dying a slow death inside. The love and understanding I gained in those meeting rooms is real and so very worth the effort – “Keep Coming Back.”

By Marlene M., The Forum, June 2013

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

How the Slogans work for me

Using the Al-Anon tools together works for me. For example, if I’m thinking I need to detach, then I will also think about PAUSE (Please Assist Until Serenity Enters) and THINK (is what I’m saying Thoughtful, Honest, Intelligent, Necessary & Kind)?

If I’m in resentment, I will think about my boundaries and whether I got in someone else’s ring and if I did, what were my motives, do I need to think about the 3 A’s: Awareness, Acceptance & Action?

If I’m going through a difficult time, the Slogan, This Too Shall Pass, the Serenity Prayer and One Day at A Time is also helpful.

This programme really does work in all our affairs and I’m very grateful for it and all the wonderful members who keep coming back!

By Emma, Al-Anon Today

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.



JUST FOR TODAY

I hated everyone before coming to Al-Anon, I especially hated myself. I was always tired and I needed to sleep. I would still be awake by 3am and when I woke up, I’d be full of fear, worrying about the past and dreading the future. My life was falling apart, and I didn’t want to exist anymore.

A family member gave me the Al-Anon daily reader One Day at a Time. Reading it helped me to sleep, and it made me feel better: I didn’t know why. They suggested I go to Al-Anon meetings and explained that being affected by alcoholism growing up, life can become unmanageable. I couldn’t understand this because I was now an adult, but I went along anyway.

I have learnt to grow up in Al-Anon and to live each day in the here and now, One Day at a Time.

By Phyllis, Al-Anon Today, Summer 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.



Principled...honourable, righteous, upright, ethical, just, moral The Concepts

Concept One: This clearly defines the ultimate responsibility and authority for Al-Anon world services belongs to the groups. For Concept One to work effectively it is essential to have healthy Al-Anon groups.

A principled approach to healthy groups encourages members to share their experience, strength and hope in sharing their story. Each individual member is also participating in the principles of reliability, courtesy, honesty and unity, by ensuring the door is open and meeting room set up ready for meeting. Members willingly welcome all members including newcomers.

We follow the suggested guidelines, sharing our experience, strength and hope, ensuring groups use only Al-Anon conference approved literature.

We also follow the principle of being self-supporting by making personal donations, which frees us from outside influences diluting our fellowship.

Concepts Two and Three: With the principles of healthy Al-Anon groups in place, we can then be confident to delegate administrative and operational authority to the Conference and its service arms. This makes effective leadership possible.

Concept Four: The key to harmony also relies on the principles of healthy, harmonious groups.

Concept Five: This gives us the right to be heard including the minority opinion. The Group Conscience is where we first learn the principle of the right to be heard.

Concepts Six, Seven and Eight: Al-Anon as a fellowship has administration services and legal responsibilities to enable a principled approach for the benefit of Al-Anon as a whole. The Trustees delegate to Executive Committees to carry out these responsibilities.

Concepts Nine and Ten: The principles of good personal leadership and service responsibility at all service levels are defined by the principles of defined service authority. Double-headed management is avoided.

Concept Eleven: The World Service Office is composed of committees, executives and staff who are aware of the Al-Anon principles.

Concept Twelve: The Twelve Concepts of Service and the Five General Warranties of the Conference sum up the principles of the Al-Anon programme by giving me principles to live by.

I didn't know how to use the principles before I came to Al-Anon (I may have never even heard of the word, I certainly didn't understand it). After many years in Al-Anon I have learned to use the principles of the Twelve Concepts and the General Warranties in my life.

1. I learned how to manage my money by these financial principles; I now have a prudent reserve!

2. I learned not to let the alcoholic, my family, friends and people in my work life have unqualified authority over me. This was a relief and a blessing.

3. I learned in my Al-Anon family to have discussions, and we could agree to things unanimously, or agree to disagree respecting each other's opinions. This helped me to have honest relationships with my kids and family.

4. I learned not to be personally punitive to other people or cause controversy in my family. This made my part in my family much simpler – the slogans and the prayer on the back of the Just for Today card was a big part of developing this skill.

5. In my family, I practice consideration of others, so our family is democratic in thought and action, and all adults have equal rights. I use the principles of love and kindness that I have witnessed in meetings of Al-Anon Family Groups on a daily basis.

By Nerise D., Delegate, Austra-Link, January 2026

This is the property of Al-Anon Family Groups Australia, 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



The Twelve Concepts help me work with others in unity and humility. When I apply them, I experience less control, more cooperation, and deeper spiritual growth. Concept Four reminds me that everyone affected by a decision has a right to participate.

Service

Concept Four reminds me that everyone affected by a decision has a right to participate. This creates fairness and unity in service.

- Encourages inclusion and shared responsibility
- Helps me value every voice
- Reduces resentment and exclusion
- Strengthens unity

Home

At home, Concept Four encourages shared input and cooperation. It reminds me that everyone matters.

- Encourages family participation in decisions
- Builds respect and fairness
- Reduces feelings of being ignored
- Strengthens connection

Community

In the community, Concept Four supports inclusivity and collaboration. It helps me work with others rather than over them.

- Encourages shared involvement
- Builds respect for diversity
- Promotes fairness
- Strengthens cooperation

Unity grows when everyone belongs.

By Madelein O'B., Cape Area, February 2026



The moment I noticed something wasn't right with my parents was when I needed help with my homework one day, and I asked my dad to help me. When I went over to him, he had a beer in his hand, and he hid it behind his back, saying, "I will be right there," while shooing me away. I thought, Why did he hide it behind his

back? I felt confused and upset. My parents were getting into fights at that time, and I felt too scared to tell my mom because I just thought it would start up another war between them. After that, I became a fixer. I always held in my emotions in order to try to fix the fighting between my parents and keep peace in my home.

Sometime after this, my mom began going to Al-Anon and had been active in the programme for a year when my dad went away for rehab. My parents sat us down the night before, and my dad admitted that he had a drinking problem. At first, after hearing what my dad said, I felt unemotional; I didn't know how to feel. The next morning, my dad left, and I thought, Why is this happening to me? Watching my dad leave made me feel overwhelmed. That was nearly three years ago.

When my mom introduced me to Alateen, I honestly thought it was going to be very boring. I felt like I didn't need to go, like I had everything figured out, and I was fine. Before Alateen, I felt as if I couldn't talk about my feelings at all, whether I was sad, angry, emotional, etc. But after attending meetings and hearing that others had experiences like mine, I felt like I belonged there. I felt like people could understand how I felt, and I realized I didn't have to hold it all in just so everything could look perfect from the outside. Just a few months later, we decided to start an Alateen group in our town. It has been nine months since our meeting began, and Alateen has made a big impact on my life—not just related to the alcoholic, but with school as well as my mental health.

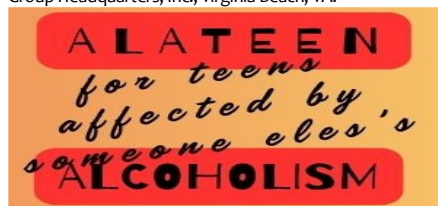
The slogans stand out to me as really important. The two that I find most helpful are "One Day at a Time" and "Let Go and Let God." These slogans help me to take my time and not worry about anyone else but myself. I cannot control the words or actions of someone else, but in Alateen, I've learned that I can control mine. "One Day at a Time" reminds me to stay in the present, rather than living in the past or the future. Keeping my thoughts in the past or the future does not allow me to enjoy the time that I have now, in the present. These simple lessons help me let go of others' problems and focus on my growth.

When we formed our group, we decided to open our meeting to ages seven through eighteen. Most of the time, our group's members are nine through fifteen, but even when there are seven-year-olds in a meeting, they have experience, strength, and hope to share. While in our Area the Alateen meetings remain small, it is my hope that our meetings will grow as families remember that alcoholism really is

a family disease, and all children can benefit from having a safe space to work through their experiences together.

By Alicia, The Forum, November 2024

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



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,

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 - 7PM **Where** ON LINE

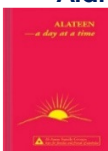
WhatsApp 084 502 2542 for login details.
Age group: 12 to 17 year olds
Al-Anon helpline 086 125 2666
Visit www.alanon.org.za for more information.

LITERATURE NEWS

Conference Approved Literature (CAL)
Cape Area Literature
Colleen C. & Lauren S.

Visit the literature desk at upcoming events or the office to view specials and other literature available.

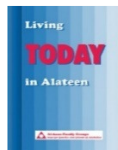
Alateen literature available



Alateen—a day at a time (B-10)
Daily help for teens. Positive sharings from Alateen members around the world. Indexed. 384 pages.

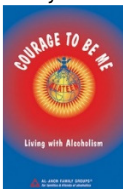
Living Today in Alateen (B-26)

Alateen's second daily reader shows how members practice the programme right now, today. Indexed. 378 pages.



Courage to Be Me—Living with Alcoholism (B-23)

Alateen's most comprehensive book, filled with shared recovery from Alateen members. Includes workshops for group discussions. Indexed, softcover. 326 pages.



PUBLIC OUTREACH

Cape Area Public Outreach

Janice C. & Anita P.

MAY – MEDIA: RADIO, TV & PRESS

The target for this month is **all forms of media – print, radio, television and cinema**. Take the opportunity to call local radio stations and tell them about the Al-Anon work that is being done in your community. Media kits are available from the Area office. Arrange for an interview on a TV chat show, offer to provide articles for press or magazines or local newspapers.

Public outreach is each member's responsibility. Create an awareness that there is help for those affected by someone else's drinking.

Contact the Public Outreach Coordinator or the Area office to find out about public outreach literature.

WhatsApp: 066 158 0234

Area email: alanonct@iafrica.com

Website: www.alanon.org.za



Reflections from the WSO Archivist on 75 Years of Al-Anon History

As Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. prepares to commemorate 75 years of help and hope in 2026, I reflect on the fellowship's long, remarkable journey and the role of the WSO Archives ([Archives - Al-Anon Family Groups](#)) in preserving its story.

The Archives began in New York City as a modest effort to safeguard early correspondence, meeting minutes, and literature. What started in a few filing cabinets has grown into a rich historical collection documenting Al-Anon's evolution from its founding in 1951 to its global presence today. These records capture the voices of pioneers, the growth of groups, the publication of recovery literature, and the development of Alateen in 1957 – each milestone reflecting courage and unity.

Over time, the Archives have transformed from paper files to a digital repository, making photographs, audio recordings, newsletters, and personal stories accessible worldwide. This work ensures that members, researchers, and the public can connect with the fellowship's legacy through exhibits, publications, and curated resources.

Serving as Archivist has been one of the most meaningful experiences of my service journey. Each letter and photograph tells a story, not just of individuals, but of a collective effort to bring hope to families affected by alcoholism. Handwritten correspondence from early members speaks of isolation and the longing for understanding, reminding me that even the smallest act of service can ripple outward and change lives.

By Jennifer U., Archivist & Conference Specialist, The Forum, March 2026

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

SELF-WORTH

When I first came to Al-Anon, I saw life as a race in being the best, smartest, prettiest, most dedicated person in my circle. Everything was a competition and failure was my personal enemy; feeling unworthy was my biggest fear. I realised that I was still the little girl trying to get her daddy's attention, if I was just good enough, he would love me. Through Al-Anon, I learnt that personal failure is not always down to 'me not being good enough', sometimes it's because my Higher Power has something better waiting for me. I also learnt that my self-worth doesn't have to be measured by approval from others and that I can stop seeking my dad's love. I know I am very loved by many people and just because they don't show it, it doesn't mean I am unloved.

I learnt that I can choose to detach from the little girl I regressed to whenever I met my father; I can be an adult around him with personal boundaries and love for him, and that it is acceptable to detach emotionally if my emotions are overwhelming me. I learnt to pause and consult my Higher Power in moments of emotional stress. Just for today, I will not seek others' approval, and I will love myself just how my Higher Power has shown me love.

By Jenny, Al-Anon Today, Summer 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.

Just for Today
The slogan "Just for Today" tells us that things are more manageable when we deal with and live in the present. Things that seem way too difficult to manage long term may seem more manageable if we deal with them just for today. We can move forward in small steps rather than be overwhelmed by trying to change everything at one time.

"Just for today I will have a programme. I may not follow it exactly, but I will have it. I will save myself from two pests: hurry and indecision."
Just for Today M-10 pamphlet

I want to wear something new but not shoes or a shirt, I want to put on some reckless joy that is MUCH too big for me and so brightly coloured that I become unrecognizable.
JK Kennedy

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.

AFG CAPE AREA 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

WHERE DO I BUY CAL (CONFERENCE APPROVED LITERATURE)?

Order your literature by visiting the office, email 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, 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

SAVE THE DATE

MEETINGS

*Area Assembly Saturday, 16 May 2026 at 9.30am (electronic via Zoom).

*Service Committee Saturday, 20 June 2026 at 9.30am (in person).

RALLIES/CONVENTIONS

*Al-Anon Birthday, Gratitude Envelope Parade, Family Fun Day **Theme: Progress Not Perfection**

Date: Saturday, 9 May 2026

More information to follow.

Venue: Lions Club Hall, Dorrey Street, Protea Heights, Brackenfell

*Regional Service Seminar (RSS)

Theme: Moving forward in unity

Date: Saturday, 29 August 2026

Venue: Schoenstatt Retreat and Conference Centre, Constantia

Registration fee: R300 includes lunch.

🔒 Limited spaces available - Book your seat by contacting the office: 0215954517, WhatsApp 0661580234, Email alanonct@iafrica.com. More information to follow. 📧

*AA West Coast Spring Rally (with Al-Anon & Alateen Participation)

Theme: A Design for Living

Date: 25 to 27 September 2026

Venue: Weskus School of Skills, Saldanha Road, Saldanha

See flyer on page 1 for more information.

FUNDRAISERS / GROUP NEWS

Is your group celebrating a special occasion, holding a combined meeting, arranging a fundraiser? Advertise here. Email details to alanonct@iafrica.com or WhatsApp to 066 158 0234. Visit <https://www.alanon.org.za/meetings/> for meeting details.

*AA Rondebosch Group celebrating its 78th At-Home with AA and Al-Anon speakers on 29th April 2026 at 7.30pm at St Michaels Catholic Church, Rouwkoop Road, Rondebosch.

NEXT ISSUE

ISSUE 05 OF 2026

Send Your Shares

Submissions due by 17 May 2026

For the next issue the topics are

- The slogan for May is "**Progress, Not Perfection**" acknowledges that growth is a process and mistakes are part of it. What has been your experience with this slogan? How do you use this slogan in your recovery? How has this slogan helped you accept that recovery is a journey and not a destination?

"...I look only for progress, not perfection. Increasingly, I see participation and service not as ways of perfecting my abilities or my knowledge, but as ways of learning to accept my imperfect performance..."

From When I Got Busy, I Got Better P-78, page 29

- 36 Principles – How has Step 5 Tradition 5 or Concept 5 helped in your recovery process?

You can share your thoughts by emailing alanonct@iafrica.com or sending a WhatsApp message to 0823422102.

Send your suggestions to 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. "If you have received help, and no doubt have, why not give to further the cause for the peace and serenity of future members." —Anne B., Al-Anon Cofounder.

Bank: ABSA, 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/uLjixXn>

