



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/>

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. 09 OF 2026 (SEPTEMBER)

Page 1	What's on in the Area	Regional Service Seminar 2026
Page 2	Trust leads to freedom	
Page 3	Ten months in Al-Anon	Na die aarde onder my voete weggesak het
Page 4	What I learnt growing up around alcoholism	Alateen – What is Alateen?
Page 5	Special friends	Concept Nine – Good service leadership
Page 6	Of my understanding	Concept Nine and the principle of flexibility
Page 7	Public Outreach	Anonymous members, visible programme
Page 8	Notice Board	Declaration/Serenity Prayer

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

WEST COAST Spring Rally
THEME: A DESIGN FOR LIVING
25TH TO 27TH SEPTEMBER

WEEKEND ACCOMMODATION & REGISTRATION **R1150**
DAY VISITORS **R130**

BRING OWN
BEDDING
EATING UTENSILS
TORCH/LIGHT

VENUE: Weskus School of Skills
LOCATION: Saldanha Rd, Saldanha, 7395, Western Cape, South Africa

PAYMENT BY EFT
West Coast Spring Rally
TND
Acc no: 63152900884
Card Facilities Available

Contacts:
Sussie: 073 521 6545
Marlene: 072 267 9147

AL-ANON AND ALATEEN PARTICIPATION!

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS Western Cape
80th
MINI-CONVENTION RALLY
CELEBRATING 80 Years of Gratitude

Saturday 3rd October 2026
Sea Point Civic Hall, Cape Town

First meeting is an open meeting.
Registration from 08h00.
Registration fee - R10.

09:30 – 11:00 | Meeting 1: 80 Years of Gratitude
11:30 – 13:00 | Meeting 2: 80 Years of Gratitude
13:45 – 15:15 | Meeting 3: 80 Years of Gratitude

Tuckshop with food on sale!
Competition Prizes to be won!

With Al-Anon Participation

ACCEPTANCE IS THE ANSWER
WESTERN CAPE SUMMER RALLY
27 - 29 NOVEMBER 2026
MELKBOS CULTURAL CENTRE

R1150 (ACCOMMODATION & MEALS)
DAY VISITORS
1 DAY - R80
2 DAYS - R120
3 DAYS - R150

CONTACT Dawid 076 443 4072 or Debra 082 776 2344

WCAA with Alanon Participation

REGIONAL SERVICE SEMINAR 2026
Moving Forward, in Unity
Workshop 3
Many Hands, One Purpose

Regional Service Seminar 2026

This year's Regional Service Seminar (RSS) was held on Saturday, 29 August 2026, at the Schoenstatt Retreat and Conference Centre. The Policy and Planning team, who are responsible for this event, did a

phenomenal job of organising the workshops, choosing a welcoming venue, and creating a memorable day for everyone who attended.

Theme: Moving Forward, In Unity

The workshops centred on this theme and highlighted the importance of service in our recovery journey. We hope everyone who attended the RSS left feeling encouraged, renewed, and ready to become involved in service—whether in their group, their Area, or wherever they are able to give back.

With Appreciation

Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed in any way to a meaningful day filled with the presence of a Higher Power. Your service was deeply appreciated.

Special thanks to everyone who offered service, including Andre, Glenda, and Sabrina for the wonderful workshops.

- Thank you for the strong literature sales, which exceeded expectations.

- Thank you for supporting the lucky-draw ticket sales and for the many generous prizes donated and won.
- Thank you for the enjoyable lunch and the delicious treats shared throughout the day. As always, our Al-Anon members gave in abundance.

Workshops

Workshops 1 and 2 have been circulated within the Area. Groups are welcome to use them as meeting topics, workshops, or discussion material.

Workshop 3, titled Many Hands, One Purpose, was interactive and creative. Each member made an individual piece of art; each piece was beautiful on its own, but when they were brought together, the result was especially powerful. In much the same way, service can be meaningful when done individually but working together as a team is far more fulfilling and allows us to achieve much more and grow in our recovery.

By Fatima D, Cape Area, August 2026

TRUST LEADS TO FREEDOM

When I first thought about the topic of trust, the word that kept coming to mind was freedom.

For me, freedom means being able to be my true self. It means being able to live my life without constantly apologising for who I am, without continually looking outside myself for validation, and without trying to control everything and everyone around me. It means living my life the way I believe my Higher Power wants me to live it.

That doesn't mean I always know what that looks like. I still need guidance and direction from my Higher Power. Trust has become less about knowing exactly what is going to happen and more about believing that, whatever happens, I will be okay even when I don't know.

Sixteen years ago, my son was killed in a motor vehicle accident. I was devastated. For ten of those sixteen years, I didn't know how to live my life without my son being part of it—and I didn't want to carry on living. I lived only to see my daughter through high school and tertiary education, believing that once she was settled, I would be done with living.

When I became aware that my adult daughter had a problem with alcohol, that was equally devastating. Once again, I didn't know how to live my life with active drinking in it. I asked the God of my understanding, "What's the point of living?" The response I received was simple: I have my own life to live.

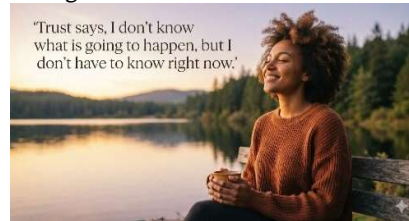
Looking back, I can see how important that message was. I had spent much of my life living vicariously through other people. I knew how to control and fix. I thought I needed to know what was going to happen in order to feel safe. I wanted the how, the when, the why and, preferably, the outcome. When I didn't know, my space was filled with fear.

Fear influenced most of my decisions. I would anticipate, evaluate, plan, control, fix and worry, believing that if I could just think more or understand enough, I could make things safe. Looking back, I can see how exhausting that was and how much of my life was shaped by fear.

When I came into Al-Anon, I didn't necessarily realise that what I was looking for was freedom. I thought I was looking for relief from my circumstances, and for people with whom I could connect and socialise. But recovery began teaching me that relief and freedom come from letting go of things that were never mine to control or fix in the first place.

Today, trust means letting go of my need to know and allowing myself to believe that, with the help of my Higher Power, I can handle whatever comes my way. Trust doesn't mean that I know everything will turn out the way I want. It doesn't mean that I will never experience disappointment, uncertainty, challenges or fear. It means I don't have to allow those things to run my life. Trust says, "I don't know what is going to happen, but I don't have to know right now."

This is where "One Day at a Time" has become very real for me. I don't have to trust the next ten years, the next five years or even the next ten minutes. I can trust myself with this moment, right here and right now.



The first three Steps have also taught me a great deal about trust. Step One asks me to admit that I am powerless over alcohol and that my life had become unmanageable. For me, there is freedom in admitting that I'm not in charge of everything. That hasn't always been easy. Part of me believed that if I tried harder, thought harder, understood more, controlled more or fixed more, I could make things different. Step One helped me see that this wasn't working.

Step Two asks me to come to believe that a Power greater than myself could restore me to sanity. That's where trust begins to enter the picture. I don't need to understand exactly how my Higher Power works. I can simply become willing to believe that there is a Power greater than myself and that I don't have to do this alone.

Step Three asks me to make a decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand God. For me, that's where trust becomes a living practice. Surrender is not something I do once. It is something I practise whenever a need arises, as revealed to me by my Higher Power.

One of the biggest differences between the newcomer I was and the person I am today is that I am getting to know myself.

In A Little Time for Myself (B-34), page 3, there is a section about getting to know myself, taking care of myself and trusting myself as a way of forming an intimate relationship with myself. That

speaks deeply to me because I don't think I had much of a relationship with myself before recovery.

I knew what other people thought, what they needed and what I thought I should do. I wasn't always connected to what I felt, what I needed or what was true for me.

Recovery is helping me learn to trust myself. Not because everything I think or feel must automatically be right, but because I am learning to listen to myself. I am learning to pause and listen to my feelings instead of immediately dismissing them. I am learning that what I feel is valid. And trusting what I feel affirms something very important: my life is valid and I matter.

Today, I show trust in myself by attending meetings and listening. When I hear something that speaks to me, I try to apply it to my life. Sometimes I get it right and sometimes I don't—and that's okay.

When I am afraid or unsure, I no longer have to isolate or figure everything out by myself. A Little Time for Myself (B-34), page 35, reminds me that I can reach out for the loving care of my Higher Power, my sponsor and those I trust in Al-Anon.

Trust doesn't mean I never feel fear. It means I know where to turn when I do.

Recovery hasn't made the fear disappear, but it has changed what I do with fear.

I am also learning to trust the process. Guidance from my Higher Power doesn't always come as a dramatic answer. Sometimes it comes through a meeting, something someone says, a feeling of peace, or simply knowing that I need to wait. Sometimes the guidance is, "Don't do anything right now." That has been a big lesson for me.

I don't have to react immediately. I can wait before taking action. I can trust the timing even when the timing is not in my control. My timing and my Higher Power's timing are not necessarily the same. I may want an answer today, while my Higher Power may be asking me to wait. I may want to know what happens next, while I am simply being asked to take care of today.



This is where "Let Go and Let God" has become more than just a slogan. Letting go doesn't mean that I don't care or that I become passive. It means recognising the difference between what

is mine and what is not mine. I can make my choices, take care of myself, speak honestly and set healthy boundaries. I don't have to manage someone else's path.

That connects deeply with "Live and Let Live". Other people have their own paths to walk. They may make choices I don't understand, and they may have lessons of their own to learn. I don't have to interfere. Trust allows me to bring my focus back to myself.

I have learned that trust can bring peace even when I don't have the answers. I used to think peace would come when I finally had certainty. Today I understand that peace can come before certainty.

I can be peaceful while something is unresolved, even when there is chaos around me. I can embrace uncertainty without immediately trying to eliminate it. Uncertainty may not be comfortable, but I don't have to turn discomfort into an emergency.

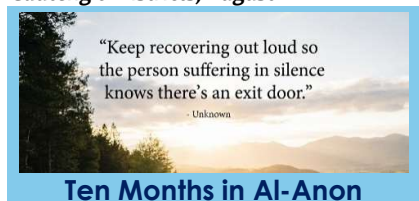
Trust has also taught me to honour myself. I can listen to the wisdom other people share without automatically handing my power over to them. I can listen, consider, pray and then decide what is true for me. I don't need external approval in the same way I once did. I am learning to believe in myself.

When I think about how different I am from the newcomer I once was, I realise that the greatest change is this: I am learning to have a relationship with myself. I am learning who I am, how to care for myself and how to trust myself.

I am still a work in progress. I have the Steps, the slogans, meetings, my sponsor and the people in Al-Anon I can reach out to. And, most importantly, I have my Higher Power.

For me, trust leads to freedom because it allows me to stop living from fear and start living from faith. I don't need to know the whole path ahead. I just need enough trust to take the next step.

By Mathoto S., Thursday Morning Group, Gauteng & Districts, August 2026



I joined Al-Anon in October 2025. The Hanover Park Al-Anon group was reopening, and I was asked to attend to help fill the seats. I did not know what to expect. I had heard of Al-Anon, but I did not really know what it was all about.

At my first meeting, I was very confused because I never thought that I had any part to play in the mess my life had become. In my mind, everything lay at my ex-husband's door, as he was the alcoholic in my life. However, by listening to the ladies in the meeting and reading from the daily readers, I realized that I was in the right place. Their stories were so much like mine, and we shared a deeply rooted trauma.

I thought I was in total control of my life and that I was happy enough. But through attending meetings, I realized that I carried so much anger and resentment towards my ex-husband that my life was by no means under control. My every waking thought was about him and the revenge I wanted to take. Who can truly live like that?

I started to realize that my life was completely unmanageable, even though it appeared functional from the outside. Whenever thoughts of anger surfaced, I began saying the Serenity Prayer. It was as if a calmness came over me each time I said those words.

Through attending meetings and reading the daily readers, I slowly began my recovery journey. I became the Group Representative for Hanover Park and started attending Area Assemblies. Today, I serve on the Service Committee as the Alternate Literature Coordinator. My first service opportunity was at the Regional Service Seminar (RSS) this year, and although I was a bit nervous, I thoroughly enjoyed it.

In Al-Anon, I learned that I never have to be alone again. I have met so many amazing people who understand what I have been through. With every meeting, rally, and mini-convention, I take away something valuable. Even though fearful thoughts and anxieties still arise, I now have somewhere to go and people to turn to for support.

I was very sceptical about the Higher Power concept at first, but through experiencing the changes Al-Anon has brought into my life, I have learned to place my trust in my Higher Power. "Let go and let God" is such a powerful slogan, and since adopting it in my life, things have become much easier. Whenever anxiety starts to take over, I remind myself to Let Go and Let God, and suddenly the weight on my shoulders feels a little lighter. My Higher Power works in mysterious ways, and I see evidence of that every day.

Al-Anon is a lifelong programme, and I am excited to continue on this recovery journey and see where it takes me. If, within just ten months, I already feel that I am firmly on the path of recovery, I cannot

wait to see what growth, healing, and serenity the future holds. I am grateful for the fellowship, the support, the lessons, and the hope that Al-Anon has given me. For that, I will always be thankful.

By Mathilda S., Cape Area, September 2026



Toe ek by my eerste Al-Anon-vergadering instap, het ek desperaat en gebroke gevoel. Ek het gehoop om leiding of insig te kry en het regtig die gerusstelling nodig gehad dat ek nie besig was om mal te word nie. Ek was so verstremmel met my volwasse seun en sy jong gesin dat, toe alles rondom sy siekte in duie stort en hy sy huwelik en sy baba-seuntjie verlaat, het dit vir my gevoel het asof die aarde onder my voete padgegee het. Ek kon niks verstaan nie en wou desperaat die situasie help "regmaak".

Ek het geweet dat slegs iemand wat iets soortgelyks as wat ek ervaar het, deurgegaan het, my kon help om te verstaan en te aanvaar wat met my en met die mense vir wie ek lief is, gebeur het. Ek is by daardie eerste vergadering so hartlik verwelkom dat ek onmiddellik gevoel het dat ek behoort.

Omdat ek 'n nuweling was, het die lede die vergadering 'n Stap Een-vergadering gemaak en elkeen het vertel wat hulle na Al-Anon gebring het en hoe lank hulle al die vergaderings bygewoon het. Ek was verbaas om te hoor dat sommige mense al dekades lank Al-Anon bywoon. Een heer het vertel dat hy al 30 jaar lank vergaderings bywoon en dat die vergaderings hom gehelp het om geluk en tevredenheid in sy lewe te vind, selfs al het sy eggenoot steeds aktief gedrink.

Toe ek vertel van my eie pyn rondom my seun se siekte, is daar aan my gesê: Ek het dit nie veroorsaak nie, ek kan dit nie beheer nie, en ek kan dit beslis nie genees nie.

Aan die einde van die vergadering het die Voorsitter na my gekyk en die hele Voorgestelde Afsluiting uit haar geheue opgesê. Hierdie woorde het veral by my situasie gepas:

"'n Paar spesiale woorde aan dié van julle wat nog nie lank saam met ons is nie: Wat ook al julle probleme is, daar is mense onder ons wat dit ook al ervaar het. As julle probeer om 'n oop gemoed te behou, sal julle hulp vind. Julle sal besef dat daar geen situasie is wat so moeilik is dat dit nie

verbeter kan word nie, en geen ongelukkigheid wat so groot is dat dit nie verlig kan word nie.”

Dit was 'n ongelooflike gevoel.

Ná die vergadering het die lede 'n paar Al-Anon leesboeke aan my voorgestel, en ek het twee daaglikse leesboeke gekoop wat ek onmiddellik begin gebruik het. Ek het 'n paar ander vergaderings in my omgewing bygewoon en uiteindelik een gekies wat die beste by my program en skedule gepas het as my tuisgroep.

In Al-Anon voel ek werklik asof ek “tuisgekom” het.

Deur Mary S., Indiana, Die Forum, Augustus 2023

Herdruk met toestemming van Die Forum, Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., Virginia Beach, Virginia, USA.

Translated by Margie D., Cape Area, September 2026



Growing up around an alcoholic, I learnt how to control people. When my father was drunk and becoming aggressive, I would beg him to lie down with me by pretending to need to sleep, once he was horizontal, he'd fall into a deep sleep and we would all be safe. This controlling behaviour became second nature and soon it was all I knew. Not knowing how to have healthy relationships without being controlling has cost my friendships and ultimately, my marriage dearly. The Slogan, “Easy Does It” reminds me that it's not my place to force solutions, it reminds me that doing nothing can be far more productive than random actions to make me feel like I'm doing something.

I learnt that life was precarious: I never knew what the next minute might bring. “Keep It Simple” reminds me that I can't control every possible outcome, and that I can take things at face value rather than trying to figure out all the other things that may or may not happen.

I learnt to only depend on myself; I never knew who else would have my back: even as an adult, when I started to depend on others, it was often not a healthy relationship. The suggested closing to our meetings helps me to feel able to unlearn the isolation that I have felt for so long, that you guys are there for me, and it's ok to share at meetings.

I learnt to keep my own counsel, that people were not dependable. Since coming to Al-Anon I have learnt that it's ok to share how I actually feel. “Let It Begin With Me” reminds me that it's ok to stop focusing on others and that it's healthy to keep the focus on me.

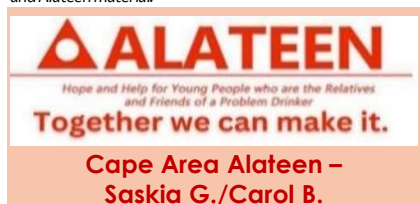
I learnt that people are not to be trusted. At meetings I am learning to trust other people, I don't have to explain myself because people in Al-Anon already understand. The Slogan, “How Important Is It?” helps me to gain perspective. It helps me to see that I am free to determine for myself what is of value and consequence to me. When I ask myself this, I get answers to the many questions that I previously worried unnecessarily about.

I learnt that secrets are not safe: when we kept secrets, we were not able to get support and help. Until we let them out into the light, they keep us trapped. (Still working on that one.)

I recently started psychotherapy, it's an amazing experience to have another person, who is there just for me, and who actually wants to hear me. Being able to hear them, without feeling attacked or threatened is both liberating and terrifying in equal parts. “Keep An Open Mind” has helped me to access this support and open myself up to turning my life over to my Higher Power. Finally, I am starting to let go of my past and allowing my Higher Power to take me wherever they think I need to be.

By Amanda, Al-Anon Today, Summer 2026

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.



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.

It 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 through the use of 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.

Sponsorship

Alateen Group Sponsors

Every Alateen group needs two active, adult members of Al-Anon, accredited by their local Area as Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) to serve as sponsors. The sponsors are an active part of the group, guiding and sharing knowledge of the Twelve Steps and Traditions.

Alateen Personal Sponsors

Just as Al-Anon members sponsor each other, Alateens sponsor each other. Alateen personal sponsors are fellow teenagers and peers who can discuss personal problems or questions with those individual Alateen members they sponsor. This sponsorship takes place outside of the Al-Anon/Alateen meetings. Therefore, any form of supervision for the sponsors when working one on one with their peers is a family responsibility because it is outside of Al-Anon's realm of influence.

Meetings:

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). For details about Alateen meetings, contact the Area office or the Alateen Coordinator.

Contact details

- Email: alanonct@iafrica.com
 - Tel: 021 595 4517
 - WhatsApp: 066 158 0234
 - Website: <https://www.alanon.org.za/alateen/>
- Visit the Alateen page to read members' stories and learn how meetings have helped them. Although you cannot stop someone else from drinking, you can find support for yourself in an Alateen meeting.
- Source: Al-Anon Family Groups South Africa website.**

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

ALATEEN

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.



When my dad started drinking six months after he had stopped, I blamed myself because I had not been with him to prevent it. Maybe I was being punished or something, I thought. I was constantly depressed, worried and nervous. I followed my dad everywhere he went, peeped through windows, checked the bottles to see how much he had drunk, just because I thought that he might injure himself.

My boyfriend started talking about Alateen. He wanted me to go to see if that might help. I took all my anger out on him. He was never happy because I was always sad. So, thinking I owed it to him to go to just one meeting, I went, knowing that I would never have gone otherwise. I enjoyed the meeting and continued to go. It was a chance to release my emotions that I felt and more than that, I was able to meet a group of friends. (Special friends because of the alcoholic we all had in common.)

My dad still drinks and doesn't believe that he is an alcoholic. I love him dearly and I forgive him because it is a disease and not something he does for the fun of it. I believe in him and I hope that one day he will give up drinking but until then I can love him and feel proud of him because even though he is an alcoholic, he's the best daddy on this earth.

By Tracey, South Africa, Unitas, March/April 1989

Together We Can Make It!

Thank you so much for great meeting. It was very heartfelt. Thank you

for helping my daughter and all the teenagers in the programme.

I want to share part of our story of how my drinking affects my daughter but because it was her platform she is not close to sharing. We ended up in hospital for twelve days in August 2024 because of my addiction. I came out and still carried on until I got a job on 16 September 2024. I became sober on 17 September 2024 and remain sober until this day. I try to be a present mom for my 20-year-old son who is in matric this year and my teenage daughter. I see how they grow daily. Thank you so so much. I can't stop crying, because of a Higher Power, we can make it as a team.

By Anonymous Parent of an Alateen Member, South Africa, August 2026

Concept Nine – Good Service Leadership

“Good personal leadership at all service levels is a necessity. In the field of world service, the Board of Trustees assumes the primary leadership.”

Service

Concept Nine reminds me that good leadership plans carefully and remains accountable. It supports continuity and effectiveness.

- Encourages planning and foresight
- Builds stability
- Supports rotation
- Promotes responsibility

Home

At home, Concept Nine helps me plan responsibly and consider long-term effects. It builds security and trust.

- Encourages thoughtful decisions
- Builds consistency
- Reduces chaos
- Supports stability

Community

In the community, Concept Nine supports sustainable and responsible leadership. It helps create long-term solutions.

- Encourages planning
- Builds reliability
- Supports continuity
- Promotes trust

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

Concept Nine and the Principle of Flexibility

Concept Nine states: “Good personal leadership at all service levels is a necessity. In the field of world service, the Board of Trustees assumes the primary leadership.” My first thought is, “What does this have to do with me?” In order for me to wrap my head around this, I need to put my head directly into

Al-Anon service and what it means to put the focus on Al-Anon.

I have come to believe that the Al-Anon programme is a way of life for me. As a result, I have come to admit that I am powerless over people, places, and things. I am not in charge. I have a Higher Power that knows the best plan for me, and I need to stay out of the way in order to reap the rewards of that plan. I do not have to question the plan or force a solution to the plan. I can trust the process.

Many times, the process requires that I listen to others and, in the spirit of unity, think about what is best for the group and not just me. This idea has helped me not just in Al-Anon, but at home with my family and in my employment over the years. Just because I may feel that I must come up with a solution to a particular issue, does not mean I bulldoze my way through to the other side. I need to take other ideas into consideration—and really consider them in the spirit that they are offered.

What I find is that this comes easier when it pertains to Al-Anon service but not as easy when it comes to situations involving family or work. I have come to accept that it is okay to take the risk to practice this in all of my affairs. I am further reminded that in my home I am not the self-appointed Chairperson of the Board! There is a core unit of people that makes decisions. That unit involves more than just “the great” me! The opinion of that body matters, and I have the duty and responsibility to listen to it with the same respect as when it listens to me. When I approach situations from this perspective, I am able to be flexible with sharing the decision-making process. Most times, because of Al-Anon, the solution that I had in my head is nowhere near where I end up!

By Sue P., Associate Director—Group Services, The Forum, January 2021

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



An Agnostic's Approach to Higher Power

In the Summer edition of Al-Anon Today you asked for shares from atheists on how they deal with the Twelve Steps.

I would not say I am an atheist, but I am agnostic by which I mean that I do

not know whether there is a Higher Power or not. In my early days as a member of this great Fellowship, I used to worry about this problem, but as time went on, I began to ask myself, “Does this exclude me from being a member?” I have come to my own conclusion after much thought.

I have tried to apply my own way of working the Steps. I came to the conclusion that I could practise all on my own except Step Five. I did not just read them, I thought hard about them too.

I shared my thoughts on Step Five with my Higher Power, with other members, and even with a man of the Church. He told me that to his mind, one’s behaviour and love of one’s fellow men and women was what was really important.

Having now reached a very old age, I am now content that, if there is a Higher Power, I have tried to behave in a manner which I feel would be acceptable to him/her. I have never felt that my own agnostic feelings have excluded me from membership of our wonderful Fellowship. The love and kindness which has been given to me over many years in the Fellowship is quite wonderful, and my appreciation of it is genuine.

By Alasdair, Al-Anon Today, September 2019
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.

Of My Understanding

I grew up a cynical atheist in an alcoholic home, baffled by the bible stories I was taught at school, above all, angry: if I could not trust the people around me, how could I possibly put any faith in something I could not see?

My rock bottom came years after the death of my alcoholic mother. When the penny finally dropped about the nature of her disease and my lingering depression I could not keep it to myself any longer. My GP told me about Al-Anon. I am surprised I did not walk out of my first meeting when I saw the word God written on the wall. The gift of desperation is wonderful for opening my mind. I stayed and listened, because I did not have any answers and I knew things had to change.

That was twenty years ago, and I have heard a wide variety of people’s shares about what constitutes their Higher Power since I began my own meandering spiritual journey. No-one told me at school that I was allowed to construct a

Higher Power that resonated with me, rather than tradition or other people’s interpretations.

What did I come to believe? It is not about doctrine and dogma: it is all very practical for me. What attitudes and beliefs can make me a happier, less anxious and depressed person? How can I become someone who looks forward to bumping into people in the street, rather than always looking over my shoulder and avoiding people? How can I get the courage to take healthy risks and live authentically, shedding my chameleon skin?

Sometimes my Higher Power is a feeling in my gut, sometimes it is in the air when I physically hand something over. Sometimes I blissfully go with the flow, sometimes I get scared of disobeying, as if my Higher Power was the punishing one I read about as a child. Sometimes it keeps my feet on the ground, reminding me of reality or giving me a better idea. My Higher Power is a crucial tool in my recovery, and when my cynical side starts to say I am being daft I remind myself that life is infinitely better this way, daft or not. “Keep an open mind!”

By Gary, Nottingham, Al-Anon Today, September 2019

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.

Slogans

I don’t know if I would have continued in my Al-Anon journey without them—helping me to put the program in little bite-size chunks—before I gained a better perspective and mind space to handle the many other suggestions and tools of the program.

‘How Important Is It?’ was the slogan that worked the best initially and is still one of my primary go-tos. I believed everything was important and my responsibility to fix. My thoughts had become so distorted due to not understanding the nature of the disease of alcoholism on the alcoholic, but also myself and my relationships with those around me.

That meant having to acknowledge that I had the disease of ‘watching’ and wanting to control things or assert my opinion on things. Things that were not only out of my control, but generally not my business and usually not that important.

I had so many distorted expectations of myself and everyone, including my young

children, to control behaviour so the alcoholic might drink less or avoid a trigger for an outburst of discontent.

I discovered that it was me and not the alcoholic who had more of these outbursts. Taking a few moments to stop and think (another slogan ‘Think, Think, Think’) and evaluate my thoughts and potential actions in the light of ‘How Important Is It?’, quickly started to bring me the gift of moments of clarity and calm, which I began to associate with the concept of serenity.

Being less reactive also reduced the negative reactions reflected back to me by my impulsivity and inappropriate remarks or actions.

I was a great door slammer and a detacher with anger, rather than detaching with love. Such behaviour is not good for a healthy relationship with myself and with others.

I give thanks to the Al-Anon founders for incorporating the slogans into the program, particularly as we celebrate the 75th year of Al-Anon, and I appreciate all the literature and shares of members that continue to explore these legacies.

By Annette L., Victorian Southern Area, Austra-Link, September 2026

This is the property of Al-Anon Family Groups in 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 material.

LITERATURE NEWS Conference Approved Literature (CAL) Cape Area Literature Colleen C., Lauren S., & Mathilda S

Browse available literature at the literature desk during upcoming events or at the office. The next events are the West Coast Spring Rally in Saldanha from 24 to 27 September 2026 and the Mini- Con on 3 October 2026 at Sea Point Civic.

The screenshot displays the 'Al-Anon Literature' website, which lists various books and workbooks available for members. The page is organized into sections: 'DAILY READERS', 'WORKBOOKS - INVENTORY', and 'WORKBOOKS - RECOVERY'. Each section contains several book covers with brief descriptions and page counts. For example, under 'DAILY READERS', there are books like 'One Day at a Time in Al-Anon (B-6)', 'Courage to Change (B-16)', 'Hope for Today (B-27)', and 'A Little Time for Myself (B-34)'. Under 'WORKBOOKS - INVENTORY', there are 'Alateen's 4th Step Inventory (P-64)' and 'Blueprint for Progress (P-91)'. Under 'WORKBOOKS - RECOVERY', there are 'Reaching for Personal Freedom (P-92)' and 'Paths to Recovery Workbook (P-93)'. The website also mentions 'Daily readers and workbooks' and provides a link to 'Browse available literature at the literature desk during upcoming events or at the office'.

Al-Anon Family Groups
Help and hope for families and friends of alcoholics

every Friday on Zoom.

Join the Cape CAL Book Club

SA Time: 7pm
UK Time: 6pm

We're working on
Opening Our Hearts and Transforming Our Losses (B-29)

Tr. Tr. Transforming Our Losses

Contact the office at alanonct@iafrica.com or WhatsApp 066 158 0234 to purchase your copy.

Login in details:
Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/844555740907>
pwd=jwao7173VxskPwXmTSU2UzL8eedK.1

Meeting ID: 844 5557 4090 | Passcode: 946320

Al-Anon Family Groups
Help and hope for families and friends of alcoholics

PUBLIC OUTREACH EVENT

Hope & Recovery:
AA, Al-Anon and Alateen Speakers

Join us for a day of sharing, community, and support.

Hear powerful personal experiences from Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Al-Anon, and Alateen speakers who will share their journeys of recovery and hope.

EVENT DETAILS

Date: Saturday, 31 October 2026
Time: 12 PM to 2 PM
Venue: All Saints Anglican Church Hall
Address: Wesley Street, Robertson

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Inspiring Speakers:** Hear heartfelt personal stories of recovery and practical insights on supporting loved ones.
- Community Connection:** Connect with others working similar paths in a completely safe, anonymous, and welcoming space.
- Refreshments:** Complimentary tea and coffee will be on tap throughout the day.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Whether you are seeking help for your own recovery, worried about a loved one's drinking, or simply want to learn more about how these fellows work, please join us.

Admission: FREE (No registration required)

CONTACT INFORMATION

For any questions, directions, or additional info, please reach out to the Al-Anon Cape Area Office.

Contact Person: Annalisa
Telephone: 021 595 4517
WhatsApp: 066 158 0234
Email: alanonct@iafrica.com
Website: Visit Al-Anon South Africa: <https://www.alanon.org.za/> or AA South Africa: <https://aaouthafrica.org/>

For more guidance, see Why Anonymity in Al-Anon? (P-33), Attracting and Cooperating (S-40) <https://al-anon.org/pdf/S40.pdf>, and the "Anonymity" section of the "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies" in the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27) <https://al-anon.org/for-members/members-resources/manuals-and-guidelines/service-manual/>.

Source: Inside Al-Anon Family Groups, The Forum, September 2026

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

PUBLIC OUTREACH Cape Area Public Outreach Janice C. & Anita P.

October – Police, Traffic, The Law

In October, the Public Outreach team is encouraged to connect with the SAPS, traffic departments, and other legal services.

The aim is to make Al-Anon more visible in places where people seek support, guidance, or legal assistance.

Place literature at local SAPS offices, community policing forums, and courts. You may also contact the traffic department to request permission to join traffic stops and offer pamphlets to drivers.

Report your outreach: Please share where literature was placed and who was contacted, so these efforts can be included in the monthly Public Outreach report.

Thank you for being part of Public Outreach and for helping to carry Al-Anon's message of help and hope. Public outreach is every member's responsibility, and together we can help more people discover that support is available for anyone affected by someone else's drinking.

Need literature? Contact the Public Outreach Coordinator or the Area office for information about available Public Outreach literature.

Contact details

- Email: alanonct@iafrica.com
- Tel: 021 595 4517
- WhatsApp: 066 158 0234
- Website: <https://www.alanon.org.za/>

Anonymous Members, Visible Programme

One of the first things we learn in Al-Anon/Alateen is that members are anonymous—but the program is not. If Al-Anon Family Groups were anonymous, how would newcomers ever find us?

Because the program is not anonymous, Al-Anon can have a public name, website, meeting listings, literature, phone lines, and service offices. This allows Al-Anon to work with professionals and share information with communities that need support for families and friends of alcoholics.

Tradition Twelve reminds us that anonymity is the spiritual foundation of the program, placing "principles above personalities," and Tradition Eleven protects the anonymity of individual members while ensuring the program remains visible to the public.

What does this mean when carrying the message publicly? Members may use full names within the fellowship, but in all forms of public media—press, radio, TV, films, and the internet—personal anonymity is maintained by using a first name and last initial, a pseudonym, or remaining completely anonymous. When working with professionals, members are encouraged to provide full names and contact details for credibility. In non-media settings, such as health fairs or community presentations, members may choose to use their full names if they feel comfortable doing so.

Why Anonymity in Al-Anon? (P-33)
Covers the many reasons why anonymity is an important Al-Anon principle. Updated to address concerns of how to apply this principle to everyday situations, including Internet use. Eight pages.

Attracting and Cooperating (S-40)
Al-Anon's Eleventh and Twelfth Traditions are explained for members working with the media and professionals. Eight pages.

2026-2029 edition of the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27)
Download your copy at <https://al-anon.org/for-members/members-resources/manuals-and-guidelines/service-manual/>

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.

SPRING TO-DOS

- Visit another group and share your experience, strength and hope.
- List what you're grateful for this year and why.
- Be gentle with yourself when you make mistakes.
- Walk in nature and enjoy the sunshine.
- Plan something fun and invite others.
- Try something new and stretch yourself.
- Write your recovery story for Cape Area Echo readers.

You matter, and your story matters.

AFG CAPE AREA NOTICE BOARD

ONLINE RESOURCES

Visit the new Al-Anon Family Groups South Africa website: <https://www.alanon.org.za/>

Shop online for Al-Anon literature: <https://online.alanon.org.za/>

Cape Area Office contact details: Tel: 021 595 4517 | WhatsApp: 066 158 0234 | Email: alanonct@iafrica.com

WHERE TO BUY CAL (CONFERENCE APPROVED LITERATURE)

Order literature from the Cape Area Office, by email at alanonct@iafrica.com, by phone on 021 595 4517 or WhatsApp 066 158 0234, or through the online bookshop at <https://online.alanon.org.za/>.

Payment may be made by direct deposit, EFT, SnapScan, or cash. CAL is also available at literature desks during upcoming events.

IN-PERSON & ELECTRONIC MEETINGS

For the latest meeting information, visit <https://www.alanon.org.za/meetings/>.

Please notify the Area office of any group-information changes so the meeting list stays current.

MEETINGS NEEDING SUPPORT:

- Monday, 7.30pm **Parkwood Group**, St Gerard's Catholic Church, 1 Harrier Road, Lotus River
- Fridays, 7pm **Hanover Park Group**, Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church, 111 Hanover Park Drive, Hanover Park

UPCOMING EVENTS

SAVE THE DATE

MEETINGS

- **Area Assembly**, Saturday, 17 October 2026 at 9.30am (online).
- **National Policy & Planning Day**, Saturday, 7 November 2026 at 9am (hybrid).
- **Area Assembly & Year End Get Together**, Saturday, 21 November 2026 at 9.30am.

RALLIES/CONVENTIONS

- **A.A. 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.
- **A.A. Mini Con (with Al-Anon & Alateen Participation)** Theme: 80 Years of Gratitude
Date: 3 October 2026 Venue: Sea Point Civic Hall
More information to follow.
- **Al-Anon & Alateen Public Outreach in Robertson (with A.A. Participation)** More information to follow.
Date: Saturday, 31 October 2026 from 12pm Venue: All Saints Church Hall, Wesley Street, Robertson-
- **A.A. Summer Rally (with Al-Anon Participation)** Date: 27 to 29 November 2026
Venue: Melkbos Cultural Centre, Melkbosstrand More information to follow.
- ***A.A. National Convention 2027 (with Al-Anon & Alateen Participation)** Theme: There Is a Solution. It's Better Than Gold.
Date: 26 to 28 March 2027 Venue: Deutsche Internationale Schule Johannesburg
More information to follow.

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.

SAVE THE DATE: Monday, 27 October 2026 at 7pm – Celebrate Courage to Change's 34th Anniversary. More details to follow.

NEXT ISSUE – ISSUE 10 OF 2026

SEND YOUR SHARES – SUBMISSIONS DUE BY 17 OCTOBER 2026

Share your thoughts by emailing alanonct@iafrica.com or sending a WhatsApp message to 0823422102. For the next issue the topics are:

- Our Al-Anon slogan for October is “**EASY DOES IT.**” As we enter the final quarter of the year, it is natural to look back on what we have or haven't accomplished. However, this reflection can sometimes open the door to worry, fear, and projection. This month, let “**EASY DOES IT**” remind us to slow down. How can the slogan help you in your recovery journey?
“‘Easy Does It’ suggests not only that I learn to slow down, but also that I learn to lighten up. Today I will strive to take a more accepting attitude toward myself and to enjoy the day, regardless of what I achieve.” *Courage To Change (B 16), p. 93*
- 36 Principles: How have Step 10, Tradition 10, or Concept 10 supported your recovery process?

Send your suggestions to alanonct@iafrica.com. How long should my sharing be? <https://al-anon.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; in keeping with our Seventh Tradition, “**Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.**” Al-Anon is self-supporting at every level—groups, Area Office, and General Service Office—through members' voluntary contributions. These gifts help cover group expenses, literature, rent or platform fees, and support for our service arms. Please contribute regularly so the Area can continue to keep its doors open. Every member and group is 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>