

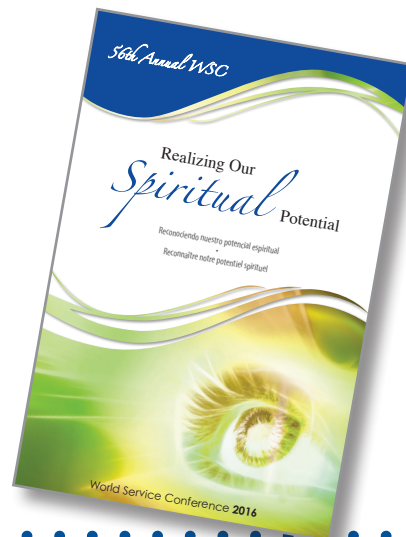
Area *H*ighlights

Spring 2016
Volume 48, No. 1

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Realizing Our *Spiritual* Potential

Reconociendo nuestro potencial espiritual
Reconnaître notre potentiel spirituel



Tina B., Conference Chairperson, California

On April 12, 2016, the World Service Conference (WSC) will convene in Virginia Beach. The Delegates, Board of Trustees, Executive Committee, and WSO staff—all members of the WSC—will participate in Al-Anon’s largest group conscience. This is the 56th meeting of the World Service Conference. Participation in the WSC involves presentations, discussions, reports, decisions, direction, connections, understanding, and fulfillment of commitment to Al-Anon Family Groups. Lest you think we have grown very stodgy and unemotional, there is a great deal of laughter, prayer, and support for each other as well.

In looking at the Conference theme, “Realizing Our Spiritual Potential,” I am struck with one of those “what if” thoughts. What if, when asked to open a service office to register and assist the growing number of “coffee & cake” and Non-Alcoholic family meetings, Lois W. and Anne B. had not appreciated all of the possibilities for family members’ recovery? They could not have realized at that moment the full potential of Al-Anon Family Groups worldwide. However, from their own personal understanding of the need for family recovery, they were willing to reach out and did contact those first 87 groups. Let’s take just a moment to stand in awe of such a simple act that has become a huge part of our magnificent program. Not only has the Clearing House—which became the World Service Office—helped you and me, but thousands of friends and family members here and around the world find hope and recovery. It is all too easy to take for granted what the

first Clearing House achieved toward the determination of the future of Al-Anon Family Groups. Additionally, the wisdom that guided the creation of the World Service Conference is also an example of “Realizing Our Spiritual Potential” by gathering participation from the widest group conscience.

The work of the Conference is to make the decisions and provide the tools necessary to guarantee that Al-Anon Family Groups is here for those who are new, those who have been to many meetings, and those who have not yet found the doors. Keeping our spiritual principles in the forefront and continuing to seek guidance from our Higher Power, let’s join in supporting our trusted servants in continuing what those wonderful first members began and who believed in the limitless spiritual potential for all of us.

Did you know?

The *Conference Summary* is the annual report to the groups about the World Service Conference and the World Service Office activities. Did you know that all 55 editions—the first Conference was in 1961—of the *Conference Summary* are available electronically on the Members’ Web site?

Letter to the Treasurer of AFG, Inc.

Sharon D., Group Representative, Maryland/DC Area
via surface mail to the WSO

Dear Treasurer,

I am the Group Representative for a group that meets in Baltimore, Maryland on Friday nights. I attended the Spring Assembly where our Delegate presented a very detailed report from the WSO's yearly meeting for all the Delegates.

I left that Area Assembly with an enthusiasm for change. One thing was clear to me—the WSO wanted us to think outside of the box. I came back to my group and we have been holding a series of group conscience meetings to discuss some of the agenda items. The WSO had changes it wanted to make to its Web site in order to reach more new members, especially young people. So as a group, we decided to create a “Change for Change” can to donate spare change to the WSO. One member of our group decorated the can for the group. I also donated during my birthday month, an idea I heard from our Delegate.

We also have a collection box, decorated by the one member. On the front of the box, it simply states, “If you can give more, Al-Anon can do more.” We have also discussed as a group how to handle a new person who comes to our meeting, but not for an alcoholic. We decided to let the new person have some space to talk, and after the meeting we would approach the newcomer with Conference Approved Literature and suggest he/she go to more meetings. Maybe in later meetings, the new person might find he/she indeed does have a problem drinker.

I am very proud of our group because each group conscience meeting seems to bring us closer together as we discuss what we believe about our group and how we want to represent Al-Anon to the newcomer. It has been a privilege to be the GR for such a warm, caring, friendly group of amazing people. The information shared by our Delegate to me, and then from me to my group, has had a positive impact on our group as a whole.

It is with great pride that I send you \$29.95 from our “Change for Change” can, collected in less than three months.

Speaking the same language

Michelle, Newsletter Editor, California North
Share & Care, Vol. 47, No. 8, August 2015

A new lady started at my job recently and I've enjoyed talking to her as we've been getting to know each other. The other day, we were standing in the copy room and I listened as she described an incident in which she became frustrated by her mother's reaction in a situation. During the conversation, I discussed my own journey learning how to let go of expectations and mentioned one of my favorite sayings from Al-Anon: Don't go to the hardware store for bread. When she heard this idea, she immediately recognized the Al-Anon saying and identified herself as being an Al-Anon member. I outed myself and we began to talk recovery, standing in the middle of the copy room. It was a beautiful moment.

Later, as I thought about the incident, I started to think about the importance of Tradition Four: "Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or AA as a whole." I have participated in several business meetings in which the issue being discussed was the desire to change the wording of the Steps due to concerns about the use of "Him" or "God." Though I'm glad our groups get to be autonomous in matters that do not affect another group, Al-Anon, or A.A. as a whole, I'm also grateful that our groups are encouraged to be mindful about the unity of Al-Anon as a whole. Because every Al-Anon meeting uses Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature, this new coworker and I were able to speak the same "language" despite living in different towns and attending different meetings. We could use the language of Al-Anon as our own secret handshake in the work setting to recognize each other as Al-Anon allies.

When I first started Al-Anon, I didn't understand (and therefore didn't like) the Traditions. As a newcomer, I even thought about skipping meetings when I knew it was a Tradition study night. Now, after working the Traditions with my Sponsor, I am so grateful that I can recognize their value and wisdom. Now, if only I could get my family and job to adopt the Traditions!

Have you shared your service projects?

Tarcila F., Area Delegate, Tennessee
The Tennessee Traveler, Fall 2015

Have you visited *Area Highlights* on-line? Have you shared your service projects? You can send them to the Area Newsletter Coordinator or directly to World Service Office (WSO).

The Statement of Purpose of *Area Highlights* is to provide service-related news from Areas to all Delegates, Coordinators, and District Representatives in order to communicate, motivate, and inform service-minded members.

The articles are compiled from Area newsletters and reports from the links of service. Delegates were asked to "please encourage members in your Area to share their service projects and experiences." The latest edition had articles from members in our Area! *Area Highlights* is posted on the Members' Web site, al-anon.org/members. Go to the "District Resources" section under the "Service Structure" tab.

District meeting agendas

Meg H., District Representative, Tennessee
The Tennessee Traveler, Fall AWSC 2015

I have grown in my role and continue to learn. My Alternate District Representative and I meet two weeks before every district meeting to plan the tentative agenda and consider the needs of the groups. One of us then contacts each Group Representative by phone to talk through the agenda and make sure that we have covered everything. We wait to post the agenda until the week before our district meeting in order to allow time for any last-minute agenda items. I have an amazing service Sponsor who challenges me and supports me along the way.

2016 World Service Conference

Delegates and other trusted servants will meet in Virginia Beach, Virginia, April 11-15, 2016, for Al-Anon's 56th Annual World Service Conference. Trusted servants enjoy receiving mail from members and groups in their Areas while they are at the Conference. On-line and phone meeting members can write to the Delegate from their individual geographic Area. Send cards and notes of support to:

**Name (Hold for WSC 4/11-4/15, 2016) • Wyndham Virginia Beach Oceanfront
5700 Atlantic Ave. • Virginia Beach, VA 23451**

Please plan to have your cards arrive **after April 7th**. Remember to write your trusted servant's name and address in the return address section of the envelope in the event that mail delivery is delayed.

Life happens!

Debbie H., Panel 55 Delegate, Manitoba/Northwest Ontario

Area 82 Province Wide Newsletter, Winter 2015

As the end of my first full year as a Delegate approaches, I look back at what I have learned thus far and what's ahead for 2016.

There are always going to be opinions on what works and what doesn't. Some are positive and some are negative. Growth in our program comes with challenges and successes. Our Twelve Concepts of Service are helpful in carrying the message of recovery, in addition to our Steps and Traditions. The Fourth Concept of Service says "Participation is the key to harmony." Being involved in service may seem daunting to newcomers and longtime members alike. It does involve a commitment that some of us are reluctant to take on. Our recovery may be jeopardized due to being over-committed at times. Or, as we all can relate to, life happens! Unexpected situations occur that are outside our control—we need to remind ourselves to go back to Step One and admit that our lives have become unmanageable. This may happen due to the recurrent effects of alcoholism, or it may be due to family or personal illness, losses, grief, and other situations.

Concept Five is another valuable tool that reminds us that everyone has a voice. "The rights of appeal and petition protect minorities and insure that they be heard." While we may have issues that impact the health of our groups, we do want our members to be able to offer their opinions. Decisions affecting groups/districts/Areas may need to use the group conscience process to resolve their issues or use Knowledge-Based Decision-Making (KBDM) to assist in the decision-making process.

From our booklet, *Talk to Each Other—Resolving Conflicts within Al-Anon* (S-73), some tips that may be helpful:

1. Separate emotions from facts, and principles from personalities.
2. Share as equals and presume goodwill. Everyone involved has Al-Anon's best interests in mind, even though their opinions may differ.
3. Trust in other members and a Power greater than ourselves, knowing that this Higher Power can work through whatever decision is made for the good of the fellowship as a whole.

I continue to be grateful to all Al-Anon members in our Area for their continued membership and service work. We are not alone in our recovery. Keep coming back—it works!

Put in your two cents' worth

Karen L., Panel 54 Delegate, Missouri
Missouri Round Robin, November 2015

The Al-Anon World Service Office (WSO) continues to ask for our input as to how Areas might help make up the deficit budget approved at this year's Conference, as well as for member input concerning memorial contributions from non-members. I will have simple forms to fill out on both issues for each Group Representative at Assembly and hope to have some wonderful ideas to share with you later.

My favorite budget deficit idea so far is "Put in your two cents' worth." If each registered group has only five members and each member puts in an additional two cents per week and then the group passes along those two cents to WSO, the deficit would disappear. Also, we've included the first "ad" in this issue of the *Round Robin*, asking folks to remember Al-Anon Family Groups on their gratitude lists and sharing how easy it is to make contributions. My full Delegate's Report will be on the Web site later this month, so please read it for more ideas. Ideas imparted at this Assembly will be shared later, too.

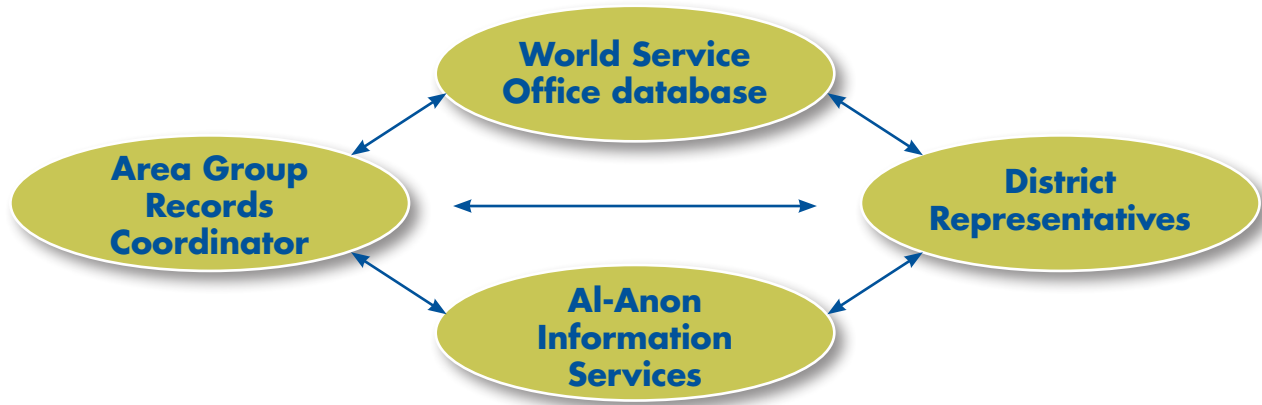


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Is your meeting information in sync?

Valerie Stump, WSO Group Records Coordinator (non-member)

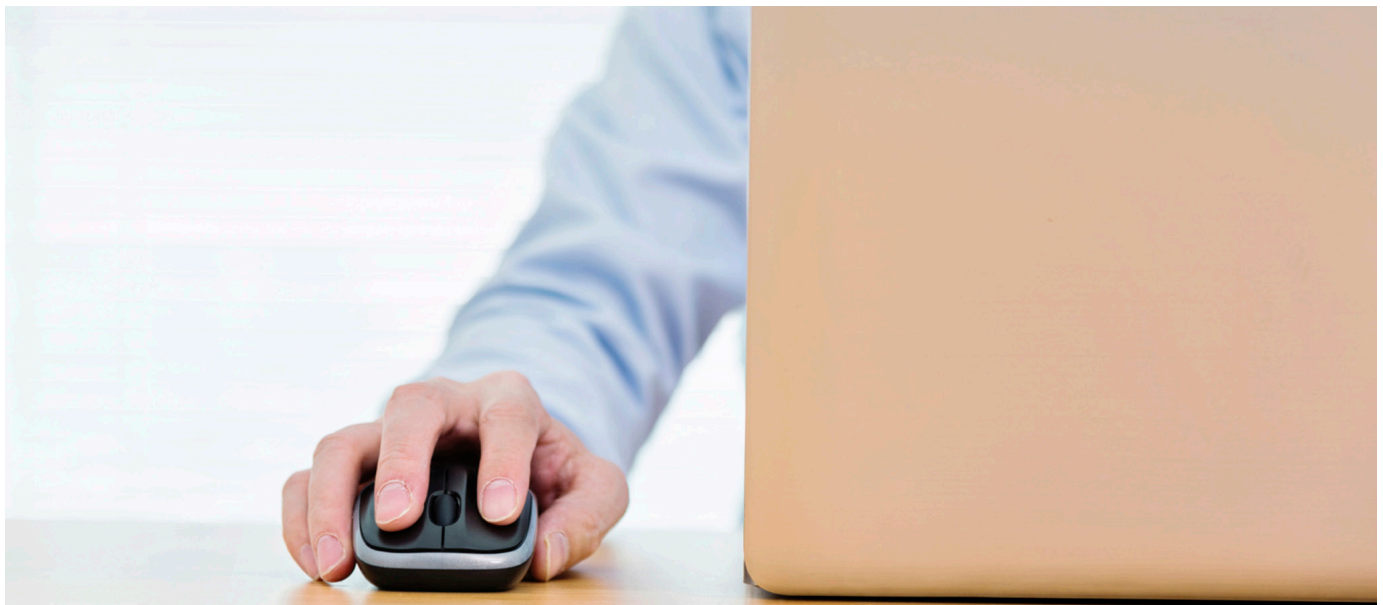
Sharon B., WSO Group Services Assistant



It can be challenging for service arms to keep meeting information in sync between the WSO, Area, district, and Al-Anon Information Services (AISs). Cooperation between the Area Group Records Coordinator, the district, and the AIS is crucial, as meeting information is often maintained in separate databases. Area Group Records Coordinators play an instrumental role in ensuring that the most up-to-date information is available to newcomers and to the fellowship. Here are several suggestions for Area Group Records Coordinators to enhance communications between those who are responsible for maintaining accurate meeting information:

- Define your Area's process for communicating meeting changes between the service arms, including the Area Web Coordinator.
- Provide reports to the AISs, the DRs, and to the Web Coordinators on a regular basis.
- Encourage DRs to run their own WSO On-line reports and notify the AIS of any changes.
- Ensure that all service arms are using the current GR-1 form.
- Ask other Areas for their shared experience on the AFG Connects Discussion Board.

Since all districts might not always have a DR, it is even more essential that the Area Group Records Coordinator communicates with the AIS. Establishing good rapport with the service arms and communicating your Area's process for submitting meeting changes helps everyone to be in sync. This helps to ensure that accurate meeting information is provided to the families and friends of alcoholics seeking help and hope in Al-Anon.



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ALATEEN

Area Alateen Coordinator & AAPP report for Assembly, Sept. 25-27, 2015

Barbara W., Area Alateen Coordinator, Newfoundland/Labrador

Labland News, October 2015

Throughout the past year and half, I encouraged groups in Newfoundland/Labrador to participate in an Alateen Public Outreach project to junior high schools and high schools in the Area. Groups have been very generous in donating Alateen books, which were delivered to schools along with Al-Anon and Alateen information packages for guidance counselors, staff, and students. All junior high schools in District 1 have received packages, and we hope to start on the high schools in the coming months. I encourage other groups in the district to continue with this Alateen Outreach project to schools as well. I understand it is much more difficult in other districts because of the limited number of groups and vast area to cover. It is important that we continue to provide information about Alateen to as many of our school guidance counselors and teachers across Newfoundland/Labrador that we can possibly reach. They are usually the first ones who recognize young students who maybe troubled by a family member's drinking problem. Group Representatives (GRs) in other districts can order Alateen books through their local Literature Distribution Center (LDC), and also may purchase them at Assembly. I will provide copies of suggested cover letters for schools and a list of suggested pamphlets to include with your donated Alateen book.

• How can we help grow Alateen?

• Barbara W., Area Alateen Coordinator, Newfoundland/Labrador
• *Labland News*, October 2015

• I think one of the most important things we need to do in our Area is to educate our Al-Anon fellowship about Alateen and how it can help young teens deal with the "family disease of alcoholism." Most Al-Anon members know very little about Alateen. Educating our Al-Anon fellowship will help grow Alateen faster than any public outreach (PO) project we can think of. If we don't educate our newcomers and encourage them to bring their kids, we have no base to start with. It is important that we announce Alateen availability at every meeting and in our district. I also encourage Al-Anon members in other districts to get certified as Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) and hopefully we can then provide at least one or more Alateen groups in other districts of Area 83. I've been told that Alateen groups usually grow and flourish when they meet at the same time and location of a supporting Al-Anon meeting. Flyers and information regarding Alateen have been distributed to A.A. groups, local police, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Janeway Children's Hospital, and health fairs, etc. **What other things do you think we could do to help the growth and awareness of Alateen?**

New Mexico/El Paso Area Alateen Convention (NMEPAAC)

Dolores T., Area Alateen Coordinator, New Mexico/El Paso
Newsletter for AMIAS & Alateens, Vol 1, No 3, November 2015

The first New Mexico/El Paso Area Alateen Convention (NMEPAAC) was held side-by-side with the Mountains of Hope Al-Anon Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico last July. Twenty-two young people attended the convention. Members between the ages of 7-18 enjoyed each other's company in the workshops and meetings. The T-shirt workshop was the ice breaker meeting on Friday night where artistic talents were explored and a good time was had sharing paints and sharing stories around slogans.

Sixteen Alateens received scholarship monies in varying amounts from \$8 to \$100. Eighteen Alateens attended all three days. A total of 22 attended a part of the weekend. Thirteen Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) gave of their time, talent, and personal funds to be of service to Alateen.

Many Al-Anon and Alateen members participated in the fund-raising activities that netted \$1,823.15. We spent almost \$1,300 on scholarships, the ice cream social, and other expenses. We netted \$524.37, which we will save for next year's event.

We are grateful for all the contributions of items, personal checks, and even \$20 for a cookie that members contributed to Alateen for our first event.

We are calling our Alateen Convention—NMEPAAC, pronounced "NEPAC."

The Alateens had their business meeting Sunday morning and elected the next Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary for the 2016 Convention. An AMIAS for each position was elected to work with each Alateen. The group conscience voted to have the next NMEPAAC in the Albuquerque area.

Our responsibility for Al-Anon's future

St. Louis Al-Anon Information Service, Missouri
Sincerely Al-Anon, December 2015

The Al-Anon Information Service Board is in the process of recreating our Public Outreach position. We envision assembling a team consisting of talented individuals, connected and supported by one another, to create a movement to deliver our message of recovery to those we have not yet reached. To continue to exist, Al-Anon must grow. We have had suggestions to have multiple teams. For example, there would be a team that focuses on schools and counselors, a team that focuses on treatment centers, a team that focuses on clergy, a team that focuses on social media, a team that focuses on legal, etc.

Please, come be a part of our movement to inform people who we are and where to find us!



Journey to service

Lynne H, Group Representative and Treasurer, District 4, Kentucky
Kentucky Area Newsletter, 4th Quarter 2015

I had been in Al-Anon almost three years when the Group Representative (GR) of my home group became ill. At our meeting, I volunteered to go to the district meeting the next Monday since she was unable to attend. All I remember about it is GRs, DRs, Area Assembly, AWSC, CMA, ISC, WSC, WSO—TMI, OMG! I remember taking lots of notes. I think I smiled and nodded quite a bit, too.

Fortunately for me, I had started volunteering every Tuesday at the Al-Anon Information Service (AIS) office. I marched into the office the next day with my district notes and I grabbed a *Service Manual*. I was determined to learn as much as I could to “decipher” my notes filled with this secret code! I asked the office manager several questions about the information I had written down. Eventually my notes began to make sense.

At the next Al-Anon meeting I was able to pass the information on to my home group. At that same meeting, our GR asked if someone else could finish the last year of her term. My group asked me! At first, I was panic-stricken. My Sponsor—who was on the Board at the time—and several of my friends, assured me they would help if I needed anything. I accepted the position. I asked a lot of questions that year and there was always someone there with an answer. When it was time to elect a new GR for the next three-year term, I was re-elected. I even accepted the nomination for District Treasurer.

It has definitely been a learning experience! I have learned so much more about Al-Anon than I ever would have just going to meetings. I have met some great people with great ideas. I now know that I don't really like writing or listening to reports, and that's okay. But most of all, I have learned to pass on the things I have learned in order to help others new in service.

Please photocopy *Area Highlights* and share it with other members.
Visit us at: al-anon.org/members

TEAM (Together Empowering Al-Anon Members)

Anonymous, Group Representative, New Zealand
Messenger, November 2015

As Group Representative, I was privileged to attend an Area-sponsored TEAM Event.

During this day, we were privileged to have four Board of Trustee members present; each did a presentation during scheduled workshop sessions. This special day was all about empowering us in areas of service. Each participating speaker willingly shared his or her experience, strength, and hope on his or her specific topic.

When it was all over, I realized we need to participate in TEAM Events when we have the opportunity. By attending a TEAM Event, we broaden our vision about service so when we go back to our small groups, we can share with others what a big, big, and bigger than ourself group we belong to!

Together we grow in service

Susie, UK & Eire
Al-Anon Today, Winter 2015–2016

Areas 3 & 6 held their combined TEAM Event recently in Basingstoke. It was a wonderful learning experience, even for someone like me, who has been around long enough to (supposedly) know how things work in Al-Anon.

The committee did a great job – everything ran like clockwork. The presentations on the structure of Al-Anon, public information, and how our finances are managed were excellent. The spiritual shares were powerful.

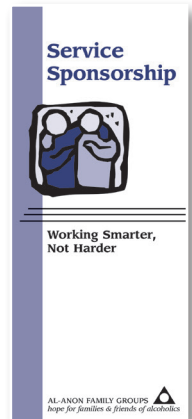
However, what I liked most of all was being in a room full of Al-Anon members (68, I believe) who share a dedication to service in our wonderful fellowship. The theme was “Together We Grow in Service,” and that’s certainly how it felt. The enthusiasm was inspiring!

“Easy Does It” in service, too!

Teresa B.C., Area Literature Coordinator, Massachusetts
Bulletin, July 2015

Ever dream of taking a group service position (Secretary, Treasurer, Literature Person, etc.)? Have you toyed with becoming a Group Representative, District Representative, or even going further in service, but you feel hesitant? Help is on the way.

The pamphlet *Service Sponsorship: Working Smarter, Not Harder* (P-88) is about having a Sponsor who has held a service position and is willing to share experience, strength, and hope to answer your service-related questions. I have found it immensely helpful to be guided by those who went there before me.



Encouraging men to write

Bud S., Rhode Island
Via fax to WSO

When I first heard about the development of a new daily reader, I was excited at the possibilities. I loved the idea of having a piece of literature that would show this was not your mother’s Al-Anon—that Al-Anon was something inclusive and versatile. I know that some people have a hard time writing anything, but asking men to write about their feelings can be a daunting challenge.

Organizing a men’s writing workshop provided a supportive atmosphere that lent itself to expression in both written and spoken word. After the workshop, I really felt a sense of fellowship that makes this a “we” program. What more can one ask for but to spend an afternoon with like-minded men endeavoring to heal and to help others do the same through a daily reader? I’m always astounded at the level of gratitude I get from participating in my recovery in Al-Anon.



You can help, too!

We continue to need sharings for the new daily reader. For the latest writing guide, click here: <http://www.al-anon.org/members/pdf/WeStillNeedYourExperience.pdf>.

To submit your sharing online, just follow these steps:

- Go to the Members' site: al-anon.org/members
- Enter your password—any variation of your group name followed by AFG.
- Click on the "Individuals" tab.
- Click on "Featured Publications."
- Click on "Send Your Sharing."

New! *Courage to Change* is now available as an e-book!

Courage to Change (B-16) is the first Al-Anon daily reader to be available electronically, also in Spanish and French.

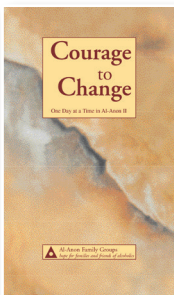
Contact one of the following electronic media providers to purchase a copy of the *Courage to Change* e-book (eB-16) for your iPad, Kindle, Nook, or other electronic reading device:

- Apple iBooks
- Amazon
- Barnes and Noble
- Kobo

On Apple iBooks, the electronic book is priced at \$13.99 (U.S.), and on Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and Kobo, it is available in two parts, each for \$6.99 (U.S.).

Also, stay tuned for the *Courage to Change* audio book, coming soon.

This announcement is informational only, and not an endorsement of any electronic media provider, e-reader, or other products sold by electronic media providers.

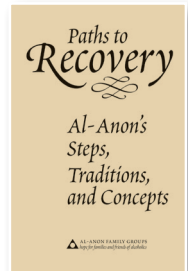


A guide for studying our Three Legacies

Judy P., Texas East

District 6 Newsletter, Winter 2015

In 1997, Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. published *Paths to Recovery—Al-Anon's Steps, Traditions, and Concepts* (B-24), a wonderful guide for the study of our Three Legacies. This book shares the experience, strength, and hope of Al-Anon members worldwide for each Step, Tradition, and Concept of Service, and each one is followed by questions that stimulate thought and discussion.



The book has now been available for 18 years, and is still going strong. In addition to being available in English, it is also available in French, German, Korean, Norwegian, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Many members have asked why the book has such wide margins. This was part of the original plan to give members space to write notes as they go through the book.

Groups and members have used this book as a guide for their study of the Legacies, and as a resource—especially when searching for answers to service, group, and even personal problems. Many members have used the book when called upon to discuss a Step, Tradition, or Concept, and the questions that follow each one of the individual Legacies are often used as a springboard for a meeting topic.

Remember—When you buy from your local Literature Distribution Center, you support your local services.

Lois's Story and *Lois W. & the Pioneers* DVDs - Available this month in Spanish and French for rental from the WSO

The *Lois's Story* (AV-1/SAV-1/FAV-1) (running time: 33 minutes) and *Lois W. & the Pioneers* (AV-24/SAV-24/FAV-24) (running time: 22 minutes) DVDs are now available with Spanish and French subtitles for sharing at meetings or for a fun addition at a special Al-Anon event (district meetings, workshops, assemblies, etc.).

For more information and to schedule the DVDs for a week's rental during a time that is convenient for you, based on availability, download the S-35/SS-35/FS-35 order form, and mail or fax to the WSO. Depending on whether you would like to rent the English, Spanish, or French DVDs, the order forms can be accessed as follows:

- English (S-35 order form): (The Al-Anon Online Store, [link here](#))
- Spanish (SS-35 order form): (The Spanish version of the Members' Web site, [link here](#))
- French (FS-35 order form): (The French version of the Members' Web site, [link here](#))

Each DVD can be rented for \$25, and all return packaging and postage will be included with your order. It is requested that your order be placed three weeks in advance of when the DVDs will be needed.

Easy, quick, powerful public outreach

Are you willing to carry the Al-Anon message of recovery, but you're short on time? An easy way to have a big impact is to call or e-mail the station that plays an Al-Anon public service announcement (PSA) and say, "Thank you for playing Al-Anon PSAs."

Do you have a little more time to make a bigger impact? Call your local station and ask for the name and number or e-mail address of the best person to talk to about public service announcements. Call or e-mail and tell them what Al-Anon has done for you and your family. Ask them if they would play PSAs on the air so other families in their audience could benefit from Al-Anon. Then call or e-mail WSO with the name, phone number, and the name of the station. Thank you!

The ins and outs of public outreach and anonymity

The revised *Why Anonymity in Al-Anon?* (P-33) pamphlet provides clear, helpful information to answer members' questions about anonymity when involved in public outreach. It clarifies:

- Maintaining anonymity on the Internet and social media.
- Providing full name and contact information when speaking one-on-one to a professional.
- Using social media, the Internet, and e-mail.



The WSO is now shipping 2016 Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism magazines

Thank you for your orders and for carrying the magazines to families and friends of alcoholics in need of our program. To make it easier for newcomers to find a group, please add local Al-Anon contact information and meeting schedules to the magazines.



Introducing Al-Anon at a correctional facility

Anonymous
Via e-mail to the WSO

The district is sponsoring a biweekly introductory Al-Anon meeting at the only women's correctional facility in Alaska. The attendees vary with each meeting, but almost all of the women grew up in homes with alcoholism. They have no sense of personal value or an understanding of boundaries.

At the meetings, we don't talk about being stuck in traffic, a bad day at work, or a bad hair day. We talk about real issues:

- How do I get along with someone who has power over me to put me in "the hole" when *he or she* is having a bad day?
- How do I take responsibility for my part and no more?
- How can I be most effective in my life?
- How do I find serenity wherever I am?
- What is my next step toward changing *me* so I can be successful?

I am proud to be involved with this outreach. These meetings help me put all of my life in perspective. With the help of these inmates, I am constantly learning.

Wow! A district's commitment to public outreach

Geneva D. and Linda G., District 23, Missouri
Missouri Round Robin, November 2015

Our district includes five counties but the number of groups in it is small. However, we have a couple of members who consistently work at keeping Al-Anon's message available to the public.

One member keeps *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* magazines and other pamphlets stocked at the County Courthouse. There is a room where family members wait for their loved ones who are in court.

Another member finds out about all kinds of venues where our literature can be distributed. These include health fairs, garden shows, and other events.

Although a radio station declined to play our public service announcement, a member was able to be interviewed by one of the announcers.

Our district Public Outreach Coordinator takes our literature to judges, police departments, and women's shelters. She also takes our directories and Area business cards to hand out with our literature. In addition, she is working on getting an Alateen group started at a treatment facility that is eager to have our program available to teens.

Please photocopy *Area Highlights* and share it with other members.
Visit us at: al-anon.org/members

Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism magazines distribution—to be or not to be anonymous

Laurie K., District 14, Missouri
Al-AnonSense, August 2015

I can still do some public outreach even if maintaining my anonymity is especially important to me. I can simply leave copies of *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* (AFA) magazines in doctor's offices, car repair waiting rooms, public restrooms, and a myriad of other places where people can find them.

If I feel comfortable with a one-on-one approach, I can give copies of AFA magazines and my personal recommendation of Al-Anon to a doctor, counselor, attorney, teacher, or any other professional. This helps them to refer patients or clients to our program.

AFA distribution—thinking “outside the box”

Rachel L., Public Outreach Coordinator West, Oklahoma
This Day, December 2015

I ordered 50 copies of *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* (AFA) magazines for the two groups I attend. I asked the members to take as many copies as they were willing to distribute. I encouraged them to “think outside the box” when planning where to leave the magazines. Doctors' offices are, of course, excellent outreach locations, but I want to try to expand our outreach. I gave examples such as insurance companies or car rental places—any place where members do business on a regular basis.

How to encourage subscribing to *The Forum*

Jill O., Alternate Delegate, Florida North
The Legacy, August 2015

- Share stories from *The Forum* at meetings.
- Always offer *The Forum* to newcomers—past and current copies.
- Pass a can at meetings for extra change, write group members' names on pieces of paper and put them in the can, and hold a drawing periodically. The “winner” gets a free subscription to *The Forum*.
- Conduct regular group meetings using *The Forum*, sharing topics and articles that have been vital to your recovery.
- Discuss an article from *The Forum* at one meeting every month.
- Announce and encourage group and individual subscriptions.
- Put *The Forum* on each chair and ask members to pick something from it to which they can relate.
- Include a *Forum* subscription form and a money order in the raffle basket donated to Assemblies and Conventions.
- Ask the Alternate DR to share something from *The Forum* at district meetings.

THE FORUM BOOK (working title)

Have you ever read a *Forum* sharing that:

- helped you to look at something a bit differently?
- made you laugh?
- touched your heart and reminded you that you aren't alone?
- had a unique way of presenting the topic/subject?
- will stand the test of time?

Those are the sharings we would like to include in THE FORUM BOOK (working title).

The 2015 World Service Conference gave conceptual approval to develop a piece of Conference Approved Literature based on member sharings published in past issues of *The Forum*. The piece is intended to compile thoughtful sharings that are important enough to be read for years to come.

You are cordially invited to send us your most memorable and relatively recent, *Forum* sharings (2005 – present). There's only one caveat! We need to know the title, month, and year in which it appeared in the magazine. You can submit your suggestions on-line. Go to the Members' Web site at al-anon.org/members. Click on Individuals, Featured Publications, *The Forum*, THE FORUM BOOK (working title).



These shared experiences, sent from around the world, came to the WSO through Spanish newsletters as well as correspondence. The WSO will continue to select service activities for these pages, so Spanish members will have the opportunity to write and read about their service projects without translation. This additional page gives all members a consistent reminder that service in Al-Anon is taking place in many languages.

Las experiencias que comparten miembros de todas partes del mundo han llegado a la OSM por medio de boletines y cartas en español. La OSM continuará publicando actividades de servicio en estas páginas, de manera que los miembros que hablan español tengan la oportunidad de leer y escribir sobre sus experiencias de servicio directamente en su idioma. Estas páginas sirven para que todos los miembros recuerden siempre que el servicio en Al-Anon se lleva a cabo en muchos idiomas.

Editorial

Vuestra OSG, España

Serenidad, Número 141, año 35, junio de 2015

Este pasado mes de abril ha tenido lugar la XXVIII Conferencia de Servicio Nacional. Como siempre han sido momentos de emociones muy intensas, de alegrías por los reencuentros y por la posibilidad de compartir entre servidores, a todos los niveles: de servicio, de estructuras, de crecimiento, especialmente del crecimiento y la «salud» de los grupos de Al-Anon en nuestro país, y de afecto; el afecto que los miembros y los grupos les demuestran a Al-Anon y a las estructuras que les sirven.

En estos últimos años, se va constatando el «decrecimiento» de Al-Anon: hay menos grupos; en lugar de sumar, restamos; en términos estadísticos diríamos que son más las bajas que las altas. Esto en sí no sería preocupante si el número de asistentes a los grupos aumentara, lo que representaría que habría grupos que tendrían que doblar sus reuniones para poder atender a todos los asistentes, pero por los informes que se reciben, no siempre es así.

La consecuencia de todo esto es que afecta también el mantenimiento de las estructuras. Aunque se ajusten los presupuestos, que haya menos grupos y menos miembros supone más esfuerzo para los miembros y grupos responsables y para los servidores que tienen que cumplir con los proyectos con que se comprometieron en Asambleas y en la Conferencia.

Aunque son muchos los grupos e intergrupales que aportan a la Oficina de Servicios Generales (OSG), hay algunos grupos que, desde hace años, han dejado de hacerlo. Sorprende que esos grupos, si funcionan con regularidad, aunque sean pocos miembros, no alcancen a cumplir con la Séptima Tradición haciendo las aportaciones sugeridas, en la medida de sus posibilidades, tanto a su Área como a su OSG, aunque sean mínimas.

Invitamos a reflexionar sobre las consecuencias que, a la larga, puede acarrear lo que parece un olvido, y sugerimos la posibilidad de que en los grupos se trabaje ampliamente la Séptima Tradición para ver de enmendar este problema, pensando siempre en los principios y el bienestar de Al-Anon como un todo.



Foto: Tom C., Texas

These shared experiences, sent from around the world, came to the WSO through French newsletters as well as correspondence. The WSO will continue to select service activities for these pages, so French members will have the opportunity to write and read about their service projects without translation. This additional page gives all members a consistent reminder that service in Al-Anon is taking place in many languages.

Ces expériences partagées proviennent de bulletins et de lettres envoyées au BSM par des membres d'expression française à travers le monde. Le BSM sélectionnera pour cette page des témoignages de membres sur leur travail de service, et leur permettra ainsi de partager leurs expériences dans le service directement sans traduction. Cette page supplémentaire rappelle à tous les membres que le service dans Al-Anon se fait dans toutes les langues.

LE SERVICE

Extrait du bulletin mensuel des Groupes Familiaux Al-Anon/Alateen de France

La Chaîne, octobre 2015

Sylvie, Vice-présidente du Conseil d'Administration

Elle s'appelait Loïs, elle avait jeté sa chaussure à la tête de son mari Bill, excédée par ce qu'elle vivait; comme beaucoup, elle n'en pouvait plus. Elle eut l'idée d'adapter le programme des Alcooliques Anonymes aux problèmes vécus par les familles et amis de personnes ayant un problème d'alcool. Avec Anne elle a fondé les groupes familiaux Al-Anon. Grâce à elles, j'en suis venue à croire les amis de mon groupe, qui me disaient que ma vie allait changer. J'en suis venue à croire que j'allais bien finir par trouver une Puissance supérieure à moi-même qui allait m'accompagner chaque jour.

Mon histoire de serviteur a commencé lorsque j'ai tout simplement accepté le service de trésorier qu'on m'a proposé de prendre dans mon groupe, convaincue que je n'en serais pas capable. J'ai eu le sentiment d'être utile, ça m'a réchauffé le cœur. J'ai attendu que mes enfants grandissent pour aller en réunion de Région. Dès que ce fut possible, j'ai accepté de prendre le service qui était disponible, le secrétariat. Au bout de 3 ans, mes amis m'ont demandé d'être Présidente de Région : j'ai pensé « je n'y arriverais pas », mais ils semblaient si sûrs du contraire. J'ai accepté au moins de me présenter, j'ai été élue.

Puis le Conseil d'Administration a lancé un appel à serviteurs, une amie de ma Région m'a incitée à proposer ma candidature. Je ne me sentais pas capable d'assumer ce service, mais je me suis lancée. J'ai imaginé naïvement que je n'avais rien à craindre, je ne serais pas élue. Je l'ai été, j'ai donc accepté le poste de vice-présidente d'Al-Anon avec une vive émotion mêlée d'une immense peur, celle de ne pas parvenir à servir ma fraternité pour le bien commun de tous.

Mais c'est très simple en réalité, il y a du travail à faire et il suffit de le faire de son mieux. C'est ce que je fais, juste selon mes possibilités, rien de plus. Et je suis si heureuse de pouvoir redonner un peu de ce j'ai reçu.

Avec l'aide de ma Puissance Supérieure, j'apprends la confiance que je n'ai pas eu l'occasion d'apprendre avec mes parents, ni durant ma vie de couple. Oui, grâce au service j'apprends la confiance un jour à la fois. J'ai l'impression d'avoir tellement grandi. Et lorsque je me suis retrouvée durant deux jours en présence de Paula et Ric du Bureau des Services Mondiaux pour partager sur le développement d'Al-Anon en France, j'ai ressenti tellement de gratitude et de joie pour cette occasion qui m'était donnée.

Quelle belle aventure que celle du service et de l'amour dans Al-Anon! Quelle force et quelle joie de la partager avec vous tous.
Merci Loïs et Anne!

SERVIR

Extrait du journal interne des Groupes Familiaux Al-Anon et Alateen de la Circonscription du Québec-Est et du Nouveau-Brunswick

Le Contact, septembre 2015

Solange, Déléguée

Voici un sujet qui me tient beaucoup à cœur : **Servir** dans notre belle fraternité Al-Anon fait partie de nos principes spirituels. **Servir** peut être l'affaire d'un soir ou d'une implication à plus long terme; à chaque membre de décider. Il est important de faire du service dans ce qu'on est à l'aise de faire, mais faisons du service, cela fait partie du rétablissement dans Al-Anon. Si vous débarrez la porte pour un soir, c'est certain qu'en même temps, vous ferez de l'accueil et peut-être de l'écoute, pourquoi pas? **Servir**, c'est comme la prière et la méditation, si vous en prenez l'habitude, vous ne pourrez pas vous en passer. **Le service** est comme l'électricité : on ne sait pas toujours comment ça marche, mais ça marche si on fait seulement tourner l'interrupteur à « ON » en disant OUI. **Servir**, c'est donner au suivant ce qu'Al-Anon nous donne. **Servir**, c'est comme manger, mangez aujourd'hui et vous le ferez encore demain sans dire je l'ai fait avant. **Servir** est une nourriture spirituelle...

Je visite plusieurs groupes et le service est un peu partout pareil : on hésite. Moi, je vous dis : osez en faire, c'est tellement gratifiant; ça vous fait connaître plein de belles personnes avec qui vous entretenez des relations particulières le reste de votre vie. N'attendez pas d'être guéri pour servir, faites-le pour guérir...

Invitation à tous les membres Faites-nous parvenir vos expériences dans le service pour nous permettre de les publier dans cette page. En nous envoyant les bulletins de nouvelles de votre Circonscription, vous nous donnez aussi la possibilité d'y puiser des témoignages et de les partager avec tous les membres.