

The Fellowship's Beacon

by Clif H

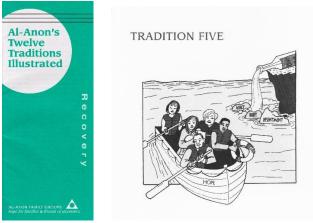


Illustration from P-60

Each Al-Anon Family Group has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of AA ourselves, by encouraging and understanding our alcoholic relatives, and by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics.

I was recently provided a bag of literature from an AFG that had folded. Many of the books were duplicates of literature I already owned, so I in turn passed them along. Several items, however, I did not have, so I added them to my personal library and have been slowly adding them to my reading list.

One such item is pamphlet P-60, Al-Anon's Twelve Traditions Illustrated. When I reached Tradition Five, and realized the next BITS for publication was May, I decided to stop and smell the roses, so to speak. What does this Tradition mean to me? Could I write an article? And would it make the BITS if I did?

"Sailing an uncharted sea, we drift aimlessly unless we can set a course and head toward a destination. Tradition Five is the beacon that gives the fellowship direction and goal.", Al-Anon's Twelve Traditions Illustrated, P-60, (p. 12). The opening paragraph.

Having been a competitive sailboat racer, I could indeed resonate with this idea. For each race, as we approached the start line, the winds were variable, as were the tides. Yet those were the easiest obstacles to navigate. Then come the other boats, each captain and crew attempting to deal with the winds and tides, and the other boats, and everyone insists on coming out ahead. There are clear sets of rules and expectations for water navigation, but like the alcoholic, the rules don't always apply to the boat captains.

And when someone else makes a bad choice, it's up to you to avoid disaster. Crunching boats, as I've discovered, can be very expensive. But that toll can be nothing compared to the crushing of the soul inflicted by the alcoholic.

By practicing the Twelve Steps, I'm in the most ready state to observe and respond to alcoholic behaviors, just as I was once prepared to dump a sail, fall off the line, or call for a quick tack to avoid disaster. Oddly, back in the day, I knew the nautical rules and was therefore well aware when I gave up the "right of way" to an offending captain, so as to avoid costly repairs. At the same time, pre-Al-Anon, I was completely unaware I was giving away my rights and my soul to the alcoholic behavior of friends and family.

Today, by actively participating in the Al-Anon Family Groups, I have gained a new level of serenity, and am able to encourage and provide understanding to the alcoholics in my life, while giving comfort to friends and relatives of alcoholics. I do this by demonstrating improved behaviors as I live my life following the Al-Anon principles. Tradition Five keeps me pointed in a good direction.



Workshop: What Seattle AIS Is ... and Isn't

Workshop: What Seattle Al-Anon Information Services (AIS) Is ... and Isn't

Ever wonder what Seattle AIS really does?

Ever wonder why Seattle AIS doesn't do _____ (fill in the blank with your question)?

Want to hear how Seattle AIS applies the Traditions and Concepts to guide us in policy and business decisions?

Interested in hearing why we enjoy volunteering at Seattle AIS?

Those are all good reasons to attend the "What Seattle AIS Is...and Isn't" Workshop on May 15, 2023 from 7-9pm. We may not (honestly probably won't) answer all of your questions, however, I hope you will hear at least one example that will be meaningful and relevant to you. And who knows...it may even help you find new ways to apply AI-Anon tools in your life.

Volunteers & Donations = Service

by Mary R, LDC Co-coordinator



Tradition 7:

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

"In Al-Anon we learn to take responsibility for our own recovery rather than expecting others to do our work for us. With the help of our Higher Power and our fellow members, we realize we no longer need to look for inner contentment outside of ourselves. We begin to care for ourselves financially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. The idea of selfsupport found in Tradition Seven is essential to Al- anon." How Al-Anon Works (p. 140).

I have learned in Al-Anon how to support myself in all these areas. I do like the extra support I get from my recovering alcoholic spouse, my family, my friends, and my Al-Anon friends. But I know that without the extra support I can survive. I have also learned that in an all-volunteer situation my support for my group, the members in my group, my AIS/LDC (Al-Anon Information Services/Literature Distribution Center) and the members that use it is so very important to not only spread the word to others, but to support those in my program.

I have learned that without the volunteer help and financial help from me and all members, my group and AIS/LDC can cease to exist.

So, I am first asking our Higher Power for help, and then asking for help from all members in being self-supporting for my group and AIS/LDC.

Right now, AIS/LDC is in real need of more volunteers to step up and serve all of us at the Seattle AIS office, and on the LDC email.

We need help in the office on Thursdays to pack and ship the literature orders that come in via the email. (this constitutes a couple hours on Thursday, but only one Thursday a month or so)

And for the email itself. (this constitutes one week at a time a couple times a day checking the LDC email, creating an invoice and replying it to the requester, one week a month or so)

We have training available and ready for anyone that might want to help serve our Seattle Al-Anon.

The other way we need help in this day of virtual, face to face, and hybrid meetings is to remember that even though we are at home for a meeting Al-Anon still needs your financial help.

Thank you for considering my sincere calls for help, and putting your actions and money where your heart is.



Spring Fellowship Gathering

May 13, 2023, 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Please join us for speaker meeting, fellowship, and food We will provide Taco Salad Dinner Please bring a dessert to share

> Al-Anon Speaker – Ellen S AA Speaker – Robert M

St Elizabeth's Church 1005 SW 152nd St Burien, WA 98166

Suggested donation \$10

KENT ALL MEN'S AL-ANON FORT WORDEN WEEKEND

<u>June 2 - 4, 2023</u>

Arrival: Friday, June 2nd at 4:00 p.m.

Departure: Sunday, June 4th at 12 noon

The 40th Annual K.A.M.A. Fort Worden Weekend is packed with remarkable meetings, lasting fellowship, spiritual growth and recovery that goes on and on and on.....



With all that there is still time for games, music, good food and yes, the Saturday night bonfire.

An experience not to be missed and then made a tradition! Set askie the first weekend in June and Join us!

Seeking Meeting Directory Editor

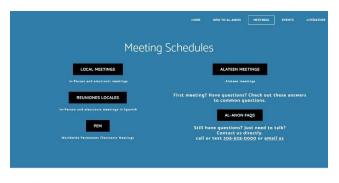
by Teresa H

Is Attention to Detail Your Thing? I think a behind the scenes look at how the meeting directory is updated on our AIS website might be of interest to our members. And, if attention to detail is your thing, please consider serving as our AIS Meeting Directory Editor.

What skills are preferred in the crucial role as Meeting Directory Editor? Attention to detail is important as are knowing how to format tables in Word online and having 15-30 minutes to make updates a couple times each week. What specifically does the Meeting Directory Editor do?

Check your AIS email on the Editor's Office 365 account a couple times each week. This is easy. You will have your own log in to your Outlook mail account. To make it easier for me (the temporary editor) to see when there is a change that needs to be made, I have those emails forwarded to my personal email account. Whether or not to have them forwarded is up to the Editor.

What kind of emails will you find there? There are two primary types of emails. One is an automated confirmation of a meeting listing change that was submitted by the member of a Group to WA Area using their website. YAY! The second type is an email from a member requesting a change to their meeting listing. I love that the member is doing service to their Group. And, all that can be done with that email is to respond to that member with a cc to their DR reminding them that the change will be processed once the change is submitted to WA Area (NOT WSO). That might be painful to the Editor who wants to be helpful and get the change posted ASAP (we are Al-Anoners!) as well as the member emailing in the change.



Update your meeting information



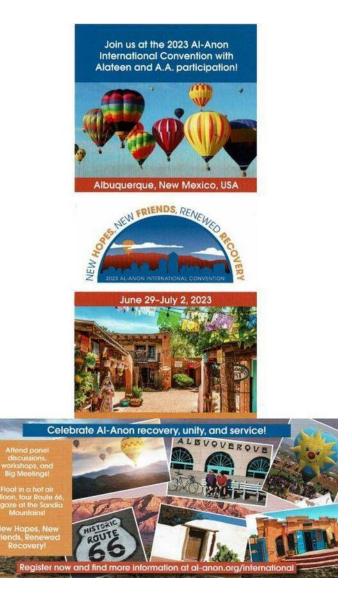
Updated: April 31 ESP M Schenk TAI Beereng Updaten for Santha Ska Walkers FARO, Fernies and Frends Oniv. (FFRAW: Familia, Fernia, & Observer Wetcome (B. Bigmenr-Infor Meetra CONCURRENT (Inductors: and in person metalized as the anti-thick begated). (FYRBM) persons models (bigHter distances) and in persons)						
Day	Time (PT)	Group Name Length / Attendees Group Email	Connection Info (Note: Zoom Dial-in for our area is: 1 253 215 8782 "It to toggie mute from on to off)	City	Location Crossed out address indicates not currently meeting in person / Special locations notes	Diabrict # Group #
ONDAY						
Monday	7.00 AM	Hope for Today AFG 50 minutes (FFAON) http://gmail.com	Zoom Meeting Login info: Get via email	Seattle	17 ACOL 02-00-	District 21 Group 502461
Monday	12:30 AM	Monday Morning Jump Start AFG 90 minutes / FAFO / Closed Captoring (CC)	CONCURRENT - Zoom Meeting D: 830 (663 8625 Code: Serenty?	Auburn	Zion Lutheran Church 1305 17th St SE (Auburn Wax at M Sti (N AA) Face Masks Required	District 14 Group 63297
Monday	12.00 PM	Capital HIII AFG 75 minutes / IFFAON Capital III AFGEDatal com	IN-PERSON ONLY	Seattle	Sr. Mark's Cathedral 1245 10th Ave E (Sloedel Hall) Face Masks Required	District 20 Group 64445
Monday	12:00 PM	Monday Noozens AFG 60 minutes / FFAON Monday/Issonars@amail.com	CONCURRENT - Zoom Meeting ED 975-6172 1702 Code: 2650148	Bellevue	St Andrew's Lutheran Church 2000 149th Are SE 291 Fore Media Official	District 16 Group 3052078
Monday	12.00 PM	Queen Anne Midday AFG 60 minutes / FFAON	HYBRID - Zoom Meeting ID: 451 (64 938 Code: 188642	Seattle	First Free Methodiat Church 3200 3rd Ave W Face Masks Optional (The Rm / Park on Cremona / use North antire) (H	District 20 Group 62081
Monday	12.30 PM	Bothell Monday Study AFG 90 minutes / FFACH	IN-PERSON ONLY Exception: Memoral Day - Zoom Orby ID: 826:1962:8342 Date: alimon	Bothell	Eastside Church Memorial Day 5-29 Zoom Only 14520 102th Ave NE 1910 Face Maske Optional	District 15 Group 31186
Monday	4:30 FM	3nd Place Literature Study AFG 50 minutes / FFAOW Ive The odd/Damail.com	IN-PERSON ONLY	Laka Forest Park	Lake Forest Park Presbyterian Church 17440 Brookside Bivd NE	District 22 Group 3051509
Monday	5:30 PM	Mountain AFG 50 minutes / FFAON	IN-PERSON ONLY	Enumblew	Celvery Presbylerian Church 1728 Wells St 010 Face Masks Optional	District 14 Group 3080032
Monday	6:30 PM	Soltwater AFG 90 minutes / FFAOH Soltwater/AFG/Bornal.com	Zoom Meeting Login info: Get via email	Des Moines		District 14 Group 3051248
Monday	7:00 PM	Living in the Solution AFG 90 minutes / FFACH/ /R	IN-PERSON ONLY	Kirkland	Kikkerd Congregational United Church of Christ 106 9th Ave Room #23 (enter thru glass front doors)	District 15 Group 49784
Monday	7:00 FM	Magnolia Monday Nite Fireside AFG 50 minutes / FF 4CW	Zoom Neeting ID: 885: 9829 75311 Code: 105861	Seattle		District 20 Geoup 53177

What do you do with the email containing the automated confirmation from WA Area? Open the Meeting Directory file in Office 365. Make the necessary changes, rename it, and save it as a PDF. Then open the website editor and update the link on the appropriate button on the Meetings page. Our website editor is extremely easy to use even for those who have never edited a website. Then send an email to the member, the DR, and the AIS Communications Coordinator letting them know the change has been made.

That's it!

What have I found most rewarding in serving in this position? Every time I make a change to the directory, I get to interact with a member. It is a great way to renew friendships and get acquainted with other members from across our AIS service area. I also consider the newcomer, someone like me who is suffering from the effects of someone else's drinking. By keeping the directory up to date, I am making it easier for them to find the help and hope that I have been privileged to enjoy. I hope you too will want to experience those rewards of service.

Please contact communications@seattle-alanon.org to volunteer or to find out more about the position. The new editor will be lovingly mentored with gratitude for their service as they learn their new position.



Phone Volunteers Needed

by Dave M

The Al-Anon Declaration states in part "When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always be there." Quite often this process starts with a phone call to the Seattle AIS 24 Hour Phone Service (206-625-000).

This service is staffed by a crew of dedicated volunteers who share their experience, strength and hope with the people that call in seeking help or information. When volunteers are not available, the system allows people to leave a voicemail or text message and the next volunteer on shift contacts the individual. My personal experience is that callers are amazed when a real person answers the phone and asks, "How may I help you?" Additional volunteers would allow this to happen on a more frequent basis.

If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity to serve, two Zoom "informational", "orientation" classes will be held in May and June. Class focus will be on explaining how the system works (it's easy) and answering questions potential volunteers may have.

Dates and Zoom invitations:

May 25, 2023 7:00 – 8:00 pm https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87528036212?pw d=N1pUQUR6SmJDeHZNQXdZN0FmZUV5 Zz09

June 6, 2023 7:00 – 8:00 pm <u>https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88982624513?pw</u> <u>d=S3QwYVNIWE8rOGJOZzJJa1ImbUtBUT0</u> <u>9</u>

As always, in service, I remind myself to Let it Begin with Me! I look forward to meeting you at one of the class meetings.



Step Five

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.



Service in Al-Anon by BZ W, DR 14

When I first started in Al-Anon many years ago I thought service was just putting out the books, getting the tea, coffee or cocoa ready or chairing a meeting and that is service but then I found that there was a treasurer, secretary and a literature person, so I stepped up and over the years I've held all those positions. When we moved to our present home and I retired I had to choose a new sponsor. She is wonderful and talked to me about more service and explained to me about how the beginning starts at group level and that our group needed to be represented and that the information that happens in the district my meeting was in and needed to be brought back to our group. The point she made was, "Are you getting anything from Al-Anon, if so what are you willing to do to keep it going? At all levels." So, I signed up to be a GR (group rep.) and I met so many neat people and enjoyed learning more about Al-Anon on all levels.

After being a GR (group rep.) and seeing how the district rep. handled the meetings, I volunteered to be the DR (District Rep) which is the next step (you must be a GR (Group Rep.) before you can be a DR. I still am a DR. No one has volunteered to take the position and I wanted our district to have a voice at Pre-Con and Fall Assembly (our yearly conventions).

When attending an AIS (AI-Anon Information Service) monthly meeting they had officers but didn't have a secretary, so I volunteered to do that until elections. There are two AIS meetings: a council and a board meeting. GR's attend the council meeting, vote on items and take information back to their meetings. Board meetings DR's and Alt DR's attend and vote and take information back to district meetings.

The next step is AWSC (Area World Service Committee) which DR's or Alt DR's attend twice a year to hear, vote and learn about business in Al-Anon. There is a chairperson and officers as well. Then we have a Delegate that attends WSC (World Service Conference).

All these are people are in service.

Sure, hope you get involved in service!





Tradition Five

Each Al-Anon Family Group has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of AA ourselves, by encouraging and understanding our alcoholic relatives, and by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics.



AIS Council Meeting

The next Council meeting is Thursday, May 11, 2023, 7:30-9:00 pm. Click the AIS website 2023 Calendar link on the Events page (<u>https://www.seattle-al-</u> anon.org/events) for the zoom information.

Has Your Meeting Changed?

- Gone back to meeting in person
- Become hybrid or concurrent
- Has a new physical location
- Made other changes that members need to know about
- Has an alternate Holiday Schedule
- Has disbanded

Please send all meeting changes to the WA Area Group Records Coordinator [<u>https://waal-anon.org/meeting-changes/</u>] Changes and Updates are made Weekly. (Seattle AIS is automatically cc'd in the change request)

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the Seattle AIS updated meeting schedule, please contact <u>meetingdirectoryeditor@seattle-al-</u> <u>anon.org</u>

Concept Five

The rights of appeal and petition protect minorities and insure that they be heard.





Journey Out of Denial



Denial is a protective defense mechanism and an essential part of the grieving process. I was born into the twisted world of intergenerational alcoholism and all its discontents. People coped by ignoring heartbreaking realities. As a child I simply could not have multiple caregivers who were dysregulated and punishing. So, I idealized some of them. I utilized magical thinking and denial to try to navigate the intermittent abuse and dysfunction. However, as I approached my teen years, there was a discerning part of me that longed for stability and authenticity.

I have spent much of my life feeling responsible for the choices and happiness of others. I didn't realize I was allowing manipulators to guilt or bully me into doing things for them. Not doing what someone else wanted generally meant there would be painful consequences. Sometimes I felt compulsive about it, trapped in a cycle of people-pleasing.

There have been key seasons in life where I have embarked on a deeper threshold of recovery. God led me into keen insight through prayer and strategically timed resources. Denial often hangs at the edges of my mind like a dense fog that requires the winds of epiphany to clear the inconsistencies. Al Anon and a book on boundaries opened the first door to my healing. Sitting in a circle in an old Alano Club house, we took turns reading a page from a small book entitled; Courage to Change. Encouraged by the vulnerable shares of others, I found my genuine voice. I thought I was there to "save" my family, but in those rooms, I found the courage to begin to save myself.

It is ironic that I chose not to drink for 15 years, thinking I could influence my alcoholic loved ones into recovery! At the time I lived over a thousand miles away from them. During those early meetings I witnessed people making decisions for themselves and considering multiple options. It was like a "lightbulb" moment when I could see that it wasn't "selfish" to allow yourself choices. At the time, I was in a domestic abuse situation, but it was out of my awareness. These meetings helped me devise a "Plan B" to contend with the growing insanity and chaos of my homelife.

Denial is often referred to as peeling the layers off of an onion. That is rather poetic as tears often accompany the process of both. What I find most challenging is living in the hot zone with active alcoholism. Sometimes when the fog begins to clear, it suddenly returns, clinging to my thoughts like a disorienting cloak. Nonetheless, I progress through the mist, to discover a new level of growth.

Order the Forum Magazine



Al-Anon's monthly magazine features timely sharings from Al-Anon and Alateen members, suggested meeting topics, and the latest information on worldwide Al-Anon recovery. Experience and insight you won't find anywhere else!

May 2023 AIS Council Meeting Minutes (Summary, not yet approved)

Meeting Opened at 7:30 PM with the Serenity Prayer

Attendance: 19 individuals

Introductions: all

Readings: Concept 4 Karen T

Secretary: Kathy K: Approval of the March Minutes: Solveig W moved that the March Meeting Minutes be accepted as presented. Mary R seconded. Motion Passed.

Chair: Karen L: LDC Co-Coordinators are officially appointed. Mary R and Linda H, who have been serving in the role will be co-coordinators. WSO AIS/LDC Community Webex:

WSO held a WebEx video conference for all AIS and LDCs on Mar. 11. Mary R, Linda H and Karen L participated. Washington State was represented by Pierce County AIS and Seattle AIS (the only 2 AIS officially in WA). The information presented was basic with 3 primary messages.

1) AIS(s) should stay in their geographical boundaries. Karen L felt this may be related to the issue of Permanent Electronic Groups (PEGs).

2) Keep the WSO office contact up to date.

3) Reminder that AIS(s) are self-supporting.4) We will be able to pre order the new daily reader which will debut at the International Convention in July.

We have been asked by WA Area to present a workshop at SSA. Gary H has volunteered for this.

Treasurer: Gary H: Financial reports: Statement of Financial Position: Total assets of \$57,704.15. Statement of Activity Comparison: Donations

were down from 2022 and significantly more literature sales.

Vice Chair Report: Dave M: Open House Report: April open office was quiet with 2 visitors and about \$80.00 of literature sold. It was the same weekend as Pre-Con which may have affected attendance and sales. May and June are staffed. There is a need for a few more volunteers. We can provide preorder pickups.

Coordinators:

LDC: Mary R and Linda H: They continue to process Literature orders via email to LDC and are shipping orders each Thursday. We still need another two volunteers for the office. Office job usually entails about 2-3 hours per week. Training is provided. AIS had an opportunity to buy some Spanish literature from District 8 in the Vancouver, WA Area. They bought items needed, saving LDC over purchasing from WSO while maintaining good inventory levels. There seems to be a little trend of districts wanting to get out of the literature business. Linda H and Lynne W attended Pre-Con to sell literature and offered those attending an opportunity to purchase the new Service Manual.

Linda H's recommendation is that in the future we only accept invitations to provide literature in Western Washington locations that would not require an overnight stay. Mary R's input would be that if a hosting district wants AIS to provide literature sales, that the hosting district pays for the registration, and room if overnight is required. Action: None

Seattle AIS was also invited to sell CAL at the Annual Spanish AI-Anon Conference. More than 300 people gathered in Seattle. The sale of Spanish and English literature was a huge success as demonstrated by the below results. Sold to 120 members from all over the US, Mexico and South America. In total 637 items were sold (Pamphlets and Books). There is an article by Evelyn B in the April BITS with more detail.

Communications: Jackie T: Reviewed the members of the Communications Committee: Web Editor, BITS editor, Events Editor, Meeting Directory Editor and Archive Editor (currently inactive position)

Phones: Dave M (outgoing Coordinator): The coordinator position is open. 64% of the shifts were covered, and daytime shifts were covered completely. There were 55 calls and 24 people needed assistance. There were 3 texts and 5 voice mails. He has written an article for the May BITS and is hoping to recruit new phone volunteers.

Outreach: Solveig W: Not a lot of activity during the past month. She is now the person who sends newcomer packets out to individuals requesting. She is answering the emails that are sent to Outreach which are usually people in need.

Tech: Pierre J: He is out of town so no report this month.

Old Business: Need a replacement phone coordinator

New Business: Karen L has sent an email to Board members in regards to doing a workshop about AIS. In general; what it does and doesn't do. In the past our helpfulness has led to double headed management which has caused problems. She is proposing a work-shop in May and after a head count of council attendees, it is now proposed to be May 15 from 7-9 p.m. She is suggesting reading the Service Manual (p. 65-66) and using the WSO website under the Members tab to get more information about AIS prior to the workshop. The workshop would be open to all interested members.

Seventh tradition: Solveig W asked about Venmo and Gary is working on it.

Next Council Meeting: Thursday, May 11th, 2023 from 7:30-9:00 PM

Next Board Meeting: Thursday, April 20, 2023 at 7:00PM

Adjournment: Al-Anon/Alateen Declaration at 8:38 PM

Submitted by Kathy K, Secretary

Thank you for your donations and your support of AIS!

Our funding now comes primarily from: *Donations by Members, Groups, and Districts *Literature Sales Please send all AIS mail, including checks for literature orders and donations, to: Seattle AIS 505 Broadway E #400 Seattle, WA 98102-5023 Donate Now

And More ...

MEETING SCHEDULE: registered Al-Anon groups in the Greater Seattle Area. Hybrid, Concurrent, and in-person meetings are listed.

MEETING SCHEDULE

Please visit our Members section for the most up-to-date information on:

- List of AIS Officers and <u>Coordinators</u>
- Where to Send Donations
- District Representatives and Business Meeting Information
- <u>AIS Financial Information</u>
- <u>Calendar of Events</u>

Meeting News

News from the Meeting Directory Editor

Please consider volunteering to serve as the Meeting Directory Editor. Information about the position can be found in this issue.

Again, this past month, there were very few meeting changes. So, if you see a date at the top of the Meeting Directory that is a week or two old, please don't assume that our schedule is not up to date. All changes are usually made within a couple days of their submission to WA Area via the form on their site. AIS is immediately notified when you submit the change to WA Area.

The following changes were made from March 22 through April 24.

- Saturday, 8:30 AM, West Seattle Saturday Morning AFG, Face Masks Optional [updated 3/28]
- Thursday, 10: AM, **GFA Un Regalo Para Mi**, Meeting day and time changed to Friday at 7:00 PM [updated 3/28]
- Sunday, 6:00 PM, Enumclaw Sunday Night AFG, Hybrid {updated 3/28}
- Monday, 7:30 PM, Richmond Beach AFG, New Zoom Log In and Passcode {updated 4/11}
- Friday, 7:00 PM, **Practice Makes Progress Women AFG**, Disbanded (updated 4/11}
- Wednesday, 7:00 PM, **Courage to Change AFG – Seattle**, Face Masks Optional, No Vaccination Required {updated 4/15}
- Sunday, 7:00 PM, **Ballard Sunday Night AFG**, Face Masks Optional {updated 4/17}
- Tuesday, 12:30 PM, **Kirkland Tuesday Afternoon AFG**, Activated as In Person for FAFO {updated 4/23}