

|SUBSCRIBE TO THE BITS | NEW TO AL-ANON? | FIND A MEETING | September 2022 |

AIS Service

by Karen L

"Now it is our turn to give back." Paths to Recovery, Step 12 (p. 120)

Service is my favorite topic at meetings!
Someone in my home group noted that my shares are usually about service. When I've



shared my story, service is a big part. This happens because **Service** is how my Al-Anon program gets stronger. I feel a deeper responsibility, an accountability to Al-Anon principles, when I take service positions. This forces me to do more thorough homework on Traditions and Concepts and the Al-Anon Service Manual. I get to develop and practice new positive Al-Anon behaviors in a safe environment with other Al-Anon members. With enough repetition, I have found the practice in my service positions develops the "muscle memory" for my brain and mouth that helps me in relationships with family and people outside of Al-Anon. And in doing so, I gain a little more serenity each day and a lot of priceless Al-Anon friendships.

I mention this because, in two months, AIS will elect officers and appoint new Coordinators. Following the Al-Anon principle of rotation to give all members the privilege of serving, a number of positions will be opening up. And there are ongoing volunteer positions for Literature, Phones, and Alateen that always welcome new volunteers.

Below are what other AIS volunteers have written about their service experience. Please consider

"giving back" through an AIS service position. We have many positions with a wide range of duties and skills. There is a position match for everyone! Please contact any of the AIS Officers or Coordinators, or email chair@seattle-al-anon.org for more information.

Like many, Al-Anon has helped me enormously in dealing with tough stuff. I got curious about what made it work, started volunteering at the LDC, and then got more involved with AIS, serving as Vice-Chair and later co-coordinating the LDC. I've met so many terrific people this way, and learned a huge amount. It really feels great to give back to an organization that I've gotten so much from. Doug L

I was new to WA state but not new to Al-Anon when I volunteered to help with literature at the AIS office. I knew I would get to meet more members, see the office, and get to learn how the process worked for ordering and filling book orders. I met some wonderful volunteers and the members who came into the office to purchase books and pamphlets (before Covid hit). This way, I met many more members than I would have by just attending my meetings in the suburbs of Seattle.

Ellen

Service is key to recovery. I have been a phone volunteer for years and was Phone Volunteer Coordinator for some time. It's important to have a voice on the phone to connect newcomers and others to meetings. It doesn't cost anything to listen for a few minutes. I always get more from service than I give.

Karen T

Hard Work

by Allen L

Very little has come easily to me. The overwhelming majority of what I have or have accomplished has been the result of hard work and perseverance. Military service reinforced the concept of "improvise, adapt, and overcome!"

The problem with that approach is that I believe I can achieve anything I want by working harder. I continued to push for my ideal solution long after any rational person would have admitted that it just wasn't possible.

Through Al-Anon, I learned to tell the difference between the things I cannot change and the things I can. Well, truth be told, I'm still learning. By attending meetings and talking with my sponsor and other Al-Anon resources, I gain, little by little, a better understanding of what's really mine to change.

My process is to admit I'm powerless over whatever the thing is I'm struggling with. To accept that my thinking has become distorted, and to reach out for my Higher Power to clear my thinking. Lastly, to turn whatever this is over to my Higher Power for resolution. Together with the frequent use of the Serenity Prayer, I can find the "wisdom to know the difference."

Once I can see and accept that I cannot control whatever the current "thing" is, I can turn off the committee in my head just long enough for my Higher Power to restore me to sanity.

Step Nine

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.



Enjoy Talking on the Phone or Sleeping on the Job?



Seattle Al-Anon Information Service (AIS) Is Looking for Phone Volunteers!

Shifts are available 7 days a week in 3-hour intervals starting at 7am during the day, and at night there is one shift starting at 10:30pm, which goes until 7am.

The focus is to answer questions about Al-Anon and Alateen meeting times and Zoom availability, to give hope to people whose lives may be affected by someone else's drinking, and to help others reach the appropriate source of help.

A manual is provided with resource numbers and helpful suggestions on maintaining anonymity and talking to people in distress.

FOR INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT phones@seattle-al-anon.org





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2022 WA Area Speakers Convention

WA Area is hosting the 2022 Speakers Convention on October 21-22, 2022, at the South Puget Sound Community College in Lacey. This is a free event, and we hope you will save the date to attend a weekend of speakers and workshop panels. The Speakers Convention Committee needs your support in financial donations to offset the cost of travel and hotel for our speakers, venue rental, etc. Please consider donating directly to our Venmo account or contact our convention treasurer at waspeakers2022@gmail.com. Venmo for 2022 WA Area **Speakers Convention** @WAAreaSpeakersConvention

New WA Area AFG Address to send DONATIONS

WA Area AFG 12128 N. Division St. PMB # 1531 Spokane, WA 99218

Grateful in Service, Melissa M. WA Area Treasurer

Let Us Know If Your Meeting Has:

- 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**

[https://wa-al-anon.org/meeting-changes/] Changes and Updates are made Weekly. (Seattle AIS is cc'd in the change request)

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the Seattle AIS updated meeting schedule, please contact meetingdirectoryeditor@seattle-al-

anon.org

Tradition Nine

Our groups, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.



AIS Council Meeting

The next Council meeting is September 8, 2022, 7:30-9:00 pm. Check the AIS website calendar (https://www.seattle-al-anon.org/events) for the zoom link. Or the Council Meeting direct link https://www.seattle-al-anon.org/council-meeting.html

AIS Board Meeting

Saturday, September 10 from 2:00 to 4:00 PM

Check the AIS website calendar (https://www.seattle-al-anon.org/events) for the zoom link.

Need a Free Newcomer Packet?

Anyone local to Seattle who is a newcomer and wants an individual newcomer packet (or in Spanish, too!), please send an email to LDC@seattle-al-anon.org with the name and mailing address.

Do you see Wilson? by Clif H



An Al-Anon friend sent me this picture of clouds. In my exchange with her, she made the statement, "You know, I almost see a reverse Print of Wilson from Castaways in the middle of those clouds, Iol." (Editors note: the actual movie title is Cast Away.) When I relooked at the picture, sure enough, the ball was there. What really struck me, though, was how my friend described what she saw. Wilson.

For those who aren't familiar with the movie, Wilson was a volleyball with a handprint turned into a face. The main character was marooned on an island with limited resources and nary another soul. As the movie progresses, the main character goes a bit crazy and creates his friend, Wilson, with whom he shares his world. His life had become unmanageable, and was doing the best he could under the circumstances.

So why not say she saw a reverse volleyball in the clouds? To be honest, I don't know what she was thinking. Here, however, was my own thought. Perhaps this is what I saw.

My vision was of my best friend, not Wilson per se. What I observed was his representation of himself. My Higher Power, speaking through the clouds days ago, sent the message through a picture taken by my friend and the words she used to describe what she saw. Mentally, as I looked at the picture, I looked up into the sky; the same direction I look for my Higher Power, based on the religion of my youth.

Another interpretation might have been to have seen a fellow traveler, one that appears when someone is in need. Was my friend in need right then? Perhaps.

In *Paths to Recovery*, addressing Step Twelve, it states, "What is a spiritual awakening? How can we try to carry this message?" (p. 119). No doubt, my friend didn't arise that morning thinking about carrying the message of Al-Anon, but she did to me without question.





Never Get Too ...

The first time I heard the acronym **HALT**, I was sitting in a booth at a local restaurant with my mom and others after they had been to an AA meeting. It wasn't until years later that the saying

used in Al-Anon and other 12-step programs came home to roost. Applying the HALT process can be a quick way to check in with oneself and consider where some self-care may be in order before life goes off the rails.

Never get too **HUNGRY**. I have a lifetime of trying to strike a balance in my relationship with food, which has generally been my go-to in self-medication since I was a teenager. When I get to the point of actually feeling hungry, thoughtful choices often go out the window. That's when fast-food drive-thru comes IN the window! The temporary panacea of a full belly quickly fades into self-recrimination and futility. However, the deeper hunger that often fuels overeating is the hunger for authentic connection and relief from emotional pain.

Never get too **ANGRY**. My parents were quick to anger and rage, which was unleashed verbally and often physically upon my brother and me.

Conversely, I was not allowed to express anger or frustration in any form and was punished for showing any emotion that was not acceptable to them in the moment. Stuffing anger and feeling that horrible mix between love and hate for my disordered alcoholic caregivers was torturous for me. As a young adult, I felt guilty for even "feeling" anger or irritation. However, within recovery work, I now recognize anger as a signal that something has been violated and/or some action needs to be taken. The key is to stay attuned to oneself and not allow a stockpile of repressed emotions.

Never get too **LONELY**. I chased after love and friendship most of my life. Coming from the patterns I learned in childhood, I would invest even more time and energy to try to get a connection from a detached and unavailable person. Living with a dysregulated alcoholic, I find myself vulnerable to that gnawing loneliness. This is when I may expose myself to a potentially damaging interaction with the alcoholic or seek out anyone who happens to be available out of desperation.

Never get too **TIRED**. It has been well-documented that sleep deprivation is one of the most effective means of torture. Even one night of anxiety-ridden sleeplessness limits my functionality the next day. Affected by the chaos and insanity of alcoholism, these insomniac nights may string together to create the perfect storm of elevated dysfunction in my life. It is essential to protect slumber time with discipline and boundaries!

Concept Nine

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



Delving into the Concepts by Emily S



Concept Nine

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

Ok, concepts are devoted to service, that much I've gathered. It took me a while to understand that.

They are so rarely mentioned in our group that we don't even read them before our meeting, just the Al-Anon Steps and Traditions. The Concepts are not more advanced, but it seems they are for someone further along in their recovery than a newcomer, as newcomers are less likely to volunteer for a service position. Maybe that's why our group doesn't recite them aloud before each meeting.

I've found 4 Al-Anon books in my collection that talk about this concept. *Many Voices, One Journey* (an Al-Anon history book) has this to say after describing that they instituted Concept Nine in 1981. "To emphasize the necessity for having a vision of the future, the Committee quoted Bill W.'s essay, 'Leadership,' which is included in the Concept Nine descriptive text in the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27)" (p. 220). I thought I'd just leave that here because it seems important, even though I don't know what it really means in the grand scheme of things. Remember, I'm a Concepts newbie.

In How Al-Anon Works, Concept Nine is discussed in detail. Leadership is something I've always struggled with because I'm not born with that gene. I prefer not to be in charge. Concept Nine has helped me in my personal life and work life as well. Even though I'm not in charge a lot, I still have learned to show more respect to my friends and coworkers. I can't go wrong if I show respect. That's a lesson I must have learned in Al-Anon but can't pinpoint exactly where I got it from.

If anyone wants to read the best/most thorough interpretation of Concept Nine, please read *Paths to Recovery* (pp. 301- 308). All the other CAL books I have identified merely touched on Concept Nine, but *Paths to Recovery* has 8 full pages dedicated to it. It's helped me understand that while I may not be a natural leader, I can still lead in my own way. A good leader attends meetings regularly, welcomes newcomers, helps with service positions, and listens to others. These are all basic things I do and can do.

Discovering Choices has perhaps my favorite summary of this concept. "Concept Nine reminds us that we are all leaders of our own lives" (p. 265). Very zen, I love it. When I got lost in my alcoholic's problems, I did not feel like I was in control of my own life. How did I let my life get like this? So I made a change and put myself first. And that has made all the difference.



Order the Forum Magazine

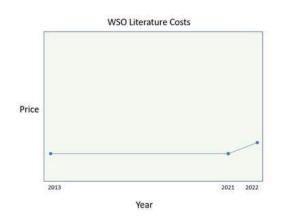
Al-Anon's monthly magazine features timely sharings from Al-Anon and Alateen members, suggested meeting topics, and the latest information on worldwide Al-Anon recovery. Experience and insight you won't find anywhere else!

Literature Price Increase

The Al-Anon World Service Office (WSO) prices on literature have not increased since 2013, despite significant increased costs of paper and other expenses. Recently the WSO Finance Committee decided, with Executive Committee approval, to raise prices on most books and some pamphlets, effective August 1, 2022, so that WSO can remain self-supporting.

We are in the process of updating our systems and price lists to align with WSO's pricing recommendations. Effective September 8, 2022, Seattle AIS prices will increase to match the new WSO prices.

Julie R and Doug L, LDC Co-coordinators



FALL AWSC Alateen Coordinator Report 8/6/22

As Alateen Coordinator for Washington Area, I am still a cheerleader for Al-Anon members involved in Alateen service (AMIAS). FOLKS WHO SERVE AS AMIAS, YOU ARE ALL MY HERO.

We have had 4 AMIAS CIRCLEs, gatherings (currently on ZOOM) where we share our experience, strength, and hope (ESH) with each other and answer each other's questions about being in service to Alateen's. That is going well. We have another one scheduled on Aug 13 @ 4 PM.

We are planning to have ASTAR (A Service, Training, and Recovery event) next year in April. I head the planning committee. To be really successful, at least 8 people are needed on the committee to plan publicity, registration, and fundraising. Please get the word out that I am looking for volunteers to be on the 2023 ASTAR planning committee.

District Representatives (DRs) planning outreach for Alateen is something I encourage at the Group and District levels. We have 83 AMIAS ready, willing, and trained to be group sponsors. If your District needs to have an AMIAS training event, let me know.

Eliza D, WA Area Alateen Coordinator, alateen@wa-al-anon.org



Dear Members of Al-Anon,

Growing up in an Alcoholic home I can relate to Alateens ESH. I admire their ability to articulate and wisdom they have at such a young age.

There are many ways we can contribute to the Alateen community, for example having Alateen Talk on our literature table or even using it as CAL reading on open topic night! Like me you might be surprised...

Thank you for letting me share

Mary-Ann N.

Grateful Ais Alateen Coordinator

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August 2022 AIS Council Meeting Minutes (Summary)

Opened 7:30 PM with Serenity Prayer

Attendance: 21 attendees

REPORTS

Secretary: Motion by Helen V to accept July 14 Meeting Minutes as submitted, Linda seconded. Motion

passed

Treasurer: Motion by Mariann M to consolidate the financial accounts to one bank and set up on-line

payment systems for donations. Seconded by (?) Motion passed

Bylaws Presentation: Motion by Helen V to accept the Bylaws as amended (34% for the Board quorum and

"timely" in place of "promptly" for the filing of the IRS. Cheré F seconded. Motion passed.

Literature Distribution Center: WSO is raising literature prices. LDC Co-Coordinators are in the early stages of

how we will go about doing this.

Chair: The Area World Service Convention in August was good. Please get the information through your Districts. The Gratitude Garden Party on Aug 21st will have books for sale at the same, not the increased .

prices.

Meeting closed at 8:50 PM with Al-Anon/Alateen Declaration

Minutes respectfully submitted by Elizabeth G, AIS 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. All virtual 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 Coordinators
- Where to Send Donations
- <u>District Representatives and Business Meeting Information</u>
- AIS Financial Information
- Calendar of Events

Meeting News

Meeting Changes Reported during August

Complete details at: https://www.seattle-al-anon.org/meetings.html/

Changes are underlined.

- Monday, 10:30 AM, Monday Morning Jump Start AFG: Closed Captioning (CC) (updated 8/13/22)
- Monday, 12:00 PM, Capitol Hill AFG: [Monday Holidays Zoom Only 9/5, 10/10, 12/26/22, 01/02/23]
 {updated 8/13/22}
- Monday, 7:00 PM, Just for Today AFG: <u>DISBANDED</u> {updated 8/29/22}
- Monday, 7:00 PM, Living in the Solution AFG: (<u>Hybrid starting 8/1 and new location: Kirkland Congregational United Church of Christ</u>) (updated 8/1/22)
- Monday, 7:00 PM, Parents for Serenity AFG: meet in lower lot weather permitting {updated 8/13/22}
- Tuesday, 7:00 PM, Vive GFA: new Zoom details {updated 8/13/22}
- Tuesday, 7:15 PM, Bothell Tuesday Niters AFG: removed CH designation {updated 8/13/22}
- Tuesday, 7:30 PM, Denny Park Family AFG: new Zoom details {updated 8/21/22}
- Tuesday, 7:30 PM, North End Men's AFG: <u>updated Zoom link and added group email</u> {updated 8/23/22}
- Wednesday, 7:30 PM, Auburn Wednesday Night AFG: <u>DISBANDED</u> {updated 8/29/22}
- Wednesday, 7:30 PM, Midweek Men's AFG: New location + Hybrid effective Sept 7, 2022 {updated 8/30/22}
- Thursday, 7:30 PM, Stay in Your Lane AFG: Men's designation removed {updated 8/30/22}
- Friday, 8:00 PM, Friday Night LGBTQ+ AFG: passcode added {updated 8/23/22}
- Saturday, 9:00 AM, Changing Attitudes AFG: Face Masks Required (updated 8/29/22)
- Saturday, 11:00 AM, Search for Serenity AFG: <u>HYBRID</u> (weekly) <u>BYOB</u> <u>removed Beginner designation</u> {updated 8/21/22}
- Saturday, 7:30 PM, Saturday Night Recovery AFG: new Group Name and Zoom details (updated 8/29/22)
- Sunday, 6:00 PM, Enumclaw Sunday Nite AFG: <u>HYBRID and Face Masks Optional</u> {updated 8/29/22}

Meeting Support

- Thursday, 7:00 PM, Madison Madrona AFG, In-Person, BIPOC / LGBTQIA (added 8/31/22)
- Thursday, 7:30 PM, Stay in Your Lane AFG, In-Person {added 8/31/22}
- Sunday, 8:30 AM, Sunday AM Fresh Start AFG, In-Person-Hybrid {added 8/31/22}

Meeting Holidays

Monday, 12:00 PM, Capitol Hill AFG: Monday Holidays – Zoom Only 9/5, 10/10, 12/26/22, 01/02/23