

Southern Illinois Al-Anon Family Group
News-O-Gram
Summer 2021

SIAFG Area Assembly Information July 10, 2021

ZOOM Meeting Details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87591284440?pwd=L3JxVkI3WVVveFdSb3pONCs4UUhJdz09>

Meeting ID: 875 9128 4440 Passcode: 755943

One tap mobile: +13126266799,,87591284440#,,,,*755943# US (Chicago)

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87591284440?pwd=L3JxVkI3WVVveFdSb3pONCs4UUhJdz09>

8:30-9 am Sign On and Get Settled 9:00 am Meeting Starts

Who attends these meetings??
Southern Illinois Al-Anon Family Group

SIAFG Area Assembly meeting is open for all members of Al-Anon, everyone is welcome! This meeting is for the Area District Representatives, Officers, Coordinators and Past Delegates. However, input from every Al-Anon and Alateen member is welcome! Group Representatives (or alternate if GR cannot attend) are the only ones who have vote. Discussions will include minutes from previous meeting, financial reports, group records, any old and/or new business and sharing of group concerns/successes/information, districts, and area coordinators. Your Delegate will also share information from WSO.

SIAWSC MEETING Information
September 18, 2021

Zoom Meeting Details: TO COME

8:30 - 9 am Sign On and Get "Settled" 9:00 am Meeting Starts

Who attends these meetings?? Southern Illinois Area World Service Committee

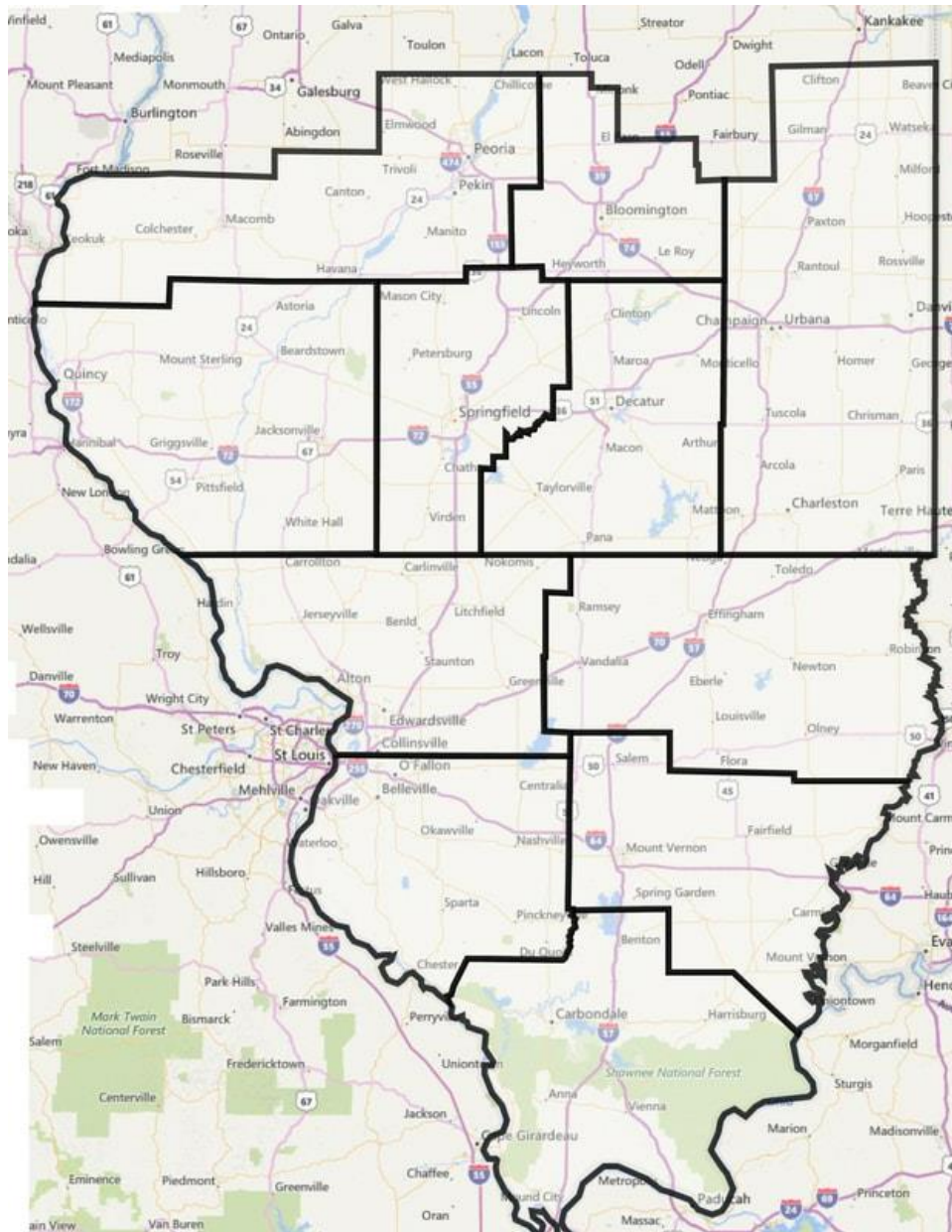
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Attendance from everyone is greatly encouraged. Topics from Area Assembly will be discussed, and any suggested improvements for Area Assembly meetings, suggestions for group support, district support, or suggestions from WSO are considered. Decisions will be made and the agenda will be set for the next Area Assembly meeting.

Every Al-Anon and Alateen member has a voice, but only Area District Representatives, Officers, Coordinators, and Past Delegates have vote."

If you have any changes to group meeting times, date, contact person, etc., please contact the Group Records Secretary at siafg.group.records@gmail.com.

The 2021 Illinois State AFG Convention
is virtually scheduled for
September 24 – 25, 2021



Can you name the District numbers?
Check it out on the SIAFG.org website.

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Happy Summer 2021 SIAFG!

What a year we have had! One thing I LOVE about Alanon is our resourcefulness and our perseverance. Groups, Districts, and our own SIAFG Area Assembly have all figured out ways to move on and improve. Some things we miss dearly about being together but other things I personally am happy to learn new skills to make our programs and our work of Alanon move forward. Thank you all for your patience, understanding and love to help us all make it through safe and healthy.

I'd highly encourage all members to take a look at the July 10 Area Assembly agenda and PLEASE attend our meeting, or as much of our meeting as your schedule will allow. We have some important work to make sure our groups, districts and area run smoothly and we would love your participation. Remember, all members have voice! If you have suggestions or ideas to make our Area run more smoothly please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

I would also point out that we have a number of important Coordinator positions open at this time. In particular Cathy Blakey has graciously agreed to step in as our interim Convention liaison. If you would like to get an idea of this position you can "walk along side" Cathy this coming year as liaison and then take the position from there.

We also have Archives, Forum/Literature, Public Outreach, and Ways and Means all open. When these positions aren't filled the work of them is stalled for our area. Please thoughtfully consider if you can help pitch in. Remember, we all do the best we can as we volunteer for these roles so if you have any capacity at all to pitch in we would welcome your help!!

Thank you again for sharing your love and service to Al-Anon.

Best wishes for a safe and fun summer!!

Becky Ropp
217/369-8164
rropp@growmark.com

SIAFG Inventory Results 2020

- The most common obstacles to attendance for those who attend once a year or less included "Too much time commitment" 50% and "Too far to drive to Springfield" 50%.
- When asked about the ideal length of our meetings, most [63%] had no opinion, 25% felt 2 hours would be best.
- 50% of members would like Zoom/in-person hybrid meetings in the future and 25% preferred a Zoom-only option.
- The most appealing aspects of our Assembly meetings were "Informative" 64% and "Networking opportunities" 64%; 41% chose "Productive," "Casual atmosphere," and "We do important work."
- The least attractive aspects of our meetings are "Unproductive" 47% and "Boring" 26%.
- Other areas for improvement include "Dominance by a few members" 74%, Assembly meetings "do not help our groups thrive" 62%, and 52% leave meetings feeling neutral or negative.
- Suggestions for improvement include:
 - Skits, workshops, joint projects, speakers on the Concepts
 - More group connection and communication; Challenge GR's to participate with each other.
 - Better use of time, less repetition; Limit presentation and discussion time; If we can't agree, we need to do more research or send it to committee and bring it up next meeting
 - Have coordinators and officers provide reports by email before meetings so we can use meeting time for questions and discussion

Southern Illinois Area Treasurer's Report May-21

Hello, I hope everyone is enjoying spring and looking forward to resuming family activities again. We sure are in a happier, healthier position, than we were last year. Let's all get vaccinated, so we can gather together again, in safety. The table below shows district and group donations from January - April 2021. When sending a donation, please use the contribution form that I return with your donation receipt. The donation form is also available on SIAFG website and is listed below, after the contribution table. In order to keep complete records, I need to know **Group Name, District Number, and WSO ID number**. In addition, it helps if you print the name and address of the person sending the donation, because I cannot always read the signatures. The below donations were given to Area's general fund.

On behalf of our Area Assembly, I thank you for your contributions. It is because of your support we can continue to carry the message to others. I look forward to seeing all of you on zoom at the next Area Assembly in July.

Yours in Recovery,
Carol W., Area Treasurer



District or Group Name	District Number	Group Number	District or Group Name	District Number	Group Number
Bethalto Wed. Morning AFG	18	3491	Personal Donation	12	3507
CMA Hope AFG	20	35525	Progress Not Perfection	19	30633415
District 14 AFG	14		Rise & Shine AFG	12	30669824
Edwardsville Fundamentals of Recovery	18	30584718	Saturday Morning Serenity Seeker	10	25455
Fourth Step AFG	10	30595928	The Last Resort	18	50020
Friday Night Happy Hour	10	61535	The Monday Night Serenity Group	18	26501
Happiness Is	19	4811	Thursday Night AFG	18	30528380
Hope for Today AFG	12	66486	Troy Joy	18	63747
Hopeful Serenity Seekers Adult Children AFG	18	34856	Twelve Step AFG	16	50819
Monday Morning AFG	20	24161	Wednesday Morning Glories	20	4022
Onley AFG	13	3980			

Date: _____

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS AREA CONTRIBUTION FORM

PLEASE PRINT

Group Name _____ Group ID# _____
 Contact Person _____ District _____
 Street Address _____ Amount _____
 City and State _____ Check # _____
 Zip Code _____
 Phone Number _____

Send to: Carol Wielgus

Please Make Check or

Money Order to:

SIAFG

**1000 Bethel Mine Road
 Caseyville, IL 62232
 (618) 304-4672**

District Coordinator Reports

News-O-Gram Coordinator

This media forum is meant to include personal and business sharing, including personal-sharing by Al-Anon/Alateen members of their experience, strength and hope. It is also an opportunity for Business sharing by principally concerned members pertaining to Al-Anon/Alateen business, organization or procedures (sharing must include references to Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature).

Please share your thoughts and concerns with Carol Holterman, 3321 West William Street, Champaign, Illinois 61821; text/call 262-729-0946 or email to Carol53115@Yahoo.com. The next News-O-Gram deadline will be October 9, 2021. This will accommodate the next SIAFG Assembly on November 6, 2021

Service is truly the key to personal growth, and I appreciate the opportunity to continue my journey.

Peace,
Carol H.

DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS

District 12 News:

District 12 Report for Area Assembly Meeting 07/10/2021

District 12 – Cathy B. The district tried to meet on May 16, 2021, but had to cancel due to lack of attendance, and it has been rescheduled for July 18, 2021. The groups will be polled prior to the meeting to determine if the meeting will be held via Zoom, or F2F.

We updated our group meeting lists, and they have been posted to the siafg.org website. Our Tuesday, Savoy, New Lease on Life meeting resumed F2F meetings as of March 27th; and the Tuesday, Savoy, Parents of Alcoholics meeting also resumed F2F meetings as of May 4th and changed their meeting time from 7:30 pm to 7:00 pm. The Parents of Alcoholics meeting is our first official hybrid meeting as the meeting place can accommodate their needs. The Rantoul, Saturday Night AFG meeting is still on Zoom but is currently investigating the options of continuing on Zoom, resuming F2F, and/or becoming a hybrid meeting. All the other groups still meeting on Zoom, will remain on Zoom for now, and will discuss their options at a later date. Lots of options available, along with pros & cons, and of course technology challenges.

Our financial health is still stable; and budget looks good. No real expenses right now, other than the monthly Zoom room payments. Group donations are low, but do not present any issues at this time.

Elisabeth J., our public outreach coordinator, continues to maintain our district website (www.centralillinoisalanon.weebly.com) with any updates, along with any updates to our twitter account. There are links to both siafg.org and WSO's websites, and a note for those looking for information about Al-Anon, or meeting information, to click on those links. We do not maintain a meeting list on our website or have any other documents housed on the website. Its main objective is to make information available to potential newcomers.

Our next district meeting will be July 18, 2021. We will be discussing options to possibly host a virtual event, such as a workshop or panel speakers, to be held TBD.

News from District 19

DISTRICT 19 (LINCOLN, SPRINGFIELD, ILLIOPOLIS and areas)

SUNDAY, APRIL 11, 2021 3:30PM on ZOOM-www.spi-alanonweebly.com

MEETING MINUTES:

Opening - Serenity Prayer, 12 Steps/Traditions/Concepts

Representatives from most of the groups: Sue W , Travis Y, Debbie M, Charlene V, Gail R, Marlene C , Patty S. , and Suzanne D in attendance.

Treasurer report and website: Travis Y. reported business account of \$919.

Groups have shared as able during Covid and also individual donations.

Checks written to Southern Area AFG - \$120 and to WSO-World Service Office - \$150.

Each month \$10.56 for voice mail which directs the person to the website and there are contact numbers for each meeting. Also monthly \$15.00 to DEX/Media yellowpages . The district has had this for 7 years and discussion to not continue as many google and search for information, now days.

Zoom portal is paid up through July and all agreed has been very helpful. Discussion to continue as some meetings may be keeping the Zoom format especially the Tuesday night speaker meeting at 7pm and the Saturday night 6:30pm meeting. Speakers have been invited from all over to speak via this format and greatly appreciated.

Our new District 19 Treasurer is Patty S with Assistant Treasurer, Travis Y. who is helping maintain our Zoom site.

Alateen Coordinator/Alateen Area Process: Debbie M. is working with Kyra N. our webmaster for SIAFG –Southern Illinois Area Family Group, to clear up some of the documents online so current AMIAS can find the correct forms for recertification. AMIAS-Alanon Member Involved in Alateen Service. People who are interested in becoming an AMIAS for the first time, can reach out directly to Debbie M. debbiemccoy67@comcast.net.

State Alanon convention will be virtual Sept. 24-25, 2021. Flyers will be coming out from Northern Area. Debbie M. and Janese H. plan to work on the convention for fall 2022.

Debbie is working with the NIAFG-Northern Illinois Alanon Family Group – Convention Planning Committee with the Alateen portion.

The position of Group Records Secretary is now held by Jane F. Any changes to meetings need to go to Jane at grouprecsec@gmail.com . Then she will contact WSO.

State AA convention –Aug. 28, 2021 and details coming.

New business: DEX/yellow pages voted to cancel payment and Patty S. will be new District Treasurer. Her contact information will be on the website.

Southern Area Assembly meets 3 times/year on a Saturday – March 6, July 10, and Nov. 6, 2021 9am-2pm via the Zoom portal. Our chairman-Becky R., conducts a very efficient meeting. All invited to any meetings.

Next District meetings will be held late July or August. I will send out emails of events, minutes of Southern Area and District 19 meetings, and News O Gram.

Suzanne D. shared that meetings in District 11- Decatur are all live. District 19 – Illiopolis has live meeting on Saturday 6pm as well as others locally. www.spi-alanonweebly.com for meeting flyer.

Meeting adjourned with Serenity Prayer at 4:35pm Thank you all for coming to the meeting!

Respectfully submitted, Charlene V. DR- Charlene.vollmer@gmail.com 217-891-2981

An Index for Gratitude

Where can you find some inspiring sharings on the topic of gratitude in Al-Anon's Conference Approved Literature?

- *Courage to Change* (B-16), pages 264, 282, 304, 340
- *Discovering Choices—Recovery in Relationships* (B-30), pages 58-59, 257
- *Hope for Today* (B-27), pages 23, 151, 247
- *How Al-Anon Works for Families & Friends of Alcoholics* (B-32), "Gratitude," pages 78-79
- *...In All Our Affairs* (B-15), pages 232-233, 235
- *Just for Tonight* Bookmark (M-81)
- *Living with Sobriety* (P-49), pages 44-45
- *One Day at a Time in Al-Anon* (B-6), pages 46, 126, 319, 345
- *Opening Our Hearts, Transforming Our Losses* (B-29), "Gratitude," pages 170-172
- *When I Got Busy, I Got Better* (P-78), pages 33-34

Available from local Literature Distribution Centers or [online](#).

Resources for Meetings

*From G13 - This Guideline may be photocopied.
This piece may be adapted by a General Service structure and distributed within that structure*

Al-Anon/Alateen Conference Approved Literature (CAL) provides an unlimited supply of topics. Each book, pamphlet, and leaflet offers options for a variety of subjects and situations.

For a complete listing of Al-Anon/Alateen Conference Approved Literature see the catalog S-15 order form S-16, or visit the Al-Anon/Alateen Web site, www.al-anon.alateen.org.

- The Forum, Al-Anon's monthly magazine, is recommended to be used at meetings. Sample articles are available on the Public Outreach Web site, www.al-anon.alateen.org.
- The Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27), guidelines, and other service materials also provide excellent resources for meetings.

The Service Manual and the Guidelines are posted on the
Al-Anon/Alateen Members' Web Site,
www.al-anon.alateen.org/members.

**AL-ANON STATE CONVENTION
HOSTED BY NORTHERN & SOUTHERN
AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP**
<http://www.ilstateafgconv.org>.

The Illinois State Al-Anon Convention is a key event to celebrate recovery in the Al-Anon/Alateen fellowship. It is a yearly event for Al-Anon, Alateen and AA members. Families, friends or anyone wishing to learn more about these programs are welcome to attend as well. All Al-Anon and AA meetings are “open,” meaning anyone can attend them. To assure the safety of Alateen members, Alateen meetings are “closed,” attended only by Alateens and certified Alateen Sponsors.

The convention is supported by two Areas, Southern and Northern Illinois Al-Anon Family Groups. Each Area takes a turn hosting the convention each year. The hosting committee selects the convention site within their Area and plans the details of the event. Often, members from both Areas volunteer their services during the convention, making the event more unified between the two Areas.

Although Al-Anon may participate in AA events with Al-Anon participation, this is the only event hosted exclusively by Al-Anon at the Area level. This makes the convention a unique celebration with a wide participation of members. All members, from both Southern and Northern Illinois AFG are encouraged to attend.

WHAT’S AN UNCONVENTIONAL CONVENTION?

First, it’s a virtual convention, so you can enjoy it from the comforts of anywhere you are. But what makes this different from other virtual conventions? We looked at the elements that make an in-person convention so wonderful... great speakers, excellent meetings and a chance for fellowship—meeting new people & catching up with old friends, plus fun activities, to name a few highlights. We found a way to provide all those in-person elements, but by doing it virtually. It’s unconventional—like no other convention you’ve attended before!

WHO ATTENDS?

Any member of Al-Anon, Alateen or AA. A full schedule of meetings and keynote speakers will be available for all attendees. All meetings are “open” to all registrants, except Alateen meetings. For safety reasons, only Alateens can attend Alateen meetings and the designated certified Al-Anon Member.in Alateen Service (AMIAS).

WHY IS THERE A FEE TO REGISTER?

Tradition 7 tells us that we should be fully self-supporting. The fee covers our expenses to bring you this unconventional convention. For this reason, we encourage early registration, it helps us in our planning to undertake such a unique event. The cost to register is only \$15 until June 30th, \$20 on July 1st & \$25 on September 1st.

CAN I REGISTER FOR THE CONVENTION AFTER SEPTEMBER 17TH?

Registration ends on September 17th, a week before the convention, so that the committee can process registrations to make everything as seamless as possible during the event. This way, you’ll get an awesome experience! So, be sure to sign up before 9/17!

DO I NEED TO CHOOSE THE MEETINGS I WANT TO ATTEND IN ADVANCE?

Yes. This is for a variety of reasons, but most importantly, we need to know who is attending what session so we can electronically “pre-admit” you into the meetings you are registered to attend when the meeting starts. This will make it easier for you to join the meetings.

IF I PRE-REGISTER FOR A MEETING AND CHANGE MY MIND LATER, CAN I “UNREGISTER” FROM THAT MEETING AND CHANGE TO ANOTHER?

Yes! You can make as many changes to your personal schedule as you wish until September 17th when convention registration ends. Unfortunately, we cannot make changes after September 17th.

CAN I VOLUNTEER TO SERVE AT THE CONVENTION?

Of course, we would love to have you! We need volunteers for a variety of positions: 1) Meeting leads, 2) Greeters for the hospitality room and 3) Zoom meeting hosts (admit people from waiting room into meeting room from waiting room and make sure everyone is muted). Just let us know if you’re interested in any of these opportunities when you register for the convention and our convention service coordinator will contact you

IF I HAVE QUESTIONS, WHO DO I CONTACT?

For general questions or for technical assistance, please email IL21afgConvention@gmail.com. You can also learn more about the convention by visiting <http://www.ilstateafgconv.org>.

Register Now!

Important Registration Information

Registration is a 2-step process:

1. Register for the event and make payment. You’ll get an email to confirm your payment.
2. Within a week of registering and paying for the event, you’ll get a 2nd email with a link to register for the convention site. ***The convention site is live now.*** Once you access this site, you can:
 - Update your personal profile. Add a picture or add a bio—even add your favorite slogan!
 - See the full convention schedule and register for the meetings you wish to attend (pre-registration is required and must be complete by 9/17/21)
 - See who else is attending—and request to connect with attendees so you can send messages to them now or during the event.
 - Visit the hospitality room and post a message for everyone to see.
 - Download free AI-Anon materials.

Online registration will close September 17th 2021.

PLEASE NOTE: There will be no refunds after August 15th 2021.

Hotel:

This is one of the GREAT things about a virtual convention...you can check into ANY hotel you would like...or log in from home. You can dress to the nines or dawn your most comfortable pair of PJs, and still have a wonderful growth inspiring experience.

VIRTUALLY YOURS IN RECOVERY: AN UNCONVENTIONAL CONVENTION

2021 AL-ANON IL STATE CONVENTION
WITH ALATEEN & AA PARTICIPATION

WHEN

Friday, Sept. 24, 2021
3pm - 9pm

Saturday, Sept. 25, 2021
8am - 8:30pm

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Al-Anon

Ric B., FL

Juanita U., NM

Alateen

TBD

AA

Chad S., IL



FEATURING • Keynote Speakers • 18+ Meetings to Choose From • Fellowship in the Hospitality Room • Entertainment • Item • Item • Item • Item

ADVANCE REGISTRATION REQUIRED

\$15 Until 6/30
\$20 Until 8/31
\$25 Until 9/17

LAST DATE OF REGISTRATION

9/17/21

No registrations accepted after this date.

REGISTRATION LINK:



**DUE TO COVID-19,
RESERVATIONS CAN
ONLY BE ACCEPTED
ONLINE.**

VISIT REGISTRATION SITE

**Further details about the convention and how to participate will be sent soon after your registration is complete.

CONVENTION FAQs

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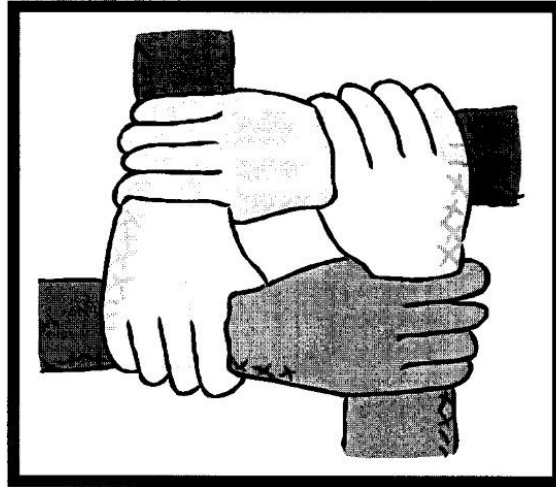
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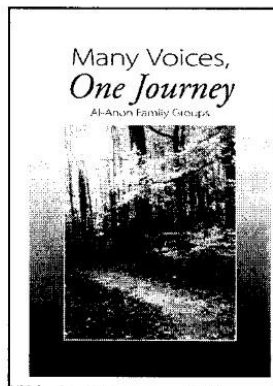
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Sixty Years of Recovery



A Guideline for Workshops using
Many Voices, One Journey (B-31)



The following workshop format can be adapted to accommodate any given timeframe, audience of Al-Anon members, or number of attendees. It includes a generalized format for opening and closing, with four topics to choose from for the specific focus of the workshop. All four topics relate to various segments of the book, *Many Voices, One Journey* (B-31). These topics are presented to provide a variety of options, but other topics can be created using other segments, following the same format.

Distributed by Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. This handout may be photocopied.

Sixty Years of Recovery

To prepare for the workshop, first select the topic (or topics) to be covered from the following list:

- 1) Change**
- 2) Control**
- 3) Denial**
- 4) Growth through Service**

The list of workshop topics covers certain themes and subjects that are covered over a 60-year period in *Many Voices, One Journey*. You may wish to include the specific topic(s) in any announcements for the workshop. You may wish to select a few members to give the material to ahead of time, and ask them to be prepared to begin the discussion and initiate conversation, once the material for the topic has been read aloud. Depending on the size of the audience, you may wish to allow 30 to 60 minutes per topic.

- I. The Moderator opens with the Serenity Prayer and Al-Anon Preamble. Then the moderator briefly introduces the specific subject (see list of four topics above), and explains that the format of the workshop will include a brief reading of text and a question from *Many Voices, One Journey* (B-31), Al-Anon's new book on 60 years of recovery. This will be followed by discussion, in which all attendees are invited participate.
- II. Using the chosen topic(s), ask one or more attendees to read the selected text and questions from *Many Voices, One Journey*. (See the following pages for readings and questions.) A handout sheet with the topic, excerpt, and questions is also given to all participants.
- III. Members are now invited to briefly address the topic and/or questions in front of the entire group.
- IV. Summary by Moderator, suggesting that now this discussion has begun, we can continue exploring it among program friends, Sponsors, and at meetings. The new book can be a tool to help us look at how Al-Anon's growth as a fellowship is connected to our own personal growth. End with Suggested Al-Anon/Alateen Closing.

Topic Choice One

Change

Readings:

1977

From pages 194-5

*"I did not take a Fourth Step inventory until I was in Al-Anon for about 14 months. I was afraid it might change me and therefore break up my relationship with my partner. And it did change me—I stopped criticizing, yelling, and screaming. Surprisingly, my partner never resented my going to meetings. He also knew that I needed to go, and that if I didn't, I could die, as I constantly thought of suicide. It took me about four years to realize I had finally achieved serenity from going to Al-Anon meetings."**

2011

From page 384

"I often hear longtime members talk at meetings and conferences about how Al-Anon 'used' to be. They question the direction it is taking now, and feel that the program just isn't true Al-Anon anymore.

I don't know how Al-Anon 'was' back in those days. I only know what it has been for me the past ten years. I know that it is working for me. It has given me a life filled with serenity and joy, in spite of the ongoing alcoholism in my family. Those same longtime members are the ones who inspired me and shared with me that life is all about change. When I changed, everything changed.

It probably is true that Al-Anon is not the same as it used to be. However, nothing is the same as it used to be. Life is all about change. It is about our willingness to be open to this change—to use these opportunities for growth and to fall back on the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Service to keep the program in check.

*The program has also taught me that we can't go back in the past, but we can use those experiences to improve what's happening now. The bottom line is that the program is in the hands of a Power greater than ourselves. I think Al-Anon couldn't be in better hands."**

From page 390-1

"I used to think of change as the ultimate threat to my security, as if my well-being could only be maintained by making sure everything stayed exactly as it was. I felt like I was standing on a fault line, paralyzed by the possibility that if I moved a muscle, I might be swallowed through the cracks at any moment. Looking at Al-Anon's past has taught me to stop being afraid of change. . .

*Growth cannot occur without change, and our history as a fellowship is a long, continual series of changes. As Lois wrote on page 195 of Lois Remembers, '. . . stagnation is retrogression. There is no standing still.' Our history has also taught me that change need not be painful, and that as long as I hold on to those spiritual principles that are most clearly part of my essential identity, I can continue to change, grow, and transform without fear of losing myself or my way."**

For discussion:

1. What are my feelings about change?
2. How has my attitude changed since joining Al-Anon?
3. How has the way I practice my program changed since I joined?
4. How has the Al-Anon fellowship changed?

*From *Many Voices, One Journey*, copyright 2011 by Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.

Topic Choice Two

Control

Readings:

1925

From page 6

"Lois W. had a secret motive when she and her husband, Bill, left New York City in 1925 for a year as 'motorcycle hobos.' Bill wanted to discover investment opportunities by visiting companies across the country and learning about them first-hand. Lois wrote:

*My reasons for wishing to take the time off were quite different. Although I thought Bill's stock theories were sensible, I wanted to get him away from New York, with bars (saloons they were called then) on many corners, and away from his buddies, both of which I considered contributed greatly to his excessive drinking. A year in the open, which we both loved, would give me a chance to straighten him out."**

1963

From page 119

"The 1963 World Service Conference did not come to agreement on the content for a new book, planned to debut at the International A.A. Convention in 1965. 'Some thought the book should contain interpretations of the Twelve Steps and Traditions, while others felt we needed a history of Al-Anon with chapters by interested outsiders, such as clergymen, doctors, welfare workers, etc.' The Conference members decided to leave the final decision to the Literature Committee. Meanwhile, all Delegates would ask the membership in their Area to submit sharings on the Steps and Traditions, while contacting outside agencies and asking them to express their opinions about Al-Anon."

2000

From page 326-7

"When re-typing *One Day at a Time in Al-Anon* (B-6), the WSO staff discovered that numerous housekeeping changes had been made between 1978 and 1998, despite the 1978 Conference decision that no changes could be made to the book without majority approval of the full Conference... The Conference declined 'to approve all text changes made to *One Day at a Time in Al-Anon* between 1979 and 1999' with a single motion. Instead, the Conference approved 14 separate motions for changes, and rejected five others. For example, Motion 28 authorized the WSO to capitalize the slogan 'Let Go and Let God' on p. 95. Motion 33 authorized the WSO to capitalize the slogan 'Let Go and Let God' on p. 361...

These motions took the Conference well into the night. To avoid this type of session again, the Conference also approved a motion that authorized the Executive Committee to approve housekeeping changes to *One Day at a Time in Al-Anon*, beginning with the 1979 edition of the book. Any proposed text revisions would still need to come before the entire Conference, but the Conference would not have to spend time on details such as updating addresses, correcting misattributions, etc."

For discussion:

1. What have I done to try to manage someone else's drinking?
2. How do I find the appropriate balance between maintaining control and letting go?
3. When have I taken too much detailed control, and realized that it was self-defeating not to delegate responsibility to others?

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Topic Choice Three

Denial

Readings:

1979

From pages 204-5

"The Elephant in the Living Room,' a sharing by a member in Virginia, was printed in the April 1979 edition of *The Forum*. Although probably not the first time this metaphor was used to describe the denial common to alcoholic families, this story greatly popularized the term throughout Al-Anon:

So there the dumb thing sits—it's called alcoholism, and it's the biggest thing in the house. Other people can entertain, other children can have friends sleep over. Your house is full of elephant! So you flail at it, cry over it, push the tail end, pull the trunk end, and try to coax it into joining the circus—but there the dumb thing sits.

Some of us spend so much time pushing and pulling our own private pachyderm around that we never really do anything else. Our children go on with their lives the best they can, and every now and then we leave off shoving long enough to throw a little comment of criticism at them—but we run back to our primary occupation.

Now, isn't that silly? You can't move an elephant! You can move out—or you can go on with your life the best way possible considering the irrefutable fact that there is an elephant in your living room.

You can learn to live with it . . . roller skate around it . . . dust it off . . . crochet a nose-cosy for it . . . paint it puce and purple . . . rent space on it to the political candidate of your choice . . . but STOP TRYING TO MOVE IT!!!

*. . . and smile. God loves you, and He gave you the whole world to be happy in—not just the little space around the you-know-what in your you-know-where."**

2001:

From pages 336-8

"I first started hearing about adult children meetings in the mid-1980s...My first reaction was that it would be okay, but only if they were willing to cease using outside literature, stop whining about lack of nurturing, quit all that 'inner child' talk, and get beyond Step One. I thought, 'Just suck it up and grow up.' In other words, be like me...

There was a lot of fear and animosity about this issue in our Area at the time. It was a very hot topic! Despite a little reluctance on my part, I did what I could to work toward the unity of our fellowship, helping us all see and share what we had in common. But regardless, they weren't like me...

In 2001, I was attending a Regional Service Seminar in Ontario with Al-Anon friends...After I told some of my experiences as a child, one of these friends asked me if I could possibly be an adult child. I replied, 'Of course not!' But then the light bulb went on, and I admitted, 'Yes I am!' Not only are they like me, but I am like them!

Until that moment, I really didn't believe that I had been raised in an alcoholic home. Nobody really drank in my immediate family. I had never connected my maternal grandfather's drinking to myself or to my family. I had denied the effects that alcoholism had on my mother, and I had refused to deal with the alcoholic behavior of my mother, or any consequences it had on my upbringing.

*I wasn't being intentionally dishonest or untruthful—it had just never occurred to me. Denial is like that. I think it was God's way of protecting me from the truth until I was ready to handle it."**

For discussion:

1. How has denial affected my response to alcoholism?
2. What part has denial played in my life before Al-Anon, and during my recovery?

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Topic Choice Four

Growth through Service

Readings:

1942

From page 20

"Another 'Anne,' Al-Anon cofounder Anne B., first met Lois late in 1942, shortly after a doctor suggested that Anne find some help for her husband. Anne was 43 years old, and had been married for more than 20 years.

"After several years, Anne came to understand that she could also benefit from A.A.'s Twelve Steps:

*...I had been the most fearful person: afraid of everything . . . afraid of animals, the dark, thunderstorms, and people. As I grew older, people were my greatest fear. Even approaching the program, I still was fearful. I'd go to A.A. meetings but still really was afraid of meeting people. I was very shy; I was the greatest introvert on record... Eventually, with the help of Lois, a Westchester Family Group was formed . . . After I entered into family group activities, had taken the Step of acceptance, then of conversion, the Third Step came along—the Step of dedication. Then I really began to progress, because I was helping others; trying to give them something I had experienced. If it was no more than just giving out literature, a book to read, or a word of encouragement, it was a part of Twelve-Step work. Possibly my experience wasn't great enough to help some, but that I was able to help at all was a step to progression, and I feel now that I'll never stop progressing."**

1965:

From pages 122-3

"A member from Missouri shares:

*My first meeting was at an open A.A. meeting in 1965. There wasn't an Al-Anon Group in Columbia at that time; we got one started the next year. Shortly after that, my Sponsor received a letter asking her to give a ten minute talk on sponsorship at a district meeting in Marshall, Missouri. She asked me to go with her, but I said no. She told me she would buy my lunch. Since no one had ever offered to buy me lunch before, I agreed to go. In 1965, there were seven districts. District 5 covered all of Missouri from Kansas City to St. Louis, up the Iowa line and down almost to Arkansas. Then we split it down the center to form District 8 and have continued adding districts. District Representatives were called Committeemen back then."**

For discussion:

1. Anne B. said she was "the greatest introvert on record," and yet she went on to be a Chairman of the Board for Al-Anon. She believed that Al-Anon service played a very important role in her recovery. What part has Al-Anon service played in my own recovery?
2. Most success stories in Al-Anon service begin with the positive encouragement of someone else who is already involved in service. How did someone play that role in my Al-Anon service? How did I pass that encouragement on to someone else?

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