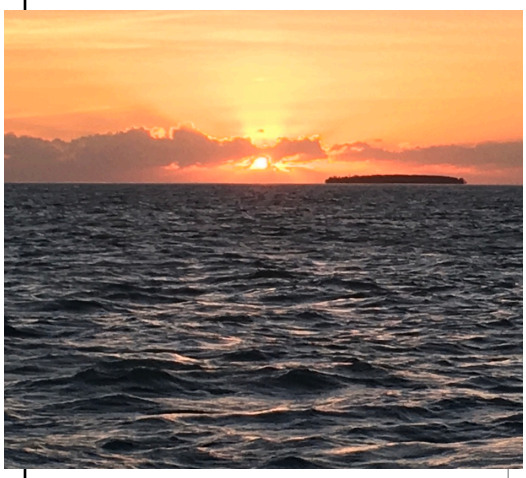
LIFELINES FEBRUARY 2020



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This Month's Step, Tradition and Concept

Editor's Corner:

"I came, I came to, I came to believe." I have heard the first three Steps described this way. So I showed up and explored the possibility that Al-Anon could help me if I gave it a shot. The Power greater than myself has evolved throughout the years. First, it was the God of my upbringing. Then it was the group when I got angry with the God of my upbringing. The tools of the program were a Power that I drew strength from. I used them to help me live in the situation I was in, rather than deny or wish things were different. Sometimes the God of my understanding is that spark within me that results from a nudge or an inspiration or nature or a song or a phrase I heard at a meeting. Something within me but originating outside of me.

I am grateful to Al-Anon for helping me release my God from the confining pigeon hole I had stashed him into. My God was limited by me. I had to get angry and let go of old beliefs that stood in my way. I had to release this God from the confines I had created and trust that somehow I would get a better understanding of this Higher Power.

I have come to realize that the God of my understanding is beyond my capacity to understand. When I approach my Higher Power with only my mind, my intelligence, I get into trouble because my mind wants things to be neat. Everything has a place and it needs to be in that place. My Higher Power doesn't behave that way. My Higher Power is beyond my capacity to control and analyze. Just as I don't belong in the alcoholic's head, I don't belong in my God's head. I cannot figure out why someone drinks or what magical act or phrase on my part will enlighten them. I cannot figure out why things happen the way they do in my life. And I cannot blame my God when things happen not according to my plans.

When I was lost and wondered why God had abandoned me, I started reading "Having had a spiritual awakening." And there is a prayer in that book that hits home for me:

> The very air you breathe is My gift to you….
> The sight of the sea you so enjoy is My gift to you.
> The feel of My power is My gift to you.
> Take them within yourself and use them all the days of your life.
> Don't ever limit yourself;
> I have more to give than you could ever use.
> (p.31 *Having Had a Spiritual Awakening* B-25)

My Higher Power has an unlimited supply of caring for me. I cannot exhaust this. My Higher Power's strength and gifts are limitless. I can bring trivial things as well as critical issues to my Higher Power. I don't have to worry that I am using up my supply of help because it has no limits. Whatever it is, my Higher Power can handle it. "I began to picture my Higher Power as a force that could take in whatever I had to give." (p. 48 *Having Had a Spiritual Awakening* B-25)

A Grateful Member of Al-Anon
Elaine H., Lifelines Editor

***DEADLINE FOR THE MARCH ISSUE IS FEBRUARY 27TH.**
Would you like to be on the distribution list for Lifelines? Send an email requesting this to lifelines.riafg@gmail.com. These are sent as "BCC's" so your anonymity is protected.

Do you have an upcoming Al-Anon event to announce? - an inspirational photo?- a personal share? - etc. Please email these to lifelines.riafg@gmail.com

ALATEEN NEEDS YOU:

Knock, Knock. Who's there?
The next generation looking for help!

We need YOU to meet soaring demand

***Consider carrying your 12th step message through Alateen* service**

Right now we're down to **one** – yes, just a measly one! – active Alateen group in the entire state of Rhode Island…
But the emails and calls are NOT slowing down…Parents, teens, school staff, and social workers all reaching out for help with the family disease of alcoholism because they have **nowhere else to turn.**

A sad truth. But a silver lining: YOU could help change that sad fact.

Willing to find out how?
Alateen meeting. on February 8th at 10 Davol Square from 10-AM to 12 pm

For additional information, please email Ashley B.: alateenri@gmail.com

ALATEEN CORNER:

It Doesn't Make It So

Before Alateen, I could never forgive the people who hurt me. I could hold grudges like I could hold a feather — easily. Resentment is a bad habit I couldn't seem to break. If you hurt me, I was going to hurt you back — ten times worse. No one knew that on the inside I was hurting. I played it off like everything was okay. If you even said the slightest thing wrong or even looked at me wrong, I was coming after you.

But when I started working my program in Alateen, I learned that it's okay to forgive someone if they hurt me. I have learned to forgive my dad for his drinking. I always used to beat myself up about the stupid stuff I did to myself, but I have forgiven myself for the pain I caused to myself and the harm to my body. I feel so much better knowing that it's okay to forgive. I've learned that if people hurt me, they hurt me. They only affect my mood if I let them. Before, their opinions would convince me that's how I was. But today, I know that it's their opinion, and it doesn't make it true.

by Paige M.

(Reprinted with the permission of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., Virginia Beach, VA. From *The Forum,* June 2018, p. 4)

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS:

FOREVER HOPE
Al-Anon Family Group

Invites you to join us to celebrate our
32nd Anniversary
and
Lois W.'s Birthday

Sunday, March 1, 2020
10:00 a.m.

West Greenwich Town Hall
280 Victory Highway, Route 102, West Greenwich, RI

Speakers• Fellowship • Spirituality
Finger Foods • Hot & Cold Beverages

Come Share the Joys of Recovery with Us

Park in the large lot to the south (right) of the Town Hall.
Entry is at the back via the wheelchair ramp.

NEW MEETING:

Announcing a new Al-Anon
open discussion meeting
Beginning Tuesday, January 7, 2020

GRATITUDE NOT ATTITUDE AFG

Tuesdays 11:30 a.m. Serenity Center 66 Social Street Woonsocket, RI

Parking available in lot behind building.
Parking lot entrance is on North Main St. (across from the Salvation Army 30 North Main St.)

2020 EVENTS CALENDAR:

February 08	Alateen Informational meeting, at 10 Davol Square, 10AM to Noon.
February11	District 2 meeting from 7PM to 8PM at the Area office, 106 Rolf Square, Cranston
March 1	Forever Hope Anniversary (see flyer on previous page for details.
March 10	District 2 meeting from 7PM to 8PM at the Area office, 106 Rolf Square, Cranston
March 20-22	2020, 44th AA Convention with Al-Anon participation. Gurney's Newport Resort, see flyer
May 30	RIAFG Spring Assembly at Emmanuel Church, 42 Dearborn, Newport, RI
July 2-5	2020. A.A. International Convention in Detroit, Michigan. See news from the WSO.

MEETING NOTICES:

Group Name Change: Hello RIAFG family! **The Monday night Cumberland group #30653912 has voted to change its name to Love, Hope and Recovery AFG** effective immediately. This group has received consistent feedback from visitors over the last several months that the original name implies that the group was only for parents, preventing them from attending the meeting. This is an open meeting and all are welcome to attend. The group has had low attendance for the last 4 years, and is hoping the name change will attract other members. Please make the appropriate changes and share where appropriate! In service, Lorie G. GR, Love, Hope and Recovery

Holiday Notice:

The **North Providence Step** Meeting **will not** be meeting on **any holiday** that falls on a Thursday.

Wakefield Just for Today at Wakefield Baptist Church on Monday @ 7:30 **WILL NOT MEET** on any holiday that falls on a Monday.

New Meeting:

Gratitude Not Attitude meeting starting Tuesday, January 7th at 11:30AM. Woonsocket Serentity Center, 66 Social St., Woonsocket, RI. Parking in the back, enter Main St.side across from the Salvation Army.

Starting Sunday October 13th there is a new meeting for **Adult Children of Alcoholics** at the Peace Dale Congregational Church, Community Room 2nd floor, 261 Columbia St., Peace Dale.

Needs Support:

The **Cranston-Warwick Daytime** AFG on Tuesdays at 10 AM at the Edgewood Congregational Church, 1788 Broad St., Cranston

Now Wheelchair Accessible:

The **K.I.S.S.** has moved to the first floor and is now wheelchair accessible. They meet Saturday 12:00 PM at Butler Hospital, Ray Hall, first floor, room 1.

Meetings that have Closed:

Let it All Go AFG, Tuesday 7:30 PM, N. Kingstown Methodist Church, 450 Boston Neck Rd., (Rte 1A)

The **Ashaway** Al-Anon Group meeting Thursdays at the Trinity Lutheran Church, Ashaway, has closed.

The **Saturday Night Live** Al-Anon Group meeting, Saturdays at 6:30 PM, at Calvary United Methodist Church, 200 Turner Rd., Middletown has closed

The **Hope for the Family Disease** meeting Friday at 7:30PM in Tiverton at St Theresa's CatholicChurch has closed.

AA Liaison Report:

Rhode Island AA Convention with Al-Anon participation

Sarah S., past delegate from MI is set to serve as speaker at the convention!

The updated flyers are on the following pages. Holly P has offered to lead the 2:30 pm meeting. **Please consider serving as a leader for one of the four remaining meetings** during the Convention.

*****Also, I am looking for volunteers to read the following.**

- **Anonymity Statement – _____**
- **Preamble –_____**
- **Al-Anon Twelve Steps –_____**
- **Resolution of Gratitude to Al-Anon – Steve L (Steve is the new Area 61 Delegate and will read this)**
- **Speaker Host – Jackie G**
- **Speaker – Sarah S from St Charles, MO**

As a reminder, the convention will take place Friday, March 20 – 22, 2019 at the Gurney's Resort in Newport, RI. The theme for the meeting is **2020 A Vision for Us**. Convention Registration: https://aainri.com/area-61-convention-2020/. Register by Feb. 18 for best room prices.

Jackie G., AA Liaison

44th AA CONVENTION WITH AL-ANON PARTICIPATION:

Alcoholics Anonymous with Alanon participation!
Area 61 Assembly of Alcoholics Anonymous

44th Rhode Island Convention

March 20 - 22, 2020

Gurney's Newport Resort & Marina
Goat Island, Newport, RI 02840

For online registration (preferred) and additional information go to http://aainri.com

For Hotel information and reservations call 833-235-7500 or 401- 851-3366
(reference 2020 State Convention)

- Reservations must be made directly through the hotel
- 72 hour hotel room cancellation policy
- All rooms *$150 + 13% tax per night (single, double, triple, quad)

***this is a special convention room rate available for reservations made by February 18, 2020**

Events include:
- *Speaker & Marathon Meetings*
- *Afternoon & Evening Entertainment*
- *Hospitality Rooms*
- *Great Fellowship*
- *Yoga & Meditation Workshops*
- *Evening Ice Cream Parties (nominal cost)*

New early registration benefit:
- *For every meal purchased before February 18th, participants will be entered in a raffle to win a **free registration** to **Convention 2021**. Two winners will be chosen and announced at the Saturday Night Meeting during Convention 2020!*

Resort amenities:
- *Beautiful rooms*
- *Amazing food*
- *Pool*
- *Deluxe Spa*
- *Complimentary shuttle into downtown Newport*

The Convention begins at 3PM on Friday, March 20th.

CONVENTION REGISTRATION * REGISTER EARLY * space is limited due to fire codes

To register online, visit the Area 61 website **aainri.com** OR mail this form before February 18th

MAIL TO: RI Convention, PO Box 449, Charlestown, RI 02813

Name_____ What do you want on your badge?_____

Address_____ City_____ State/ZIP_____

Phone_____ E-mail_____

Assistance needs_____
If you require Spanish translation at speaker meetings, Please advise/register by January 14, 2020. Hearing assistance equipment is available.

Registration cost: ☐ **before February 18th- $25** ☐ ***after February 18th- $30***

MEALS: The purchase of meals offsets the cost of meeting spaces and helps the Convention Committee meet its financial obligations to the hotel. Orders taken until 2/18/2020 (on this form or online). **Please make your selections below:**

Friday Dinner: $46
- ☐ Grilled Chicken Breast
- ☐ Oven Baked Scrod/herb stuffing
- ☐ Curried Roasted Vegetables/ couscous, arugula, & lemon

$_____

Saturday Luncheon Buffet: $32
- ☐ New England Clam Chowder, salads, assorted cold cuts (roast beef, turkey, ham, hard salami), assorted cheeses, breads, rolls. Cookies, tea, coffee.

$_____

Saturday Evening: $48
- ☐ 6 oz. New York Sirloin
- ☐ Pan Seared Atlantic Salmon
- ☐ Whole Wheat Penne Pasta/broccoli rabe, heirloom tomato ragout

$_____

Scholarship fund: ☐
Please consider donating to our Scholarship Fund. Any amount will help those in need who might not be able to attend.

$_____

Convention service opportunities: (circle one)
Greeters, Parking, Lead a Marathon Meeting, Hospitality, Registration, Decorations, other_____

The earlier you register, the more flexible the scheduling is. You will be contacted by phone or mail to discuss scheduling.

Convention Chair: Ken D.
Email: conventionchair@aainri.com
Registrar: Lisa B.
Email: conventionregistrar@aainri.com

TOTAL ENCLOSED
$_____
Checks payable to RI Convention

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS

riafg.com

2020 A VISION FOR US:

Alcoholics Anonymous with Al-Anon participation! 44th Rhode Island Convention

March 20 - 22, 2020

Five Al-Anon meetings will be available. Please consider leading one! Meeting leaders are responsible for the $25.00 registration fee. Registration: https://aainri.com/convention/

Special Note: Sarah S., our AL-Anon guest speaker gives her talk on Sat., Mar. 21 at 10:15 am.

Al-Anon Meetings:

Sat., Mar. 21 at 9:00 am: **How do I see myself when I use the Al-Anon program?**
Sat., Mar. 21 at 11:30 am: **Steps, Traditions, and Concepts: A new Vision?**
Sat., Mar. 21 at 2:30 pm: **Holly R.Illusions and fantasies I've let go, since coming to Al-Anon.**
Sat., Mar. 21 at 5:00 pm: **2020 reasons to Keep Coming Back!**
Sun., Mar. 22 at 8:30 am: **Changing my attitude by changing my perspective.**

If you would like to lead a meeting, please contact Jackie G. by email: aa.riafg@gmail.com or leave a message at our Area Office phone number, (401) 781-0044.

Parking is FREE and available at the hotel, though it's limited. The hotel offers valet parking @ $20.00per night. We have a FREE trolley that runs from the Newport Visitors Center parking lot (there will be a sign) 23 Americas Cup Ave from, Friday, March 20, 6-8:00 pm, 9:30-midnight & Saturday, March 21,8am-8pm, 9:30-midnight: https://www.discovernewport.org/about-newport/visitor-center/

44th Rhode Island Convention March 20-22, 2020
Gurney's Newport Resort Goat Island, Newport, RI

General information

This is a non-smoking event. Ashtrays are located outside AWAY from the doors. Please see signs for designated smoking areas.
Spanish translation is available during the Main Meetings and is located to the left of the stage.
La traducción al español está disponible durante las Reuniones Principales y se encuentra a la izquierda del escenario.

HOSPITALITY ROOM ~ *Vanderbilt Room

**will be closed 15 minutes before and during all speaker meetings*

Friday:	(no AM hours)	3 pm–7:45 pm	10 pm–11:30 pm	
Saturday:	6 am–10 am	11:30 am–1 pm	2:30 pm–7:45 pm	10 pm–11:30 pm
Sunday:	6 am–9:45 am			

BEVERAGE ROOM ~ Commodore Perry Room

Friday All day: 3 pm–12:30 am
Saturday All day: 6:30 am–12:30 am

Shuttle Service Schedule

Friday, March 20 6 pm – 8 pm and 9:30 pm – 12 am
Saturday, March 21 8 am – 8 pm and 9:30 pm – 12 am
Shuttle service is not available on Friday or Saturday from 8-9:30 PM.
The shuttle will run between the Convention area entrance & the Visitor's Center

AL-ANON MEETINGS: - Heritage Room

SATURDAY

9:00 AM	How do I see myself when I use the Al-Anon program?
11:30 AM	Steps, Traditions, and Concepts: A new Vision?
2:30 PM	Illusions & fantasies I've let go, since coming to Al-Anon.
5:00 PM	2020 reasons to Keep Coming Back!

SUNDAY

8:30 AM	Changing my attitude by changing my perspective.

MARATHON MEETINGS - Newport Room

FRIDAY, MARCH 20

3:00 pm - 4:00 pm	The Doctor's Opinion
4:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Step 1
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Insanity
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Step 2
7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Step 3
8:00 pm - 9:00 pm	Pick up meeting
9:00 pm - 10:00 pm	Pick up meeting
10:00 pm - 11:00 pm	Step 4
11:00 pm - 12:00 am	Spiritual Experience
12:00 am - 1:00 am	Y.P.A.A.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

7:00 am - 8:00 am	Step 5
8:00 am - 9:00 am	Freedom From Fear
9:00 am - 10:00 am	Step 6
10:00 am - 11:00 am	Whisper Walk
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Step 7
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	How It Works
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	Step 8
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Serenity
3:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Step 9
4:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Acceptance
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Step 10
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Happy, Joyous, and Free
7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Step 11
8:00 pm - 9:00 pm	Pick up meeting
9:00 pm - 10:00 pm	Pick up meeting
10:00 pm - 11:00 pm	Step 12
11:00 pm - 12:00 am	The Promises
12:00 am - 1:00 am	Y.P.A.A.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, MARCH 20

3:00 pm Registration opens	Main Floor
3:00 pm Marathon Meetings Begin	Newport Room
6:00 pm Dinner	Rose Island
8:00 pm Opening Meeting, Debbie D	Ballroom/Brenton Hall
9:30 pm Ice Cream Social ($6)	outside of ballroom
10:00 pm Dance with DJ Ray A.	Rose Island

SATURDAY MARCH 21

7:00 am Marathon Meetings begin	Newport Room
7:00 am Yoga	Brenton Hall
8:30 am Meditation Workshop	Ballroom
10:15 am Al-Anon Speaker, Sarah S.	**Ballroom/Brenton Hall**
12:00 pm Luncheon buffet	Rose Island
1:15 pm Speaker Meeting, Tami P.	Ballroom/Brenton Hall
2:30 pm Old-timer/Newcomer Panel	Ballroom/Brenton Hall
4:30 pm Play	Ballroom
6:00 pm Dinner	Rose Island
8:00 pm Speaker Meeting Don L.	Ballroom/Brenton Hall
9:30 pm Ice Cream Social ($6)	outside of Ballroom
10:00 pm Dance w/Take It to the Bridge	Rose Island

SUNDAY MARCH 22

7:00 am Yoga Class (45 min)	Brenton Hall
8:00 am Spiritual meeting	Ballroom
10:00 amSpeaker Meeting, Martin A.	Ballroom

*All meals provided by the hotel require pre-registration (ticketed event) ** Meditation Workshop please be on time. Doors close at 8:30AM. Bring your yoga mats for Meditation and/or Yoga sessions (optional).

Rhode Island Area World Service Committee (AWSC) Changes

I would like to officially acknowledge and welcome the following newly elected, re-elected, and appointed Area Officers and Coordinators:

Cindy B., Area Secretary
Joel B., Interim Archives Coordinator
Ann H., Forum Coordinator
Lisa G., Group Records Coordinator
Kim C., Website Coordinator

I also want to take this opportunity to thank the following out-going AWSC members for their service:

Terry L, District 3 Representative
Cindy B., 2019 Workshop Co-Coordinator
Julia G., 2019 Workshop Co-Coordinator
Mary P., 2019 Workshop Co-Coordinator

I look forward to working with the continuing and newly elected officers and coordinators in 2020.

Phyllis H., Area Chair

Fall 2019 Assembly Report

The Rhode Island Al-Anon Family Groups holds an Area Assembly twice a year. An Area Assembly is the business meeting where groups send their Group Representative to discuss issues pertinent to our Area as well as issues our Delegate may bring to us from WSO, and to vote on behalf of the group. Any and all interested Al-Anon and Alateen members are encouraged to attend as well.

Twenty-three Al-Anon members gathered in Providence for the Fall Assembly. In addition to the required business of holding elections and approving the 2020 budget, those in attendance participated in a Writing Workshop for the *Forum* and *Lifelines*, a brainstorming activity to gather ideas for Public Outreach, and an Alateen Group Sponsorship presentation.

At the end of the day, participants were asked to provide feedback on the Assembly. Overall, participant responses indicated that they enjoyed the day and the activities and that they felt their opinions were heard. Here is some of the feedback.

- In response to a question about how the Assembly helped with one's personal recovery, one person said "The Assembly reminded me I have skills and tools" and another said "Community – working with others and listening to and sharing with members I'm still getting to know."
- In response to a question about the Agenda topics being timely, informative, and useful, one participant said "Yes, opportunity to observe the Traditions in action."
- Other comments included "Get more people here; encourage 'everyone bring one'" and "Breakout session so much more engaging than just viewing reports."

We also received some constructive feedback regarding the budget presentation and financial discussion.

- Financial discussion needs more structure, either in expectations or allowance for questions and dissent. Many people have opinions without knowledge.
- Financial reports – budget vs. projected. Year End actuals + history, charts, include projected income.

Many thanks to everyone for your feedback.

Phyllis H., Area Chair

2019 Rhode Island Al-Anon Family Groups Financial Report

Our total Income for the year was $10,528 and our total Expenses were $10,566.
Our income was comprised of the following primary sources: Group Donations $7,214; Annual Appeal $1,081; Fall Workshop $1,289; Literature Sales $600; Other $344.
Even though our 2019 Expenses exceeded our Income by $38, our prudent reserve ($5,283) is intact, with a current bank balance of $5,648.
Thanks to the generosity of our membership, Rhode Island Al-Anon Family Groups continues to fulfill our commitment to helping families and friends of alcoholics.

Love in Service and Fellowship,
Phyllis H, Area Chair, Rhode Island Al-Anon

Let it Begin With Me. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help - let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always be there, and Let It Begin With Me.

FORUM ARTICLE:

Today, I know that love is unconditional

I grew up not knowing the difference between shame and guilt. Shame told me that I was fundamentally unworthy, insufficient, and unlovable: a "wrong" person. Guilt is what I feel when I make choices that disrupt the harmony between myself and my Higher Power, other people, or the universe.

My shame came from physical and emotional abuse suffered in childhood, a lack of validation and support at home, and a rule-oriented religious practice that seemed to say I could almost accidentally be damned. I also discovered, at age 11, that I was gay. I thought it was something horribly unique to me that made me an unfit human being. Feelings of shame and guilt made it very difficult for me. Since I saw myself as "wrong," the hope of being a good person was hard to realize.

Shame robbed me of the thought that I could be loved. I didn't see that I deserved love, which had a huge negative impact on my relationship with my Higher Power. God was a fierce judge, not a loving parent.

Shame meant I didn't understand that love is unconditional. It seemed to me that God's love came with many conditions and catches, and had to be earned. I thought this was true of human love, too. It led me to set conditions about whom and when I would love; conditions so impossible to meet that I couldn't love freely.

In my months in Al-Anon, I have never felt judged by any other member. Instead, I received the message that I am loved just as I am, character defects and all. The first three Steps are teaching me how to trust my Higher Power, Al-Anon members and principles, and the universe.

I have learned that my Higher Power is there to *help* me grow and change; pick me up when I stumble or fall, and teach me that I am loved unconditionally.

I am not a finished product, but I am finding enough serenity in the Al-Anon program to make hope take root and grow. I am starting to feel some gratitude. I am learning to live without unreasonable fear. I am starting to feel love, and return it.

by Joe M., Kentucky

(Reprinted with the permission of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., Virginia Beach, VA. From *The Forum,* June 2016, p.14)

MEMBERS SHARE:**

(**Hi Everyone, Below are the sharings from the area assembly writing workshop this fall.)

A New Balance

A new balance in my life was a courageous step when I as strong enought to use the Al-Anon tools. As a recent widow, I needed to readjust my thinking. Using my fourth step inventory and establishing my priorities of self-care was a big change. It was a big change to think of me first. This process has been working in many new ways: boundaries, listening, not judging, keeping an open mind, taking a nap, giving myself permission to do nothing, and most al all Gratitiude and Prayer to the God of my understanding.
Slowly, I'm becoming aware of my need to grow differently beyond being a wife and mother and sister and friend. I try to reach out to the Newcomers, have volunteered to do service work, and am slowly growing in a different way. I know this awareness is God-given and I llike it and plan to keep it and give it away.

Cathy S.

MEMBERS SHARE(cont.):

Coming to Al-Anon was not a decision that I made. I don't really even remember my first meeting because I was such a mess. I just found myself there after my common-law husband of 25 years walked out on me. We had survived so much together. I met him in my early 20's and I was a drinker, and he was in drug and alcohol treatment at the time. I gave up drinking to help him. He became my addiction. I would spend the next 2 decades either trying to save him or myself. We both used drugs and drank together, but when we finally gave it up, I became dependent on his moods. I could not take care of myself but I seemed to think I could take care of him.

I never imagined being without him after everything we had overcome. To find myself alone now was heart breaking. I had no idea how sick I was until I started going to Al-Anon and saw how the women in my group, and the men too, had so much in common with me. I had to learn that a healthy person gets up in the morning and has breakfast and takes a shower and wants to look good and feel good. I had not spent money on myself in years but I knew how to purchase for my family. I shopped for everyone except for myself. I had to learn not to feel guilty taking care of me. I had to learn how to do everything for me now. That is when I began to understand that I was not alone now. My Higher Power was just waiting. My Higher Power was standing by and waiting for me. He knew I would be needing Him so He was just waiting for the call. I called Him when I could not stop crying. I did not have to stop crying for I could call to Him in my own mind and I found as I spoke to Him I did not need to cry. Now I look forward to our conversations and I know that He will always take care of me and always had — all I had to do was ask and listen.

Anonymous

DISTRICT 2:

What's NEWs in District 2 – December 2019 Meeting Report

Once a month, District 2 meets for about an hour at a named location to unite the individual groups within the district. Topics range from informing groups about Area or World Service news to planning program related events. District meetings also coordinate service and public outreach projects and as such are a great way to see the program in action and get involved in service.

The December 2019 District 2 Meeting was held at the Area Office in Cranston. We opened the meeting with the serenity prayer, introductions, and reading the Tradition of the Month & the Concept of the Month. The minutes from October & November were then read and accepted.

First, Alateen needs were discussed. At the time of this meeting, it was shared that the previous Alateen meeting records were inaccurate. Instead of there being only one Alateen meeting, there were actually two. One at North Kingstown High School for their students only, and the other a free standing Providence meeting Sunday nights.

Next, we revisited the discussion of Virtual Meeting Attendance as an option for members to "participate" in the District meeting if they can't attend in person. One member researched conference call options since concerns were previously expressed about anonymity and finding a quiet, private location for the meeting time. This member reported back that there are options to conference in up to 5 people using a smartphone, which could be put on speaker, in addition to a service called FreeConference.com, though the latter isn't actually free. It was suggested that we keep this topic on the agenda for 3 months for discussion.

In addition, we revisted the discussion of finding a consistent day, time, and location for our District meetings. It was suggested we try planning to hold our meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of every month for the first Quarter (January, February, & March) at the Area Office in Cranston at 7pm. All present were in favor of this and also agreed that if there is no school in Cranston due to snow, then there would be no meeting that month.

While there were no new updates on Task Force Guidlines for task for chairs and no new group meeting concerns brought to the table, there was discussion around Newcomers. It was shared that some groups had been getting alot of newcomers but that those newcomers weren't coming back to those meetings. Feedback from newcomers revealed that they felt singled out and maybe there is a way to change that. For instance, instead of asking, "Are there any newcomers present?", to consider changing the wording to be more inclusive, such as "If there are any newcomers present…we welcome you…it is suggested that you attend 6 meetings…please feel free to stay and talk to any one of us after the meeting." Also, if a particular meeting offers a newcomer's meeting, simply say that. Another suggestion was to consider having a Greeter for the meeting so the interaction could be one-on-one.

Lastly, we briefly touched on dysfuctional meetings. Concerns were expressed about a Group Rep (GR) who finished their term; the group not having elected a new GR; and that group not being open to suggestions or to following group guidelines.

That wraps up another District 2 Report! Our next District 2 Meeting is **Tuesday February 11th, 2020 at 7pm at the Area Office** (106 Rolfe Square, Cranston). All are welcome to attend. We hope to see you there!

Links of Service

Member + Member = **Group**
Group + **Group** = **District**
District + **District** = **Assembly**
Assembly + **Assembly** = Conference

DISTRICT 3:

Al-Anon
RI District 3

District 3 News **Meeting Notes January 9, 2020**

COME TO THE NEXT DISTRICT MEETING ON FEBRUARY 13
TO HELP CREATE DISTRICT 3 ALATEEN MEETINGS!

Experienced Al-Anon members will attend to inspire and guide us in creating District 3 Alateen meetings. District 3 currently has requests for Alateen meetings in Tiverton, Warren, Portsmouth, and Middletown, and we want to serve young people looking for recovery as soon as possible. The District meets regularly on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6p in the Portsmouth Library, and our next meeting is February 13th.

Spring Assembly:
Toby and Dan are our co-chairs of the RIAFG Spring Assembly that District 3 is hosting at Emmanuel Church in Newport on May 30th 2020 at 9:30-3:30p. **We are asking each D3 meeting to donate funding for the assembly, and to each send three members to the assembly**.

Meeting News:

- The new Sunday night meeting in Newport will be celebrating its first anniversary this May and 10-15 members attend weekly.
- Unfortunately, the District determined to close the Friday night Tiverton meeting due to sporadic attendance.

From outgoing District Representative Terry L:

January was my last district meeting as official DR. Thank you to all Al-Anon members to who provided service and support to grow Al-Anon in District 3, and personally to me as DR. I am so grateful for your service of positivity, creativity, initiative, and energy toward strengthening the District 3 service body of RIAFG.

I encourage all members in all Disto consider growing your knowledge of and service in the greater Al-Anon organization. The 12th Step encourages us to "carry this message to others" and the 1st Concept explains that "The ultimate responsibility and authority for Al-Anon world services belongs to the Al-Anon groups." That means that *it is imperative to our personal recovery to give service* toward strengthening the greater Al-Anon organization, so that more friends and families of alcoholics may find help. I hope that I have contributed to strengthening District 3 and RI Al-Anon Family Groups during my tenure, but I know that this service has grown my recovery immeasurably.

Please consider becoming Group Rep, District Rep, an RIAFG Officer, an Alateen sponsor, as well as an RIAFG Office Volunteer. It takes many hands to lift Rhode Island Al-Anon Family Groups and we need YOU to contribute your gifts! Know that service is as much as you can put into it, and you are more talented than you know. ☺

Gratefully in Service,
RI District 3

AREA OFFICE NEWS:

Volunteers Needed to staff our RIAFG office in Cranston. If you are interested, please call the office at 401-781-0044 and leave a message.

We currently have <u>ONLY 2</u> Volunteers: Here is the schedule:

Monday:	12:30 to 2:30 PM	Phyllis H.
Thursday:	7:00 to 8:30 PM	Jane A.

NEWS FROM THE WSO:

AL-ANON FACES ALCOHOLISM

Important news…

NOW that the "Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism" (AFA) public outreach magazine is available all year round…

the Rhode Island Area Office/Literature Distribution Center will have them available for groups to purchase.

25 copies for $8.00

When you buy from your local Literature Distribution Center, you support your local services!

NEW WSO HOURS

Dear Members,

I'm writing to alert you that the World Service Office is changing our office hours! Beginning January 21st, the WSO will be open to answer member questions, provide customer support, and receive visitors between **8am and 5pm Eastern.**
After hours, we offer support to those still struggling with the effects of another person's alcoholism through our IVR phone and online meeting searches.

We wish you all a very serene and joyful 2020!
With gratitude,
Vali M. F. | Executive Director

NEW DAILY READER NEEDS YOU

A new daily reader in being developed. The Al-Anon member serving as a freelance writer/editor of this book has reviewed all sharings submitted so far, and is currently selecting and editing ones to include in drafts for the Literature Committee to review. Based on those received, we still need sharings about the following topics:

- Abundance
- Abuse
- Concept Two
- Concept Six
- Concept Seven
- Concept Eight
- Concept Eleven
- Conference approved Literature
- Finances/ money
- General Warranties of the Conference
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Sex
- Shame
- Spirituality
- Tradition Six
- Tradition Eight
- Tradition Nine
- Trust
- Unity

The Committee hopes that this book will include a variety of members' experiences and backgrounds that clearly demonstrate how Al−Anon can work for a*nyone* affected by someone else's drinking. So far, we've received only a few sharings from members who identified themselves as African American; Alateen; Alateen Group Sponsor; of Asian descent; LGBTQ+; men; people of color; or those who live outside the US and Canada.

A writing guideline is available at **al−anon.org/dailyreader**. Please ask members to send their sharings by **June 1** to AFG. Inc., 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617, Attention: "Daily Reader"; at **wso@al−anon.org** with "Daily Reader" in the subject line; or at **al−anon.org/dailyreader**.

Thank you for all your help in making this new daily reader the best it can be!

The Forum Needs a Few Good Men!

Gentlemen, consider sharing your stories with readers. Your experience as husbands, partners, fathers, brothers, and sons of alcoholics means that you have a story to tell that others could benefit from. Please submit your sharings to *The Forum,* 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617; at al-anon.org/forumshare; or wso@al-anon.org with "Sharings by men" in the subject line.

See You in Detroit!

Online registration for A.A.'s International Convention with Al-Anon participation opened September 9, 2019. Registration is $115.00 and will be $140.00 after April 15, 2020. The Convention will be held in Detroit, Michigan from July 2 through 5, 2020 to celebrate A.A.'s 85th Anniversary.

Al-Anon participation will include a variety of sessions held during the day on Friday and Saturday. Also, Al-Anon members are welcome to attend the A.A. Big Meetings, which will take place on Friday and Saturday evening and Sunday morning. Many attendees come early or stay late for a vacation. There are many fun things to do, so see you in Detroit!

For a Good Night's Sleep

The *Just for Tonight* Bookmark (M-81) offers thoughtful reflections on Al-Anon principles to help prepare for a peaceful, restful night. It serves as a perfect companion piece to Al-Anon's classic *Just for Today* Bookmark (M-12).

"Just for tonight, I will be grateful. I will give thanks for the past day, its failures as well as its successes, its sadness as well as its joy, and its pain as well as its pleasure. I will take comfort in knowing that every event and circumstance that occurred today can be used for my good and the good of others." From the *Just for Tonight* Bookmark.

STEP TWO: *Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.*

TRADITION TWO: *For our group purpose there is but one authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.*

CONCEPT TWO: *The Al-Anon Family Groups have delegated complete administrative and operational authority to their Conference and its service arms.*

WEB Sites, Addresses and phone numbers:

RI AFG: **www.riafg.org Office,:106 Rolfe St., Cranston, RI 02910**
Telephone:401-781-0044. Office hours available by calling this number.

WSO: **al-anon.org. Office: 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454.**
Telephone: 757-563-1600

God, grant me the serenity to accept the the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference.

Photo by Kim C.