



Florida North District 8 - Serenity Messenger - June 2017



District Meeting 3rd Saturday each month — 9:00 AM Al-Anon Information Services, 9:30 AM Group Representatives, 3333 W. Columbus Drive, Tampa — Come See our Legacies in Action!

Calendar

June 10 Writing Workshop, Clearwater FL

Aug 25 – 27 N Florida Area AFG Convention, Tampa FL

Oct 6 – 8 N Florida Fall Assembly Altamonte Springs FL

Oct 21, 8 AM – 2 PM District 8 Garage Sale, Town N Country

NORTH FLORIDA AREA SPRING ASSEMBLY 2017

NFA Spring Assembly was held the first weekend in May. Reports from the Area 9 Chairs as well as DR's from all 13 Districts are posted at the [North Florida Area website](#). In addition, the documentation / summary for each of the Red Light Green Light questions has been uploaded. In case you are not familiar with this, three questions were selected for review, and volunteers researched the conference approved literature and all available Al-Anon policies to provide insight. The three topics chosen were: prevention of "cross talk"; multiple meeting times during the week for a single group; and promotion of functions hosted by local AA groups or A-Clubs.

MOVING TO HIGHER GROUND – CHOOSING TO CHANGE THE THINGS I CAN



I left my alcoholic husband and filed for divorce after five and a half years of a verbally, physically, and spiritually abusive marriage. I have been living in a motor home in various campgrounds—in hiding. Recently, we had heavy rains. I came in one evening to find my motor home sitting in eight to ten inches of water. I sat in my car for about five minutes almost paralyzed, not knowing what to do. At least, it didn't take me five and a half years to make a decision. I got out of my car and waded in, to find many of my patio items floating around in the water, along with my sewer hose. This reminded me of my life, wading around in my stinky circumstances, trying to figure out what to do. I went inside and thought that maybe the water would recede, even though it was still raining. I had done the same in my marriage. I held out for so long, hoping it would get better. Every time a car would drive by it would make waves and make matters worse by throwing things in to my RV. Again, like my alcoholic marriage, every wave began to make the already bad situation worse until I could not take it anymore and left. Likewise, I began to prepare to move my RV. There were several other campers behind me sitting in the water, not knowing what to do either. I remember thinking to myself, "Well, they aren't moving so maybe I am overreacting." Finally, I made the choice and began to pack up. When I asked the people behind me if I could turn off the power so I could unplug my power cord, they decided to move too. The people next to them asked if I thought it was okay to move—and what if the campground didn't like it? I replied, "Does it matter? We are sitting in a lake." They decided to move to higher ground also. Both groups of people helped me move my belongings out of the water. I was proud to have shared my Al-Anon program with others—the principle of choice. I learned some valuable lessons while dealing with bad circumstances. I can sit in them or choose to get out, and move to higher ground. I can ask for help, and accept help, without feeling weak or vulnerable. I can empower others to believe in the power of choice. I am so grateful for the rooms of Al-Anon that have taught me I have choices and have given me the courage to change the things I can. The last detail of my story is this. The lot I was sitting on had flooded many times before and the campground knew this and never told me. I could have blamed them for that, or I could have been resentful and been a "victim" as I have so many other times in my life. It would not have made a difference to them but would have kept me in the bondage of the victim's role. I chose to move to another campground. **Reprinted with permission of The Forum, Al-Anon Family Group Hdqts., Inc., Virginia Beach, VA**

District 7 Writing Workshop. Saturday, June 10, 10:00am - 12:00pm, Central Church of Christ, 1454 Belleair Road, Clearwater, FL 33756. Join Jill O., our Area 9 Alternate Delegate for an opportunity to write on Diversity. Please bring your own writing materials (pen, paper, etc.).

SERVICE ARMS

CALENDAR QUOTATION

English: It can be difficult to trust ourselves. In Al-Anon we are learning not only to trust our Higher Power, ourselves, and our fellow members, but also that we deserve to be trusted. At first those around us may be doubtful of our new attitudes, but we can earn their trust as well. *Blueprint for Progress—Al-Anon's Fourth Step Inventory* (Revised) (P-91), page 51

Española: Confiar en nosotros puede resultar difícil. En Al-Anon aprendemos no solamente a confiar en nuestro Poder Superior, en nosotros y en los miembros, sino también en que nosotros mismos somos merecedores de confianza. Al principio quizás quienes nos rodean tengan dudas de nuestras nuevas actitudes, pero de igual forma podemos ganarnos su confianza. *Plan detallado para progresar: Examen del Cuarto Paso de Al-Anon* (Revisado) (SP-91), página 51

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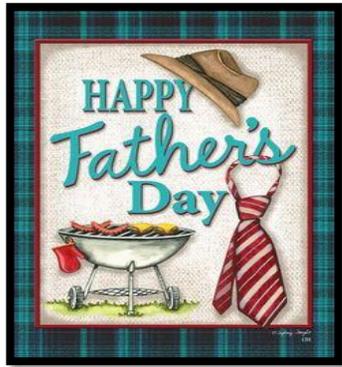
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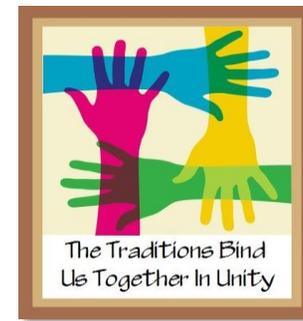
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Principles Above Personalities. We Al-Anons have no doctrine or prestige to defend, nor any power or pride worth fighting over. Neither is it our place to make rules and then punish those who do not comply. When we fail to follow our traditions, we suffer as individuals and as groups. This is our penalty and therefore no humanly administered system of punishment is necessary in our fellowship. If we receive criticism from others, we would do well to thank them and then take our own inventory. If we can keep an open mind and give the same dignity to others as we do to ourselves, even in the face of strong controversy, we can be certain our protection is in the hands of a power greater than we.



Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature. Although Al-Anon's roots are based in A.A., the A.A. "big book" is not and never has been Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature. In the very early days of Al-Anon, A.A. materials were used at meetings because we had very little material of our own. When our cofounder Lois W. wrote *The Al-Anon Family Groups* (B-5) in 1955 with the help of other pioneers and the support of her husband Bill, she intended it as our big book. Bill had not allowed her to write any part of the A.A. big book—even the chapters to the wife or the family—because his book was from the perspective and experience of alcoholics. "Conference Approved Literature" came about from discussions held at Al-Anon's very first World Service Conference in 1961. The first few Conferences developed a process to give conceptual approval for the development of Al-Anon literature, and it was the will of the Conference to recommend exclusive use of CAL in Al-Anon meetings. Although the Conference grandfathered in several existing Al-Anon pieces, the A.A. big book was not among them. The exclusive use of CAL in Al-Anon meetings supports Al-Anon's First Tradition: personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity. The big book is the authority on alcoholism from the perspective and experience of the alcoholic. It does not reflect the perspective or experience of the families and friends of alcoholics. The original source of the Al-Anon program was the shared experiences of families and friends of alcoholics and their application of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. Of course, as part of their personal recovery, Al-Anon members are always free to read any materials they choose outside of an Al-Anon meeting. Many find reading A.A. materials helpful in understanding the disease of alcoholism, but it is important to stick with Al-Anon materials in Al-Anon meetings. Those wishing to receive help understanding the A.A. focus can usually find an open A.A. meeting.

Am I Willing to Ask for Help? Tradition Seven teaches us about being self-supporting and this applies to all areas of our lives, not just finances. If an individual needs help, then Tradition Seven suggests it is their responsibility to ask for it and work it out with others. This is not independence, it is self-support; with the help of others, we support our own needs and abilities. Reaching out to others and discussing our needs, knowing that we operate in a culture of trust, is just one of the spiritual principles of our program. Asking to have our needs met can feel frightening and we may stumble even as we move forward in recovery. Breaking our isolation gives us hope for a new and better life.



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