



Florida North District 8 – Serenity Messenger – May 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

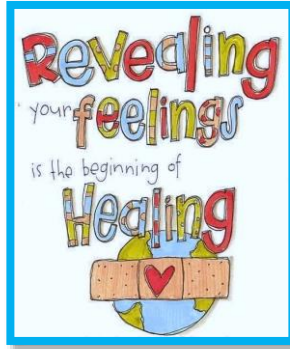
May 5 – 6 N Fla Area Spring Assembly, Altamonte Springs
May 6 – 7 Area 9 TEAM Event Altamonte Springs FL
Aug 25 – 27 N Florida Area AFG Convention, Tampa FL

RECOVERY RODEO 2017

Join us for the 28th Annual North Florida Area Convention in beautiful Tampa, Florida at The Grand Hyatt Tampa Bay. The event takes place August 25 – 27, 2017 and is hosted by District 5. Enjoy a weekend full of fun and fellowship! There will be Al-Anon Workshops with Alateen and AA Workshops too! Plus you'll get to hear great speakers share their stories! There will also be a Boutique, Raffle Baskets, Souvenirs and a CAL Bookstore. Registration is \$35. Click [here](#) for registration and particulars on this great event. Please support Al-Anon Family Groups.



A New Relationship Brought My Old Issues Back



I am an incest survivor; I met an alcoholic the day I was born. I replaced him with other alcoholics, as well as gamblers and addicts of every kind. I was single until I was 52. I remember thinking, "I've finally got myself a 'normal' guy!" But the truth was, his life had been affected by someone else's drinking and he hadn't yet found recovery. I received one key piece of wisdom when I agonized over whether to marry this man I loved: a Sponsor told me not to place all my eggs in my fiancé's recovery. Ask the question: "Do I trust my own tools; my own recovery?" and I did. And I do. I had 12 hard-fought years in Al-Anon, working the Steps over and over, reading, sponsoring and being sponsored, and participating in service work. But when I got into this relationship, it wasn't enough. I had to be a newcomer again – a frightened, angry newcomer. I've heard that being in a relationship is like pouring fertilizer on all my character defects. I have lived with fear and anger all my life. I still do, to some extent. But I'm crawling out of it. And it hasn't been only crawling. There has been a lot of dancing in these years of recovery. My partner's got more than three years in Al-Anon today. He's growing, I'm growing, and it's good. I talk to my Sponsor. It is so important to me to be accountable and to tell the truth to someone. A Sponsor is essential for me because I tend to keep secrets – and secrets are deadly to me. When I did my last fourth Step, I looked hard at my life; I talked about all the embarrassing stuff – and the shame is *gone*. Shame drags me down and makes me ill. I try to be very careful to tell my Sponsor all the dirt. My Sponsor knows it all and loves me anyway. I pray and meditate. I can't sit still so I do a nine-minute meditation each morning: three minutes of writing; three minutes of silence; and three minutes of reporting. It is good, and my Higher Power has often spoken to me in the silence. I can recover for fun and for free. All I need to do is give back to the newcomers coming in the door with fear and anger in their eyes what was given so freely to me. **Reprinted with permission of The Forum, Al-Anon Family Group Hdqts., Inc., Virginia Beach, VA**

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP NEWS

Chair Opportunities for Remainder of Panel 55. District 8 has three chair positions available through the remainder of 2017: Comfort Liaison, Institutions, and Public Information. The #1 Priority for District 8 is Public Outreach, which is a collaborative effort between CPC, Institutions, and Public Information. Two of our Public Outreach chairs were recently vacated and we are looking for volunteers to carry on this important work for the balance of Panel 55's service window. This is a unique opportunity for anyone wishing to explore the benefits of performing service at the district level where you can learn new skills, boost your recovery, and make stronger connections with others in our local Al-Anon Family Groups. Participation is the Key to Harmony!!

SERVICE ARMS CALENDAR QUOTATION

English: It is not what happens today that is beyond our powers to endure. Rather, it is remorse or bitterness for things that happened yesterday, and dread of what tomorrow will bring. Let us remind ourselves each morning that we will live this one day as fully and confidently as we can. *Alcoholism, the Family Disease* (P-4), page 16



Española: No es lo que suceda hoy lo que esté más allá de nuestras facultades soportar. Más bien, es el remordimiento o la amargura por las cosas que pasaron ayer, y el temor a lo que el mañana nos traerá. Pensemos cada mañana que viviremos tan sólo este día de la forma más plena y confiable que podamos. *Alcoholismo: Contagio familiar* (SP-4), página 16

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Area: www.afgarea9.org
World: www.al-anon.alateen.org

Dominance, Promotion, and Loving Interchange. In the Optional Readings section of our Service Manual, we find the "Three Obstacles to Success in Al-Anon" which was taken from the pamphlet: Alcoholism, the Family Disease (P-4). One of the obstacles is Dominance and we are reminded that no member of Al-Anon should direct, assume authority, or give advice. Offering personal advice or giving the impression that we are the experts who know what is best for all friends and families of alcoholics is a form of promoting Al-Anon and is contradictory to Tradition 11. Loving interchange isn't restricted to what is said during meetings. It can happen before and after group meetings, while talking on the phone with another member, and at one of the many Al-Anon events taking place in our District, Area and beyond. One of the benefits of attending Al-Anon meetings is learning how to communicate with others in a healthy way. Everyone shares as an equal, keeping the focus on Al-Anon and our own recovery. On occasion we may attend a meeting that seems to be dominated by two people, one giving advice to the other, and the message communicated is different from what we receive at a meeting where members share their own experience, strength and hope and then allow others to do the same. Maintaining loving interchange without interrupting or giving advice is an invitation to every Al-Anon member in learning to practice recovery principles in every situation and circumstance.



Record Sales for AFA. Participation in the 2017 *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism (AFA)* public outreach magazine project resulted in record-breaking sales!! Al-Anon members ordered a total of 184,675 copies of the magazines for the second printing, which exceeds the previous record achieved in 2012. WSO is grateful for the additional efforts members and Al-Anon service arms are making to reach more families and friends of alcoholics with our message of help and hope with AFA magazines. This is a public outreach success worthy of celebration!!! Together We Can Do It.

Taking a Group Inventory. I recently had the privilege of participating in a meeting dedicated to taking a group inventory. Each member was given a copy of the Al-Anon guidelines the previous week and encouraged to answer the questions in each section according to their own experience with the group, the meeting, and their own part as a member of the group. One topic discussed at length was whether the group has a process for handling problems. We also discussed encouraging members to volunteer for leading a meeting, as well as rotation of other leadership roles within the group. Many ideas were shared during the meeting and everyone was given an opportunity to speak. As a result of the inventory meeting, motions were made, the group voted and some changes were made to the format. This is Knowledge-Based Decision Making in action!!



District 8 Website. If you haven't visited our website lately, you're in for a real treat!! Our webmaster has made some major changes in the past few months; refreshing the home page, incorporating more interactive components, and expanding the use of intuitive navigation. A click on the Meetings tab brings up a chronological list for the current day, arranged by start time with the name and address for each group. There's a designated tab for en Español, and the Events section has all the details on meetings, picnics and parties!! The webpage address is: tampabayalanon.org

AL-ANON INFORMATION SERVICES

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