



# Serenity Messenger



Florida North District 8 – Panel 64

February 2026

## TRADITION 2

**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.**

If you've been in Al-Anon for more than five minutes, you've probably noticed something unusual: nobody is "the boss." There's no gavel, no corner office, no one handing out performance reviews. And yet—miraculously—the coffee gets made, the meeting starts (mostly) on time, and the chairs somehow end up in a circle. That's Tradition 2 in action.

Tradition 2 gently reminds us that Al-Anon isn't run by personalities, volume levels, or whoever's been coming the longest. Our real authority is a loving Higher Power, working through the group conscience. Leaders are trusted servants—emphasis on *trusted* and *servants*—not rulers, referees, or royalty.

Sounds lovely in theory. In practice? Well...let me tell you a story that illustrates what this means.

The Great Chair Arrangement Debate

At one meeting, a seemingly harmless question was asked:

"Should we arrange the chairs in a circle or in rows?"

You would have thought someone asked us to solve world peace.

One member passionately advocated for a circle—"We need equality and connection!"

Another preferred rows—"Circles make me dizzy."

Someone else suggested a semi-circle, which made everyone suspicious.

And one brave soul said, "Honestly, I'll sit on the floor."

Voices rose. Opinions multiplied. Someone muttered, "We've always done it this way," which, as we all know, is the most dangerous sentence in any group.

Finally, our long-time group secretary—who had clearly reached their Al-Anon quota for the day—smiled and said,

"Well...should we ask the group conscience?" Silence. Then laughter.

We took a breath, said a quick prayer, voted, and—get this—no lightning struck. We landed on a circle with a few extra chairs off to the side. Nobody stormed out. The meeting went on. People shared honestly. Healing happened.

And the world kept turning. That's Tradition 2

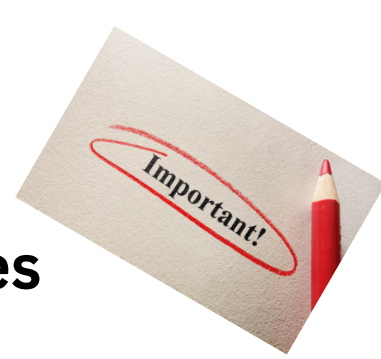
Tradition 2 doesn't mean we never disagree. It means we don't let disagreement run the show. It reminds us to pause, invite something bigger than our egos into the room, and trust that a loving Higher Power can work through all of us—yes, even the person who really hates circles.

It also takes the pressure off. Leaders don't have to have all the answers. They just have to be willing. Willing to serve. Willing to listen. Willing to let go when their idea isn't the one the group chooses.

For many of us who grew up in chaos, control, or confusion, this is radical stuff. A group where power isn't hoarded? Where no one governs? Where humility is a feature, not a flaw?

Tradition 2 quietly teaches us how to live differently—how to trust, how to cooperate, and how to remember that we don't have to run everything to be okay.

So the next time a meeting runs a little messy, or a decision takes longer than you'd like, or the chairs aren't quite right, take heart. That might just be Tradition 2 stretching its legs. After all, if a loving Higher Power can organize a room full of Al-Anon members...maybe there's hope for the rest of our lives too.



# Al-Anon Group Annual Updates

I had a lot to learn about group records when I came to work at the World Service Office (WSO). Although I had held a number of Area service positions, I never managed the Area records. What I remembered about how it worked was what I learned as a newcomer: at every Assembly the Area Secretary distributed piles of “computer printouts” (remember the green bar paper with the perforated edges?) to each District Representative with the instructions, “These are the groups in your District. Make sure they all get updated and sent back to the World Service Office!”

The WSO no longer mails green bar reports to the Areas. We evolved to sending an Annual Update Sheet to each group’s Current Mailing Address. Changes—hundreds of forms every year—are mailed back to the WSO and processed by the AFG Records team. Accurate records provide each group with “a link to worldwide Al-Anon and Alateen that assures unity of purpose and a common bond of love and friendship available to each member” [“Benefits of Registration with the WSO,” 2019-2021 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27), p. 28].

**In 2020, we evolved again. We discontinued mailing the Annual Update Sheet, but the need for current information—for a link to worldwide Al-Anon and Alateen—remains. We are asking each group to please take a few minutes this year to review your group details—day and time; location and location instructions (if physical); meeting ID, phone number, and password (if online or phone); Current Mailing Address; language spoken, etc. If any of these have changed, please use one of the online forms available at [al-anon.org/groupupdate](https://al-anon.org/groupupdate) to let us know. (If you aren’t sure of your group details, check with your Area Group Records Coordinator or [al-anon.org/meetingsearch](https://al-anon.org/meetingsearch) to verify.)**

Please note there has been an update to the form this year stating that registered groups have permission to display—in an electronic format and without alteration—the Suggested Welcome, Preamble, Suggested Closing, Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of Service. While groups have always had permission to use these, some members were not sure if it was okay to display them in meetings. This language seeks to clarify that it is. We know these tools are essential to well-run meetings, and we are here to support that. We appreciate the flexibility, patience, ingenuity, and perseverance members have shown in figuring out how to continue to hold vibrant, thriving Al-Anon meetings every day.

By Kerri K., Associate Director—International

The Forum, March 2021

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**Please contact our Group Records at [grouprecords@tampabayalanon.org](mailto:grouprecords@tampabayalanon.org) with your updates/corrections.**



It is customary in District 8 for groups to host District Events. 2026 is now here and we are looking for group sponsors for the following events:

Gratitude Luncheon 2026- TBD

Speaker's Marathon 2026-TBD

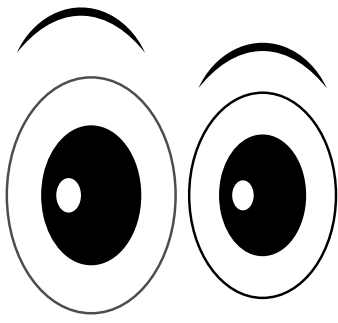
Picnic 2026 - will be hosted by Journey to Recovery

Date and location to be announced soon.

Please discuss these opportunities with your groups and know that groups can work together to do these workshops. If you are not sure what or how to take on a workshop, we have records from previous groups on the planning process, the numbers attending, the location available, etc. There is money available from the district to help offset any costs. And we have some supplies on hand to help with hosting.

Interested?

Contact Howie [events@tampabayalanon.org](mailto:events@tampabayalanon.org)



**NEW BUS BENCH MESSAGES  
FOR AL-ANON**

***Have you seen one?***

- Busch Blvd and North Blvd – Across from Chamberlain High School
- North Blvd near Busch Blvd – Across from the Library
- Florida Avenue and Linebaugh Ave – NW Corner
- Hillsborough W Avenue and N MacDill
- Henderson and Nebraska Ave
- Gandy Blvd and Westshore Blvd

If you happen to see one of these benches! Take a picture and share it with our community!



**RAFFLE TICKETS ARE BEING SOLD FOR THIS YEARS CONVENTION 2026!**

**THE COST IS \$5 EACH...**

HOTEL, CONVENTION REGISTRATION, CONVENTION WORKSHOPS, AND  
MEALS SERVED AS PART OF

EVENT

\$500 VALUE

2026 FLORIDA NORTH AFG CONVENTION TO BE HELD

AUGUST 28-30

CAPE CANAVERAL.

ASK YOUR GROUP REP OR COME TO OUR NEXT DISTRICT MEETING!

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

[HTTPS://WWW.AFGAREA9.ORG/CONVENTION2026](https://www.afgarea9.org/convention2026)

**IMPORTANT!**

Elections for Open Positions:

Public Information,

Group Records,

Institutions,

Cooperating with Professional Community (CPC)

Where and When

- Please talk with your groups and consider volunteering to help with these positions! These positions are most important in getting the word out to the community about what we do... help for others impacted by alcoholism... you can even volunteer to do this as a group or with a friend!

# AL-ANON COMMONLY USED ABBREVIATIONS

**AFG** - Al-Anon Family Groups  
**AIS** - Al-Anon Information Services  
**AMIAS** - Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service  
**AWSC** - Area World Service Committee  
**CAL** - Conference Approved Literature  
**DAL** - District Alateen Liaison  
**DR** - District Representative

**GR** - Group Representative  
**IR/ISR** - Intergroup/Information Service Rep  
**PI** - Public Information  
**PO** - Public Outreach  
**PSA** - Public Service Announcement  
**WS** - World Service  
**WSO** - World Service Organization

## SLOGANS AND MEMBER SUGGESTED ACRONYMS

### *Slogans to Remember*

- **DENIAL** - Don't Even Notice I am Lying
- **DETACH** - Don't Even Think About Changing Him/Her/Them
- **FEAR** - False Evidence Appearing Real
- **FOUR** Unwanted M's - Martyrdom, Managing, Manipulating, Mothering
- **FINE** - Feelings Inside Not Expressed
- **HALT** - Am I - Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired?
- **HOPE** - Happy Our Program Exists
- **HOW** - Honest, Open, Willing
- **JADE** - Justify, Argue, Defend, Explain
- **LOVE** - Let Others Voluntarily Evolve
- **NUTS** - Not Using the Steps
- **QTIP** - Quit Taking It Personally
- Blame, Shame, Complain and Criticize!
- **STEPS** - Solutions To Every Problem
- **TRUST** - Try Really Using Step Three
- **3 A's** - Awareness, Acceptance, Action
- **3 C's** - I didn't Cause it, I can't Control it, I can't Cure it
- **3 G's** - Get off their back, Get out of their way, Get on with your own life
- **5 G's** - Same as 3 G's + Give them to God, Get to Meeting
- **3 Unwanted P's** - Perfection, Procrastination, Paralysis
- **THINK** - (Before speaking...) Is it Thoughtful, Honest, Intelligent, Necessary, Kind?
- **WAIT** - Why Am I Talking?
- **WILLING** - When I Live Life I Need God

***IF YOU HAVE A FAVORITE SLOGAN THAT IS NOT LISTED ABOVE***

***PLEASE SHARE IT WITH US! SEND IT TO ME AT [SERENITYMESSENGER@TAMPABAYALANON.ORG](mailto:SERENITYMESSENGER@TAMPABAYALANON.ORG)***

## AL-ANON INFORMATION SERVICES

### DISTRICT 8 REPRESENTATIVES

**DISTRICT REP – HEATH C.**

[dr@tampabayalanon.org](mailto:dr@tampabayalanon.org)

**ALT DIST. REP -CINDY**

[adr@tampabayalanon.org](mailto:adr@tampabayalanon.org)

**SECRETARY -LYNN**

[secretary@tampabayalanon.org](mailto:secretary@tampabayalanon.org)

**TREASURER – TRICIA**

[treasurer@tampabayalanon.org](mailto:treasurer@tampabayalanon.org)

**DISTRICT INFO SERVICES**

**REPRESENTATIVE-**

**LYNNE A.**

[disl@tampabayalanon.org](mailto:disl@tampabayalanon.org)

Area Information

Spanish Coordinator

[Spanish-64@afgarea9.org](mailto:Spanish-64@afgarea9.org)

**Contribution Addresses**

(Include FL-N Dist. & Group#)

District 8 AFG,

PO Box 954

Odessa, FL 33556

Area 9 FL N

NFA AFG, Inc.

1767 Lakewood Ranch Blvd.

PMB 249

Bradenton, FL 34211

World Service (WSO AFG)

1600 Corp Landing Pkwy

Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617

Website Addresses

Local: [www.tampabayalanon.org](http://www.tampabayalanon.org)

Area: [www.afgarea9.org](http://www.afgarea9.org)

WSO: [www.al-anon.org](http://www.al-anon.org)

**ALATEEN - HOLLY**

[alateen@tampabayalanon.org](mailto:alateen@tampabayalanon.org)

**ANSWERING SERVICE-FADIA**

[answering-service@tampabayalanon.org](mailto:answering-service@tampabayalanon.org)

**ARCHIVES-SHIRLEY**

[archives@tampabayalanon.org](mailto:archives@tampabayalanon.org)

**CPC -(OPEN)**

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**COMFORT LIAISON -MELINDA**

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**EVENTS- HOWIE**

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**GROUP RECORDS - (OPEN)**

[grouprecords@tampabayalanon.org](mailto:grouprecords@tampabayalanon.org)

**INSTITUTIONS - (OPEN)**

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**LITERATURE - GAIL**

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**PUBLIC INFORMATION -JOE**

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**WHERE & WHEN -(OPEN)**

[whereandwhen@tampabayalanon.org](mailto:whereandwhen@tampabayalanon.org)