

THE BEACON

Al-Anon Family Group | District 159 | Naples, Bonita Springs, Immokalee & Marco Island

The 12 STEPS, TRADITIONS, & CONCEPTS guide us in recovery and show us a better way to live.

“The Steps show me how to love myself; the Traditions show me how to love others, and the Concepts show me how to love the world that I live in.”

-Paths to Recovery, Page 341

STEP 1

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.

TRADITION 1

Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity.

CONCEPT 1

The ultimate responsibility and authority for Al-Anon world services belongs to the Al-Anon groups.



SERENITY

JOURNEY

CHOICES

LOVE

MIRACLES

SELF CARE

FORGIVENESS

SERVICE

**LET IT BEGIN
WITH ME...**

**NEW YEAR
2022**



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

District 159 Meeting is now being held in person at Naples Community Church, 849 7th Avenue So., 2nd floor, Naples, Fl.

January 12, 2022/6:30pm

All Al-Anon members welcome.

To all GROUP REPRESENTATIVES (GR's) in District 159. If you can't make the meeting, please find someone who can cover for you.

Concept 4: Participation is the key to harmony.

Looking forward to seeing you at the next District Meeting!



DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T HAVE A SUBSCRIPTION YET ?

Each month *The Beacon* can be delivered to any email address by going online to

Newsletter@naplesal-anon.org



SLOGANS ARE WISDOM WRITTEN IN SHORTHAND

AS WE DEVELOP A WILLINGNESS to be receptive, we find unexpected wisdom and guidance in the words and actions of those around us.

-Having Had A Spiritual Awakening, pg 103

Let Go & Let God

I grew up surrounded by alcohol and angry men. As a latch-key kid, I was lonely, unseen and unheard as my mother struggled to support us. Little wonder that I grew up with a poor self-image; letting go of healthy men, marrying an abusive alcoholic and raising a family in the disease.

My last job before retiring was working in a rehabilitation center for substance abuse. I was the first person to speak with family members of the addict, listening to their story, commiserating with them but never connecting their experiences to my own. Talk about denial!!

Eventually I moved to Florida, leaving family behind. Following my counselor's advice, I started attending Al-Anon meetings. I thought I would learn how to help my son. Because of Al-Anon, I have learned that I can not change anyone. I turn my son over to God everyday. Program has taught me to be true to myself and my Higher Power, to let go of the past and live in the present. I have been in Al-Anon for 20 years now and I see the positive changes in my life. I have little immediate family left, but I have the best family in the world-my Al-Anon family. They are there for me.

Yes, I have been affected by the disease of alcoholism, however, I have always had a deep faith in the God of my understanding. Even as a young child, He was and is my best friend. Through the help of the Al-Anon program I have learned to Let Go and Let God.

-Naples/New York

Do you have a favorite slogan? Why and/or how do you use it? Please share it by emailing naplesal-anon.org/newsletter

Spiritual Principle of the Month

HONESTY - I must be honest with myself and with my higher power while facing the reality of my circumstances. My purpose is to know who I am, how I got this way, and my characteristics that I have to work with. In this way I can take a positive step toward recovery.

-Blue Print for Progress

It may feel like an enormous risk, but talking honestly about the situation is the key to healing.

-Courage to Change, pg 296

I am going through the process of determining, with as much honesty as possible, just what makes me tick.

-Hope for Today, pg 167

Am I honest with myself about my motives?

-Blue Print for Progress, pg 78



THOUGHTS

Focusing on spiritual principles means looking at myself.

What spiritual principle is my Higher Power asking me to practice in this situation?

A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

We don't plan where or when we might have a spiritual awakening. Mine took place at the Grand Canyon at sunrise. I was there this summer with a group of fellow travelers and meditators. After watching the sun rise and marveling at the hues of red, orange and yellow, our teacher guided us into our meditation practice. Several minutes later, I closed my eyes and settled into my breath. Two visuals emerged: out of the mud comes the lotus flower and out of darkness comes light.

From my childhood there had been darkness in my psyche about my body. I had been body shamed by my mother from the time I was eight years old which resulted in low self-esteem and hating my body. As I meditated, I felt the harshness and the rawness of my mother's words. I breathed in the truth of her insensitivity.

As I continued meditation, a new awareness came over me. I did not have to hold on to my mother's words as the truth. Out of the darkness came a vision, a felt sense, of my inner and outer beauty. I was the lotus flower growing up from the mud. In that moment, I chose to love myself and my body just as it is. Tears came, a warmth filled me, and a smile radiated from deep within.

Later on, I realized that my breath was freer and deeper as a weight had been lifted. Any anger I had towards my mother was gone. I knew she had loved me and had only repeated what she experienced from her own mother. I was healing myself and the pain of generations that came before me.

I love the phrase "Don't leave before the miracle happens." Words I have heard many times in Al-Anon meetings. Who would have guessed that my first trip to the Grand Canyon, at the age of 68, would be the setting for a lasting miracle?

-Suzanne N. / New York

TEST YOURSELF !

What are the words
for the acronym

PAUSE

HEARD AT A MEETING

If I'm doing what's good for me,
then it's good for everyone else.

Discovering who I am has set me
free.

Everything you put before your
program is what you will lose
without it.

3 things you can not change:

- the truth
- the past
- someone else



CHANGES!

11th STEP, AFG is going Hybrid
in January.

Check the Where & When on
NaplesAl-Anon.org

Naples United Church of Christ,
Nelson Hall, 5200 Clayton Rd,
corner of Seagate Dr., Naples

* Postpone Action Until Serenity Enters



In January, 1980, Ellie, Shirley, Irma and Del registered the **Wednesday Noon, AFG** meeting with WSO, making it the second oldest Al-Anon meeting in Naples today. It was the first Naples Al-Anon daytime meeting filling a need for those who could not make an evening meeting because of family obligations. They created a format using CAL, established a lending library and provided a list of temporary sponsors for those coming into the program for the first time.

Sometimes we don't know the history of our group. We only know that we are one of the lucky ones to have found Al-Anon when we did. Lois W. once said, "It takes only one person to start something, but many others to carry it out".* For 41 years, those 'many others' have continued showing up, doing service, chairing, sharing and welcoming those who come in in crisis.

Today the Wednesday Noon, AFG, continues to meet at the 24 Hour Club on Pine Ridge Road carrying the message of hope.

We are thankful to those who came before us.

*Lois Wilson, MVOJ pg 262

We hear the 7th Tradition spoken at every meeting but can
you recite it without looking?

Every group...

NOTICE

A time will come when each Al-Anon Family Group of District 159 will make a decision as to whether they will remain a virtual meeting, a hybrid meeting or return to an in-person meeting.

When that decision is made, please get in touch with our District 159 Records Keeper so that the information can be updated in the *Where & When* on our website for those people who are looking for a meeting.

Records Keeper:
recordskeeper@naplesal-anon.org

Where & When:
naplesal-anon.org

RECOVERY IS FLUID

CHANGES!

Thursday Noon, AFG is now Hybrid.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church,
Parish Hall, 1101 N. Collier Blvd.,
Marco Island

Zoom ID: 176642700;
Passcode: 747488

5 STAGES OF RECOVERY

Upon reflection of my recovery journey, I have been able to identify what I call "The Five Stages of Recovery". They are only my opinion and as they say, "Take what you like and leave the rest".

Stage 1 - Enter the Rooms

I believe that recovery begins by entering the rooms of Al-Anon. It doesn't really matter how you get there. It can be court mandated, friend suggested or situationally motivated. Regardless of how or why one walks into the rooms, unless you claim a seat, recovery doesn't begin.

Stage 2 - Learn the Language

Sitting in the rooms and regular attendance at meetings allows an individual to begin to learn "Al-Anon speak". In order to recover we need to begin to understand the philosophy and language of the program. We need to be able to "talk the talk" before we can "walk the walk". Slogans and sayings help us to begin the journey.

Stage 3 - Listen and Share

As we begin to learn the language and hear the stories, we feel safe to share and begin to feel more comfortable. We recognize we are not alone. The disease of alcohol robbed many of us of any semblance of trust. Hearing others freely share their stories helps us to feel safe to share our own. By listening and sharing, we are relieved of some of the pain and the healing begins. We start to trust others as well as ourselves. We are not yet truly in recovery but recovery is beginning.

Stage 4 - Working the Steps

Having been in the rooms long enough to learn the language and understand the philosophy, we can "talk the talk" and basically sound good. We may know in our heads what to do but,

(continued on next page)

LOOKING FOR A GIFT?

The FORUM is a gift that keeps on giving 12 times a year.



It features timely sharings from Al-Anon & Alateen members, suggested meeting topics and the latest information on world wide Al-Anon recovery.

You can receive The FORUM through the mail or get the electronic version by ordering either one online at

e-comm.al-anon.org

For \$11 a year-12 issues- it's less than a \$1 a month. It is said that The FORUM is like a meeting in your pocket.



5 STAGES OF RECOVERY (cont)

we are still not yet “in recovery”. Now, it is time to do the hard work of actually working the Steps. The Steps are the blueprint for recovery. At this point, we will need a sponsor to help us learn to “walk the walk”. Only by going through the Steps do we really begin to recover. The first three Steps help us wake up and find a power greater than ourselves. It's Steps 4, 5, and 6, that help us discover ourselves and the part we play. In Steps 7, 8, and 9 we mend the wrongs of the past by cleaning up our errors and recovery begins to occur. Steps 10, 11, and 12 help us to maintain what we have learned, to mature and to become the healthier adults we want to be. We are not recovered but we are now in recovery.

Stage 5 - Applying the Steps

Step 12 suggests that recovery is “practicing the principles in all our affairs”. Even after having finished the steps and thinking I knew the philosophy, practicing the principles remained difficult to do. Knowing what to do didn't guarantee I would actually do the next right thing. As anxiety rose and fear re-appeared, very often the Al-Anon principles disappeared. Spirituality is easily lost unless constant contact with a Higher Power is renewed daily.

They say that one meeting is enough to hear what we need. That is why I attend 6 meetings a week because I never know which meeting will have the message.

As an imperfect human being, I often struggle to apply the knowledge I have gained during my recovery journey. It is easier to preach the program than it is to practice it. Today sounding good isn't enough. I need to continue to work and apply the principles so I will do good not just sound good. Recovery is about internalizing and using the principles not just talking about them.

The beauty of the 5 stages of recovery and my spiritual awaking is every day, many times a day, I am given the opportunity to begin again. When I finish Step 12, I go back to Step 1 and start over.

My Higher Power gives me opportunities to practice the principles with soft lessons when the consequences are not as high and if I remember that the principles are beneficial not only with my alcoholics but in all my relationships. The key is to be “Honest, Open and Willing”.

I doubt I will ever be fully recovered but my recovery is ongoing as long as I “Keep Coming Back”

-Shelley, Toronto/Naples

A LOOK BACK...

A WEATHER REPORT FROM FEBRUARY 1987

Early tomorrow morning a strong front of resentments will collide with a mass of hot promises...they will be moving in your direction... so start the day slowly and with caution.

Heavy rain from falling tears are expected with angry winds and occasional howling...followed by strong threats...probably by late afternoon.

These conditions arouse sleeping memories of blame and prompts-high pitch screaming by dark... followed close with high tempers and of course... the ever present headache.

It could be quieter by morning, with extreme cold front moving in... it could cause chills... usually caused by silence...

So if you are planning to live till tomorrow... before you get out of bed, cover yourself with Serenity, say a prayer, then bathe yourself in a large tub of your favorite higher power...

-Reprint from February, 1987 The Beacon



HOT OFF THE PRESSES !!!

District 159 News...

Try to imagine when there were no Al-Anon meetings. When people struggled through chaos and dysfunction, feeling desperate and alone but still thinking there must be a way to control someone's drinking.

Al-Anon doesn't just happen. It takes a willingness to get involved, to make sure that this program continues beyond our generation and continues to help those who are in crisis.

At the local level we are familiar with the individual AFG groups and their formats. We depend on individuals showing up and stepping up to do service such as chairing, sharing their experience, strength and hope, the 7th tradition and choosing a GR (group representative) to bring back information from the district.

It is not much different at the District level. Group Representatives from all over the district come together for two hours on the second Wednesday of every other month. Our District Representative leads us through reviewing, discussing and voting on any matters affecting our meetings, our district, our area, or World Service.

The blessings of getting involved are growth in self-esteem, widening your circle of friends, a sense of team accomplishment, and paying it forward.

District 159 is returning to in-person meetings beginning this January 12, 2022. **All Al-Anon members are welcome.** This is a wonderful opportunity to learn how Al-Anon works at the District level. You will get to see volunteers in action as they keep Al-Anon vibrant, healthy and available. The meeting begins at 6:30 pm at Naples Community Church, 849 7th Avenue So., 2nd floor, Old Naples, Fl.

AFFIRMATIONS

I am a friend to myself.

Today I will rejoice in my abilities.

I can meet new opportunities
without fear.

I can give to others with no strings
attached.



ANNIVERSARIES & CELEBRATIONS

Let us help you celebrate your
group's Anniversary! Send your
information - time, date,
history, & anything else you
would like us to know to:

naplesal-anon.org/Newsletter



Where Will You Be June 29-July 2, 2023?

Al-Anon's next International Convention will be held June 29-July 2, 2023, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, United States! International Conventions are fabulous combinations of fun, fellowship, and recovery, as well as opportunities to meet new friends, explore new attractions, and vacation in new locales.

Our friends in Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A) will join us by holding daytime A.A. meetings on Friday and Saturday. Al-Anon's daytime offerings will include Book Studies, Next Picks, Panel and Speaker meetings, Table Topics, and Workshops. The daytime options will be in addition to our Big Meetings on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, where we'll hear family stories, talks from members in other countries, and spiritual sharings.

Mark your calendar and stay tuned for more details as the summer of 2023 approaches. We look forward to seeing you in Albuquerque June 29 through July 2, 2023!



Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change,
Courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.