Volume 2023 Issue 4 APRIL

# THE BEACON

Al-Anon Family Group I District 159 I 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 pg 341



Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

#### **TRADITION 4**

Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or AA as a whole.

#### **CONCEPT 4**

Participation is the Key to Harmony.





The best way to maintain balance is to build my self esteem. When I treat myself with kindness and respect, I become better able to get along with others.

-Courage to Change pg 261

My recovery is a matter of balance.

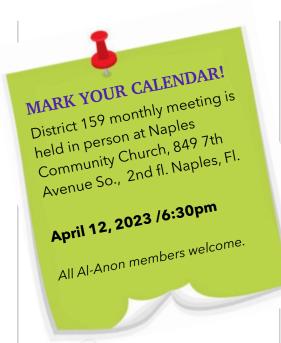
-Hope for Today pg 204

To create a balanced life, I must exercise some selfdiscipline. That way I can pay attention to my feelings without being tyrannized by them.

-Courage to Change pg 227

By improving my conscious contact with God, I find that emotional balance and inner peace can be a part of my daily life

-Hope for Today pg 282



To all GROUP REPRESENTATIVES (GR's) in District 159. If you can't make the meeting, ask someone from your group to step in for you and bring back the message.

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 p 103

#### **HOW IMPORTANT IS IT**

Previously, I would want to win even the smallest of differences of opinion. During struggles, at home, work or in public, I now use "How Important Is It?" to let go of many situations and not worry or obsess over them.

What price did I pay to win an argument or prove I was right, even sometimes when deep down I knew I was not? To determine if an issue or situation is important, I now ask, is it important today? Will it be important in five days, in a month, or in a year?

I question whether a loved one's unkind words early in the day merit a whole day of misery, obsession and hostility. Does it really matter? If I could say to myself how important is it and believe what I was saying, my attitude changed. No more worrying, obsessing, fearing, etc.

When with the help of the wisdom I heard in meetings, and in contact with my Higher Power, I started using the slogan. I found that most of what I had been concerned about was not particularly important.

Today I try to ignore some of those things that would have caught my attention. When I do, I recognize situations that are not important to spend time on. That gives me more time to care for myself. The result is I can spend more time listening to my family members. Generally, I can sort out what is important and let go of the rest. When I do so, I have a more peaceful life.

-Naples/Toronto

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

#### HEARD AT A MEETING

God was always remote. Al-Anon has made him my friend.

Pain is the great motivator to work on myself.

If you don't feel close to your Higher Power, which one moved away?

I don't want to get spiritually smug.

What can I do now in concert with my Higher Power?

# **THOUGHTS**

My character defects show up when:

- I fail to take care of myself.
- I fail to mind my own business.
- I fail to make a spiritual connection.

Being human isn't a character defect

## **NEWS ACROSS THE DISTRICT**

LIVING IN THE SOLUTION, AFG will celebrate their 12th Anniversary on Monday, April 10th at 6pm at St Monica's at 7070 Immokalee Road. There will be food, fellowship and an AA and Al-Anon speaker. (See attached flyer)

Join Al-Anon's **DISTRICT 159** monthly meetings, on the second Wednesday of each month either in person at the Naples Community Church, 849 7th Avenue So., 2nd fl. Naples, Fl. or by ZOOM: ID#: 862 6388 6284 Password: 123456

The fellowship **DINNER** before the District meeting on April 12, at 5pm continues!! Same plaza as the meeting. Bring an Al-Anon friend! "It's fun connecting with people from other meetings." Let me know if you can make it. 917-324-1145

After three years, the current **District 159 PANEL** will step down in December. It's not too soon to start thinking about stepping up to do service at the District level. Service positions will be in need of filling at the group level and at the district level by September for December. Go to <u>NaplesAl-Anon.org</u> and peruse the Open Positions and their description. Al-Anon can not stay relevant without volunteers.

A NOTE from District 159's current **Group Records**Chairperson: "If you've any interest in my position of Group Records and want to know what it is I actually do, please reach out. I'm happy to talk. Please invite your group members, too. I will say, when I took it over during the initial stages of the COVID shutdown, it was a bear! However, all the new and strange situations that needed to be massaged, have been, and this job really IS easy. So vital to be filled."

Grouprecords@naplesal-anon.org

**CHANGES!** The **Tranquility**, **AFG** meeting has changed their meeting time to 7:30pm. They meet at St Monica's Episcopal, 7070 Immokalee Rd., Naples, FL every Tuesday.

## DO YOU KNOW?

# WHAT ARE THE WORDS FOR THE ACRONYM

ICU

# Help with the Serenity Prayer

There are two truism that I have heard in the rooms that help me with the Serenity Prayer.

- I cannot change the truth, the past and other people.
- I can change what I think, say, and do.

They help me with the "Wisdom to know the difference.



## **CONCEPT FOUR**

Concerns mutual respect

-How Al-Anon Works pg 132

Inconsistent Chaotic Unstable



Lois W. once said, "It takes only one person to start something, but many others to carry it out".\* The meeting's founder, Sandy Barger from up north, selected the book, Having Had a Spiritual Awakening, and created the meditation format. At first the 11th Step group was known only by word of mouth, a meeting at noon on Fridays in St. Williams' Ministry on Seagate (which has since been torn down). Neither the founder nor any early members attend the meeting now but there are many others who have come along since and continue to "carry it out."

Today the members of the **11th Step, AFG** know exactly what to do on Friday. At the stroke of noon, a member volunteers to chair the meeting. After the Opening is read, each person reads one of the 12 Steps and in a few words says how s/he feels. It is the group's tradition to read from the book, *Having Had A Spiritual Awakening* and meditate on the reading for 5 minutes. The group is then open for discussion.

In 2002 the group registered with the WSO as the **11th Step**, **AFG**. By 2012 the meditation meeting found a new home in The United Church of Christ on the corner of Seagate and Crayton Road in Nelson Hall and continues to meet there today as well as on Zoom. ID: 575899875 Password: 077960

While the format has changed to hybrid, the theme of "living a life that has a deeper meaning than the search for daily necessities"\*\* has not changed.

<sup>\*</sup>Lois Wilson, MVOJ pg 262 \*\* Had A Spiritual Awakening pg 5

# THOUGHTS ON THE 4TH STEP

I'm uncovering who I use to be and discovering who I am now



# IN TRADITION FOUR I FIND BALANCE— INDEPENDENCE WITH CONSIDERATION

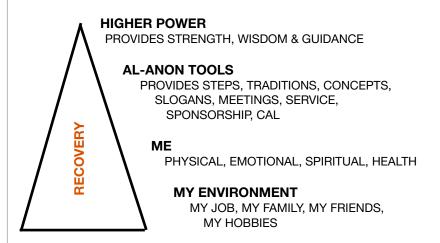


# HUMOR IN AL-ANON

I would agree with you but then we would both be wrong.

# **HOW BALANCED IS MY LIFE TODAY?**

I've come to think of my recovery as a triangle..



As long as I keep everything in that order, with my Higher Power at the top as my sole focus, everything in my life works serenely, even joyfully. God provides strength, wisdom, and guidance, which flows down to me through the Al-Anon program. With the help of Al-Anon and my Higher Power I receive what is necessary to maintain a good, balanced life and I attended honorably to my various needs. Then when these things have been taken care of, I use whatever time and energy I have left on work, family, friends, and hobbies. This is how I keep principles above personalities and practice "First Things First."

-Hope for Today pg 255

Sometimes, my experience of a Power greater than myself is simply a nudge to maintain my sense of balance. I often get that nudge from Al-Anon literature.

-Having Had a Spiritual Awakening, pg 140

# **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

Assemblies are for working on AL-Anon issues. GR's vote. Observers are welcome.

Conventions are for fun and fund raising. All are welcome.

## **SPRING ASSEMBLY**

June 2-4, 2023

Marriott Coral Springs Hotel & Convention Center, Heron Bay 11775 Heron Bay Blvd Coral Springs, FL 33076

# AL-ANON INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

June 29-July 2, 2023

Albuquerque Convention Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico Go to <u>Al-Anon.org</u> for more information and to register

# 33rd ANNUAL AFG FLORIDA SOUTH AREA 10 CONVENTION

with AA Participation
NEW HORIZONS OF HOPE

August 18-20, 2023

Hyatt Regency Coconut Point 5001 Coconut Road, Bonita Springs, FL 34134

## **FALL ELECTION ASSEMBLY**

October 20-22, 2023

Marriott Coral Springs Hotel & Convention Center, Heron Bay 11775 Heron Bay Blvd Coral Springs, FL 33076



In 1989, Ruth F. and Dee R. formed the Al-Anon Family Freedom, AFG group, meeting weekly at The Willough of Naples, a mental health facility for adults with a dual-diagnose and substance abuse. It was a way of introducing Al-Anon to the families as well as being open to the public. In 2010, as attendance began to fall off, the group made the decision to move to St. Peter's Ministry where the meeting began to attract new members.

**Tuesday Freedom, AFG** is a discussion group where each week of the month has a particular focus. The 1st week is the Tradition and the 2nd week is open topic. The 3rd week is Conference Approved Literature and the 4th week is a business meeting followed by an open topic. Tuesday Freedom offers a warm welcome to the newcomer as well as the long-timer who are in search of serenity. In the words of one member, "I came into the room a stranger and immediately felt comfort. I literally felt myself relaxing... and I'm still coming back after 11 years!"

It is noted in the archives of District 159 that since the group's formation, its members have shown, year after year, a strong commitment to service; consistently showing up at District meetings and participating as various Chairpersons.

For 34 years, **Tuesday Freedom, AFG** has continued to provide a place of safety, community and holds out the possibility of a better life.

**Tuesday Freedom, AFG** meets at 7:30pm in-person at St. Peter's Ministry, 5025 Rattlesnake Hammock, Rm 101, Naples, FL conveniently located on the south side of Naples.



## ON THE "TO-DON'T" LIST

I don't have to feel threatened by the future. I can take life one day at a time.

-Courage to Change pg 351



## MADE A LIST

of all the things that bother me about \_\_\_\_\_

Then I look at my part in it. (my expectations, my behavior)

What can I do about it? When I know my part then I can change myself.



# **TRADITION 4**

is about respecting others enough to let them make their own decisions

Hope for Today pg 139

# **Choosing Happiness**

# Acceptance

Some members describe acceptance as "living life on life's terms." In one of Al-Anon's Conference Approved Literature, *DISCOVERING CHOICES*, page 169 it states "Acceptance means putting aside the wish that our situation could be different from what it is. It's a costly luxury to worry, obsess, criticize, or pine for something that we can't have. We pay for this luxury with what we could have: the peace of mind that is available to us today. To reach acceptance of our present circumstances, it is important to come to peace with our past and to heal old wounds. This work in turn assures us that we won't re-create our past relationships in the future".

One Al-Anon member shared that one day, while she was journaling, she asked herself, "What am I willing to accept in order to be happy." She then wrote:

- I accept that alcoholism is a family disease, and that allows me to stop wasting time fighting a hopeless battle.
- I accept that I have been affected by the disease.
- I accept that I can display symptoms similar to the alcoholic among them obsession, anxiety, anger, etc.
- I accept that each life has its share of conflict.
- I accept that disputes come up even when everyone is doing their best.

Acceptance has given me the freedom to live my life happily and peacefully most of the time.

-Bonita Springs

"Acceptance doesn't mean that we will live happily ever after. With acceptance comes a little pain and sometimes a sense of loss but Acceptance can be empowering because it makes choice possible."

-Courage to Change pg 256

# 33rd Annual AFG Florida South Area 10 Convention 2023



AUGUST 18TH-AUGUST 20TH
HYATT REGENCY COCONUT POINT
RESORT & SPA

Use the QR Code to the AREA website for more convention information.



Please Donate to Florida South (Area10) 2023 Convention

# **New Horizons of Hope**

For every \$10 donated, you will receive an entry in the drawing for **2 Free Nights** at the HYATT REGENCY COCONUT POINT RESORT AND SPA for any dates from 8/16 to 8/20 2023!!

The drawing will be held in July 15, 2023

# THE DR'S CORNER



hen a mother eagle builds her nest, she first constructs it using large branches and sharp thorns. She then lines it with layers of feathers, fur and moss in order to make it comfortable and safe for her eggs and subsequent eaglets. Overtime as they grow, she starts to remove the soft lining, exposing them to the sharp thorns. The nest becomes uncomfortable to the point where the eaglets have had enough and are ready to leave and fly on their own. It as if the mother eagle instinctively (innately) knows that the longer the nest remains comfortable the longer the eaglets will stay and not go out on their own.

In Al-Anon, I learned that through my enabling, the more I did to protect and attempt to fix a situation, the more comfortable I made "the nest". Ultimately, because of my enabling in the long run, I was making matters worse by contributing. I was not allowing my loved one to have the dignity to find his own recovery. At the same time, I found my own level of comfort by attempting to try to protect and control. Needless to say it was a false sense of reality for me.

Through Al-Anon recovery over time I gained awareness of many things. I understood that I did not clause, could not control and could not cure the disease of alcoholism. I could, however, because of my love and fear, contribute to it. I grew to understand the importance of Step One, and that I was powerless over the disease of alcoholism, as well as people, places, things, and situations. When getting out of my loved ones way, I was able to put the focus on myself, and less on him, allowing him to move forward on his own when he was willing and able. Just like the mother eagle, I grew to understand my loved one had to move forward on his own, and I became willing to detach with love.

Mike S., District Representative, District 159

## **AFFIRMATIONS**

I am enough. I have enough.

Looking at my needs is not selfish.

I will have the courage to change.

I choose to be happy



## SERVICE

- 1. Service keeps Al-Anon alive for those who need it in the future.
- 2. Service helps me in my recovery.
- 3. I always receive more than I give when I do service.

When I found
Al-Anon,
nothing changed
but me.

-Opening Our Hearts, Transforming Our Losses pg 165

# A QUICK 4th STEP

When we are triggered, we start our "Stinking Thinking". This is a time when a specific 4th Step might help. Draw four columns with headings on a piece of paper.

#### **EXAMPLE:**

TRIGGER	WHAT I DO	WHAT I NEED TO DO DIFFERENTLY	MY CHARACTER TRAITS
I feel left out when I'm not included in my family's discussions or making family decisions.	I feel like I'm not valued as a member of the family. I look for validation from others. I get angry.	Acknowledge & Communicate my feelings.  Validate my own self worth.  Pause	Resentful Shut down Question my self-worth React

I have little power over what feelings arise, but what I choose to do about them is my responsibility.

-Courage to Change pg 249

I can only learn to love myself if I am willing to learn who I am.

-Courage to Change pg 24

The restoration of self esteem is one of Al-Anon's prime functions.

-One Day At A Time pg 134

We come in as nobodies—and we desperately want to be somebody.

-One Day At A Time pg 134



## **BEGINNERS' MEETINGS**

Beginners' meetings offer newcomers the opportunity to discuss your feelings in a caring and comfortable environment, and to learn from current Al-Anon members, who share their experience, strength, and hope as a result of practicing the Al-Anon program. Experienced Al-Anon members conduct these meetings using our Conference Approve Literature. They discuss the first three Steps and share about the farreaching effects of the family disease of alcoholism.

-Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, pg 30

Beginners' Meetings also explain guidelines for sharing, service and use of CAL in meetings.

## **SATURDAY**

Life Savers, Beginners, AFG 9:30am Vanderbilt Presbyterian 1225 Piper Blvd. Naples, FL 34110

## **THURSDAY**

Al-Anon Beginners, AFG 12 Noon 24 Hour Club 1509 Pine Ridge Rd Naples, FL 34109



# A WORKING CONTRACT

I have been journaling daily for nearly 30 years. Every other year I do the steps. Off years I write about range of topics including the Serenity Prayer. I have converted the Serenity Prayer to a contract. As a contract the Serenity Prayer names the parties- God and me. (Note it doesn't name the alcoholic). The Prayer sites the rights and responsibilities of the parties. God grants Serenity, Courage and Wisdom, all the nouns. I need accept, change, and know.

I sometimes repeat this as a contract saying the Serenity Prayer a different way. "God, grant me Serenity, Courage and Wisdom and I will accept, change and know. The Prayer is especially effective in advancing First Step work on powerlessness. When I do the verbs, God does the nouns and I grow in the recovery zone. Asking God for the nouns absent me doing the work is a contract that doesn't work.

-George, Naples

## **OWNING MY PART**

Being new in Al-Anon, my plan was to finish working the Twelve Steps in 12 weeks. That seemed to work until I got to Step Four. (Much later) many of the members of my home group decided to start meeting as a Step study outside the regular meeting. When we got to Step Four, we decided to make a positive attribute list for each other. I was overwhelmed with the good that others saw in me, because I sure didn't see it in myself. After talking about our list, we were later able to move on to our own moral inventory.

As each of us discussed our past and present, I was able to see my part in my life as I had never seen it before. It was very empowering to take my own inventory and take control of my life

-Reaching for Personal Freedom pg 29-30

# AREA QUESTIONAIRE

# **Group Representatives**

During your next business meeting, or in 2 weeks which ever is shorter, it will be appreciated if you would take 10 minutes of your time so your group can answer a short questionnaire- just yes or no on 9 questions pertaining to Electronic Meetings being allowed or not allowed in Area Service.

The questionnaire explains pros and cons using the Traditions and Concepts. A copy has been sent to each group's mailbox. If you aren't sure how to access your mailbox email the webmaster at NaplesAl-anon.org for instructions. Or you can go to the Area 10 website at southfloridaal-anon.org to get a copy.



#### **CHARACTER TRAITS**

It has been said that all of us have three characters: Who we think we are, who we want others to believe we are, and who we really are. In fact, we are a *combination* of all three.

-Hope for Today

# AN ANNOUNCEMENT FOR YOUR GROUP ANNOUNCEMENTS

istrict 159 has been having good attendance and appreciate all who sign up to lead or do Topic at meetings. However, since COVID, many meetings do not have a Group Representative, Treasurer, or mailing address on file. And as a result, groups aren't getting the information they need from the district; and at the 24 Hour Club the groups aren't receiving their 20% back from their collections, therefore money is not getting donated to our District 159, our Area 10, or the World Service Organization (WSO).

Please consider being of service to our Al-Anon Family Groups. Being a GR (Group Representative) means attending one 2-hour meeting a month ether in person or on zoom, and 2 Assemblies a year and if you can't make the assembly, someone will step up for you. As a Treasurer, it is collecting money, keeping an account, and distributing funds as needed for books, literature, and meetings.

Only a small percentage of our current groups are attending District meetings and contributing to our area. We are in desperate need of representatives if we are to continue having Al-Anon area support in the future. Please check NaplesAl-Anon.org website or ask someone you know that is in a service position about 'how it works' if you'd like to be of service to your group in our District. Participation is the key to harmony!

Thank you for your Time. Below is the list of GR's to whom you can text or call for service questions or about the questionnaire. (See sidebar)

Thursday Step & Study	239-331-1441
Thursday Beginners	614-226-3540
Thursday Discovering Choices	917-324-1145
Sunday Hope for Today	239-315-1607
	Thursday Beginners Thursday Discovering Choices

# Spiritual Principle of the Month

**COURAGE** - is to tell your story of who you are with your whole heart.

-Heard at a Meeting

Courage is not the absence of fear. It's choosing to act with love in spite of the fear.

-Hope for Today pg 294

Slowly I gained courage to tell my story...

-Having Had A Spiritual Awakening pg 170

Together we can find the courage to change the things we can.

-from Survival to Recovery pg 14

It takes courage to look at yourself honestly.

-Heard at a Meeting



# What's Your Group's Anniversary Date?

Are you going to acknowledge your anniversary? Will you have a speaker? Any refreshments? Do you want other people from other AFG groups to celebrate with you? Then send your information to The BEACON at <a href="mailto:newsletter@naplesal-anon.org">newsletter@naplesal-anon.org</a>

and we will get the word out!

# **COURAGE**

**STEP FOUR** helps us to find the truth about ourselves. If we blame others for our own shortcomings we continue to live as victims. But if we look at our own behavior, perceptions, and attitudes with genuine honesty, we realize most of our misery is self-inflicted.

-Reaching for Personal Freedom pg 25

The key to **STEP FOUR** is that it be taken fearlessly, free from judgment. It makes no more sense to berate ourselves for being short on patience than it does to berate ourselves because teddy bears are in short supply in our toy store. By looking at and accepting ourselves as we truly are, we can make decisions about who we choose to become.

-How Al-Anon Works for Families & Friends of Alcoholics pg 51

STEP FOUR is an exercise in perception, a way to distinguish between what works in our lives and what is no longer useful or necessary. Being aware of what we did yesterday can help us understand and accept who we are today, so tomorrow we can become the people we want to be. It is not the purpose of the Fourth Step to degrade ourselves, but to find out the types of mistakes that we tend to make. Initially our only task is to be as honest as we can.

-Blueprint for Progress pg 9



# **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.

# 33rd Annual AFG Florida South Area 10 Convention 2023



AUGUST 18TH-AUGUST 20TH
HYATT REGENCY COCONUT POINT
RESORT & SPA

5001 COCONUT ROAD BONITA SPRINGS, FL 34134

# **NEW HORIZONS OF HOPE**

Friday, August 18—Sunday, August 20, 2023 "233rd Annual AFG Florida South Area 10 Convention with AA Participation

# HYATT REGENCY COCONUT POINT RESORT AND SPA

5001 Coconut Road, Bonita Springs, FL 34134

## **CONVENTION REGISTRATION**

# RESORT FEATURES & ACCOMODATIONS

PROGRAM	
Al-Anon / A.A. <b>(circle which fellowship)</b> Postmarked before 8/1/2023	\$35
Al-Anon / A.A. at the door	\$40
Alateen (18 and younger)	\$15

MEALS	
Fellowship Celebration Feast (Saturday dinner) -circle one: Chicken Vegetarian Vegan Gluten Free	\$60
Fellowship Celebration Feast AND Saturday Lunch—circle one: Chicken Vegetarian Vegan Gluten Free	\$75
Lunch on Saturday	\$25
Alateen Pizza Party (Alateens & AMIAS)	\$10

SPECIAL AFG RESORT ROOM RATE for a standard room is \$179 per night plus taxes & reduced resort fee of \$10. Free self-parking with in / out privileges for hotel guests.

Make it a vacation—enjoy the same rate 2 days before and after the convention dates. The resort features spa, fitness center, water slides, four refreshing pools, a lazy river, and a ferry to private beach.

To phone for a reservation, call 239-444-1234 and be sure to give our group code which is **G-HAAF.** Or go to our Southfloridaal-anon website for a direct link to make reservations.

Last day to reserve a room at the group rate is July 26, 2023.

Area 10 current policy does not allow refunds

Questions on any matter can be e-mailed to: 2023conventionchair@afgfls.com

	One Form Per Guest. Please Print Legibly. HECKS PAYABLE TO: AFG FLS CONVENTION ENTION, P.O. BOX 61634, FORT MYERS, FL	
Name (First and Last	:	
E-mail:Email ac	dresses will be used for FL South Convention purposes on	<u>ly</u>
Contact Phone:	Badge Name	
District #:	Preferred Language	nish
Street Address,:		
City	StateZip Code _	

