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# THE BEACON

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

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**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 11**

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood him*, praying only for knowledge of his will for us and the power to carry that out.

## **TRADITION 11**

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, video, films, and TV. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all AA members.

## **CONCEPT 11**

The World Service Office is composed of selected committees, executives and staff members.



I experience the world through smiles and laughter.

*-Hope for Today pg 97*

I will observe and enjoy what is good and pleasant in the world around me.

*-ODAT pg 245*

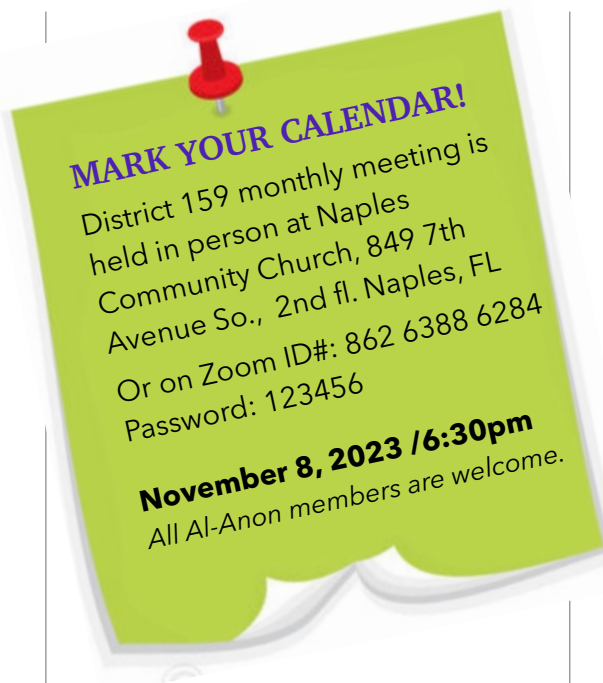
Let me make this day a celebration of the spirit.

*-Courage to Change pg 325*

By letting go... we become freer to experience the present, to feel all of our feelings while they are happening and to more fully enjoy those precious moments of joy with which we are blessed.

*-Courage to Change pg 202*

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

Concept 4: Participation is the Key to Harmony. If you don't participate, there is no Al-Anon.



### DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO WOULD LIKE A SUBSCRIPTION?

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

[Newsletter@naplesal-anon.org](mailto:Newsletter@naplesal-anon.org)

Tap on the contact form. Fill it out and tap SEND.



## 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 IT BEGIN WITH ME

When I was asked, "Why are you in recovery?", I was about to give a common answer: I am recovering from the effects of alcohol or I want to learn how to deal with the addicts in my life. But, I began to think deeper as to "why". I came into Al-Anon because someone I cared about was drinking and drugging. When I grudgingly accepted the premise that I had no control over what that person does or doesn't do, then I asked myself, "Why do I stay in Al-Anon?"

Before Al-Anon, I lived with fear that someone would find out about my embarrassing behavior toward the alcoholic and that our family was dysfunctional. So, I isolated and continued in isolation even after joining Al-Anon. I attended Al-Anon meetings but I was not comfortable with sharing, or being vulnerable.

I listened to the stories in the rooms. When it was my turn to share, I would read another page on the topic presented or preached on what "we" needed to do but *never* shared my own experience. I was afraid to let people know me.

During one of my meetings, I heard that Al-Anon is about relationships. I took a hard look at the relationships I had formed in my life. I was a people-pleaser so they would like me; I was judgmental of my children so they would look good to the outside world; I gossiped about others to make my life seem better. I was not a good parent or friend.

One day I was so sad and feeling lonely. I picked up that 500-pound phone and called a program person. I started to participate in the meetings by setting-up and later chairing. I got a sponsor and started working the Steps, Traditions and Concepts. Eventually, I volunteered to be a GR. I paid attention to the principles of the program. I made friends. I found my Higher Power.

Why am I in recovery? I am in recovery for me.

## DO YOU KNOW?

what the words are  
for the acronym

**LOVE**



## AFFIRMATIONS

I deserve happiness.

I am enough in all ways.

I am not alone.

I am grateful for the growth  
Al-Anon has given me.



“Thanks to Al-Anon, I have  
done more than just survive. I  
have emerged as a stronger,  
more loving, and more  
compassionate human being.”

-Opening Our Hearts, Transforming Our Losses pg 170

ANSWER:

Listen **O**verlook **V**alue **E**ncourage

## AL-ANON CANNOT WORK WITHOUT VOLUNTEERS

### 2024 DISTRICT POSITIONS ARE STILL OPEN

**A**fter three years, the current **District 159 PANEL 61** will step down in December. Consider doing service by volunteering for one of the open District 159 positions. Even if you are seasonal, you can still volunteer! The district meetings are in-person and on Zoom.

Each month, a District position will be highlighted in THE BEACON. A description of the open position and the procedures established will appear below. You don't do it alone. There are service sponsors to help the new incoming Chairpersons.

**POSITION: Archives** - The Chairperson is responsible for preserving and maintaining historical documentation pertaining to our District that has been collected over the years along with current group information. If you like organizing and cataloging then this job is for you!

- Separate historical from routine correspondence
- Scan items for digital preservation
- Transport supplies and presentations to events
- Find convenient storage locations

**POSITION: Public Outreach** includes four inter-related positions. **Cooperating with the Professional Community (CPC)** contacts various professionals such as doctors, therapists, counselors, clergy, attorneys and other helping professionals to educate them about Al-Anon and Alateen. **Institutions** coordinates with rehab facilities to bring Al-Anon informational meetings to clients and families. **Public Information** brings an awareness of Al-Anon and Alateen to the public via the media, Public Service Announcements, newspapers, public agencies, and libraries. **Latino Public Outreach** brings an awareness of Al-Anon and Alateen to the Latino public via the media, Public Service Announcements, newspapers, public agencies, libraries and professionals.

## STEP ELEVEN

is  
Spiritual  
Poetry



**RECOVERY IS FLUID.**



**CHANGES!**  
**Return to Hybrid**

**Thursday Noon, AFG**

Zoom ID: 176642700;

Passcode: 747488

**Monday on Marco, AFG (M&M)**

Zoom ID: 576707179

Passcode: 070857

Both meet at:

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

## 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, we are still not yet "in recovery". Now, it is time to do the hard

(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](http://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)

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. Steps 4, 5, and 6, 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 not 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. My recovery is ongoing as long as I “Keep Coming Back”.*

-Shelley, Toronto/Naples



The invitation  
to live life fully  
is  
is offered to me  
each day.

-Courage to Change pg 281



**Bring  
your problems to your sponsor  
and  
your solutions to the meetings.**



### **The P's**

**Practice observing  
Pray to a Higher Power  
Pause to listen to my  
Higher Power  
Proceed so that I will respond  
rather than react**

# **Celebrate**

## **AFG BEGINNERS 4th ANNIVERSARY**

The Thursday noon **AFG Beginners**, which meets at the 24 Hour Club, celebrated their 4th Anniversary on October 26th. They started in the summer of 2019, when they learned that the **Discovering Choices, AFG** group that met at 10:30 had been supporting the Beginners meeting and could no longer do so. They had several meetings and many members stepped up to create and lead their own group. By October 30, 2019, they had a WSO number, a GR, a Literature volunteer and a Treasurer.

They use the suggested WSO format of six meetings, and combine them into four rotating topics. They focus on Welcoming Newcomers, the first three Steps, The Three C's, and the Slogans. By group conscience, they chose to allow Newcomers to ask questions, and invited members to offer their courage, strength and hope in response. "We are mindful that although this is an exception to the concept of no Cross-Talk, the leader guides the meeting and it has been well received at our meetings," noted one of the founders.

The **AFG Beginner's** meeting focuses on the Family Disease of Alcoholism and Addiction. They average 15-20 in the couch room in summer season-the numbers often double during season-with an equal number of men attending and where dual members are welcomed. There is almost always a Newcomer, sometimes several at each meeting. Many say it is their home group as they remember, "it was the first time they felt they weren't alone and that there were others who understood what they were going through."

A new GR, Rebecca E., was welcomed and thanked for stepping up for service for the next three years. A great team of an Alternate GR, Donna J., Treasurer, Terri B., and Margaret P. helping to order literature will remain in place to support Rebecca.

Sharon R., one of the founders expressed her gratitude by saying, "It was my great honor to help form and serve this Beginner's Group. Please come join us and offer your Experience, Strength, and Hope to a Newcomer. We are in the planning stages of a new evening Beginners meeting." Stay tuned!!

## HEARD AT A MEETING

Intellectualizing spirituality  
doesn't work.

What is it about me that I have  
a problem with them?

Don't sweat the small stuff.

Advice is best received when  
asked for.

Detaching from problems, we  
discover solutions.

I use to throw love away.

Even happiness can be hard.

Let go and thank God.



**Being okay  
if it happens  
and okay  
if it doesn't happen  
is a very powerful  
place to be.**



If you're feeling down and out,  
you need a meeting.

If you are feeling good, the  
meeting needs you.

## NEWS ACROSS THE DISTRICT



The Thursday noon **AFG BEGINNERS** meeting at the 24 Hour Club on Pine Ridge Road, in Naples celebrated their 4th Anniversary on October 26 with a chocolate and vanilla heart shaped cake baked by Terri. 30 people showed up to celebrate and support their recovery.

✓ **ELECTIONS** By now each group should have elected a new **Group Representative**. The **GR** brings back information to the group from the District meeting and Area Assemblies. Along with this position, the group members, if they haven't done so already, should be electing: an **Alternate GR** to assist the **GR** when s/he isn't available; a **Treasurer** to collect donations, pay expenses and send donations to District, Area and WSO; and a **Secretary** to keep the minutes of a business meeting or enter a group conscience into the meeting format. Make sure your group is ready for 2024.

It's extremely important to get new people to participate in meetings and especially to be a **GR**. Very few people are now eligible for higher positions in the District such as **DR, AISL**, etc, which require 3 years experience as a **GR**.

District 159 attended the **Fall Assembly** October 20-22 in Ft. Lauderdale. The Assembly was successful with elections held and Area 10 positions filled for the upcoming panel. All Area officers and coordinators are important links in the chain of service and a resource to the groups in their District and Area.

If you missed any back issues of **THE BEACON**, you can still read them by going to [NaplesAl-Anon.org](http://NaplesAl-Anon.org) and click on Newsletter at the top of the page. A list of back issues will appear.

The Thursday 10:30 **DISCOVERING CHOICES, AFG** could use support. They meet at the 24 Hour Club, 1509 Pine Ridge Rd., Naples, FL.

If you don't know what District does for your group, read the **D.R.'S CORNER** on the next page.

## THOUGHTS

God gives us the opportunity to learn soft lessons so that we will be ready to learn the hard lessons later.



## HOW TO GET SERENITY

- Double up on meetings
- Pause
- Meditate-Mindfulness
- Fellowship
- Stay present
- Journal
- Reach out to sponsor



## TRADITION ELEVEN

reminds me  
to  
*demonstrate* Recovery  
rather than  
*preach* Recovery

## THE D.R.'S CORNER



**T**his question surfaces from time to time. Let's look at the anatomy of a District, what it is comprised of and what is its purpose. Your District consists of the following: a **DR** (District Representative), an **Alternate DR**, a **Secretary** who documents the District meetings, a **Treasurer** who handles incoming donations and pays expenses, **LDC** (Literature Distribution Center) provides **CAL** (Conference Approved Literature), an **AISL** (Al-Anon Information Services Liaison), an **Alternate AISL**. Think of AISL as an umbrella that consists of Alateen, Archives, Group Records, to include Where and When's, Literature, Newsletter, Public Outreach which consists of Public Information, Cooperating with the Professional Community (CPC), Latino Outreach, Speakers Bureau, Telephone Answering Service (TAS), Website, and Institutions which currently provides introduction to Al-Anon meetings at the David Lawrence Center. Descriptions of these positions can be found on our local website, [naplesal-anon.org](http://naplesal-anon.org), as well as in the Service Manual. Each of the above have expenses and need your donations.

Some examples of how your donations are used in District are: cost of printing agenda & reports for District meetings and Where & When's, Telephone Answering Service monthly bill, cost of materials for Public Outreach, cost of sending service positions to Assembly and Area World Service Committee meetings. Donations are voluntary as stated per Tradition 7, but as you can see, there are ongoing monthly expenses. The only means of financial support for your District is through group contributions. Also keep in mind that District will forward a percentage of donations to World Service Office and

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## ***What's the difference between Characters Defects & Shortcomings***

### **CHARACTER DEFECTS:**

Things that I'm doing that I  
shouldn't be doing

Or

Things that I do too much of.

Ex: I talk too much.  
I'm judging

### **SHORTCOMINGS:**

Things that I should be doing  
but I'm not

Or

Things that I don't do enough  
of.

Ex: I don't listen.  
Working the STEPS

-Heard at a Meeting

## **THE D.R.'S CORNER *continued***

Area 10. Ultimately, it is through these service positions that Newcomers find out about Al-Anon and can be directed to a meeting.

The role of your District is to provide the services as mentioned above and to disseminate information from WSO as well as Area 10. This is accomplished by sending DR's, AISLs, or their Alternates, and GR's to Assembly and/or AWSC meetings. The District is the link in the service-chain that connects the groups within a geographical boundary with worldwide Al-Anon. One of the primary means of communication from group-to-group is the District meeting.

This is what your District does for you. Many things happen behind the scenes and unless one is involved in service-work, most members are unaware of the inner-workings of Al-Anon on a District level let alone the Area level. Without these things happening on a consistent basis, it would be difficult to fulfill our sole purpose as Tradition 5 states, which is to help friends and families of alcoholics. To summarize, if you can "see it" (Website, Where & When's), "touch it" (books, pamphlets) and "hear it" (a meeting and TAS), that is your District at work for you.

Mike S., District Representative  
District 159

## **Al-Anon Relationship Bundle (K-73)**



**New! Holiday Bundle!**

***The Al-Anon Family Groups Relationship Bundle with Free Shipping!***

Give yourself or a member you care about the gift of Al-Anon literature on relationships. This \$25 special set includes free shipping.

***Available as a set for a limited time—through January 2, 2024***

The Al-Anon Relationship Bundle (K-73) includes:

- *Discovering Choices—Recovery in Relationships* (B-30)
- *Intimacy in Alcoholic Relationships* (B-33)
- *Living with Sobriety* (P-49)

**Price: 25.00**

## STEPS TO BUILDING SELF ESTEEM

At the end of the day, write:  
3 things I did well  
2 things I did ok  
1 thing I could do better



## JUST FOR TODAY

“I will exercise my soul in three ways: I will do somebody a good turn, and not get found out; if anyone knows of it, it will not count. I will do at least two things I don’t want to do—just for exercise. I will not show anyone that my feelings are hurt; they may be hurt, but today I will not show it.”



## CONCEPT ELEVEN

reminds me that  
I don’t have to do it alone.  
I can ask for help.



Maria Elena had moved from Miami, where there were numerous Spanish speaking Al-Anon meetings, to Naples where there was one Spanish speaking meeting and quite a distance from her home. While attending the meeting she met Carmen and Marcella who also wished for a meeting closer to home.

In 2004, Maria Elena approached an AA Club and asked to be allowed to establish an Al-Anon meeting using their room when they weren’t using it. At first six to seven people attended. Maria Elena remembers that “quite a few people did not read or write. They spoke a dialect. One of the members read aloud to them from *Courage to Change*.” Childcare services was provided for those who needed it in order to attend a meeting.

By 2006 **Nueva Esperanza, GFA** was registered with WSO. At the first business meeting Maria Elena volunteered to be the Group Representative (GR), Marcella the Treasurer and Carmen the Secretary. The group grew to 20 members. However, by 2008 the meeting was inactive due to low attendance.

In 2014, Nueva Esperanza, GFA re-opened with the support of the AA group.

Maria Elena and Carmen were invited to the 4th anniversary in 2018. “My heart was full of gratitude,” remembers Maria Elena. “I was emotionally excited to see the men and women. I encouraged them to keep the meeting open. I acknowledged their growth thru recovery and how they carried the message of hope to others.”

Today, the group welcomes newcomers and long timers. **Nueva Esperanza, GFA** continues to meet on Tuesday and Wednesday at 6:30pm at 3673 Prospect Ave, Unit B, Naples, Florida.

## Spiritual Principle of the Month

**Spiritual Awareness**-living a life that has a deeper meaning than the search for daily necessities.

Every activity can have a spiritual motive.

-Having had a Spiritual Awakening pg 5

To me, meditation is a higher spiritual awareness. I practice remembering that every action can serve a spiritual purpose.

-Courage to Change pg 338

I saw and felt in my heart the great love, compassion and protection with which my Higher Power carries me through every moment of my life.

-Hope for Today pg 316



## FINDING PEACE

**G**rowing up, my family performed religious rituals on auspicious days. We were told that if we didn't, God would punish us. I learned to fear this punishing God. What an absolute relief when I came in to Al-Anon, and my concept of God changed immediately!

Here, I came to believe the God of my understanding is loving and all-embracing. I don't have to sit in a specific space or wear specific clothing in order to make a conscious contact with this God. My Higher Power is my place of comfort and solace.

Peace of mind is achievable now that I have this fresh, new understanding. My spiritual awakening in Al-Anon has given me contentment beyond measure. I feel love, I give love, I embrace love, I am love.

### *Today's Reminder*

Spirituality is about being at peace with myself and others, and replacing fear with Faith. This level of spiritual consciousness makes the journey of my life truly magnificent.

"No longer terrified, we discover that we are free to delight in life's paradox, mystery, and awe." -From *Survival to Recovery*

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### How do I envision spirituality today?

-*A Little Time for Myself—A Collection of Al-Anon Personal Experiences.* pg 361



### 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.**

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