



the bits newsletter

Seattle Al-Anon Information Service

[NEW TO AL-ANON?](#)

[FIND A MEETING](#)

November 2023

A Man Gives Men a Flower

by Carl G

I put the flower on the table at the Al-Anon men's pre-meeting dinner in recognition of the advice six weeks before that had brightened my life.

The back story.

I was taught to be a caretaker of the well-being, happiness, success, and comfort of others, especially family. As alcohol became a driving force in my loved one's life, making sure my loved one's happiness, well-being and comfort continued got a lot harder for me. It was suggested that I check out and attend Al-Anon, so I went. I got a Home Group. Got a sponsor. Worked the steps. I worked with my sponsor. I looked at my 4th step character traits so that my spiritual condition could get better, and my mind would at least slow down its running. It got better for me. Many things got better in my life.

Then, my loved one needed to go to a care facility. They were dissatisfied and I was mentally distressed because I could not control the staff at the facility, the food, the activities offered, or their participation (or lack thereof) in activities.

Despite all my time and work in Al-Anon, once my loved one had moved to the care facility, I fell back into the old thinking that they needed to be happy etc. and it was all my responsibility.



At a meeting when Tradition 10 was discussed, I was presented with the idea of using Tradition 10's 'no opinion on outside issues' from the perspective of me, personally, instead of only at the group level.

I began to wonder, how responsible am I for my loved one's happiness? My mind told me thinking I'm responsible is ridiculous. My mind told me that doesn't matter, it's my duty. I decided to discuss the issue with my sponsor, and he said, "Join me at the meeting before the meeting."

When I met with my sponsor, six guys were there. So, I asked, "How responsible am I for my loved one's happiness?" It was almost a chorus. "You're not responsible at all." It was striking. Revelatory. Life changing! It set me on the path. Another's happiness is an outside issue.

For what things am I responsible? I did the work. I reviewed it with my sponsor. We considered it from the principles of the program. I began implementation to address the few things for which I could be responsible and I have found serenity. I change the things I can and accept the things I can't and recognize each day: the largest thing I can't change is another's happiness.

Phone Volunteers Needed

by Phones Coordinator

AIS provides a 7-day per week, 24-hour a day phone service to help our members in Districts 14 to 22 and the public at large. The service is staffed entirely by volunteers who work 3-hour shifts answering calls that come in. When a volunteer is not available, we rely on people leaving us a voicemail or sending us a text message. Our experience is that people dislike automated answering systems

and seldom leave a message. A valuable opportunity has been lost.

The Al-Anon Declaration states:

Let it begin with me.

Whenever anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always be there!

And let it begin with me!

For a lot of people, that first step towards help and recovery begins with a call to the AIS phone service. We need to be there when the call comes! We want the caller to hear a human voice say "Al-Anon Information Service, how may I help you?" rather than "Please leave a message..."

Are you willing to be that person?

For more information on being a Phone Volunteer please contact phones@seattle-al-anon.org.



Order the Forum Magazine



Al-Anon's monthly magazine features timely sharings from Al-Anon and Alateen members, suggested meeting topics, and the latest information on worldwide Al-Anon recovery. Experience and insight you won't find anywhere else!

NOT EVERYONE TRAPPED BY ALCOHOL IS AN ALCOHOLIC.

Families and friends are suffering too.

Do you worry about how much someone drinks?

Al-Anon and Alateen can help.

Join the Alateen Zoom Meeting Monday Nights At 7 pm!

AL-ANON.ORG

Al-Anon Family Groups
Help and hope for families and friends of alcoholics

1. Go to the Play Store app on your phone
2. Search for and download "Al-Anon Family Groups" app
3. Open the app and create your account
4. At the bottom, click on "Meetings"
5. Under "Meetings" search for "WA Area Alateen Room"
6. When it is time for the meeting, the "Join" button will be red. Click on "Join"

Has Your Meeting Changed?

- Gone back to meeting in person
- Become hybrid or concurrent
- Has a new physical location
- Made other changes that members need to know about
- Has an alternate Holiday Schedule
- Has disbanded

Please send all meeting changes to the WA Area Group Records Coordinator [<https://wa-al-anon.org/meeting-changes/>]

Changes and Updates are made Weekly. (Seattle AIS is automatically cc'd in the change request)

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the Seattle AIS updated meeting schedule, please contact meetingdirectoryeditor@seattle-al-anon.org

SAVE THE DATE
Preparing for the Holidays!

Hosted By Sunday A.M. Online AFG

SATURDAY, NOV. 4
10:30 AM-12:00 PM
PACIFIC TIME

 **3 SPEAKERS:**
1 AA & 2 AL-ANON

ZOOM: 143-546-828
PC: 018 040



SELFCARE, BOUNDARIES,
DETACHMENT, SERENITY

Kent All Mens AFG (KAMA)

42nd Gratitude Dinner

November 4, 2023

Dinner served at 6:00 pm

AA and Al-Anon Speakers at 7:00 pm



Dinner provided by KAMA
Dessert Potluck – Please bring a dessert to share.

Holy Spirit Catholic Church
310 3rd Ave S, Kent

The 7th Tradition will be observed.

H.E.A.R.

EVERY 3RD SATURDAY

Speaker Meeting

HOPE, EXPERIENCE, & ACCEPTANCE
IN RECOVERY



Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023
7:30-9:00 PM PST

Al-Anon Speaker:
Mike M of Tacoma, WA

AA Speaker:
John N of Maple Valley, WA

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!
Al-Anon, AA, Alateen, Family,
Friends...

Zoom Meeting

ID: 896 7579 4182 Password: 107130
One tap mobile:
+12532158782,,89675794182#,,,,0#,,1
07130# US (Tacoma)

“My Experience, Strength, and Hope”

M.E.S.H.



MONTHLY SPEAKERS MEETING

Saturday, Nov 11, 2023 at 7:30 PM

Hosted by The Friday Men's
Al-Anon Family Group, Seattle, WA.

2nd Saturday MESH Speaker Meeting AFG
St David Emmanuel Episcopal Church
18842 Meridian Ave N, 98133

IN-PERSON ONLY, 90 minutes
Families, Friends, & Observers Welcome

Please join us on the 2nd Saturday of each month as
An AA Speaker and an Al-Anon Speaker share:

AA Speaker: TBD.
Al-Anon Speaker: TBD.

CANDLE LIGHT DINNER

Renton Thursday Night AFG invites you
to our annual Candlelight Dinner and
Meeting

Please bring a potluck dish, a candle,
and gratitude

St. Luke's Episcopal, 99 Wells Ave. S, Renton WA 98057

Thursday, December 14, 2023

Potluck dinner starts at 6:30pm

Meeting 7:30-9pm

Step Eleven

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.



Photo by Clif H

out as a small stick or two, those managed to grab a larger stick, then most of a tree, and surrounding that began a collection of character defects. Soon enough there was a significant impediment to the flow of the river's water, or, in context, development of my insane behavior.

By working Step 4, I've been able to identify individual defects (sticks and rocks), as well as, defect patterns (the big logs). Working Steps 5 through 7, I'm able to begin removing the debris. More work; more and more effective removal.

As we know though, it doesn't stop there. Complacency will result in the repopulation of the debris pile in the river. Leading me to understand that I must be ever vigilant keeping the area clean or else the river and I will again collect debris (or the resurfacing defects of character). I find that once I let one defect resurface, if I don't get active in the program, a second or additional character defects resurface too.

So, for me, during my travels, it took constant effort and practice of the program to stay connected to my sanity.

Debris Collection

by Clif H

I recently had the opportunity to travel back to my home town to assist my parents. During my weeks there, I took time every day for myself in my attempt to maintain a level of sanity. It mostly worked.

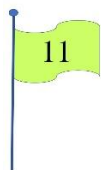
As I was walking along the mighty Yellowstone River one day, I saw what could be described as a pile of organic debris. Since my goal for the walk was to work my program for the benefit of my sanity, I related the debris to that of the effects of alcohol on me. Like the effects of alcoholism, it started



Photo by Clif H

Tradition Eleven

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



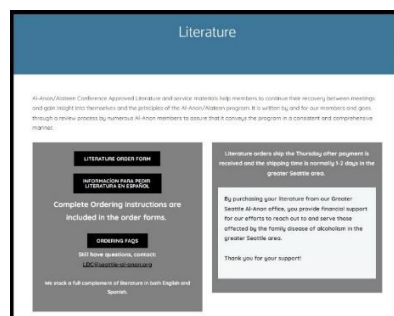
Access to Al-Anon Literature

by Mary R - LDC Co-Coordinator

Do you like a quick easy access to Al-Anon Literature?

Seattle AIS/LDC offers an easy way to purchase Al-Anon Literature for yourself and/or your group. In English and Spanish. We have all the Literature available.

Purchase Literature - GREATER SEATTLE AL-ANON AND ALATEEN (seattle-al-anon.org)



At our Literature Distribution Center in Seattle, you can order literature from an on-line form and have it delivered to you at your address. (See more ordering details at the end of this message)

Or you can come pick it up on the first Saturday of the month.

(See the flyer in the BITS).

We have volunteers ready to take your order via e-mail at LDC@seattle-al-anon.org, and more volunteers to pack it up and ship it to you.

As life does there are always changes in our personal lives. Right now, life has changed for some us in LDC. We NEED VOLUNTEERS to facilitate your literature orders.

The two positions are Home Volunteer and Shipper.

The Home Volunteer takes as little as an hour a day, computer access, and as the title implies you don't even have to leave home to do it.

The Shipper position is 2-3 hours in the office, generally once a month.

Both positions come with training, assistance, and fellowship with other volunteers.

This is an easy way to perform service in Al-Anon, and grow your personal program.

Please contact Mary R or Linda H at LDC@seattle-al-anon.org if you would like to join us.

Ordering note.

Download the order form from the web site Purchase Literature - GREATER SEATTLE AL-ANON AND ALATEEN (seattle-al-anon.org) to your desktop, fill it out completely, then attach it to an email and send it to LDC@seattle-al-anon.org.

When LDC receives it, we will process an invoice and email the invoice to you.

It will have the Review and Pay Now button on it. After you review, click that button and follow the credit card instructions.

AIS Council Meeting

The next Council meeting is Thursday, November 9th, 2023, 7:30-9:00 pm. Click the AIS website 2023 *Calendar* link on the *Events* page (<https://www.seattle-al-anon.org/events>) for the zoom information.

NOTE Meeting Topics: Officer Elections & 2024 Budget Presentation

Concept Eleven

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



Horas de Aperatura de Seattle AIS
El Primer SÁBADO del Mes
11 AM - 3 PM
No se requiere cubrebocas
All Pilgrims Church
509 10th Ave E. Seattle, WA 98102
¡Únate a nosotros para disfrutar de golosinas, café y compañerismo! Sin oradores, solo mucha literatura aprobada por la Conferencia para echar un vistazo y/o comprar y ver a los amigos! ¡Los recién llegados y veteranos todos son bienvenidos!
Recogida en la acera disponible.

Nota: Ingrese por la 10th Ave por la PUERTA AZUL (NO por la Broadway). PRESIONE EL TIMBRE DE AL-ANON. Estacionamiento gratis en la calle. Hay dos sitios que se paga el estacionamiento que es QFC y E. Republican entre Broadway y Harvard.
Voluntarios: ¿Te necesitamos? ¡Por supuesto!
Envíe correo electrónico al vicechair@seattle-al-anon.org



Seattle AIS Office Hours
First SATURDAYS of Every Month
11 AM - 3 PM
Masks OPTIONAL
All Pilgrims Church
509 10th Ave E. Seattle, WA 98102
Join us for treats, coffee and fellowship! No speakers, just lots of Conference Approved Literature to browse/buy and friends to see.
Newcomers and Long Timers Welcome!
Curbside pickup available!

Note: Enter on 10th Ave via the BLUE DOOR (NOT on Broadway). PUSH THE AL-ANON DOORBELL. Free street parking available. Paid Parking at the QFC or on E. Republican between Broadway and Harvard.
Volunteers: Do we need you? Of course we do! Email vicechair@seattle-al-anon.org for more info

The Right to Feel

by Allen L

Early in my Al-Anon journey someone gave me an insight that has saved me from countless opportunities to beat myself up. They taught me that I am not responsible for how I feel, only for how I act.



Photo by Allen L

There are so many times when I feel hurt or angry and think “I don’t want this to bother me” or “I thought I was over this”. Instead of thinking that there is something wrong with me, now I remind myself that when something I have no control over happens (a song on the radio or someone else’s words) that it’s normal for me to have some feelings in response. I give myself permission to feel those feelings and to try to remember that as long as I don’t vent these feelings on my friends and family, or even random strangers there really is nothing wrong.

I found this idea supported by the January 24th reading in *Courage to Change*. *“I have a right to what I want and to feel the way I feel. I may not choose to act on those feelings or desires, but I won’t hide them from myself. They are part of me”*

Need a Free Newcomer Packet?

Anyone local to Seattle who is a newcomer and wants an individual newcomer packet (or in Spanish, too!), please send an email to outreach@seattle-al-anon.org with the name and mailing address.



Out of the Toolbox

by BITS Columnist Callie D.

Bucket of Crabs

I have heard this analogy used lately, on several recovery podcasts. As a crab tries to crawl out of a bucket, the others will inevitably hook them back in, blocking their escape. The crabs could represent a family, a group of friends, or any relationships that surround a person. The bucket represents a trap or dangerous space to spend time in. For this example, the bucket surrounding the crabs is alcoholism.

As alcoholism encompasses the entire family in a diseased dynamic, people become comfortable with damaging behaviors. If one member tries to get healthy and break free of the chaos, the others tend to work hard to drag them back in by any means possible.



Artwork by Callie D

What are my personal latch points that make me vulnerable to the confinement of the bucket syndrome? I am going to name some of my adversarial crabs:

Alcoholics tend to be expert victims. Therefore, one of my latch points is feeling sorry for the alcoholic. The messes they are making of their life, the depression they wallow in, the stupid choices they routinely make. I sometimes find myself stepping in to try to protect the alcoholic or soothe them, and that only gets me more bucket time.

Another hook for me is feeling guilty if I'm not available to rescue them. I feel this sick sense of obligation and responsibility. These feelings are extremely uncomfortable and the alcoholic latches on with manipulation and double binds to get me to do their bidding.

An additional point of entrapment for me, is the fear of the volatile rage that erupts when the alcoholic doesn't get their way. As I have tried to establish reasonable boundaries, the alcoholic regularly becomes sarcastic and

disrespectful. It is exhausting living with an adult toddler who lacks rational thought and refuses to cooperate in their own best interests! This leaves me without the strength to even try to climb out of the bucket!

Loneliness and the desire to try to connect with the alcoholic often leaves me vulnerable. As I place a claw over the top of the bucket, and shift my protruding eyes over the edge, that's enough to get gripped, while they get ripped!

As I become more aware of my latch points, I can work on changing the things I can. By learning to focus on ourselves, our attitudes and well-being improve.

Detachment (<https://al-anon.org/pdf/S19.pdf>)

October 2023 AIS Council Meeting Minutes (Summary, not yet approved)

Meeting Opened at 7:30 PM by Karen L Chair

Attendance: 20 individuals

Introductions: all

Readings: Concept 10, Dave M

Secretary: Kathy K: Reading and Approval of the September Minutes.

Treasurer: Gary H: Financial reports: Seattle AIS remains financially stable, as they work toward achieving the accepted Ample Reserve.

Dave is sending thank you notes to donors and is having some trouble finding addresses to mail thank you notes. BZ suggested asking DRs to contact GRs to put their name on the check or send a thank you note to the DR. Donations through the website are captured.

He will be able to file a shorter version of Federal Taxes next year which will be a much quicker process than previously. He has not finished the 2024 budget yet but soon.

Chair: Karen L, Chair: November Elections: All positions are for 1 year. The officers are elected at the Council Meeting and Coordinators are appointed by the Chair. Please contact Karen L. if interested or desire more information. We are required by by-laws to have an annual

meeting and approve the budget. She has talked to some people and feels good about the interest. We may use the poll capabilities in zoom to vote.

Heather R. has volunteered to be phone coordinator and will take over in Dec.

Vice Chair Report: Dave M: Linda and he opened the office in Oct. There were 6-7 people who attended, and fellowship was appreciated as well as they sold some literature. He is sending thank you notes to groups and individuals who are donating.

Coordinators:

Outreach: Solveig W: : She has had requests for Newcomer packets and has sent literature to the ICE detention center as requested. Pierce Co. AIS also donated. She attended a potential new AI-Anon meeting on D14. This was initiated by the Somali community there. It was a very good meeting and there was not a language barrier as she

feared. There is some Arabic CAL from California.

Communications: Jackie T: (absent)

LDC: Mary R: They are very much in need of another Home Volunteer. This is a simple way to provide service to the Literature Distribution Center. It entails about an hour a day for a seven-day period about once a month. Training is provided. It does take a computer with good internet. All training is done on zoom.

They could also use some more volunteers for the office opening for 2024. Four people is optimal but they can open with three. Office volunteers need to be able to make a sale on the computer, but training is available.

The shipping volunteers work in the office one day a month on Thur. to fill orders placed by the home volunteer. The shipping positions are filled but they could use a backup.

The new daily reader "A Little Time for Myself: should be available from WSO by late Oct so they should be available from LDC by Nov. They have ordered 8 cases (almost 200 books) and WSO will let LDC know when it is available. There are available books in Spanish currently.

The open house in Oct. had 6 visitors and sold \$167.98 in literature. LDC coordinators think we should continue the open house in 2024. People are happy and grateful we have this service.

They have accumulated many hanging file folders that are available to anyone who wants some and will be available at the Open Saturday.

She asks if we want to vote to continue open office hours in 2024?

Action Item: Motion to continue the open office hours the first Saturday of the month in 2024. Motion passed with 21 in favor, 0 nays and 1 abstention

Phones: Dave M (outgoing Coordinator): 108/180 (61%) shifts were covered in Sept. There are 10 active volunteers with no new volunteers. There were 50 calls and 34 were actual Al-Anon calls (second highest number this year). This is a great number in terms of actually being able to be of service. Texting is picking up and a great way to share information.

He met with the volunteers on 9/21/23 and all remained committed to continuing the phone service. He got some good ideas but no changes were made.

Tech: Pierre J: He has met with meeting and events coordinators to be of assistance. He has been looking at software for Office Acrobat which is easier than Adobe to help with the price list for literature.

Old Business: We have a positive budget this year and have money for outreach and need to make a decision on how best to spend it.

New Business: : Solving, Outreach Coordinator: Outreach Campaign/Budget options presented by Solveig W. There was significant discussion on the available presented options.

Action Item: It was moved and seconded that AIS commit to the Sound Transit option summarized below. There were 13 in favor, 1 against and 2 abstentions. The motion passed.

Sound Transit: This is a new option to place information plaques on buses and light rail in King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties. The

cards would be above the seats and 11x17 inches in size. The campaign will take place over a 2 year period.

Seventh Tradition: <https://www.seattle-al-anon.org/donationinfo.html>

Next Council Meeting: Thursday, November 9th, 2023 from 7:30-9:00 PM: Officer Elections & 2024 Budget Presentation

Next Board Meeting: Thursday, October 19th, 2023 at 7:00 PM

Adjournment: Al-Anon/Alateen Declaration at 9:07 PM

Submitted by Kathy K, Secretary

Thank you for your donations and your support of AIS!

Our funding now comes primarily from:

*Donations by Members, Groups, and
Districts

*Literature Sales

Please send all AIS mail, including checks for
literature orders and donations, to:

Seattle AIS

505 Broadway E #400
Seattle, WA 98102-5023

[Donate Now](#)

And More ...

MEETING SCHEDULE: registered Al-Anon groups in the Greater Seattle Area. Hybrid, Concurrent, and in-person meetings are listed

MEETING SCHEDULE

Please visit our **Members** section for the most up-to-date information on:

- [List of AIS Officers and Coordinators](#)
- [Where to Send Donations](#)
- [District Representatives and Business Meeting Information](#)
- [AIS Financial Information](#)
- [Calendar of Events](#)

Meeting News

News from the Meeting Directory Editor

The following changes were made during October.

- Sunday, 8:30 AM, Sunday AM Fresh Start AFG, This meeting's room number has changed to 305A {10/2}
- Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 7:00 AM, Hope for Today AFG, These meetings have an updated Zoom link {10/2}
- Sunday, 7:30 PM, Auburn Sunday Night AFG, This meeting is now in-person only {10/15}
- Monday, 12:00 PM, Capitol Hill AFG, Removed zoom link for the Oct 9th session {10/15}
- Wednesday, 7:30 PM, Midweek Men's AFG, Added room number {10/15}
- Tuesday, 6:30 PM, Vashon Island Women's AFG, This meeting is temporarily closed {10/15}

Best,
Wren B
Seattle Al-Anon Information Service
Meeting Directory Editor
