

Al-Anon Today

YOUR E-LINK TO AL-ANON UK & ÉIRE

Embracing
our path
through
Love and Light



Autumn 2025

Letter From Your Editor

Embracing our path through Love and Light

As the days begin to get shorter and the warmth of the sunlight fades, it feels natural to reflect on the theme of love and light that can truly illuminate our path. It's also important to remember self-love and self-care in a similar context as it's easy to lose sight of the simple yet profound power these two elements hold.

Love, in its many forms connects us. It's the kindness shown by members, the unwavering support of the fellowship, and the quiet comfort of self-acceptance. It involves opening our hearts to vulnerability and recognising the inherent value in oneself and others.

Light is not just the sunshine, it's the light of hope, understanding, and inspiration. It ignites new ideas bringing wisdom that helps navigate challenges, and positivity that guide us through difficult times. It's about seeking the solution, even in the shadows, and striving to be a source of positivity for those around us.

This issue aims to capture the essence of love and light in various ways with stories offering experience strength and hope to cultivate our journey of recovery. Using the tools of the Al-Anon programme, we can choose to focus on the love, and the light that surrounds us.

I take inspiration from reading each heartfelt share and hope you are inspired to embrace your path through love and light.

Annie S

OPINIONS EXPRESSED HEREIN ARE NOT TO BE ATTRIBUTED TO AL-ANON AS A WHOLE. MEMBERS SHARE THEIR PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND STORIES, AND INVITE OTHER MEMBERS TO 'TAKE WHAT YOU LIKED AND LEAVE THE REST' — THAT IS, TO DETERMINE FOR THEMSELVES WHAT LESSON THEY COULD APPLY TO THEIR OWN LIVES.

How the Slogans work for me ~

Using the Al-Anon tools together works for me. For example, if I'm thinking I need to detach, then I will also think about PAUSE (Please Assist Until Serenity Enters) and THINK (is what I'm saying Thoughtful, Honest, Intelligent, Necessary & Kind)?

If I'm in resentment, I will think about my boundaries and whether I got in someone else's ring and if I did, what were my motives, do I need to think about the 3 A's: Awareness, Acceptance & Action?

If I'm going through a difficult time, the Slogan, This Too Shall Pass, the Serenity Prayer and One Day at A Time is also helpful.

This programme really does work in all our affairs and I'm very grateful for it and all the wonderful members who keep coming back!

Emma

How do you use the Al-Anon Slogans?
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First things first
KEEP IT SIMPLE
Let Go and Let God
detach with love
JUST FOR TODAY
keep an open mind
How important is it?
Together we can make it

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FROM DESPAIR to recovery

I first approached Al-Anon at a time of despair. I no longer had alcoholism in my life but I was stuck, unhappy and at the time felt unable to move forwards. I was back living with my parents, but I still felt very isolated and cooped up.

I phoned the Al-Anon Helpline and spoke to a wonderful man who shared his story that was similar to mine. He suggested I go to an Al-Anon meeting and said the words my heart needed to hear 'you didn't cause it; you can't control it and you can't cure it'. Hearing these words brought me great relief and I cried.

Since then I was determined to make a new start for myself. I attended my first meeting in January and went to an online meeting every night in that first week. I began to ease into a better place, and although initially I was impatient to

'cure' myself, I found a wonderful Sponsor who was patient, kind and thoughtful. It's been an amazing journey, I am now two years into the programme and I am beginning to work the Steps with my Sponsor in a way that works for us both, tackling them at a slow and steady pace. It is a gentle programme after all.

Sometimes I look back and think, if it hadn't been for that one call with that kind volunteer giving Service and my willingness to recover, I would not be where I am today. And for that I am very grateful. And to every other person in this fellowship who through their words, written or spoken, have shared their wisdom with me. Thank you.

Kirsteen

Who has helped you on your journey of recovery?
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YOUR AL-ANON TODAY

AUTUMN REFLECTIONS

Take time to cultivate a path of LOVE and LIGHT

(Every day is another chance to become the best version of You)



1 Have faith, trust, open your heart to love and light

2 Spend time in nature, observing and appreciating the beauty around you

3 Treat yourself with the same kindness and understanding you would offer a dear friend

4 Meditate to cultivate awareness of your thoughts and feelings

5 Express Gratitude, acknowledge and appreciate the positive contributions of others

6 Release grudges and resentment, allowing for healing and growth in relationship

7 Engage in small acts of kindness and generosity towards others

8 Create positive ripples of love and light around you

9 Communicate your feelings and needs honestly and respectfully

10 Observe others' without judgment, recognise that everyone is on their own journey

11 Use positive affirmations to reinforce positive self-beliefs

12 Visualise love and light surrounding you and others

13 Offer support and encouragement to those who may be struggling

14 Make a conscious effort to be fully present in the moment

15 Appreciate the beauty and wonder around you

16 Recognise and embrace your own unique gifts and talents

17 Allow your inner light to shine to illuminate your path

18 Practice self-compassion and acceptance

19 Recognise that you are worthy of love, care, and compassion

20 Challenge negative self-talk and replace it with positive affirmations

21 Take time each day to reflect on the things you're grateful for

22 Keep a gratitude journal or verbally express your appreciation to others

23 Shift your focus from negativity and open your heart to more love and joy

24 Surround yourself with supportive people who uplift and inspire you

25 Actively communicate with loved ones, prioritise quality time, and show appreciation

26 Practice forgiveness towards yourself and others, letting go of resentment

27 Practice mindfulness to stay present and aware of your thoughts and feelings

28 Explore loving-kindness meditation to cultivate inner peace and compassion

29 Set achievable goals and celebrate your progress

30 Find ways to serve others and contribute

31 Today will be what it is. I will be who I am. And there will be beauty in both

Awareness of what is around me

Before Al-Anon, I took life for granted. I was that human robot; the human doing. I had to distract myself. My focus was on controlling the turmoil and chaos of family life, the home, children, and divorce. I became a walking mistake, busy trying to be perfect, my brain only focussing on the negative. I felt like I was the only one trying to fix and control the mayhem that was going on.

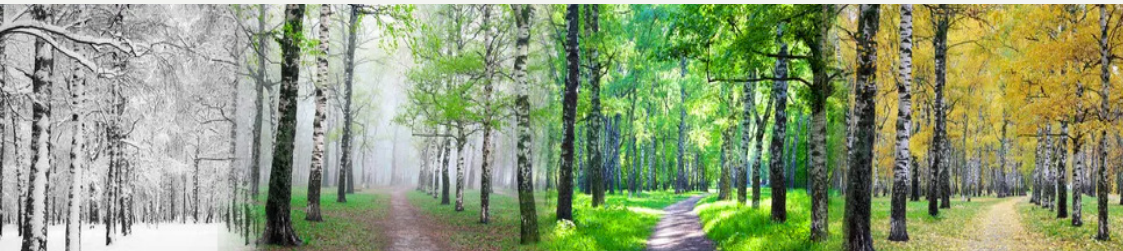
Attending an open AA meeting led me to discover Al-Anon and soon after attending Al-Anon meetings, I was able to see myself and my controlling behaviour.

After five years, I now have an awareness of what is around me. I can see the glory in each season as they come and go, the dark foggy mornings with beautiful cobwebs in autumn and winter, the bright youthful colours of spring and the warmth and brightness of summer.

Gratitude has entered my life, now, I know that I too can change, evolve, and grow, just like those seasons. Chaos is now replaced with positive attitudes, love, and acceptance of the things I could not control or change.

Today, I can find peace, I can look for the good, breathe in the good times and I can have a great day. Al-Anon has given me permission to gradually learn who I am, to feel needed and loved, and to be able to act and behave in ways to see how much gratitude I have for life.

Anon



Can you share your gratitude?

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A lesson from my dog

Dog spelled backwards is God.

The week after a bad storm hit Scotland causing lots of damage, I headed off in the car to our usual spot in the forest with my dog. It's where I feel close to God and can truly relax and enjoy my walks.

I handed my drive, my walk, and my day over to God, surrendering my will and asking for his guidance. The three car parks I tried to park in all had a sign across saying "all forestry paths were closed to the public". The unexpected diversion to

our usual routine wasn't a problem, I asked God to guide my thinking, and headed to the fields near my home. I parked without a problem and we started our walk. My dog happily ran up the path and in his excitement was unaware of the canal at the top. He landed right in the middle of it and I got covered in mud pulling him out of all the reeds.

We carried on our walk and further along my dog sat down and was just looking at me. My mind wasn't on this present moment, it was on how he may be cold. I was annoyed with myself, thinking how I'd need to shower him and sort him out when we got home. Then suddenly, I felt something pass above my head, as I looked up, I saw it was a power cable that had been pulled half way down by a tree.

I was shocked, my body shook and I had to take a breath as I realised, I had just missed walking into it with potentially devastating consequences. How could I not have seen this right in front of me? I wasn't at ease with myself on this walk, I was uncomfortable and annoyed. My dog was trying to warn me and had stopped to alert me to the danger and I wasn't aware.

At home, once I got the dog and myself cleaned up, I settled myself into a meditation. I made contact

with God and pondered on how the day had unfolded.

When my head and my will take over, my awareness, rational thinking, presence, and peace leave me?

My dog didn't get frustrated when his walk changed. His joy was on his new route at that

moment. He shook himself off after he fell in the canal and carried on his way. Only when I truly surrender and hand my will, my day, and my life over to the care of God, can I have the freedom of presence, peace, and serenity. Perhaps some joy, too.

If I had been present as I walked near that cable, I would have been aware of my surroundings, and that my dog was trying to communicate with me. My awareness came after the shock of this moment and for that I am very grateful.

Before Al-Anon I didn't have the tools to reflect and to see another perspective. I didn't know I could take a self-inventory of my day and how I could do things differently. I was trapped in repeating the same old patterns and cycles of stinking thinking and enforcing my will.

Today, each day is a new one, I have choices. I can follow my will and get into the mud and battle, or I can make a decision to turn my will and life over to the care of God as each moment unfolds. I can be gentle with myself today and be grateful for progress, not perfection. I don't need to have all the answers; I much prefer to relax into His will for me than struggle in mine. When I relax and let God take charge, my thinking is clearer, solutions appear, and life unfolds calmer and clearer.

Thank you, God! Thank you, dog!

Anon

How does your Higher Power communicate with you?
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L O N E L I N E S S

Loneliness is an illness too; believe me I know. I have always been a hugger. Hugs are my way of showing love, comfort, friendship, support, and connection. My arms are always open.

I was born to loving parents, surrounded by the kind of childhood memories that make you believe in magic. Then, at seventeen years old, I met a woman at a family wedding. What was meant to be a fleeting moment turned into the longest, most beautiful, and most painful love story of my life.

I fell in love, not just with her, but with her baby girl. A fourteen-month-old angel who needed the love and guidance my parents gave me, as much as I needed to give it. And just like that, I had a family.

By nineteen, I was married, and thirteen months later, my son was born. We were

a family built on love, adventure, and endless hugs.

Our circle of friends grew, and with them, the hugs multiplied. I had everything. But loving an addict comes at a cost. Addiction has a way of taking away what you love the most.

Thirty-six years later, I had lost all my hugs. Some hugs abandoned me, and some I had to abandon. Some cut me off, some cast me aside and some forced me to choose. For many reasons, some just had to stop. One by one, the arms that once embraced me were gone, until I was left standing alone in an empty space with no one left to hug.

So, I searched out Al-Anon. I searched for people who understood what it means to love someone who is drowning, to hold on until your own arms go numb, in the hope

that one day it stops them from falling into the abyss of that murderous black hole they so desperately find themselves being called to again and again. I searched for those who knew what it was like to lose everyone around you and somehow keep hugging your one true love.

I remember my first meeting. Walking through that door, my soul was hollow. I had no one left to hug. I was lonely, so lonely. I was lost and was broken. I felt like I had failed, failed my wife, and failed myself. I felt sick with grief; I was ill.

I don't feel like that anymore. Because here, with my new Al-Anon family, I have found new hugs.

Paul, Wednesday Farnham

Can you share your Al-Anon journey?

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I am not alone

Coming to Al-Anon has made me feel part of a fellowship. I realised quite early on that others have the same problems and fears as me.

Attending meetings, listening and talking, and reading Al-Anon literature helps and makes me feel that I am not alone and also, more importantly, there is hope.

Anon

Need a theme to write something for Al-Anon Today?

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS...

How do you find balance?

•

What are your favourite Slogans?

•

Share about your recent milestone

•

How do you practice self-compassion?

Writing Tips...

Share your experience from the heart, with the focus on you. Allow your creative spirit to express what you feel... like when you share in a meeting. You could relate a personal experience based on a programme principle such as detachment or acceptance, a Step, Tradition or Concept. Remember, grammar and spelling are not as important as heartfelt experiences. The Editorial Committee will take care of the spelling, grammar and punctuation.

SUGGESTIONS FOR MEETING TOPICS

Focusing on the solutions
Growth in recovery
Sponsorship
Time for myself
Communication



My Higher Power's steady hand

It had been a stressful week. My partner had been working all week and when they weren't working, they were drinking. We'd also had home improvements delayed, causing even more chaos, while I solo parented. The weather had been glorious all week, so even though it wasn't as warm and sunny as it had been, I suggested we take a family trip to the beach. My partner grouched, grumbled, and complained that we should have ditched work and gone during the week, but we went to the beach.

I knew there wouldn't be much to do on a day like today, but learning from my programme to make the best of it, I purchased a kite. The windy breeze blew the kite up in the air and my two daughters squealed with glee. They both took turns and I could tell it had made their day. At some point they handed me the kite and ran off down the beach, so I took a turn.

At the start, the kite and I struggled, it kept plunging down and crashing as the gusts of wind suddenly got too strong or changed direction. After a while I figured out that if I held the string with a steady hand, the kite could bob and weave in the wind while I guided it.

It struck me that this must be how my Higher Power works. My Higher Power doesn't cause chaos in my life, it's the free will of life that causes chaos, much like the wind has a free will in nature. My Higher Power does not, and will not control my alcoholic, but with my Higher Power's steady hand and my use of the programme, it keeps me riding the wind.

My Higher Power has a plan for me and if I listen, I will fly. I might sag and veer and be unsure of where I'm going, but I'm still flying.

How do you
connect with your
Higher Power?
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Chris



Keeping the focus on me

A very long time ago I was married to a wonderful man, a soul mate. Life was great, two young people, married at 17. I was actually a child escaping from an unhappy life at home. Alcohol was not in the house, but fear and uncertainty were. I grew up hating and fearing my father, I didn't realise it had damaged my ability to have confidence in myself and develop properly as a person.

Time went on and unfortunately my husband began to drink more and more heavily. We had two children and I thought it was my fault at first. I begged, pleaded, argued, threatened, sulked, and got him to promise he would stop which didn't happen. There was always some chaos and trauma going on with him having accidents.

My doctor suggested Al-Anon and I got my mother to mind the children and went to a meeting. I expected to be given a set of examples to follow, and he would stop drinking. I was disappointed to hear that I needed fixing. I had been trying everything I could to stop him, but found the programme was for me to focus on myself and to get my life back. I learnt I didn't cause it, can't control it, and I couldn't cure it.

The words and Slogans went into my memory, and over time I started to see my behaviour was not always helpful. Today, I can change how I view the person in front of me, suffering from the disease of alcoholism.

Anon

What have you learnt in Al-Anon?

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The Trustees have legal rights while the rights of the Conference are traditional.

This Concept speaks of roles and responsibilities, and to seek clarity in what they are. This has always been a source of puzzlement to me, especially in not knowing what my responsibilities were.

Concept Seven

I thought I had to take care of everything and everyone, that I didn't have a choice.

I knew as a school teacher what my roles and responsibilities were as I had a contract and it was all clearly outlined in that, but venturing into a marriage was a different ball game, everything revolved around the pub and the next drink. This confused me; I thought if I put the Sunday lunch on the table at 11.45, he wouldn't go to the pub (they opened at 12 in those days) but he did. My other wifely roles evolved. I was doing absolutely everything and he did nothing, either around the house or with our three children. Everything became distorted because of the disease.

I didn't know that I was not responsible for my husband's drinking, sobriety, job, cleanliness, diet, or other choices. I didn't know what I was actually responsible for.

It was many years before I learnt in Al-Anon that I had a responsibility to myself first and all the wonderful gifts the programme brought. Along the way I also learnt that it was my responsibility to treat others with the same courtesy, love, and gentleness that I wanted for myself.

As my children grew into their teenage years, I accepted my role as their mum. I didn't become a jailor but instead tried to guide them through those sometimes turbulent years, by setting and talking about boundaries and sticking to them. Why? Because they were under age.

As they grew more mature in body and years my legal responsibilities as a parent are non-existent. Yet, I still have a traditional role to play. To love them unconditionally, and to give them guidance if I am asked, and it is very acceptable for me to enforce boundaries that affect my home.

When my daughter was deep in the midst of her disease as a twenty-five-year-old and had come back home to live, following an abusive relationship with an addict, she systematically broke all our boundaries and we had to ask her to give us the house keys back and leave the family home. She did. After many years, experiencing lots more hardships, she found peace and sobriety in the rooms.

Concept Seven teaches me the balance, to recognise my rights and the rights of others. Finally, I learnt that I had held on very tightly to a responsibility that wasn't mine to hold and that other people's expectations are not my responsibility.

Today I know that what I can't do, my Higher Power can. So, I need to keep practising Let Go and Let God, doing my part and trusting my Higher Power with the rest.

Annie, area 28

Can you share on a Concept?

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Relief V Recovery

I came into the rooms of Al-Anon on my knees. I was exhausted with trying to control the uncontrollable, fix the things that I didn't have the power to, and trying to change a person that didn't want to change.

I walked into an Al-Anon meeting convinced that all I needed were answers on how to get someone to behave the way I wanted.

That was my denial. I was a "yeah, but" person, my mind was closed and I felt no one else was like me or in my situation.

But at each meeting, little lightbulbs of realisation and reality came on in my head and gradually, as I started to pick up some tools to help me, my mind began to open. People in the room had the same feelings as me, some were in similar situations too. It was my denial that didn't allow me to see the similarities.

I was more obsessed about my husband's drinking than he was. My own thoughts were actually fuelling my obsession, I was putting my life on hold waiting for my husband to change. I thought that if I told him all the errors of his ways and how he had affected me, that he'd try to behave differently. I did that for years and nothing changed. Gradually, with the help of what

I was learning, I stopped my controlling and nagging and we started to communicate in a healthy and mature way.

It took me quite a while to understand that if I wanted to have peace of mind then it was actually down to me to change and not down to another person.

I came to Al-Anon originally for relief, which I got in shed loads with the help of other members. As I started to listen at meetings, I learnt that it wasn't a place to dump my problems but to understand that my problems are often the tools that fashioned me towards healthier ways of living and thinking. So, coming into the rooms for relief was important, but I've stayed for recovery,



‘Often I’m gently reminded about the importance of focusing on myself’

as I’m now aware the only person that has control over my life is the one looking back at me in the mirror.

The time I need my meeting the most is when I don’t feel like going. I was never good at sticking to anything and I hated the word commitment, but my sanity and serenity are more important to me than staying at home to watch TV. My friends know I have an important commitment at my home Group and I’ll not miss it, even for a tempting evening out.

Recovery for me is a way of life. Whilst relief was so important as a newcomer, I now understand that being in recovery is actually part of my maturity.

We focus on recovery at my home Group and share about the message rather than the mess and it adds to the unity of the Group. It took me a while to realise that moaning about or criticising the alcoholic during the meetings was detracting from the unity in the Group and I learnt that it wasn’t actually helping my recovery. I’m not perfect, I can share my frustrations with a member in confidence, but often I’m gently reminded about the importance of focusing on myself.

Thank you Al-Anon for all the love, help and support you’ve given me.

Anon

What helps your recovery?

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*Did you know, details of upcoming Workshops, **Events** and Al-Anon Conventions can be found on the Al-Anon website. To add your event please email **Enquiries***



Reaching out to members

‘ Reaching out to members across all barriers showed me just how Al-Anon works ’

Recently, while at an online meeting a member asked for speakers at her New York based Al-Anon meeting which was for Russian speaking members. A translator would be present, so I volunteered. To prepare, I attended the meeting the week before to observe the format.

Each phrase and sentence were translated, slowing down the speaker. After 45 minutes there were many questions. My initial reaction was ‘I can’t do this’.

However, my Higher Power guided me to keep my commitment. What an experience I had!

I shared my experience, strength and hope as honestly as I could. Members asked about the literature I used, and on sharing ‘Reaching for Personal Freedom’, I realised that many had never seen this book. Questions on my spiritual journey challenged me to explain my inner feelings, but how rewarding an experience this was. Reaching out to members across all barriers showed me just how Al-Anon works.

I truly received far more than I gave to this meeting, especially seeing the members laughing at some of my crazy antics before coming to Al-Anon.

I am so grateful today that I have an Al-Anon programme that I am proud to share.

Agnes

How has reaching out enhanced your recovery? [Share | Al-Anon UK](#)



fellowship, I have been given the principles of Love, Honesty, Humility, Forgiveness, and Compassion to practice in all my affairs.

What Alateen means to me today, is that I am able to use these gifts and I can give back to Alateen members the principles that I was so freely given.

Working together with other ASGSs, I have been given the gift of Service which is vitally important for Alateen members to grow and still be a part of this wonderful fellowship. Each week, ASGSs have a commitment to facilitate the Alateen meetings and to be available whether the Alateens attend or not and it's my privilege to be a part of this process.

For me, hearing the young people speak in meetings of their own understanding of the three C's: I did not cause it, I cannot control it, and I cannot cure it, fills my heart; I get so emotional that I cry with gratitude. It is a wonderful opportunity to see their growth as they come to terms with how they have been affected. The three A's also play a significant part in this process too.

I love the guided format of our meeting and how everyone takes responsibility for their part in it. As an ASGS at our online Northampton meeting, I might be the host, or I might prepare the ice breaker or research the topic that the young people have chosen for the meeting.

My commitment to Alateen for the coming future is to serve the best way I know how. For further information call 020 7593 2070 (Monday-Friday, 10am-5pm).

Jenny Area 28 (ASGS)

How has Service in Alateen enriched your recovery? [Share | Al-Anon UK](#)

I joined Al-Anon in 2008 and I became an Alateen Screened Group Sponsor (ASGS) in 2019. Alateen is for 12-17-year olds and offers support to young people whose lives have been affected by another person's drinking.

WHAT ALATEEN MEANS TO ME

As a member of Al-Anon, my life has changed in many ways. I have gained an understanding of the illness of alcoholism and addiction, because it affected every single member of my family.

Understanding compassion was an extremely painful awakening for me, because I was consumed with bitterness, resentment, anger, and judgement towards members of my family.

My attitude has profoundly changed. My family situation today is one of peace, acceptance and unconditional love for my loved ones who are still affected by the disease of alcoholism.

Today, after many years of working a Twelve Step programme with my Sponsor, Sponsoring, and being of Service in the

My situation improved greatly

I first walked through the Al-Anon doors two years ago and I am grateful every day that I found you all. Although my circumstances appear worse, I can't remember ever feeling calmer and happier in the whole of my adult life.

Since starting to work the programme and putting the Al-Anon tools into practice, myself and my children are calm, happy and feel supported.

In the Al-Anon welcome, it says that the family situation is bound to improve, and whilst life doesn't look like I would have planned, mine and my children's lives have improved greatly. We no longer walk on eggshells and we can be at peace in our own home.

Detaching with love, putting boundaries in place, and protecting the alcoholic in my life from his poor choices is still a daily challenge for me. However, his chaos is no longer my chaos.

This is all thanks to the programme, my wonderful Sponsor and the support of my Group who encouraged me to submit my share to Al-Anon Today.

Anon

Can you submit your
share to

Al-Anon Today?

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REJOINING MEETINGS ONLINE

About six weeks ago, life got pretty tough. I noticed I was trying to manipulate and change the person in my life with the disease of alcoholism. Nothing changed for that person, that I could see anyway.

However, lots changed for me. I was angry, resentful, and was blaming this person for every aspect of my life that I was not content with.

Having attended Al-Anon several years ago and working through the Steps with a Sponsor, I stopped going to meetings. The person with the disease of alcoholism also stopped going to AA. Although no consumption of alcohol took place, there is much more to alcoholism than alcohol.

I began to run the show and take it all personally. I believed it was all my fault and had to fix it, that I somehow deserved to feel in despair most of the time.

One evening, I decided to look at the Al-Anon website and clicked on a podcast. The person in the podcast might as well have been me, everything I heard was my inner narrative. I then called the Helpline as I realised that there was not an in-person meeting near to me and I wasn't sure if online meetings would be for me or not. I was greeted by a calm, compassionate person who gently encouraged me to give one a go. I joined the Sheffield Friday evening Group.



The meeting was structured and exceptionally well organised. No care or compassion is lost due to its online format. At the first couple of meetings I just sat and cried. Then, I noticed I was smiling as I heard familiar words and sayings like martyrdom, mothering, and manipulation. You didn't cause it, you can't control it, and you can't cure it. These were the sayings that I needed to hear.

I had been acting in the opposite way to the way I needed to be spiritually well. I am now seven weeks back and feeling so much better. To see new folk for their first meeting is humbling. I have taken on the co-host role to learn how it works and even though I don't live anywhere near Sheffield, I intend to stay and to have this as my home Group.

Can you share
your experience of
online meetings?
[Share | Al-Anon UK](#)

Nicky

Understanding my grief and pain



Last year, even though I had been divorced from the alcoholic in my life for many years, I was shocked at how I felt when he passed away.

I've been in Al-Anon for many years and the programme helped me to understand my grief and pain.

I understood that underneath the terrible disease of alcoholism, the man I married was still there. Every decision I made throughout those years was to fight the disease and not the person.

Each time he went into treatment, I could see the real person coming through, but I just couldn't deal with watching the disease spiralling every time he went back drinking.

Alcoholism is a progressive disease, and it was too much for me to see this happening. The disease of alcoholism took him in the end, a young man with so much to live for.

Thanks to Al-Anon, I had gained compassion, but I could not have a relationship with this human being as the disease was destroying me, too.

Since his death, I have learnt to give my children the time they need to grieve and to show them compassion and love. At one stage my daughter's anger was dangerous, it was directed at me and whilst I had to put boundaries in place, I could show her that I was there for her when she was ready.

Al-Anon has helped me to understand that we all hurt in our own way and that we all heal in our own time.

I felt today, on the anniversary of his death, I needed to write this and to share my gratitude for this programme and for all my Al-Anon friends who have supported me through my grief.

Gina D

How has Al-Anon helped you with grief and pain? [Share | Al-Anon UK](#)

PLACING MY LIFE IN GOD'S HANDS

Five years ago, I decided to live abroad. Before I left, someone suggested that before I go to sleep, to remember to place my life in God's hands. I did for a little while; I poured my heart out into his hands and as a result I felt his guidance to make better decisions for myself. When I say better, I don't necessarily mean the decisions that I wanted, but decisions that were good for me.

After a while I forgot to put my life in God's hands. Instead, I put my life in my own hands. What a recipe for unhappiness that was! Recently, I decided to pour out my heart and my life into God's hands again. But my challenges started when 'my will' wanted to take over.

When I came to Al-Anon and started to work on the first three Steps, I realised I had been walking blindly through life and I wanted to strengthen my relationship with my Higher Power. Working the programme has given me a new pair of lenses to look through and is helping me to fix my distorted point of view.

Not long ago, I realised that for every one hundred steps I take, just two of them are mine and the other ninety-eight are God's. I don't question why or how; I just try to follow them.

Casi

How do you strengthen your relationship with your Higher Power?

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FROM OUR AL-ANON FAMILY WORLDWIDE



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The Value of Sharing Our Experience

Before Al-Anon, I thought the loving thing to do when anyone shared their problems with me was to offer them my best advice about how to fix whatever the problem was. Whether I had any expertise related to their problem or not, I would eagerly tell the person what I thought they should do. Solutions popped around in my mind like popcorn kernels in a kettle of hot oil.

When I got to my first Al-Anon meeting and heard the guidelines for sharing, something about not giving advice and speaking from our own experience, I wondered how anyone was going to get the help they needed. More than that, I wondered how I was going to get the help I needed if no one there could tell me what to do.

As members shared their experiences, I recognized my own and felt relief that I was not alone. As they shared the tools and spiritual principles that helped them navigate their various alcoholic family situations and personal challenges, I learned that I could use those same tools and apply those same principles to my life.

I found more of this valuable experience, strength, and hope in the pages of our Conference Approved Literature (CAL). There were even indexes where I could look up specific topics! Al-Anon literature is the source of help that it is not because it advises or tells members what to do, but because it is made up of the lived experiences of our members. Reading about the myriad ways Al-Anon members apply our Legacies and programme principles gives me resources, options, and most of all, hope for dealing with the effects of the family disease of alcoholism.

Thanks to Al-Anon, I no longer blurt out advice or tell other people what to do. I can tell you, though, that sharing my experience in writing, has enriched my recovery. In sharing my experience, strength, and hope, I always receive far more than I give.

Please visit [Share / Al-Anon UK](#)

to submit your contribution or post to:

The Editor, at the General Service Office address below.

Please help us make this e-zine a vital, rich and diverse expression of the Al-Anon programme of recovery.

please share your thoughts with us

You don't have to be a professional writer. The Editorial Committee will take care of the spelling, grammar and punctuation – these are not as important as heartfelt experiences.

The length can be anything from a single sentence to 450-500 words. Anything longer we may have to edit. Whatever you decide, sharing in *Al-Anon Today* can be another step along the road to recovery for both the reader and the writer, helping you and other members to grow.

You may choose how you sign your article: with your own name, anonymously, or with a pseudonym, but please note that for legal purposes your full name and address are required with your submission. Your anonymity will be fully respected.

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The Serenity Prayer

God grant me the Serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
Courage to change the things I can,
and Wisdom to know the difference.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Al-Anon's Suggested Preamble to The Twelve Steps

The Al-Anon Family Groups are a fellowship of relatives and friends of alcoholics who share their experience, strength and hope in order to solve their common problems.

We believe alcoholism is a family illness, and that changed attitudes can aid recovery.

Al-Anon is not allied with any sect, denomination, political entity, organisation, or institution; does not engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any cause. There are no dues for membership.

Al-Anon is self-supporting through its own voluntary contributions.

Al-Anon has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics.

We do this by practising the Twelve Steps, by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics, and by giving understanding and encouragement to the alcoholic.

UK & Éire Service Manual 2024, page 10

THE TWELVE STEPS

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
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.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

