

Al-Anon Today

YOUR E-LINK TO AL-ANON UK & ÉIRE

**dealing
with
anxiety**



www.al-anonuk.org.uk
Spring 2022

Letter From Your Editor

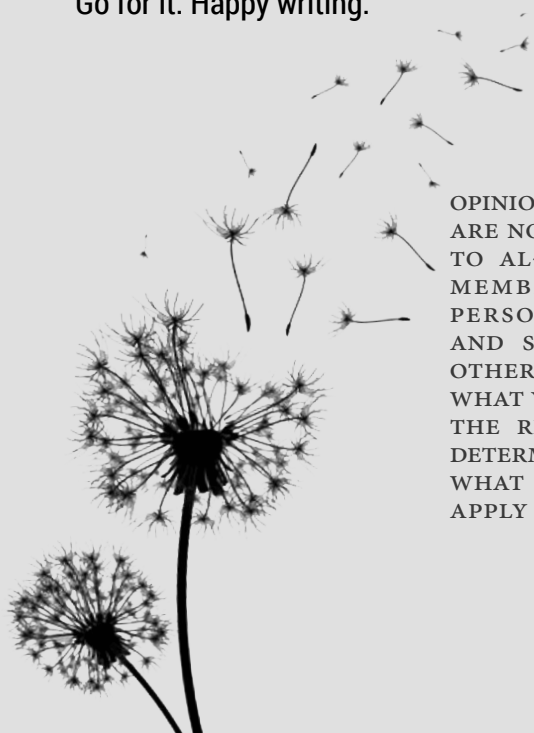
I was really anxious when, back in January, I realised we only had one share for this issue. I was surprised because during lockdown we had a great many members putting pen to paper. But things had gone very quiet.

I decided to ask for help, sending out a text message to my contacts asking for shares. I tried to think of an interesting topic, and as I was wracking my brain for one, I was getting more and more anxious, and the more anxious I became the more unhelpful my thinking became. I felt trapped. So the topic revealed itself. How do you deal with your anxiety?

Thanks to everyone who responded to the appeal, it was a comfort to know this is a common problem, and that there are tried and tested solutions.

Sorry if you didn't receive notice of the request. Perhaps you may be inspired to write something for the Summer edition.

Go for it. Happy writing.



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.

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If it matters to me - it matters

I never even knew I suffered from anxiety. I had always prided myself on being someone who can cope. I dealt with everything – I didn't grasp for a second that I could be anxious.

It took a long time in the fellowship to be humble enough to accept that fear and anxiety led every decision and aspect of my life. What I reflect back on is my complete absorption into other people's lives - with no awareness, space or attention for myself - I didn't matter. The vague whispering voice of negativity and criticism that held court in my head for most of my days did not count – yet the constant chatter held control over every decision I made.

Today I recognise my anxiety. I know when the voice gets loud, or when the nervous lack of ability to focus appears – I am aware and for that I am deeply grateful to this wonderful fellowship. I can speak about it. Members give me permission to speak out loud the words within that cripple and bind me.

When I look back at my younger self, living with trauma and volatility from a young age, I can think why wouldn't I be anxious? What is wrong with admitting it?

Dealing with anxiety today includes being compassionate, being kind, being patient with myself and asking myself – what's wrong? I ask it regularly of my younger self – 'what is it lovey?' and usually a quiet, yet truthful reply emerges that gives me clarity and my older self returns in that moment to deal with everyday life once more.

Thank you to those in my life who showed me nothing is insignificant and if it matters to me, it matters.

Dee



Awareness Acceptance Action...

To cope with my anxiety I use the three A's - Awareness, Acceptance, Action. I have become aware that I suffer anxiety as a regular reaction, rather than a response to my daily life. My thoughts can be triggered by memories of upset or useless worries of the future and also with panic of how to cope in the now.

Awareness allows me to recognise my mental state and I pray for acceptance even before I get out of bed. Then I am connected to my Higher Power so that the 'lower power' no longer steals my peace and joy. I accept my mental state as a fact rather than my fault and no longer blame myself or accuse myself of stupidity.

Al-Anon is a programme of action so I can remember that I am loved and supported by a Higher Power, then I have choices to determine which tool to use in my action, for example I might use. 'First Things First' or another slogan, or try phoning Al-Anon members.

Anon

Living my best life

I suffer with anxiety quite a lot and I can now identify the signs, and I can address it straight away. I tend to have a little chat with myself, as I would with a dear friend, and advise myself to take time out from whatever situation is causing my anxiety.

I will take a walk, run a bath, play some music or call a friend and reason things out. I attend more online meetings when I have anxiety as I feel this will get me through. It's like a fix and I can honestly say the meetings always make me feel so much better. Especially if someone is going through similar things, whether that be a work situation or children, partners, things not going the way they would have liked.

When I came into Al-Anon I thought it was for the alcoholic in my life but soon realised it was for me, to help me live my best life.

This programme has changed my life and yes I do have anxiety; however it is not as often as it was before the programme. I now have the tools to cope and it soon passes.



**Every day is another
chance
To get stronger,
Live healthier and
To be the best version of
You**

Member of Blackpool Wednesday Group

What helps me - some short shares

I breathe through
my anxiety telling myself
it won't last forever and
'This Too Shall Pass',
I remember to take 'One Day at a Time'.
I sometimes use meditation, or go
outside, even for a short stroll
every day, and talking
to someone is
good too.

Anon

Al-Anon has
taught me that when I'm
feeling anxious about a situation,
the best approach is to bring my issue
out into the light. Sharing it with someone
else - my Sponsor, my Higher Power, or a close
Al-Anon friend. This takes the sting
and the power out of the situation and
helps me to take appropriate
action in any situation.

*Claire A,
Manchester*

I write a
blog using a teddy bear
as my alter ego, I write
about my battle with anxiety.
Whenever I feel the demons are
at the door I read what I have
written about myself and how
I overcame my fears
before and how
I can again.

Bob

The
Serenity Prayer is my
'go to' when I feel anxiety.
This might be before I am due to have
a difficult conversation or when I'm nervous
about a work meeting. Sometimes I'll pop
to the loo at work and quietly recite
the prayer over and over again.

It always seems
to work.

Keith

One of the most
effective ways I have
found to deal with my anxiety
is talking about it. When I say out loud
what I have on my mind, talk through the
scenario I am imagining or am worrying
about, it can really help bring me
back to reality and put
things back in
perspective.

Anon

Here's what
keeps me calm.

Saying the Serenity Prayer,
Step One and Step Two, reading pages
on anxiety in our daily readers, practicing
some deep breathing, and remembering that
'Easy Does It'. Making a telephone call to an
Al-Anon friend, taking my dog for a walk,
making soup and having a nice
meal. Adding chamomile or
lavender oils to relax
in a hot bath.

Frances

I attend to
my gratitude list,
and try to remember
how far I have come. I go
for a walk and even though
I may not feel like walking far, I
usually meet someone to pass the
time of day with. Just a small
interaction with another
person helps to bring me
back to the present.

Joan

a softer place to land



Through working the programme I am beginning to see how much anxiety affects my life.

Before I could see it only when it erupted, most likely with a tantrum as I tried to find someone else to blame for my feeling out of control.

Now I can see the low-lying sense of overwhelm and panic that can so easily flood my mind and body repeatedly during the day and night. At these times one anxious feeling blends to another and suddenly the past or future comes towards me like a hurricane. Being able to notice this pattern as it happens, is in itself a huge relief; it's like waking up in the present again - I realise I am insane. Once I see this, I can work on acceptance and recovery.

I am working Step Three so I try to see my anxiety as an opportunity to let go and let my Higher Power help.

I can write in my diary, use the daily readers or do some stretches or meditation or even some housework - anything that grounds me in the present again. Today I am writing this piece to counter my overwhelm about losing something important.

The Al-Anon programme gives me a soft place to fall and a completely different perspective on my life.

Emily B

**Looking for a topic to write about?
Try these for size...**

How do I practice gratitude?

What stops me asking for help?

Why do I need to accept my imperfection?

What can I do about my procrastination?

How does 'First Things First' help me focus?

How I deal with my Anxiety

I still shock myself at how I can be going along steadily and happily; and then something will happen and I am spiralling downwards, hating myself, my Higher Power and anyone else who seems to be doing well (in my eyes).

At least I can now recognise when this is happening and although I can't always put the brakes on straightaway, I am able to much more quickly than I ever could before recovery.

I have to remember gratitude, taking care of myself, as that is often the first thing to suffer. I try getting in touch with nature, reaching out to friends and meditation and contact with my Higher Power.

Knowing that I can do it, even at times when I'm struggling, is a huge benefit. I am reminded that I am not alone.

Anon

One of the things I am very grateful for in my recovery is that my anxiety is much less than it used to be. As the slogan goes, it is 'Progress not Perfection' and at times I can still get triggered and relapse into my old anxious self again.

The great thing is that I have the Al-Anon tools available to me to relieve my anxiety and the self awareness to use them. I read Al-Anon literature, meditate and am kind to myself. I attend a meeting, reach out to my Sponsor or another Al-Anon friend and talk to my Higher Power.

Basically I ask for help - something I used to be too afraid to do in case I got rejected - I used to take rejection very personally. I also remember that 'This Too Shall Pass'

Carolyn

Asking for Help

You can't always
control what goes on outside,
but you can always control
what goes on inside.

— Wayne Dyer

Only Human

For me anxiety can be quite crippling. Although I no longer live with active alcoholism, I can still lose my emotional sobriety and become anxious. Then my list of jobs that need to be done grows and I do nothing productive but worry.

The things that always work for me are going for a walk in any weather - so what if I get wet? - and picking up the phone to an Al-Anon friend. I make sure my breathing stays low and slow and gentle - through the nose and relaxed rather than panicked.

Generally I try to look after myself, eating properly and exercising regularly. I sometimes have a cold shower in the morning, the shock is like a reset. I try not to sort everything out at once, and keep it in the day with 'First Things First'. I try to detach from people who are not my responsibility.

I try to be kind to myself and not beat myself up for the useless worrying that I can still fall into, and tell myself I am only human.

Janet

What are your favourite self care tools? [Click here](#) to Share

The Three A's

When dealing with anxiety, I try to apply the three A's - Awareness, Acceptance, Action.

I'm learning that my anxiety isn't all caused by active alcoholism. I pick up the phone and share with trusted fellows. I use guided meditation specifically for anxiety.

I try to be very gentle with myself. I talk myself through doing the next right thing - for example: put the key in the door, turn the lock, close the door, start walking, etc and this really helps.

Catriona Area 18

Are you looking for a new service role?

We are looking for members to join the Editorial Committee. No editorial experience is necessary, just a passion for Al-Anon and a love of our literature.

We meet online about four times a year. Members of Editorial Committee love the fellowship that we experience during the meetings when we talk about the shares.

The editing is then done on our own. What we do is simple really; we tidy up the shares, checking spelling and changing the odd word or phrase.

The process of closely reading what a member has taken the trouble of writing, is an honour and a privilege, a way of more deeply understanding the member and their recovery process.

It's been a really enjoyable service role. If you're thinking you may like to join us, or would like some more information, you could email editor@al-anonuk.org.uk

We look forward to hearing from you.

suggestions
for meeting
topics

- Keep Coming Back
- 'Let it Begin with Me'
- Courage
- Writing for the e-zine
- Impatience

The Gifts of Al-Anon



I grew up in a dysfunctional alcoholic home, striving for perfection and control. Without the tools to manage my anxiety, I hit my rock bottom and when I could no longer cope with my anxiety I decided to seek help from Al-Anon.

There was no magic cure or set of instructions on how to manage my crippling anxiety, and I can't pinpoint when I suddenly stopped feeling anxious, but I can say that I am no longer laden down by the weight of my anxiety.

Al-Anon has given me so many ways for dealing with my anxiety. Most importantly, because my Al-Anon Groups listen to me, I can speak out loud about what is troubling me to people who have had similar problems. I speak to myself more compassionately and look for things to be grateful for.

Al-Anon Slogans such as 'Easy Does It', 'One Day at a Time', 'Progress not Perfection', 'Let Go and Let God' and HALT - Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired - help put things in perspective, along with the sayings, 'no is a complete sentence' and 'drop the rope'. I can hear these words in my head; spoken in the voices of my loving Al-Anon friends.

I use the index of Al-Anon daily readers to find readings that help rationalise my darkest thoughts and free me of them. I can now refer to these readings from memory, helping me find serenity in a moment of madness.

I mentally recite an A-Z gratitude list on the way to work, which is very calming. Mindfulness, meditation and movement helped me to hold on to today. Trusting in a power greater than myself helps me to hand over my concerns for tomorrow. I like the bite-sized advice on the *Just for Today* card. A lot of my anxiety comes from trying to fix others. I now ask myself 'Whose business are you in?'

I write a list of all the things that are within my control to change and when I feel overwhelmed, I look at the list for one small change I can accomplish.

These small changes add up and give me courage to face more challenging changes on my list.

Self care is important to me. I try to remember I am worth it, I am enough, I deserve it. Self care helps me to recharge my batteries before I care for my children and gives me the energy to break the generational cycle of alcoholism.

I can put my anxious energy into cleaning, gardening, walking, sewing, crocheting. I was a complete novice when I started to sew and I needed a challenge to focus on. My new hobby was hard and I had no time to think about what was making me anxious. When I finished my project I had something to talk about with enthusiasm, and it made me smile. Movement such as exercise, walking and dancing can lift my mood when I feel 'stinking thinking' coming on.

My anxiety did not go overnight, after all anxiety had been reinforced and passed down through the generations in my family. I married an alcoholic which ensured I stayed on the 'merry-go-round'. I understand that it takes time and conscious effort to retrain my thoughts and behaviours so that I begin to thrive rather than just survive.

Today, I put my problems in their 'true perspective' and live in the present. What a gift it is to have Al-Anon in my life.

Anon

Categories of Fear

Doing some Step work recently I came across an Al-Anon reading which suggested making a list of my fears. It felt like a useful but scary idea. Without thinking too much I very quickly jotted down a list.

What immediately jumped out at me is that there were two categories of fears. One category I can do nothing about, for example the fear of someone I love becoming ill. The other category I realised I could do something about, for example the fear of losing my mobility. I can work on that by looking after myself and taking exercise.

I found I was afraid of NOT doing a job I've been putting off for ages. I am hopeful that will help me to dismantle all the delaying tactics I've been using and actually get on with the job.

Yet again Al-Anon encourages me to focus on taking positive action and not to waste my energies on the things I cannot change.

Miriam

Can you share how you cope with your fears? [Click here](#) to Share

TIPS I USE FOR TACKLING ANXIETY

I lessen my anxiety by meditating twice a day for ten minutes using an app. Sometimes I breathe deeply into my belly for four counts, hold for four counts and breathe out for six counts. It moves my body out of the fight-or-flight mode and into the relaxation mode.

Also another favourite tip is whilst I'm out walking I list five things I can see - eg shadows: five things I haven't noticed before - eg the colour of a leaf: four things I can feel - eg the wind on my face, the soles of my feet on the floor: three things I can hear - eg birds, the rain on my brolly: two things I can smell - eg grass and one thing I can taste eg - a sweet popped in my mouth.

Sometimes I name everything I can see around me eg table, chair, radiator, TV. Sometimes I count back from 100 in sevens to take control of my thoughts.

Julie H

Quieting the voice in my head

I now realise that most people experience anxiety at one time or another - it's the natural way the brain has adapted, so I am not alone.

I try to get some distance from the voice in my head that is just chatter. I then bring myself back to the moment, to my breathing, and look for something to be grateful for; a bird's song, the colour of the sky, the fact that I have a home.

When I'm in the present moment and grateful, there's less space for chatter, and if I remember I look upwards and acknowledge that I'm a very small cog in a vast universe.

My worrying really helps nobody.

Adam

I used to get very agitated at people who would tell me to take ten deep breaths or take a walk and listen to nature to help deal with my anxiety, because that never worked for me.

I realise now, that it never worked because from being a child I have always experienced a high level of fear in my life. How could I get back to being calm when I never had been calm in the first place?

What is interesting today is I have learned enough about myself to recognise my own obsessive thinking and am becoming less tolerant of it. I have experienced short periods of serenity and I know I don't have to let obsessive thinking run or ruin my day.

Today I can pick up the phone and off load the issue, however small. An Al-Anon friend repeats to me 'If it's important to you, then it's important'. I watch my own language and thoughts and when I try to dismiss something that has bothered me, however small or silly it may seem, I try to pay more attention to it and bring it into the light by acknowledging its effect on me. This gives me the courage to pick up the phone and discuss it with someone.

GOD HAS GOT THIS

I also physically hand it over to God, by placing it in my God Box, which is the bin - hence there is always a God Box handy, wherever I am. Sometimes I keep a small pad next to me at work and write the same thing on it throughout the day and place it back in the God Box as I realise it has dominated my thinking once more.

This never used to work for me because my faith in God or his plan for me was overwhelmed by my own need to control people, places, and things. I have learned through making gratitude lists and watching for the blessings that God holds me tight every day, regardless of how much I stress and struggle with something, so I might as well give it up and try to enjoy my day.

I love the fact that my God Box is always readily available, at home and at work. I have even used my God Box bin on a trip to the zoo.

My anxiety still comes over me on a regular basis, and I may never be free of it as I am learning to accept it as part of my illness, but today I have a choice to quieten it and enjoy my day, safe in the knowledge that God has got this.

Claire, Leyland

Can you share about your God box and how you use it? [Click here](#) to Share

THE THREE P'S - PROGRESS, PERFECTION and Puppy Training

This week my husband returned from town with an enormous and beautiful bouquet of flowers, which he promptly presented to me with a smile and a peck on the cheek. My reaction was perhaps not as enthusiastic as one might expect. I have had many such spectacular floral extravaganzas over the years, mostly purchased as a remedy for the after effects of alcoholic behaviour and a guilt reliever.

This one however, was different. This was offered as a 'Thank You' not a 'Sorry'. Thanking me for looking after him so well, whilst he endured the agonies of a terribly painful back injury. For my part, looking after somebody when they are ill or hurting does not come easily. A natural Florence Nightingale, I am not. After all, I was always far too perfect to be ill myself and expected everyone else to be just as perfect as me and get on with life just like I did.

But this time it was different. Feeling genuinely sorry for the poor chap and watching him struggle bravely, I was overcome with love and sympathy and realised that my finding another person's illness an irritation was selfish and uncaring beyond measure. How would I feel if the tables were turned? This was my progress.

How wonderful to see our joint recovery through AA and Al-Anon working in harmony. I can see many things now

that my blinkers have been removed. Especially, that when I put away my perfectionism, my progress shines.

No progress is made without change. Change is often uncomfortable and not welcome. Sometimes I can't see what changes need to be made but, with the help of the Steps, Traditions, my Sponsor and a Higher Power, I can peel back those blinkers and see the bigger picture.

As for my puppy training, he too has made huge progress. He no longer chews my Al-Anon books if he's bored and doesn't try to eat everybody's dinner. He can sit, fetch, catch, lie down, give me his paw and is a champion frisbee catcher. Coming when called is somewhat hit and miss and digging up newly planted plants obviously gives him much pleasure - oh dear - well, who wants a perfect dog anyway?

Nicky Area 5



Where is my part in it?

When I recognise that I'm anxious, it helps to look at my part in it first. Recently an issue cropped up between me and my husband, who also suffers from anxiety.

I find that unacceptable behaviour from others causes me to feel anxious, and needs to be worked through as part of a Step Ten inventory.

This helps me to untangle what was my problem, what was the part I played, and what needs to be changed by me.

This is an ongoing battle but I'm becoming stronger as I work my programme.

Anon

Coping with Anxiety

I find reasoning things out with an Al-Anon friend or getting to as many meetings as I can when I am going through difficult times is good for my anxiety.

Also getting out in nature and taking in the beauty around me helps. I read somewhere that nature is in the moment. Staying in the present helps me too. Anxiety can take over when I start projecting into the future.

Self care is important for me. Doing something nice, getting my nails done or having a bath can help. Focusing on my needs is important.

Anon

Made a list...

For me, making a list of things I need to do for the following day is a life saver when my anxiety is medium or high or even if I'm just feeling very stressed.

If I am particularly anxious I put in more detail and am generally more meticulous in my plan. I make sure I put times on the list too and things to look forward to.

For example:

0730 - Up. Bathroom, breakfast, walk dog.

0930 - Call mother and sort out her care needs (be cool!)

1030 - Meet best friend for coffee and catch up ...and so on.

It's very satisfying to tick things off the list!

Tom, Otley Group

Our Public Information Campaign

#TheHiddenEffects - of alcoholism on family and friends is still running. This Public Information campaign aims to simplify Al-Anon's message so that members of the public understand how living with a problem drinker can affect someone, why that person needs support, and how they can get that support.

Now is a great time to contact your local radio or newspaper, or health professionals or number of other organisations. Shina, our Public Information Officer at the General Service Office has put together many helpful tips and ideas. You can find them here

2021 Campaign #TheHiddenEffects Campaign | Al-Anon UK

Can you share an imaginative way to spread the word about how Al-Anon helps families and friends of alcoholics?

[Click here to Share](#)

Detaching from my Daughter

When my daughter is drinking and I want to help, my thinking automatically takes me back to my pre Al-Anon days when I reacted and enabled.

My anxiety levels would go through the roof, I'd go straight in there scolding and taking over to 'fix' her, feeling compelled to join in with the chaos and the secrecy. I was enabling and controlling in order to try to protect my grandchildren.

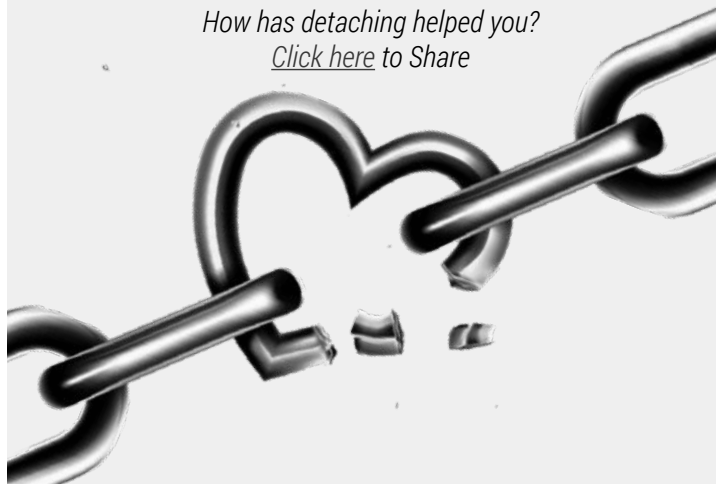
I can now practice the Al-Anon 'pause', I can now be kind, compassionate and loving without enabling. I ask my Higher Power for guidance to do the next right thing. Al-Anon has taught me that if I do for my daughter what she can do for herself I am robbing her of the opportunity to look at the possibility of her own recovery.

As I continue to detach from her with love my anxiety levels go down and I can feel the peace and serenity I hear so much about since I came into Al-Anon.

Anon

How has detaching helped you?

[Click here to Share](#)





FROM OUR
AL-ANON
FAMILY
WORLDWIDE



by Evelyn, Arizona

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permission of *The Forum*,
Al-Anon Family Group
Headquarters, Inc.,
Virginia Beach VA

calmly through the river

I liken working my Al-Anon program to my white water rafting trip down the Green River in Utah. Sometimes we were in very calm, placid waters. Other times we encountered large boulders and swift rapids. We relied on our guide to navigate us safely through those situations.

Occasionally we would get sucked into an eddie, going around and around for what seemed like an eternity. But eventually, our experienced and reliable guide moved us out of it and back into the flowing river.

My progress in Al-Anon is sometimes smooth and calm, just like the peaceful river. Yet other times I have had to navigate around large boulders and rough, unexpected rapids. But with an excellent guide – my Higher Power – I am learning to successfully work through distressing situations and navigate out of the eddies of my life.

My Higher Power continues to lead me through life's obstacles and on towards my destination – a changing attitude and serenity that I have never known before.

The Serenity Prayer...

Whenever I am feeling anxious or worried, the Serenity Prayer is always my go-to. Sometimes, especially at times of extreme stress, I don't get any further than 'God grant me the serenity'. I keep repeating this line, until I feel calmness creeping over me, then I continue with the rest of the prayer. The Serenity Prayer always works for me; it reminds me that I am powerless over people, places and things so worrying about them is a

waste of energy. It also reminds me to use my energy to 'change the things I can' - myself and my attitudes.

An Al-Anon member used to remind me of the wise words on page 98 in *Hope for Today*

'Worry is like a rocking chair. It gives me something to do, but it gets me nowhere'.

A grateful Al-Anon member

I go to the gym or go swimming and work it off there. I take my dog for a walk or I meditate.

Fiona

The most important focus for me is to unclench my jaw; to have lips together but teeth apart, and to slow my breathing, then as I breathe I count up to ten, and back down again. Another method I use which helps me a lot is to silently recite the Serenity Prayer repeatedly until my mind settles down.

Jane S

I deal with anxiety by phoning my Sponsor. Even just making the call and getting no answer calms me. Normally though, she does answer and I'm able to talk about the reasons why I'm anxious. After discussing it, I feel more able to let it go. Then I go about my day, feeling a lot lighter. That's one of the great Al-Anon tools that I use each week.

Rachael

I am a work in progress, 'One Day at a Time' I use the Steps and Slogans to become closer to my Higher Power. I have to work even more when my self-will has taken over, trying to control my family or friends. Sponsorship is a lifeline, it stops me from isolating, gives me perspective and helps me to 'Live and Let Live. I love Al-Anon.

Chloe

I use exercise, asking my Higher Power for help and reading Al-Anon literature. I chat with my Sponsor and with Al-Anon friends. Yoga daily helps with my racing mind and churning stomach. I do slow breathing, in through my nose and out through my mouth. I stay in the day as my mind wants to scare me with tomorrow and yesterday, so I say to myself 'Just for Today' or just for right now I am safe. I also walk and get in the fresh air while listening to music.

Frances

I use an app to practice meditation. I try to stick to my routine as it can provide something familiar and safe when all around me feels like chaos. My routine includes reading Al-Anon daily readers and doing yoga. I have used the services of a counsellor. I talk to a trusted friend and don't keep it all to myself. I keep busy but also carve out quiet time with whatever gives me joy; candles, soft music, reading, being creative..

Sue Guildford

If I am feeling overwhelmed I remember words from *Courage to Change* 'Be still and know that I am with you' which reminds me of my Higher Power. I also remember powerlessness; I am powerless over people, places and things and this helps me to use the slogan 'Let Go and Let God'.

Arlene

Attending my Al-Anon Group, talking with dear friends, reading *One Day at a Time in Al-Anon* and inspirational quotes on social media, listening to podcasts, praying, living 'One Day at a Time' is what calms me.

Anon

What helps me -

Please [Click here to share](#)

and 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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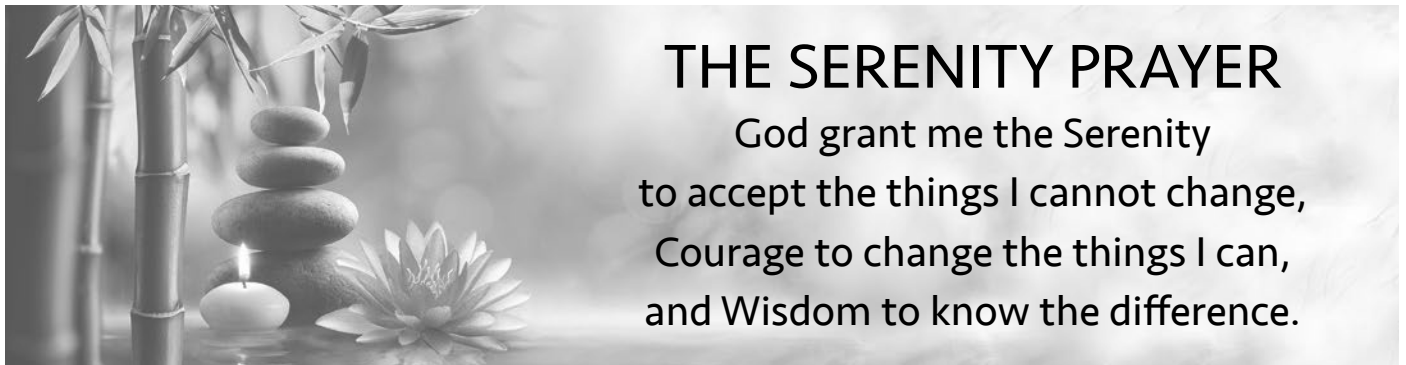
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THE SERENITY PRAYER

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.

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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.

