



Vol.2 Issue 1

Al-Anon of Fredericksburg

Help and Hope

the monthly newsletter



January 2014

This month's topic:

A NEW BEGINNING

When I see "A New Beginning" it implies change to me. I've learned in the program that change happens. Sometimes change is painful. Pain is inevitable, suffering is optional. I came to the program 5 1/2 years ago not knowing what to expect. I kept coming back because I liked what I heard. Now every day is a new beginning for me. I can't change the past, only make today the best it can be. Starting each day with my Higher Power helps, too.

Peter

Length in Program: 5 1/2 years

January 2014 is a new beginning for me, not only because of the new year (Happy New Year!) but also because I have been working on seeing myself in a new light. The old me did not understand the phrase: "Let it begin with me." I lived with the belief that what others thought/wanted/needed was the most important consideration for me and for my life. Perhaps I felt this way because I learned to live in fear as a vulnerable child, trying to making sure I was 'good' and others liked me, so that the adults in my life would want to take care of me and I would be safe.

In my new life I have found that it all must begin with me, and it must begin with the most important relationship I can ever have - the one with my higher power. Through the help of the Al-Anon program I have found that I can define my higher power in a way that works for me, there is no 'must' or 'should'. Developing a relationship with my higher power has helped me realize that no person is in charge of my life, my beliefs, my feelings, my behavior. I have the freedom of choice, and I know now that with the help of my higher power I need fear nothing. I am always walking with my best friend. What a great start to a new year!

Christine

Length in Program: 4 years

Alanon has taught me each day is a new beginning, actually I can start my day over at any time during a day! Through my program working me, I have found peace and joy in the little things, I have learned to let things go, I can now ask myself...is it my business.

New Beginning...most people think OK January a new year another new

continued on back

Announcements:

Our district donated literature to the Central Rappahannock Regional Library (CRRL) last year as part of a public outreach effort. You can find these books by using the catalog on their website; then, if you have a library card, you can check-out the books for two weeks. We donated a lot more than just daily readers, so please take a look if interested.

NOTE: Area 57, District 19, Al-Anon Family Groups, and Al-Anon as a whole is not affiliated with, neither do we endorse nor oppose the CRRL.

The donated books are property of the library.

We are always looking for Alateen sponsors. The only requirements are that you be at least 23 years of age, have at least 2 years in the Al-anon program, and attend 1 Al-Anon meeting a week in addition to the sponsored meeting.

Our district meeting is on the second monday of every month at the Green Turtle behind Spotsylvania Towne Centre. 5:00 if you would like to eat with us, 6:00 to discuss business. All are welcome to come.

The Alateens are no longer meeting on Friday evenings. Right now they are just meeting on Wednesday evenings. We are looking at adding an additional time.

Step, Tradition, and Concept of the Month

Step One:

We admitted we are powerless over alcohol---that our lives had become unmanageable.

Tradition One:

Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity.

Concept One:

The ultimate responsibility and authority for Al-Anon world services belongs to the Al-Anon groups.

beginning...I hated new years until about two years ago, it was a reminder of what I didn't do, through working the program, I no longer hate New Years, I not longer see it as an important milestone, it is yet another day, another new beginning, to the journey to me.

Allyson

Length in Program: 6 2/3 years

Next month's topic: Loving Yourself First

Al-Anon Stories from the Heart

I am the mother of a bipolar adult son & daughter. One drinks heavily; the other is separated from a husband who drinks irresponsibly. Before Al-Anon, I could no longer function. I lived in fear that my son would kill himself or someone else while driving drunk. I feared for my daughter and grandson. My doctor recommended Al-Anon. I resisted. I did not understand that the program was for me. After the first meeting, I was confused. I bought books and started reading. In the beginning, I blamed myself for what was going wrong in my son's and daughter's lives.

I now know that I didn't cause it, I can't control it, and I can not cure it. There is more peace and joy in my life these days. I have learned not to react. I am also learning not to allow anyone to ruin my day. Without the twelve step program, I could have never reached this point in my life. I have much more to learn and implement, but am grateful for the people who help me move in a positive direction every week, My pain becomes less and less as I learn, and my gratefulness and joy are steadily increasing. I am focusing more and more on the positive and letting the negative go.

Pat

Length in the Program: 19 months

To submit your share on our monthly topic, or tell how Al-Anon has affected you, please go to al-anonfredericksburg.org/submitShare.php

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.

Living one day at a time;
Enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;
Taking, as He did, this sinful world
As it is, not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make all things right
If I surrender to His Will;
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life
And supremely happy with Him
Forever and ever in the next.
Amen.

Just remember, you cannot
change yesterday, but you
can change today.

Events:

Healthy Relationships Workshop
Saturday, February 15, 2014 9am - 4pm
Location: Physician's Conference Center,
INOVA Fairfax Hospital
Falls Church is holding their annual Healthy Relationships Workshop. They will provide beverages. Please bring a snack or finger food to share. You can bring a bag lunch or eat in the hospital cafeteria. For more information, please see your GR for a flier.