



Vol.2 Issue 3

# Al-Anon of Fredericksburg

## Help and Hope

the monthly newsletter



March 2014

This month's topic:

## THE JOURNEY OF GRIEF

My journey through grief has changed the longer I am in the Alanon rooms. I think back to when my Mom died in 2000 vs when I lost my Dad in September 2012. With my Mom, I recall "doing", keeping busy with work and blowing off the feelings. Through the years, a counselor (about 6 years ago) I was told to take a day and just grieve let myself feel and just to cry. I still have not taken that step, although now I can the wisdom behind it, I however, know I am just not ready! With my Dad, I had about five plus years of program. I was in a different mindset during his last nine months of life. I had through the program stepped back from my relationship with my Dad, I knew I needed to for my wellbeing. When I learned of his diagnosis of cancer, guilt reared its head. I worked through that feeling and many others during those months. At the time of his death, I knew the feelings of sadness and loss, I could identify them, vs with my Mom, I buried them and moved forward. The moments hit out of the blue sometimes and the tears fall, the difference today, I allow the tears to flow, knowing they have a healing power and not shame or discomfort.

My journey through grief is at the beginning and there is a long winding road ahead of me, one where I no longer walk alone. I walk it slowly, stopping to feel and acknowledge where I am. I am not comfortable with the feelings, nor with grief, however, time will help me process and move forward. I use our book transforming Our Losses, in phone meetings which allows me to take a small nibble, a pause and the next step along my journey.

Allyson M.

Length in Program: 6 3/4 years

I am very grateful to Al-Anon for giving me back my dignity, hope and especially my Higher Power. When I first got to Al-Anon, I just wanted to learn how to stop the alcoholic in my life from drinking. What I learned was that I can be responsible for my actions and the consequences of my decisions and so can the alcoholic for theirs. My Higher Power helped me through those times of learning how to live my life and I still rely on HP to get through those challenges that I face today. I have worked through the steps of recovery with a sponsor which has made my life so much fuller. Working through the steps allowed me to repair the relationships in my life so that I could get rid of guilt and clean up my side of the street. This was especially important recently when my

*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 Home Team Grill in Eagle Village next to UMW at 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 Three:

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.

Tradition Three:

The relatives of alcoholics, when gathered together for mutual aid, may call themselves an Al-Anon Family Group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend.

Concept Three:

The right of decision makes effective leadership possible.

Mother passed away in November ('13). I made my ammends with both my Mother and Father some years ago which since then, whenever I was with them, has allowed me to focus on today . When my Mom was diagnosed with cancer, I did not have to wallow in the guilt of all the wrongs I had done but I could focus on making the most of today and enjoying the time I had with my Mother. Thank-you Al-Anon for giving me a wonderful life that i enjoy today and a program of recovery that I can apply to all aspects of my life.

Jon  
Length in Program: 13 years

Next month's topic: Participation

---

A late submission for February from a Bull Run district member

Loving myself first is an on-going process for me, a natural care-taker. I have made good progress since joining Al-Anon. I try to remember that I can't give what I ain't got. So, I make all aspects of my health - Spiritual, Mental, Physical and Emotional - a priority. I pray at least every morning and night, on my knees, as my sponsor suggests. I read literature and attend meetings regularly. And I do service work out of gratitude. I shop for healthy food and then eat it. Exercise is not a problem since my job is physically demanding. And even there - in my job - I make sure I am prepared daily to do the work ahead. I even changed the way I eat to perform better at work.

And lastly, maybe most importantly, I ask for help. Going it alone just doesn't seem to work as well any more.

Jeff H.

---

## Al-Anon Stories from the Heart

---

I joined Alateen my freshmen year in high school. At the time I was overwhelmed by my own changing brain, and the addition of my step-father to my family that I did not come back to a second meeting for a month. The key, though, is that I DID come back.

Alateen and Al-Anon have taught me that it is perfectly acceptable for me to be just me. Trying to be anyone else is foolish, and I also can't control anyone else. They also have taught me that it is acceptable for me to believe in a higher power of my understanding, and that I can come to terms with that higher power at whatever speed is necessary for me.

*continued on back*

## 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:

Spring Pot Luck and Speaker  
Saturday, March 22, 2014, 5:30pm - 8:30pm  
Location: Lake of the Woods Church, 1  
Church Lane, Locust Grove, VA  
Save the date for our bi-annual pot luck  
dinner. Our Spring 2014 pot luck dinner will  
feature a speaker, chinese auction, 50/50  
raffle to benefit the Alateens, and of course,  
the pot luck dinner. The district will provide  
coffee, tea, water, plates, and utensils. Please  
come with a hungry belly and ready to have  
a good time. Please see your Group Repre-  
sentative for a flier and tickets.

I grew up in a religious background, and by 8th grade I knew I wanted no part of that religion. When I joined Alateen, I initially had a severe dislike for anything religious. By three years in the program, I had opened up, and I was open to the idea of a power greater than myself. Now, I can see that higher power in my every day life.

The other problem I had with religion is that EVERY church, synagogue, mosque, whatever place of worship, in my area seemed to not only hold religious views, but political ones as well. One of Al-Anon's traditions states that Al-Anon as a whole has no opinion on outside issues. Al-Anon's members may have whatever opinions they please, but no member can speak for Al-Anon, only themselves.

Recently, I've been hanging out with a group of friends on Sunday. Most of them go to one church. I had a long talk with one of my friends about his church, and it seems like my ideal church. Religion without the politics (the Al-Anon of the religion world). Now, I have to decide if I'm open enough to new ideas to attend.

Peter

Length in the Program: 6 years

---

---

## Events:

### VA Area Spring Assembly

May 17-18, 2014, 9am Sat - 12pm Sun

This is VA Area's bi-annual business meeting. Groups, please budget approximately \$125 to send your GR to Assembly. The total costs being paid are: Registration, Lunch on Saturday, and Gas. We would like as many groups represented as possible. If you are a GR please plan on attending yourself, or ask your group to vote on a proxy.

### 6th Annual Alateen Picnic

Saturday, May 24th, 2014, 11am - 3pm

Location: Loriella Park, 10910 Leavells Rd,  
Fredericksburg, VA 22407

This is our annual Alateen Picnic. The district will provide meat, buns, condiments, and water. Please bring a dish to share. If you would like to drink something other than water, please bring that for yourself and your family. There will be lawn games, and there will be an open Alateen meeting from 2-3pm to conclude the picnic. Donations to the Alateens are always accepted.

Flier to come soon.

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

Next month's topic: Participation