



# Lifeline

June 2013

Connecticut Area 7 Newsletter for Al-Anon / Alateen

## In This Issue:

Pg 1. Announcements

Pg 2-3. What Does Service Mean To Me?

Pg 3. Tools Of the Program

Pg 4. How To Become an Alateen Sponsor

Pg 5. Spotlight on Literature

Grateful For Al-Anon Literature

My Puzzling Life - My Life Puzzle

Pg 6. 2014 CT AFG Convention & Theme Contest

2013 CT AFG Fall Workshop

Word Search



## Announcements:

### Al-Anon Events:

- Al-Anon International Convention  
July 5-7, 2013, Vancouver, BC
- Fall Workshop, Sept.-Oct. 2013
- Al-Anon CT Convention, March 21-23, 2014,  
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Cromwell, CT  
First planning meeting Sept. 15, 2013, 1 PM, Cromwell

### AA Events with Al-Anon participation:

- Rompiendo Fronteras: Sunday, July 21, 2013, Meriden, CT
- Area 11 Convention, Sept. 6-8, 2013, Waterbury, CT

### Need Support:

- Monday 7:30 PM Clinton CT  
One of the oldest meetings on the shoreline.  
First Congregational Church  
55 Church Rd, Clinton, CT

### Meeting Closed (Disbanded):

- Friday Night Windsor Meeting has closed

### Meeting Change:

- Wednesday Evening Enfield  
Time changed to 7:00 - 8:00 PM beginning June 5, 2013  
Church name changed to Holy Trinity Episcopal Church  
at same address: 383 Hazard Ave., Enfield, CT  
(was St Mary's) Meeting needs support.

### Anniversaries:

- Sunday, June 9, 2013, Portland  
Portland Sunday Night Anniversary  
First Congregational Church  
554 Main Street, Portland, CT  
7:00 PM Fellowship, 7:30 PM Speakers  
Raffle Items, Desserts & Finger Foods appreciated.
- Thursday, June 27, 2013, Simsbury  
Simsbury Thursday Morning AFG Adult Children  
25th Anniversary  
St. Alban's Episcopal Church  
197 Bushy Hill Rd, Simsbury, CT  
10:00 - 11:30 AM  
Alateen, Al-Anon Adult Child and AA Speakers  
Potluck breakfast, raffle

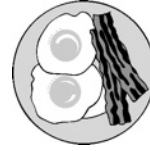
### New Meeting:

- Tuesdays 12:00 - 1:30 PM beginning June 11, 2013  
Young Adult Al-Anon at the University of Hartford  
University Commons Building  
Connections Health Education and Wellness Center  
Basement UC Room 116  
200 Bloomfield Ave (Rt 189)  
West Hartford, CT 06117  
Handicap Access



## What Does Service Mean To Me

[Five sharings from Group  
Representatives (GRs) in District 6]



1. I had been going to AI-Anon meetings for years when our meeting's GR (Group Representative) decided that he had finished his term. He asked the group for someone to step forward and no one did. We went on for a few months this way until one meeting my Higher Power suggested that I attend a district meeting. I didn't imagine that I could commit to anything for three years but I decided to take it one month at a time. It has now been two or three years (lost track) and I am in my last year as GR.

I have gotten so much more out of service than I have given. I feel good about keeping my group up to date with information and notices about anniversaries, etc., that help with recovery. I have encouraged them to attend speaker meetings as a group and I have seen recovery in all of us as a result. Sometimes it helps to attend with someone to reduce some of the anxiety of attending a new group.

I was the chairperson for a District 6 Serenity Breakfast last year and it really opened my eyes to the power of the

Higher Power. I began by not knowing exactly what to do or how to get things done. I had to ask for help which is not something that I have ever been comfortable with. The week before the event we had only half of the registrations needed to break even and I thought about trying to cancel but decided to turn it over to my Higher Power. What a good decision! We had so many people walk-in that we were able to actually make a profit but, more importantly, the speakers were great and the recovery was evident.

I also had to rely on my Higher Power when the cook showed up 5 minutes before the event and needed a half hour to get ready. No problem -- we had a speaker or two, took a food break and then finished off with the last speaker. I wouldn't have had the calmness to pull this off before AI-Anon. Service has given me the chance to expand my recovery, to help people with theirs and to give back so much that has been given to me.

-- Marvin B

2. What does Service do for me? So many things.

First of all it allows me to fulfill an Amend to each of my dead parents to pay attention to the difficulties of others when they ask for help. My parents did not know how to ask and I had distanced myself from them to protect myself. I don't protect myself anymore. I do this service to others by being an active GR for the Bethel Men's Group and by investing in being a sponsor to all who ask.

I also find the GR role at the district level allows me to not only participate in but to lead district activities. The organizing of the Serenity Hike/Picnic for each of the past 5 years has allowed me to meet new people and to get to know many of them much better. That is quite satisfying.



Organizing the District 6 Serenity Breakfast several years ago was an interesting test case for Letting Go and seeing individual members rise to the occasion. In fact this watching and paying attention to other members and their growth is a great inspiration to me.

And also, being given the opportunity to deliver and explain a Resolution on the Area Budget last month was an opportunity for me to use some of my God-given argumentative talents on an important issue. I am looking forward to participating in the Area Budget process again this year and hope that this year my arguments will turn the tide.

And finally, service gives me the regular opportunity to employ program principles and to practice their ingenuity.

-- Bruce C

3. I receive gifts from service – practicing new behaviors and setting boundaries in a safe environment to strengthen new skills with family / work situations.



4. I chose to volunteer to attend district meetings because I felt my group was disconnected from the bigger group i.e., district and worldwide fellowship. Hence, I am enjoying being more invested by serving as GR for my group and providing two way communication from my group to the district and the district/area back to my group.





5. When I first came to Al-Anon I was truly unable to voice my opinion, especially if it was not the popular opinion, or in line with the alcoholics' view of the situation. I would normally simply go along and pretend to agree in order to avoid confrontation. In my house, if I disagreed or spoke my mind, I would be interrupted, told I was wrong, and it would usually end in an argument, yelling and screaming, verbal attacks and slammed doors. It was not the place to share my unwelcome opinion. This taught me that what I had to say was not only wrong, but not worth sharing. Fear of the reactions made me keep it all inside.

When I began to attend Al-Anon meetings, I was encouraged to do service. I was fearful of not getting everything "right" and I dealt with those feelings a little at a time. I began to realize that even if I didn't do things perfectly, people in Al-Anon still appreciated what I was willing to do and accepted me as I was. This was a whole new concept for me; I didn't have to become what was accepted, I was accepted as I was, flaws and all!

One of the service positions I found most rewarding was Group Representative. It was an opportunity for me to meet new people, learn more about this program and serve my group, as they have brought me back to life. This is where the magic began. I watched the members of this small group discuss things I had no previous knowledge of, but often felt very strongly about. I sat and watched these people talk things out, agree, disagree and vote on

many things that affected the members of our district. I found myself having differing views than some of the people, but, at first, kept them to myself. Suddenly one day during a discussion, I raised my hand, and everything began to change for me. I spoke clearly, and shared my view passionately, and it was different from other members' stated views, we voted, and what I said changed the way we went with this particular decision. I was stunned. I was so shocked that, not only was I listened to, but what I said had value and other people were swayed and inspired by what I said. I had found my voice!

Several years have passed since that moment, and it is still difficult for me to speak up at times, but when I do it is respected and considered, not interrupted and dismissed. It is so empowering to realize how much I have to offer others in and out of this program. It is imperative for my mental, emotional and physical health that I both advocate for myself, and represent others in and out of this program. I am very proud of the things I have accomplished in this program, and I look forward to so much more! I have a sponsor, a service sponsor, sponsees and a long list of members that I can go to for support, and sometimes offer mine. This program saved my life, and it revealed my voice in this world; the gifts just keep coming, so I will too!

"Just for today I will be unafraid. Especially I will not be afraid to enjoy what is beautiful, and ... as I give to the world, so the world will give to me." (M-12)

-- Anonymous



### Tools Of the Program

Using the tools? Using the tools? You don't know how many times I heard this phrase when I returned to Al-Anon in 2005 after a long period of 'dabbling' in the program. The long-timers seemed to use it with a comfortable assurance that we all knew what they were talking about. For me, I had a recurring question each time: What tools are they talking about? That question was always followed by a vivid image of a hammer and screwdriver. Uh, oh! Something wasn't clicking! I just put it on the back burner and "took what I liked and left the rest." I figured as time went on and I kept coming to meetings, I'd learn what these mysterious tools were. Then, at the meetings where we had newcomers, one long-timer who frequently used the phrase, began to follow it with "the steps, the traditions, the slogans, the daily readers." Aha! A light went on! Maybe she had been saying that all along, but I HEARD it that day. Yes, those are my "tools," not handyman hammers and nails!

That was the beginning of a new outlook on my growth in the program. I began to realize, too, that when we use that phrase, "tools of the program," it helps newcomers, as well as everyone else, to follow it with examples of the specific ways those tools have helped us to grow and change in our daily lives.

One special tool, the slogan "Live and Let Live," has been a fabulous guide in my relationships at home, at work and at my program meetings and events. I don't HAVE TO get into everybody's business. Wow!! What a tool this is. I keep it in my memory and pull it out so many times when others' behavior bothers me or I'm tempted to try to solve others' problems (uninvited by them!). SERENITY follows each time!

I will forever be grateful for the unending supply of life-changing tools in this God-given program of the Worldwide Fellowship of Al-Anon Family Groups.

Mary Ann L. District 10

## **How To Become an Alateen Sponsor**

**We are always in need of Alateen Sponsors** in order to be able to offer Alateen meetings. The following is taken from the *Connecticut Alateen Sponsors Guidelines and Handbook* (11/6/2010) available on the [www.ctalanon.org](http://www.ctalanon.org) members' website under Alateen forms.



**CONNECTICUT  
AL-ANON / ALATEEN  
For families & friends of alcoholics**



**These requirements are presented in addition to the WSO Alateen Minimum Safety and Behavioral Requirements as approved by the Board of Trustees in December 2003 and affirmed by the 2004 World Service Conference.**

### **WHO WILL AREA 7 RECOGNIZE AS A SPONSOR / ADULT INVOLVED IN ALATEEN SERVICE?**

A responsible adult member of Al-Anon who attends Al-Anon regularly and who shares his or her recovery experience gained through working the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts of Al-Anon/Alateen. He or she helps the Alateens to focus on the Al-Anon program. It is in sharing recovery that we provide hope for the future. An adult involved in Alateen service refers to an Al-Anon member who has the care and responsibility for Alateens and has direct contact with Alateens while being of service to Alateen. This includes, but is not limited to, sponsors, chaperones and temporary sponsors.

1. An Alateen primary sponsor must have Al-Anon as his/her principal program.
2. Be a minimum age of 25.
3. Currently attends Al-Anon meetings and continues to be an active Al-Anon member for three years excluding time spent in Alateen.
4. A participating member of an Al-Anon Home Group.

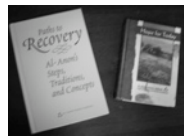
### **CERTIFICATION PROCESS FOR SPONSOR /AL-ANON MEMBER INVOLVED IN ALATEEN SERVICE**

- 1.) The candidate should first read the Connecticut Alateen Sponsors Guidelines and Handbook to help fully understand the commitment of an area 7 Alateen Sponsor. Dual members should also refer to pages 33 & 34 of the World Service Manual.
- 2.) The candidate will contact District Representative and area Alateen Coordinator to let them know of their desire to sponsor a group.
- 3.) The candidate will give District Representative her/his full name and mailing address so the District Representative can give the information to the area secretary, who will mail the candidate a background check form.
- 4.) The candidate will submit a completed background check form to the area secretary.
- 5.) After receiving a "passing" for the background check, the candidate will provide the District Representative the necessary two references to verify intentions of becoming an Alateen Sponsor. These references should be able to attest to the candidate's participation in the program.
- 6.) The candidate will then attend a district meeting to announce their intention to become an Alateen Sponsor to the Group Representatives (GRs).
- 7.) The GRs will then take the candidate's information back to their groups for discussion. The GRs will then bring back any information to the following district meeting for discussion and a vote of confidence.
- 8.) If the candidate attends meetings in a district other than the district that the candidate wants to become a sponsor in, a vote of confidence must be received from the candidate's home district (district that the candidate is currently attending meetings in) prior to receiving a vote of confidence from the district that the candidate is going to become a sponsor in.
- 9.) After receiving the district vote(s) of confidence, the District Representative will call the area Alateen Coordinator to have the sponsor candidate put on the Area Sponsors' meeting agenda. The sponsor candidate should be prepared to summarize their qualifications.
- 10.) At the second Area Sponsor's meeting, a vote will be taken by the current sponsors whether the candidate will be approved to become an Alateen Sponsor. It is recommended that the District Representative accompany the sponsor candidate to at least one or both of the meetings.
- 11.) Attend at least six Alateen meetings of the group one wishes to sponsor.
- 12.) Receive a vote of confidence from the Alateen Group members after at least six meetings have been attended by the new sponsor candidate.
- 13.) If sponsor candidate is starting a new group, a vote of confidence will taken by the Alateens after six months.



Hi Al-Anon and Alateen Members,  
 This month the focus is on our book: *Paths to Recovery* (B24). A wonderful book to read because you can start and stop at any point and still be where you need to be at any given time. I love that it talks about all of the legacies in order; Steps, Traditions and Concepts and how I can apply any and all of them to my personal life. *Paths to Recovery* has many different examples of personal experiences in working the program and many great questions to help us think. I especially like the idea that reading this book and answering the questions has helped

me grow; however, the biggest benefit was when I started working through the book with my sponsor. And once is not enough as I find I change each time I decide to use this book in my recovery. This is a great source for group discussion also. I hear there are many who share in a group setting to enhance their recovery; and also use *Paths to Recovery* for meeting topics. In some meetings the chairperson puts the questions in a basket and passes it around the room for a lively discussion. Endless possibilities!!  
 Until next time. Love in Service, CAL



**Grateful For Al-Anon Literature**

All of Al-Anon's books have helped me. However, growing up with alcoholic parents, I can especially identify with the readings from *Hope For Today* (B-27) as it is written by adult children of alcoholics. Today's reading (May 27th) really resonated with me. I did grow up "emotionally numb." I felt helpless and disconnected to my life - as though my life was happening outside of me.

Although this helped me to cope with the alcoholism in my family - I needed to find a better way to live my life.

Grateful that Al-Anon has helped me to "bridge ... my broken [fragmented] self [with] my Higher Power" (God) - helping me to slowly heal. "Al-Anon gives me the opportunity to retrieve all the broken ... aspects of myself and offer them to God to piece together into wholeness."

Also, I want to encourage others to subscribe to our monthly magazine: *The Forum*. I learn so much from reading *The Forum* each month. It is easy to carry with me to read whenever I have extra time or need to get grounded.

Judith K



**My Puzzling Life - My Life Puzzle**

My life story is analogous to a 1,000 piece puzzle that came in a box with no complete picture on the box cover. Each hour and each day is like seeing only one tiny part that will combine with the many pieces that are contained in the box that eventually will form the complete picture of my life. Coming into my first Al-Anon meeting was like starting to assemble this emerging new view of my life. I learned that only my Higher Power knows how all of those pieces will come together. If I trust His guidance, the parts will merge to a more beautiful and serene whole. Only my Higher Power has the completed picture of my life that was unknown to me on the blank box cover. My Al-Anon program teaches me how to work for a better life.

Coming into the Al-Anon program was like starting to put together the border to encompass my entire life. As I continue to read the literature, use the slogans, work the steps, attend meetings, and share with program friends, each piece continues to fit more meaningfully together as sections within the border begin to emerge and appear to have relevance for me. Each individual piece becomes more precious to me. I look forward to the shapes and meaningful parts that I have begun to understand better as my life story. As in assembling any puzzle, I will make mistakes, I can make changes and I have choices to make all along the way. As I grow in the program the picture I begin to see begins to guide my future direction and I become more confident and pleased by the picture my Higher Power and program is helping me to see.

Hope P

**2014 CT AFG Convention**

Save the date: **March 21-23, 2014**  
 37th Annual CT AFG Convention  
 Crown Plaza Hotel  
 100 Berlin Rd, Cromwell, CT 06416  
 (860) 635-2000  
 Hotel Code: QAZ

Meet friends in recovery  
 Grow in Service Have FUN!

Interested in being part of the committee?  
 The first **Convention Committee Planning meeting**  
 will be at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Cromwell,  
 Sunday, **September 15, 2013, 1:00 PM.**

For more information: [convention2014@ctalanon.org](mailto:convention2014@ctalanon.org)  
 or see the convention page at [www.ctalanon.org](http://www.ctalanon.org)



**Theme Contest**

We need a theme for the convention.  
 If your idea is chosen,  
 you will **win** one free convention registration and  
 a room for the weekend (sorry no meals).

Email as many entires as you wish to  
**ThemeContest@ctalanon.org**

All entries must be **received by**  
 Saturday, **September 7, 2013.**

See the flier at your meetings or on the Convention  
 page at [www.ctalanon.org](http://www.ctalanon.org).



**2013 CT AFG Fall Workshop**

The committee is busy preparing for the CT AFG Fall Workshop.

The date is not yet set; it may be at the end of September.

They are still looking for a place to hold the workshop and committees are still being formed.

They are looking for a secretary, someone to do the flyers, raffle, souvenirs and other positions.

Please contact Marcia and Donna at [fallworkshop2013@ctalanon.org](mailto:fallworkshop2013@ctalanon.org)

**Word Search**

- |            |            |           |
|------------|------------|-----------|
| steps      | believe    | everybody |
| traditions | willing    | relief    |
| concepts   | inventory  | hum       |
| slogans    | amends     | laugh     |
| prayer     | principles | renew     |
| Higher     | think      | FROG      |
| Power      | accept     | wish      |
| serenity   | restore    | mess      |
| hugs       | work       | fear      |
| honesty    | speaker    | sobriety  |
| share      | learn      | cry       |
| courage    | aware      | feel      |
| today      | slow       | recover   |
| service    | children   | friends   |
| sponsor    | proper     | door      |
| God        | happiness  | own       |
| powerless  | gossip     | please    |
| hope       | tool       | egos      |

E	V	E	R	Y	B	O	D	Y	R	E	L	I	E	F	E	E	L	E	D
S	N	O	I	T	I	D	A	R	T	E	B	E	L	I	E	V	E	O	W
R	E	H	G	I	H	U	M	W	N	I	K	C	E	L	A	U	G	H	E
A	R	E	W	O	P	U	U	O	A	R	N	A	T	H	I	N	K	U	N
S	E	C	O	U	R	A	G	E	R	R	A	E	E	O	W	N	E	V	E
P	S	E	R	V	I	C	E	S	O	M	E	E	R	P	R	O	P	E	R
E	T	E	K	I	N	O	P	P	O	W	E	R	L	E	S	S	E	O	D
T	O	D	A	Y	C	N	R	O	D	I	H	W	O	L	S	B	M	A	L
S	R	D	B	T	I	C	A	N	E	L	Y	R	O	T	N	E	V	N	I
T	E	G	O	S	P	E	Y	S	R	L	Z	G	T	P	E	C	C	A	H
I	E	S	A	E	L	P	E	O	A	I	A	M	E	N	D	S	N	A	C
F	E	A	R	N	E	T	R	R	H	N	E	E	R	E	V	O	C	E	R
F	R	O	G	O	S	S	I	P	S	G	L	S	O	B	R	I	E	T	Y
A	W	I	S	H	A	P	P	I	N	E	S	S	D	N	E	I	R	F	W

**Deadline for August Contributions is Aug. 12, 2013**

- Al-Anon announcements
- Sharings on using the Al-Anon tools
- Free Email Subscriptions available
- Send your items to [lifeline@ctalanon.org](mailto:lifeline@ctalanon.org)

Please contribute a sharing this month: "There is no Lifeline without you."

➔ Lifeline is also available online at [www.ctalanon.org](http://www.ctalanon.org) Lifeline tab

