

The Pipeline

South Palm Beach County Al-Anon Newsletter
Area 10, District 170

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Fellowship in Action: Step, Tradition, & Concept 5

We admit. We come to believe. We make a decision, and take inventory. Then we come to Step 5: the first step that requires the presence of *another human being*. For me, working this step was my introduction to the power of fellowship. Upon sharing my inventory with my sponsor, I was met with acceptance and unconditional love. After years of living with the disease of alcoholism, this was a welcome relief, and vastly different from the criticism and intolerance to which I had become accustomed.

Tradition 5 takes fellowship deeper. Written into this tradition, the words "help," "encourage," "understand," "welcome," and, "give" again imply the presence of other human beings. In my experience, carrying out this tradition promotes harmony with others, and begins to counteract character defects like isolating myself, being judgmental, acting selfishly, and lacking in compassion and empathy. It's not easy, and I can't do it alone. I need the Fellowship.

Then Concept 5 reminds us, as noted in *Hope For Today*, "For an Al-Anon group conscience to work with spiritual effectiveness, every voice must be heard (p. 222)." The pressure for me to please others is lifted, and room is made for me to find my voice within a group. And use it.

The 5th step, tradition, and concept blend seamlessly when viewed through the lens of service. Service strengthens fellowship. I don't have to do it alone, or perfectly, and in fact, I can't! And for that, I am so grateful. Doing service has increased my confidence: giving back to the program means I have some program to give! –Erin K.

Step 5: Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.



Upcoming Events:

No June District Meeting!
Due to Spring Assembly

June 3

Public Outreach Meeting
Panera Bread at Federal & Linton
Saturday 12:00 PM
Contact Rick for info 561-414-4423 or
ralovis@yahoo.com

June 9-11

Area 10 Assembly
Doubletree Sunrise-Sawgrass Mills
13400 W Sunrise Blvd
Sunrise FL 33323
Register Fri @ 6:30 PM or Sat @ 8-9:30
Assembly Fri 8:00 PM - Sun 12:00 PM
All GR's and Al-Anon members
invited to attend. Come and see
service live, and Listen & Learn ☺

August 18-20

**28th Annual Area 10
AFG Convention**
Trump Natl Doral Miami Hotel
4400 NW 87th Ave
Miami, FL 33178
English and Spanish programs for Al-
Anons, AAs, and Alateens.
Registration is open! Register online!
Fliers are circulating at meetings, or
find info on the Area 10 website at
www.southfloridaal-anon.org

Service:

Coming Soon To A Meeting Near You...

So much discussion of late about service. Why? Because elections for the next service panel are approaching. This summer, between watching blockbuster flicks and vacation videos, take a moment contemplate giving back. New chair positions at the group and district levels will open up—but making a phone call, sharing, or leading a meeting can have just as much impact as being a GR. Below, members share previews, and rave reviews, of how service worked for them...

Three months into the program a relative newcomer, scared but afraid to say no, and given a sheet of paper with names and numbers to call to arrange leads for upcoming meetings, summons the courage to get on the phone, only to be greeted with warm pleasantries, and learns that facing her fears, sharing, and doing Al-Anon service ultimately makes her feel better about herself.

A fearful member freezes when asked to tell her story, yet agrees anyway, and with a rumbling tummy, trembling voice, tears running down her cheeks, and her sponsor by her side, she follows through, against all odds, and is shocked when met with responses of appreciation, compassion, gratitude, and identification, and learns once and for all that sharing her experience, strength, and hope can help others.

When a city gal pitches in planning Camp Al-Anon, she finds herself wrapped up in a brave new world of adventure, excitement, and fun when she is drafted into the role of camp director, and feels gratitude for her fellow scouts who help to brainstorm creative ideas for workshops and activities to encourage campers to share their experience, strength, and hope, and later falls in love with service sitting by the campfire.

When a divorced mom with a big mouth takes on production of her district's monthly newsletter, she delights in gathering shares from others, discovers the fun in generating zippy titles instead of directing sarcastic comments at her loved ones, funnels her perfectionism into obsessing over margin width, and learns once and for all to combat isolation with fellowship.

Taking Al-Anon meetings into a women's jail, a member is taught humility and compassion for those sick and suffering from the disease of alcoholism.

The chairperson of the Literature Distribution Center suggests that a great way to learn about service is to read *When I Got Busy, I Got Better*, available at the District 170 LDC, item P78.

A grateful member's humble request to have her shortcomings removed is clarified and expedited when she volunteers to chair a Gratitude Dinner, and she receives unexpected gifts when her desire to give back to the program helps her become the person her HP wants her to be.

Tradition 5: Each Al-Anon Family Group has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of AA ourselves, by encouraging and understanding our alcoholic relatives, and by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics.

"I have a tendency to think of my experience with alcoholism as an epic, technicolor movie, an extravaganza with my name in lights on the marquee, but it's not really like that. It's really just home movies ... I came to this program with a story to tell that seemed to splash across every inch of a very wide screen. I told it and told it, until one day I noticed that I was sitting in a room with others, showing home movies... Today I feel happy to be there as part of the show, but my role has changed..."

—Courage To Change p268

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They Took What They Liked...

A few things that I heard at meetings in Houston years ago!

by Sandra M:

- "I may not be perfect, but parts of me are excellent!
- "Today, I know I will be okay, and I do not have to define what okay is."
- "Gratitude changes your attitude."

My "Take" on the Serenity Prayer

by C.T.:

God grant me the serenity, acceptance, courage and wisdom to accept powerlessness, fear of change, and, above all, to truly know that I am a Spiritual Being living an earthly life with people, places and things I cannot control.

God grant me the courage to make healthier, more fulfilling choices both in thought and action that will bring me greater harmony, peace, and love within myself, and in my relationships with people, places and things I cannot control.

God grant me the wisdom to discern in my heart, mind, and soul what is the highest good for myself, and for my relationships with people—family, friends, co-workers, and my recovery family group of Al-Anon.

Concept 5: The rights of appeal and petition protect minorities and insure that they be heard.

Some Tidbits

By Valerie D.

The more dependent I am on my Higher Power, the less I am dependent on people, places and things

Generosity with self compassion,
Generosity with self care,
Generosity with acceptance,
Generosity with minding my own business.

Have no fear of perfection.....you'll never get it.

It is immoral and unethical to hold others accountable for my happiness.

Book Report: When I Got Busy, I Got Better

One day, I picked up *When I Got Busy, I Got Better*, expecting it to urge me to try a new hobby. Like knitting. Or surfing. Maybe even something more daring: spelunking! But upon cracking open the book, I laughed out loud, quickly realizing that the "busy" part referred to service work.

Of course it did.

A line from the first page struck me, "We benefit when we practice gratitude, and Al-Anon service is gratitude in action." A week later, the GR of a group I frequent needed a volunteer to attend the upcoming district meeting in her absence. I felt my hand fly up.

Anxious and uncertain, I took a leap of faith and dove in. My sponsor guided me. The district welcomed me. My group encouraged me. And I am so grateful they did. I found myself taking on new positions—both challenging and rewarding. It took time for me to see how service was helping me, but I now know that it makes me feel like a more active participant in my program, allows me to meet new people, hear new perspectives, and boosts my confidence, in all my affairs.

I believe my HP led me to that book, just in time for me to raise my hand.

--Erin K.

How Can I Help?

**Good with money? Maybe you're a treasurer!
Take good notes? Try serving as secretary!
A bibliophile? Literature Chair may be for you!**

"My sponsor has always encouraged me to receive the blessings of service ... In service I found a group of people who truly accept and include me. They encourage me to develop new talents and to put my existing ones to work."

–Hope For Today p. 160

In July, groups will be electing members to fill service positions. Attend a business meeting to find out what these folks do! Or, ask someone with experience about the job. Positions include...

- **Group Representative (GR)** - Attends group business meetings and monthly District meetings. Brings district, area, and world service info back to the group. Attends biannual area assemblies.
- **Secretary** - Attends group business meetings. Records group business meeting attendance, minutes, discussion, and decisions.
- **Treasurer** - Attends group business meetings. Keeps record of group monies in and out, pays out rent, literature, and other expenses
- **Literature Chair** – Attends group business meetings. Orders and distributes literature for the group.
- **Alternate Group Representative** - Substitutes for GR as needed
- **Other:** Group specific; may include set-up, clean-up, greeter, etc



Adopt A Coffee Shop

- Help Public Outreach spread the word about Al-Anon!
- Sign up to "Adopt" your favorite coffee shop.
- Every time you stop in, place a few Where & When brochures on their bulletin board.
- Contact Rick at 561-414-4423 or ralovis@yahoo.com to get started.

Calling All Book Worms!

Al-Anon members in District 170 with an interest in service:

The Literature Distribution Center (LDC) is looking for volunteers for the next service panel. Current LDC committee members will gladly work with all volunteers until January 1, 2018. Then, panel 59 (that's you!) would take over the services of our LDC. Contact art2399@aol.com or 561-386-0327 if interested. Looking forward to working with you all!

–Art & Alex

DISTRICT SERVICE OPENINGS

Alateen needs Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) contact Maura at 561-376-7627

Institutions needs speakers, contact Denise at 561-789-2260

Literature Distribution Center needs volunteers to staff the store. Contact Art at art2899@aol.com or 561-386-0327

Public Outreach needs volunteers for their Adopt A Coffee Shop program contact Rick at 561-414-4423

Speaker List needs members willing to share their story. Contact Betty at 561-266-9160 to volunteer or if you need a speaker

Telephone Answering Service needs volunteers to direct callers to meetings contact Lillian at 561-414-5508

CONTACTS:

Literature Distribution Center (LDC)
1700 Lake Ida Rd
Delray Beach, FL 33445
Open Tuesdays 5-7 PM
Contact Art at art2899@aol.com
or text 561-386-0327 to place order

**South Palm Beach AFG
District 170 A**
PO Box 928
Boynton Beach, FL 33425-0928
<http://www.southpalmbeachafg.org>

**Florida South AFG
Area 10**
AFG South Florida, Inc.
PO Box 110638
Naples, FL 34108
<http://www.southfloridaal-anon.org>

World Service AFG
1600 Corporate Parkway
Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617
<http://www.al-anon.org>

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