

**OAKLAND COUNTY
AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER - Fall 2015**



The Sign



I recently came upon a true sign that summer was really here. I groaned inwardly at the sight of the now familiar orange construction barrels erected on the major thoroughfare near my home. Every summer since I could remember these drums dotted the streets and expressways making getting anywhere on time nearly impossible. Pleasant childhood family vacations turned into hours of sitting in hot cars as my parents swore and fought every weekend over what road to take to get to the cottage. I remember one day asking my father why he got so angry every time even a spec of orange came into his field of vision. He replied that, while he understood the need to fix the roads, he hated the inconvenience construction caused. Slowed traffic, confusing detours, angry motorists and the guarantee of being late were only a few of the things that made both his temper and his blood pressure rise at even the mention of construction season. So of course it was no wonder that, 40 years later, I sat cursing those very orange barrels that made my parent's life so miserable from April through November. One night, as I made my way to my weekly Al-anon meeting I made a mental note to take an alternate route so as not to be bothered by the loathsome orange drums blocking the entrance to my neighborhood.

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Need to find a meeting?

You can find an up to date list of Oakland County Al-Anon Meetings at our website. (link at right.) You can email us at the newsletter or contact the office through the website for information on locations and times for Alateen meetings.



Growing Oaks is a quarterly publication of
Oakland County Al-Anon/Alateen Family Groups
Phoenix Square Office Building
3720 Elizabeth Lake Road
Waterford, MI 48328
248-706-1020

oaklandafg.org

Edited by Go After Your Serenity LGBT AFG
This is **YOUR** newsletter: Your articles and
announcements are welcome! Please email to:
BroWCarey@wowway.com

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Trusted Servants

For our group purpose there is but one authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants—they do not govern.

Al-Anon/Alateen Second Tradition

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On the drive home I was busy mentally playing back the meeting in my head and completely forgot my pledge to seek another way home. Just as I was contemplating tonight's topic (the Serenity Prayer) I came upon an arrow that indicated the need to detour to avoid the dreaded construction ahead. I began to sputter and curse the usual complaints when a thought hit me----- "Getting angry wasn't going to do anything except ruin the blessed serenity I was feeling after my meeting." In fact, not only would anger ruin any chance I had at serenity, it would probably put me in a mood to yell at my husband, kids and cats when I got home. Furthermore, after the chaos and drama played out with my family the orange barrels would still be there every day for months to come. In other words, I didn't cause the construction, I couldn't control it nor could I cure or remove it just by muttering a few curses under my breath or wishing they would just disappear.

I realized at that moment that I had two choices----Be miserable until the winter snow fell and the road was again open to motorists or trust that my higher power put those obstructions there for a reason. Again thinking of the Serenity Prayer, I decided to resign myself to the blockades and even try to embrace them. As that very thought crossed my mind it was as if a light bulb went off in my head! (Well, actually it was more like the hundreds of tiny lightbulbs of the bright, flashing 5 foot construction arrow I was now confronted with!)

I knew then that the arrow was a metaphor for the very important decision I had to make in how I could choose to lead my life. The message of the arrow was clear---turn left to take the detour or continue straight on a congested roadway where 4 lanes merged into one. Remembering those tense family car rides of my youth and the fruitless yelling and complaining, I decided to go for it! Muttering the Serenity Prayer under my breath as a signal to my Higher Power that I need his/her help, I bravely turned the wheel of the car to the left. I wasn't quite sure where the detour would lead just as I couldn't say for sure where my new found pledge to "Let go and let God" would lead me to experience in life. Thanks to Al-anon there was only one thing I could be sure of----continuing the multi-generational unhealthy pattern of complaining but never doing anything about life's woes (orange construction barrels included!) wasn't getting me anywhere except stuck in my own head and frustrated beyond belief. As I followed the detour signs and turned one unfamiliar corner after another I felt a sudden weightlessness come over me, like I had shed a huge blockade of my own. I could almost feel my own "orange barrels" come crashing down in the form of old fears, unrealistic expectations, resentments and other negativity I was carrying around.

Suddenly I could see that embracing the construction and choosing to take its presence as a sign (literally) from my Higher Power had been the right decision. I learned that while the road ahead might be indeed bumpy at times and obstacles might get in my way to recovery I was the navigator of my future. It was in my power to choose an attitude based in recovery or one of resentment and chaos. And just as any good pilot relies on maps and GPS to help them navigate rough waters, I could rely on the tools and friends I made in Al-anon to point me in the right direction if I ever veered off course. As the captain of my own fate it was up to me to see, interpret and act upon the signs (sometimes actual 5 foot blinking signs!) in my life. With my Higher Power as my co-pilot I now look forward each day to what life lessons I can learn to bring me closer to that coveted destination----The corner of Recovery and Serenity!

Madilyn G.

Grateful member of Al-anon.



Alateen Action Area

I remember a time
When I had no cares
I remember a time
When I had no worries
I remember a time
When the world was just as big as my room
I remember a time
When I never wanted to sleep
I remember a time
When the first thing on my mind was playing outside
I remember a time
When love was a word I said to my parents before bed
I remember a time
When I thought I had it all
But what I don't remember?
When it all changed.
When did I start waking up in too much mental pain to get out of bed?
When did worries start to flood my brain?
When did I start to pity myself?
When did the cuts on my skin become self inflicted?
When did eating a meal
Become mental torture?
When did never wanting to sleep become never wanting to wake up?
When did the first thing on my mind every morning become "I can't do
this anymore"?
When did going to the hospital for a sickness turn into suicide watch?
When did goodbye become forever?
When will it all just end?
I miss the days
When life was what I wanted it to be
I miss
When money seemed unlimited
I miss
When pain was just from falling off the swings
I miss...
When I had my innocence.
In my long journey that's still traveling
I learned many things.
I found a silver lining
I met in a basement
with a big group of kids
And I talked about life
I learned to grow up
But always stay immature
I learned it's okay to feel
And that it's okay to share
I learned to live my life
As if it was my last day to be alive
I learned to appreciate the many little gifts
That my higher power gave me
I learned to love
But to keep my boundaries.
I learned that I'm not alone
We're in this together.
I learned I'm worth living
I have a purpose.
I learned that Alateen
Is my home of misfits
My home away from home
I learned that this is the place
That I truly belong.

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By Corey M.

The girl that everyone gave up on and said all those things because of the world she grew up in she was going to be just like them or worse.

The girl who got screwed over so many times she stopped counting and now takes sophomore classes in her junior year but gets better grades than her peers who put her down gave up on her stopped trying because she didn't talk because she was protecting her family but they didn't know that.

The girl who couldn't learn as fast as others because she skipped school so she could stay with her family just one more day but they didn't know that.

The girl who thought she would give selling drugs a shot just so her brother and sister could eat because she was already poor, and a drug addict the last thing she needed was "she's unnaturally skinny."

The girl who pondered suicide and cried herself to sleep because the horrors of the day came like a freight train to a blind young child who was too broken and fragile to move out of the way.

The girl who decided moving to a new school wasn't so bad, and ended up looking her dad to her worst fear a high tide of drugs wrapped around his soul dragging her heart through barbed wire and sorrow.

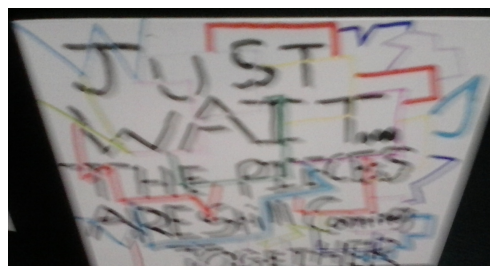
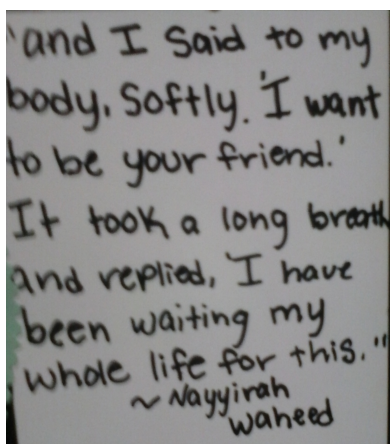
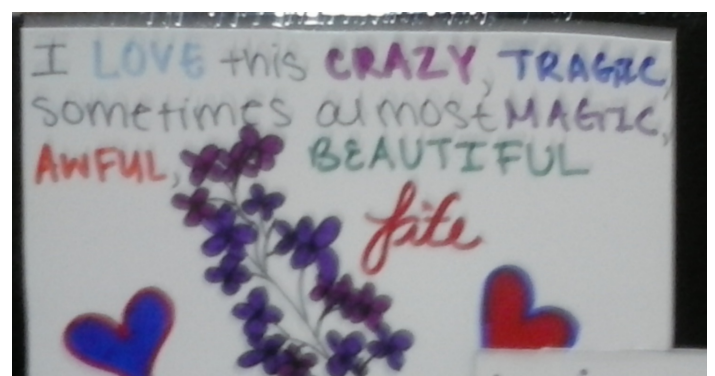
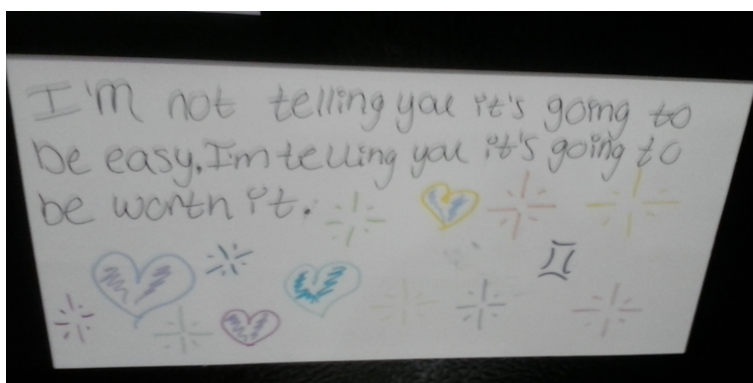
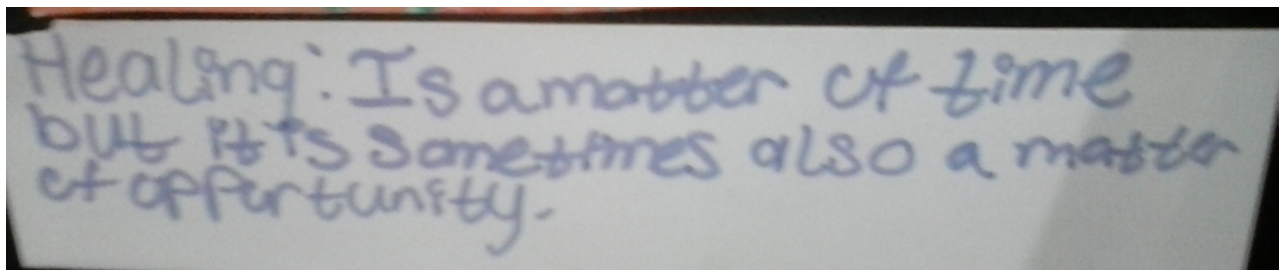
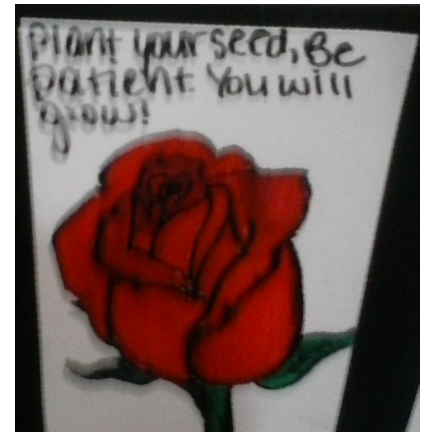
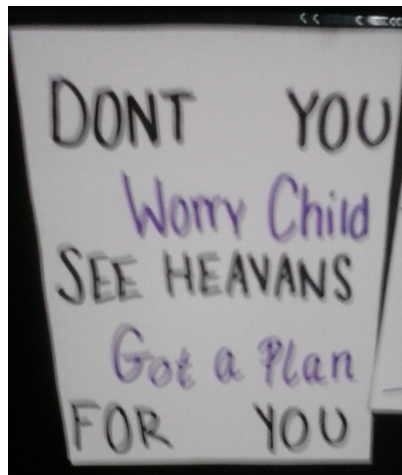
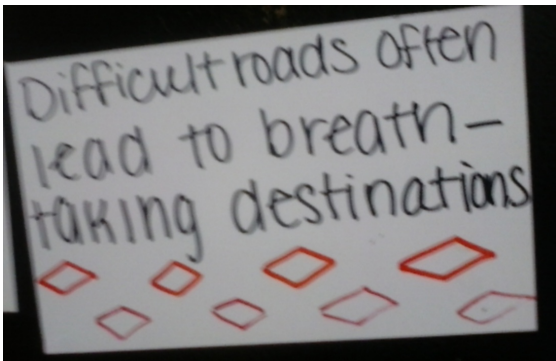
The girl who lived up to all those people's accusations but decided against it and pulled herself clean.

The girl who held her siblings while they cried looking out the back window watching all they've ever known disappear.

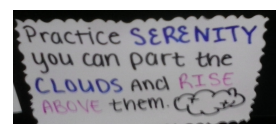
The girl who later cried behind closed doors and realized she couldn't change what had happened.

The girl who now embraces the amazing opportunities that come her way, it turns out that girl who was so broken and afraid out on display for kids to point laugh and throw things is doing just fine and continues to grow on her own time.

At the Alateen Fall Lock-in held at Dawn Farm in Ypsilant, some of the teens made refrigerator magnets that will be sold to make money for next year's KOMIAC trip. Here are a few pictures of some of these magnets. Although the pictures don't do them justice, the messages are inspiring.



(Just wait... the pieces are still coming together)



EVENTS

Holiday Candlelight Meeting

&

POTLUCK SOCIAL

Rochester Sunday Night Al-Anon Family Group

invites you to join us for our annual

Holiday Candlelight Meeting and Potluck Social



Date: Sunday, December 13th

Potluck Social - 7:00 pm

(Please bring a small dish to pass)

Candlelight Meeting - 8:00 pm

Location: First Congregational Church

1315 N. Pine St, Rochester, MI
(near Rochester Rd & Tienken Rd)



Parking and Entrance tonight off Oak Street - Lower level in back

Note: Meeting immediately follows the Alateen walking tour of downtown Rochester's light display. Teens will gather at Red Knapps (on Main St.) at 6pm. For more information, please contact Therese at 248-705-4791

Rochester Sunday Night Contact:

Michelle B. 248-941-1644.



Al-Anon Family Groups
Oakland County, Michigan

PLEASE JOIN US

**PEACE OF SERENITY
15TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2015

9:15-10:30

Enjoy BREAKFAST & FRIENDSHIP

And nurture your recovery as

SPEAKERS

CHARLIE D. ~Al-anon

& LAURA K. ~Alateen

**share their experience, strength
and hope with us.**



**Christ Church Cranbrook
470 Church Road, Bloomfield Hills,
(Lone Pine & Cranbrook)**