

growing oaks



OAKLAND COUNTY
AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS
NEWSLETTER - SPRING/SUMMER 2017



There are always lots of fun, exciting events going on in Al-Anon. Some upcoming events can be found starting on page 8, but be sure to check out our Oakland County Al-Anon/Alateen website for even more information:

OAKLANDAFG.ORG

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:
hoperemains2009@gmail.com

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**Assistant Editor Needed!!!! Good opportunity
for service work! Contact Bill**



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

2017 BOARD MEMBERS

Chairperson: Theresa M. - tjmac1207@gmail.com

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Milena C. - milenac0217@gmail.com

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District 14 Alternate Rep: Lynda E. - lynda_easterday@yahoo.com

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Alateen News



KOMIAC XLIII

KOMIAC (Kentucky Ohio Michigan Indiana Alateen Convention) was held the last weekend in July in Terre Haute, IN. The Indiana host committee did a terrific job, and everyone had a wonderful time. The theme this year was "Searching Through The Dark." Total attendance at KOMIAC was 230, about 50 of whom came from Michigan.

Each state elected new Alateen Reps and Alternate Reps. Our new State Alateen Rep is Matt R, and our Alternate is Summer B. (Matt served as Alternate Rep last year.) Thank you also to our outgoing State Rep, Julie E.

Next year, KOMIAC will be held in Kentucky, and then, in 2019, we'll be back in Michigan again.

Do you know teens who could benefit from Alateen? Please spread the word. In Oakland County, kids as young as 8 are welcome at our meetings. For more info on where to find meetings, contact

Mitch S. - mitch@mitchmaster.com
Alisa B. - alisabell422@gmail.com
Ron V. - rva159@gmail.com

The first Alateen group was registered in 1957. It was formed in California by Bob, the teenage son of parents attending AA and Al-Anon. The first piece of Alateen literature was published later that year, called *Youth and the Alcoholic Parent* (P-21). By 1963, groups totaled 262, and spanned as far as India, New Zealand, and Puerto Rico. It's amazing how far we've come. As of 2016, there were a total of 1,609 groups worldwide. We are forever grateful for this wonderful program of recovery.

More historical information is available at *Alateen - Hope for Children of Alcoholics* (B-3) and *Many Voices, One Journey* (B-31).

Alateen Members: Who they are



- Young people seeking recovery from the effects of someone else's drinking
- Members of Al-Anon Family Groups who study and apply the Al-Anon/Alateen Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions to their own lives

Happy Birthday Alateen!



I have been an Alateen sponsor at Waterford Whole Family AFG for 20 years. It has been one of the hardest things to do, but also the most emotionally rewarding. I have learned the best way to sponsor a group is to show up and listen. Sound

familiar? I know, this is what my Al-Anon family groups have given me. I am not a babysitter, mom or crazy aunt. I am an Al-Anon member who shares my experience, strength and hope. The kids know the problem. It is the tools and validation they receive that I believe keeps them coming back.

When I came into the program all I remember is “keep coming back.” I didn't know what for, but I did. Slowly I started to see my codependency, and that my reactions were those of a scared teenager. I have grown emotionally and spirituality with the love, understanding and guidance of the program. Alateen has pushed me (*not because I want to!*) out of my comfort zone many times. I have learned *principles before personalities* with my fellow sponsors. We may not agree on certain things, but the kids are the principal reason we are there.

As we finish out this birthday year of Alateen, I have made a commitment to myself to carry the message to 60 different places to celebrate the program. I find it ironic with an addiction epidemic, that so few kids are at the meetings. Like everything in the program, when I give I receive back so much. Beyond grateful for the program.

Alisa B.



*Hope and Help for Young People who are the relatives
and Friends of a Problem Drinker*

Curiosity

I admit it: I am indeed a curious person. However, I recognize that I need to temper curiosity with some serious “let go and let God” and “acceptance of the things I can’t control” with a dash of “wisdom to know the difference.” A perfect example in my life is wanting, no, **NEEDING** to know if my qualifier is drinking or not. Before program I would have been obsessed by the need to gain this knowledge, which, of course, would then serve only to make my life completely unmanageable. Now, thanks to Al-Anon, when I feel that all-consuming need brewing inside of me, I ask my HP to give me the courage to give an honest answer to a few simple questions:

- 1) Is having this knowledge, whatever it is, really going to change my behavior or my life in a positive way? **OR**
- 2) Will the act of obtaining this knowledge or the knowledge itself create unmanageability in my life?
- 3) If I do have an actual need for the information, am I willing and able to act in accordance with this awareness?

Thanks to Program, knowing whether or not my adult daughter is sober no longer impacts my life in any way. In fact, worrying about her, following her around, questioning her friends, or looking for bottles, will most certainly create unmanageability in my life just as it did in the past. Which leads me to the third question: If for some reason I did need to know the status of my qualifier’s sobriety, what would I do with the information? Try to force her into yet another rehab? Nag her to stop drinking? Pour out the bottles? Become angry and resentful of her behavior? Take out that anger on other friends and family who don’t deserve it? Punish myself for any mistakes I may have made raising my child?

In the past I might have done those very things, but now, thanks to Al-anon, I know that my qualifier has a Higher Power, and I am not it! She is on her own life path, and I need to give her the dignity to make her own choices and to suffer any consequences associated with those choices. I know that I can only control my own behavior, reactions and thinking. So every day I make the decision to concentrate solely on my own affairs. I find that I have my hands full just trying to learn my own life lessons. The best part is that when I stop trying to control the behavior of others or worry myself sick over something that is none of my business, I find that I now have the time, energy and willingness to pray, meditate, attend meetings and read Al-Anon literature. I never realized how much energy I was expending on things or people that were never in my control or never my business in the first place. I am ever grateful to Al-Anon for giving me the tools to learn this important life lesson.

Madilyn G.
Grateful member of Al-Anon

Acceptance and Surrender

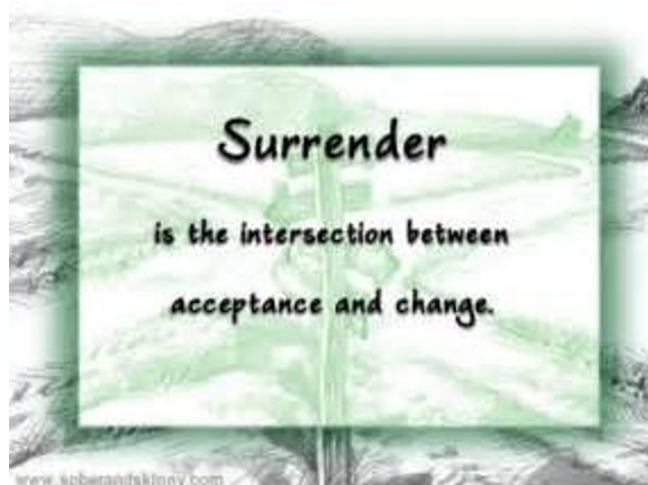
What is acceptance? To many of us acceptance means many things. We may desire to be accepted by our family, our friends and our acquaintances; but what about ourselves? When we look at the first line of the Serenity Prayer, we ask GOD to grant us the serenity to accept the things that we cannot change.

In order to work on our recovery we need to realize that we have to change. This may mean that we have to acknowledge that we have a problem that we cannot overcome by ourselves. We have to surrender our will and our lives to our Higher Power. I find that in order for me to accomplish this, I have to check my ego at the door. I often tend to get in the way of my recovery. This means that I had to accept the fact that my son is an alcoholic; it doesn't mean that I love him any less. It just means that he has a disease and that it is something that I, as a parent, I can't fix. All that I can do is turn him over to the care of his Higher Power and pray for him. I can support him in his journey of recovery when he chooses to opt for it.

Turning myself over to my Higher Power is also important because I have realized that I need help. I need to realize that I'm not God, and that he doesn't need my help in "fixing" my alcoholic. It does mean that I need to surrender to Him because I have trouble with being compassionate in dealing with my son. It means that every day I have to ask for Him for help.

I have found that my road to recovery begins when I accept the fact that I have a problem that is bigger than I alone can handle, and that I need help to do so. I have also found that accepting that I have a problem is not a sign of weakness, and that asking for help to deal with the problem is the wise thing to do. I have to remember that my Higher Power is on duty 24/7 to help me over the rough spots. This surrender of my problems begins with the fact that I have admitted that I have problems, and that I need help with them. I have accepted that I am powerless.

Mike A
April 2017



Reactions vs. Responses

I had been in Al-Anon for about 6 months when I realized that many of my personal relationships with family, friends and co-workers seemed to have improved greatly. I credit this to the fact that, thanks to Program, I was no longer REACTING to the words of others but was instead RESPONDING.

To me there is a clear difference between responding and reacting. I believe a response is truthful, well thought out, and not intended to be manipulative or judgmental in any way. The best kind of response is also tactful, justified and requires me to listen honestly and carefully to the words spoken by the other person. Many times in the past, my reactions were based on what *I THOUGHT* someone was saying and not on what was actually being said. In other words, I often read too much into conversations, putting my own “spin” on words to reflect my own insecurities, fears, and suspicions. My poor husband would say, *“This stew tastes salty,”* but I would hear, *“You are a horrible cook and I want a divorce.”*

Thanks to Al-Anon I now know I can choose not take another individual’s words personally, even if the words are intentionally hurtful. I must remember that I can’t control what comes out of other people’s mouths, but I CAN control my reaction to it. I need not allow someone else’s emotions to influence my serenity. I always have a choice whether to let another’s actions dictate how I feel.

Of course, it is entirely possible that the speaker isn’t really angry at me at all. Maybe the person had a bad day at work, just received terrible news, feels physically ill, is overwhelmed, worried about the future, or upset about the past. In this case, when the other party is experiencing a *“go home and kick the dog”* kind of day, I might actually do serious damage to the relationship if I REACT negatively. It might just be that the speaker is hungry, angry, lonely or tired (**HALT**), in which case the proper response from me would be to **QTIP** (quit taking it personally). I now know it is OK for me to either change the subject, listen quietly, or not respond at all. If the speaker persists in their wrath, I now have the confidence to just walk away. Program has taught me that I no longer have to be anyone’s punching bag or accept unacceptable behavior, even if the behavior is not aimed specifically at me.

I am forever grateful to Al-Anon for teaching me that every conversation is not laden with hidden slights and innuendos aimed at hurting me, and, even if they are, it is entirely in my power to choose whether I will respond thoughtfully to a comment, or react and say something I might later regret.

Madilyn G.
Grateful member of Al-Anon

ARE YOU WONDERING WHY WE HAVE AN ANNUAL FALL FUNDRAISER/WORKSHOP?

HERE'S THE ANSWER...

- 1- FOR **ADDITIONAL RECOVERY** through fellowship, speakers, activities and a chance to meet more people in the recovery community of Al-Anon & Alateen. Oh, and there's food too!
- 2- FOR **FINANCIAL SUPPORT** of the Oakland County Al-Anon office.



WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?

THE ANNUAL BUDGET covers the following expenses:

- Office rent & insurance
- Telephone service
- Office supplies/equipment
- Literature & sales tax
- Public Outreach materials
- Group Rep Seminar
- Our website
- Seed money for the Fall Workshop
- Alateen events
- Donations to State and WSO
- And more.



WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

1- GROUP DONATIONS

Some donations come from groups within our geographical boundaries.

As per our traditions, contributions are voluntary and are not a condition for membership.

Oakland County AFG does not seek or accept support outside the area it serves.

2- FALL FUNDRAISER WORKSHOP

3- LITERATURE SALES

We hope that you will support your Oakland County Al-Anon/Alateen Office by attending this year's Fundraiser Workshop on September 23rd and "Follow the Al-Anon Road" of fellowship and shared recovery. If you are unable to attend please know that any donations are appreciated at any time.

Thank you and we look forward to seeing you soon!

The Oakland County Board of Al-Anon along with the many Volunteers who make this day happen!

It's time to register For...
**AL-ANON and ALATEEN'S 14th ANNUAL
FALL FUNDRAISER -WORKSHOP**

"FOLLOW THE AL-ANON ROAD"

SEPTEMBER 23, 2017
Registration~ 8:30-9:00
Workshop
9:00am~1:00pm
First Presbyterian Church
of Birmingham
1669 W Maple Road
Birmingham MI. 48009

**Fellow-
SHIP...
ENTERTAINMENT...
GUEST SPEAKERS...**

**LUNCH...
ACTIVITIES...
RECOVERY...
SILENT AUCTION!**

PRE-REGISTER BY SEPT 14~ 15.00
AT THE DOOR~ 20.00
ALATEENS~ 5.00
**(NO ONE WILL BE TURNED AWAY
FOR FINANCIAL REASONS)**



PLEASE COMPLETE, CUT, AND MAIL IN THIS FORM
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: OAKLAND COUNTY AFG
MAIL TO: OAKLAND COUNTY AFG
3720 ELIZABETH LAKE ROAD WATERFORD, MI 48328

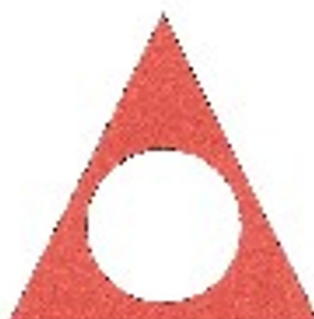
QUESTIONS? Text DeeZee @ 248-514-0079
Or Michelle B @ 248-941-1644

FIRST AND LAST NAME(S)

EMAIL

PHONE #

AMOUNT PAID \$ _____ CK# _____ OR CASH _____



ALATEEN

ALATEEN

Speaker Panel

Saturday, September 9, 2017

11am

Orchard Lake

Our Lady Of Refuge School

3750 COMMERCE RD, WEST
BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP,
MI 48324

Beyond The Steps Al-Anon Family Group
invites you to an
Alateen Open Talk!

Hear *Ian F.*
share his experience, strength and hope.



Monday, October 30th, 2017 @ 11:30 am

St. Andrew Lutheran Church
6255 Telegraph Rd (Just north of Maple on the east side)
Bloomfield Hills, MI



Al-Anon Family Groups

Oakland County, Michigan

Strength and hope for friends and families of problem drinkers

Remember to check the website for more announcements!

OAKLANDAFG.ORG

You can help support Royal Oak Alateen!

How?

By attending Royal Oak Al-Anon on Thursday nights at 8 pm, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 814 N. Campbell Rd. (south of 12 Mile).

Attendance at this Al-Anon meeting has been very low lately, making it difficult to meet expenses. Royal Oak has the only Alateen meeting in southern Oakland County. The only other one, Ferndale, had to close a few months ago because there wasn't sufficient Al-Anon attendance to continue to pay for the building. Please help our teens save their meeting! If you are able, please commit to attending this meeting, if only once a month. Every little bit helps! Thank you!

