

growing oaks



OAKLAND COUNTY
AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS
NEWSLETTER - WINTER 2018



There are always lots of fun, exciting events going on in Al-Anon. Some upcoming events can be found starting on page 7, but be sure to check out the website for Oakland County Al-Anon/Alateen 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 Greg B.

*This is **YOUR** newsletter: Your articles and announcements are welcome!*

Please email to:

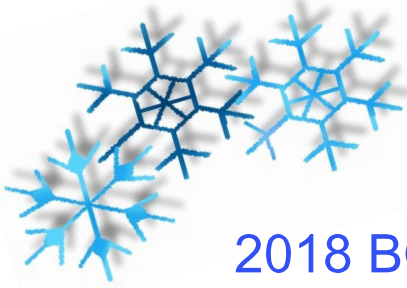
digadigadig@yahoo.com

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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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Welcome to The Emerald City!

On September 23, 2017, Oakland County AFG held its latest fall fundraiser workshop, and some very crafty members decorated the hall using the theme "Follow the Al-Anon Road." It was a day of fellowship, speakers, activities, and a chance to break bread with others in the recovery community of Al-Anon and Alateen.

Attendees were asked to write up a share, using the conference theme "Follow the Al-Anon Road" about what has helped the most along the way. Was it getting a sponsor, working the steps, service work, or going to meetings? Probably a little bit of

many things but looking back on your experience, what was it that made the difference for you? Or what was it that finally clicked for you?

"I gained so much from going to meetings. The courage each person showed in sharing their fears, anxiety, humor and trust helped me to be able to open up and talk about my own pain and hope for a different life. It helped me make a very difficult decision and not feel guilt and a sense of failure because I made that choice. It was what I needed to do to gain peace."

"The tool of "let go and let God" was very helpful in helping me attain or work towards serenity."

"Service Work – I made a promise to myself to take a position every year – some kind of service – open meetings, make coffee, give open talks – really outside my comfort zone, decorations committee and most important to be a committed member and do the steps and keep an open mind."



"There's that old saying that no one comes into Al-Anon on a high note and that was certainly true of me. When I walked through the doors, I was isolated, defeated and had low self-esteem. Service work has helped me to regain self-confidence and start living a full life again instead of dwelling on the actions of my alcoholic. I am grateful for the many friendships I have developed through service work. Whether it is helping to host an open talk with my homegroup, coming together for district meetings, or helping on a committee for workshops, service work provides many opportunities for my own personal growth as well as providing me the opportunity to give back to the program which has given me so much!" -- Michelle B.



"To answer the questionnaire regarding Al-Anon, getting a sponsor, working the steps, service work, and going to meetings were all very important. But the thing that made a difference for me was all the people I sat with at the meetings were living my life. They were there for the same reason. I could share my life with them. They didn't tell me what to do, but instead told me to keep coming back. I couldn't get that response from anyone outside of the program. It was the unconditional love that was freely given, when I couldn't love myself. You can't get that just anywhere. This year I will celebrate 36 years. Love you all." --- Sharon O.



Keep Coming Back!



Keep Coming Back: We hear those three words at the end of every meeting. Most of us remember our first Al-Anon meeting. I certainly do. It was, coincidentally, on my birthday. I was very nervous and scared. I didn't know anything about Al-Anon, or much about alcoholism. A friend I trusted very much told me I should go. When I am nervous, I tend to overcompensate... and so I showed up 50 minutes early for the meeting! There was an AA meeting still in progress, so I waited outside until it was over.

This first meeting was important to me. I have never been able to drive, and didn't have money for a cab, so I walked 2-3 miles to get there. I remember clearly that the people were very friendly and welcoming. But as far as what was said during the meeting, I remember nothing... except for the very end: They told me to keep coming back! Afterwards, a lady at the meeting, hearing that I had walked, drove me home. It was the friendliness and acceptance of those people that made me want to keep coming back. That was more than 31 years ago, in another state, but I still remember some of those wonderful people: Chick, Ed, Mary Frances, Edie, and more.

At the end of every meeting, we tell each other to keep coming back. But for the newcomer, who may not have understood much of anything, who may have been hurting too much to really pay attention, what will keep them coming back is very often the welcome we give them. It's so important to greet newcomers to the meeting when they walk in: Smile, say hello, welcome them! It can make all the difference in the world to a scared and nervous person, not at all sure they are in the right place. It did for me, and I am so glad those wonderful people told me to keep coming back.

Bill C.

Things I Can't Control: The Time

Before I walked through the doors of Al-Anon, I spent many nights waking up unexpectedly, checking the clock to see what time it was and then becoming anxious, angry or annoyed that my sleep had been interrupted. If I found myself awakened by a neighbor at 4am, I would spend the rest of the night tossing and turning, working myself into a frenzy and seething with anger at the disruption.

If I was roused by a storm, I would lay awake worrying that the electric would go out or that I would get in an accident due to dangerous roads. I let fear lead the conversation in my head as my thoughts went from icy roads to being late for work, to losing my job due to tardiness to dying alone in the hospital from injuries sustained in the car accident that hadn't even happened. I never realized that the things I feared most were coming true but it wasn't the weather or the rambunctious neighbors that were the problem. It was me and my own attitude!



Al-Anon helped me to understand that worrying about whether or not I could fall back asleep was the very thing that was keeping me awake! Furthermore, my lack of sleep was affecting every aspect of my day to the point that my life was becoming unmanageable. Lack of sleep was putting me in a constant state of Hungry, Angry, Lonely and Tired. (HALT) Being tired made me angry which made me unpleasant to be around. That led to loneliness and depression and an inability to make healthy decisions.

Al-Anon taught me that while I can't control the weather or turn back time, I do have the power to decide how I will react to situations. Recalling the Serenity Prayer, I took an honest inventory of things I could and could not control about these circumstances. For me, seeing a clock upon awakening was only adding to my anxiety so I removed all clocks from my room. I now rely on the alarm from my cell phone, charging across the room, to wake me at the appropriate time. If I do wake up unexpectedly, I have no idea what time it is which prevents me from "doing the math" to see how much time I have before I need to get up and start my day. Making these small changes alleviated my anxiety considerably, teaching me to trust my Higher Power in all things I can't control like time and weather.

Today, I use this example when I find myself letting things I can't control and the anxiety they cause rule my life. This helps me "Let go and let God" and live my life "One day at a time" because I now know I can't "worry my way into serenity."

Madilyn G.
Grateful member of Al-Anon

OAKLAND AFG DISTRICTS 12 & 14 CALENDAR OF EVENTS*

January 2018

January 27: Open Talk, Southfield AFG, St. David's Episcopal Church, 16200 W. 12 Mile, 8pm

January 29, Open Talk, Beyond the Steps, St. Andrews Lutheran Church, 6255 Telegraph, Bloomfield Hills, 11:30am

January 29: Public Outreach 2018 Kickoff Meeting 7pm, First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham, Calvin Hall

February 2018

Feb 3: Oakland AFG Board Meeting, 8:30 am, followed by District/Group Rep Meeting, 9:35 am

Feb 14: "Love In" New Beginnings AFG asks *Will You Be Our Valentine?* First Congregational Church of Birmingham, 1000 Cranbrook Rd. Bloomfield Hills, 10am

Feb 22: Alateen Panel, 8pm Royal Oak Al-Anon/Alateen, Good Shepherd Lutheran, 814 N. Campbell Rd, lower lever

March 2018

Mar 3: Oakland AFG Board Meeting, 8:30 am, followed by District/Group Rep Meeting, 9:35 am:

March 2-4: AA March Round Up with Al-Anon participation, www.march-roundup.org/

March 10: AWSC, St. Louis, MI

March 23-25: Together We Can, Al-Anon Participation, Troy Marriot, www.twcdetroit.com

April 2018

April 7: Oakland AFG Board Meeting, 8:30 am, followed by District/Group Rep Meeting, 9:35 am

May 2018

May 4-6, 2018: 46th MI AFG Convention, Shanty Creek

*****May 12***** Oakland AFG Board Meeting, 8:30 am, followed by District/Group Rep Meeting, 9:35 am

June 2018

June 2: Oakland AFG Board Meeting, 8:30 am, followed by District/Group Rep Meeting, 9:35 am:

June 9: Spring Assembly

July 2018

*****No Meeting***** for Oakland AFG Board no District/Group Rep Meeting

July 6 - 8: Al-Anon International Convention, Baltimore, MD

August 2018

Aug 4: Oakland AFG Board Meeting, 8:30 am, followed by District/Group Rep Meeting, 9:35 am:

August 11: AWSC, St. Louis, MI

September 2018

Sep 8: Oakland AFG Board Meeting, 8:30 am, followed by District/Group Rep Meeting, 9:35 am:

September 28-30: Tri-County Conference, AA with Al-Anon participation, Wyndham Garden Hotel, Sterling Heights

October 2018

Oct 6: Oakland AFG Board Meeting, 8:30 am, followed by District/Group Rep Meeting, 9:35 am:

October 13: Fall Assembly, St Louis, MI

November 2018

Nov 3: Oakland AFG Board Meeting, 8:30 am, followed by District/Group Rep Meeting, 9:35 am:

November 10, 2018 AWSC, - St. Louis, MI

December 2018

Dec 1 : Oakland AFG Board Meeting, 8:30 am, followed by District/Group Rep Meeting, 9:35 am:

2018 and Beyond

July 2020: International AA Convention with full Al-Anon/Alateen Program – Detroit, MI

**Calendar includes Al-Anon events and AA events with Al-Anon participation. See Oaklandafg.org>Events /Flyers for more information on Al-Anon events.*

I Want You



The Outreach Committee **invites** you to the **2018 Outreach Kickoff Meeting**

Mon, January 29, 7pm, 1st Presbyterian Church, 1669 Maple Rd.
Birmingham, MI 48009

Calvin Hall

- Join us to share your ideas on ways to carry the message! Learn how you can be a part of Oakland AFG Outreach without a huge time commitment by participating in upcoming projects and events! Fellowship and fun!
- We need volunteers to help with small projects throughout the year to help carry Al-Anon's message.
- Displays in libraries and other public displays, health fairs, Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism brochures.
- Questions? Call Jaema 248-852-1946

PLEASE JOIN US
for an

Al-Anon Open Talk

Monday, January 29, 2018

11:30 A.M.

presented by

BERNIE P.



Al-Anon
Family Groups

at Beyond the Steps, 11:30 am

**St. Andrew Lutheran,
6255 Telegraph Rd, Bloomfield Hills,
just north of Maple, east side of Telegraph.**

You are invited to an upcoming
ALATEEN PANEL



Al-Anon
Alateen

Thursday, February 22, 2018

8pm

Royal Oak Al-Anon/Alateen

Good Shepherd Lutheran

814 N. Campbell Rd, lower lever

More information on speakers and
topic will be annouced soon!



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

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!



Come share the love...



*The members of **New Beginnings** invite you to a
"Love-In"*

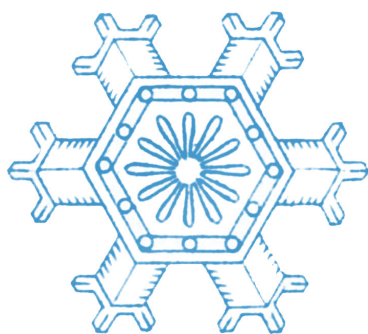
Wednesday, February 14th

10:00 ~11:00 am

*1st Congregational Church of Birmingham
1000 Cranbrook Rd. Bloomfield Hills, MI*

Indulge in sweet treats and the topic of Love

Will you be our valentine?!?



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