

# Growing Oaks

Oakland County Al-Anon Family Groups

Summer, 2024

So, we have zoomed up to mid-year, a summer filled with crazy weather patterns and end of spring events, graduations, Summer solstice, eyes and hearts heading to beaches, cabins and camp grounds, equipped with games, tents, cookout food, sun screen, bug spray, maybe a book to read.

Will Al-Anon literature be with you this summer? You may be away from your regular meeting with travel and other plans.

Maybe you will tuck away a favorite daily meditation book, and find a quiet place in nature to read and listen for a message from your Higher Power. July 4 (p. 186) in One Day at a Time in Al-Anon (B-6) was a good one for me, about being the “captain of my soul.” Good reading sitting while looking at Lake Huron, watching a freighter roll by in the distance.

“I must recognize, however, that my fate, and the fate of my soul, doesn’t depend on me alone; I need the help of God to meet life’s challenges.” The closing thought says “God dwells wherever man lets Him in.”

That ship probably needed some higher power help, like the water, the clear visibility, navigation communication from others.

Maybe our Sixth and Seventh Steps are good ones for gentle meditation and self care.



Step Six: “Were entirely ready to have God remove these defects of character.” and Step Seven: “Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.” A favorite reading of mine, page 64 in A Little Time for Myself—A Collection of Al-Anon Personal Experiences (B-34) talks about a summer activity— weeding. Easier in the spring, when frequent rain makes it easier to pull those pesky plants out, roots and all. Not so much in the drier summer days, when they’re also a lot taller and maybe chocking out the good stuff. The reading says “God removes my shortcomings when I’m ready.”

Wow? Maybe some summer journaling and walks with gratitude will be what I’ll be doing. Closing thought says “What defects can I turn over today?” I am definitely turning over growing any tomatoes. I have loved fresh, home-grown tomatoes since I was a child. My parents grew the big ones, I retreated to pots of cherry tomatoes, since I seem to have to share my yard with several four-leggeds, mostly deer and others who get to the green parts before the green tomatoes begin to show up. I don’t believe any of my defects of character are in play here - maybe unrealistic expectations. Another great just “turn it over”, and enjoy visiting Farmer’s Markets, maybe with an Al-Anon friend. I’ll be picking a few Al-Anon slogans to journal about, too. Starting with “Easy Does It” Listen to the “I got this” messages from God. Shirley B.



## USING THE “S” WORD

So, in the lazy, hazy days of summer, how efficient are you? Have you given thought, maybe started a list of what you'll need to do, commit to, when September arrives? Some of it may be directed by the needs of others. Think school supplies and car pools. What would it be like if you gave thought to Al-Anon service? Never done before? Consider a new level, new position? What about time management? You may already be asked to help with PTA, sports coaching, church boards.

Here are some shares from our District 12 and 14 group reps. They were asked: How long have you been in Al-Anon? What was your first service? Who encouraged you? What was your path to service?

Some have only been in Al-Anon for 2-3 years. They started by leading a meeting, setting up literature or chairs. Some say they've built confidence, productive, want to give back.

“My first meetings were all online. I read the opening, the Steps, the closing. I chaired meetings. My sponsor talked to me and told me she thought I was ready and would do a great job. I took over after her three-year term as Group Rep was completed.” Laura M.

“My first service for my group was becoming a Group Rep. I had led some meetings and helped to set up literature. During a group conscious meeting, it was brought up that we needed a Rep. I had been working my program and thought becoming a Rep. could help further my recovery, give back to the group that had supported me so much, and allow me to make new connections with people. Becoming a Group Rep. has done all of that and more.” Amy G.

“My first service was group secretary. I knew our group needed a Rep. I tried to be the Rep. during a time when my kids were younger (and life was busier). I couldn't make a lot of meetings, so I stepped down.

A few years went by, and COVID changed a lot of things. When things settled down and meetings and events started picking up, I felt a calling from my Higher Power. After doing 4th and 5th Step work with my sponsor, I knew the time was right to step up fully into the Group Rep. role. I became Group Rep. in the Fall of 2022, then added the role of District 14 Rep. a year later. I have enjoyed meeting other people in recovery, and using my character assets in a positive way. It has deepened my recovery and really expanded my knowledge of the Traditions and Concepts. I am grateful every day for the opportunities and blessings of doing Al-Anon service work.” Jeanette H.

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are welcome! Email to:  
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**Trusted Servants** ...Our leaders are but trusted servants - they do not govern. (Tradition 2)

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**Monthly meetings virtual and in person. Pilgrim Congregational Church, Adams Rd. north of 16 Mile, Bloomfield Hills. First Saturday at 9:45 am**

## How do I find a meeting?

- Zoom meetings (ID and password provided)
- Hybrid meetings (both virtual on Zoom as well as in person)
- In person meetings (social distancing and masks may be required)

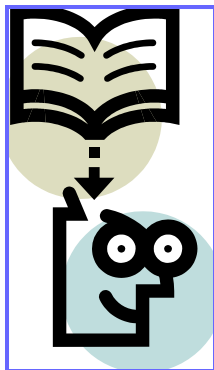


**For updated list, please check: [oaklandafg.org/meetings](http://oaklandafg.org/meetings).** See special meeting flyers on our website under Events/flyers.

## Best Way to Get Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature (CAL)

To order: email [Oaklandafgliterature1214@gmail.com](mailto:Oaklandafgliterature1214@gmail.com). Melissa can only accept cash or checks at this time. Books and other literature can be picked up at the monthly District 12 and 14 meeting. You may contact Melissa to make other arrangements.

Thinking about how to carry the Al-Anon message to others? (Step 12) How about, as an individual or group, donating a book to a church, school, lending library or community center near you.



## Mark Your Calendar

- ◆ “Family Reunion” Food and Fellowship. Open talks Al-Anon and Alateen. Tuesday, July 23, 6 p.m. Community of /Christ Church 1900 Crescent Lake Rd., Waterford 48327
- ◆ “Bringing Colors to Recovery” Alateen Convention (KOMIAC). July 26-28. Michigan hosts!! Contact Sheryl S. at [miafgalateen@gmail.com](mailto:miafgalateen@gmail.com). for further information.

## The Concept of Love: What Does It Mean for Each of Us in Our Recovery?

Note: During our 2024 state convention, one activity was round-table group discussions on a variety of topics. The topics varied, and at each table was a topic card, with Reflection and Questions to be addressed with shares by each participant. Everyone moved tables after 15 minutes.

One topic was “Love in Recovery.” As was noted: “As we continue to examine ourselves in Al-Anon we may find opportunities for growth by reading literature, to treat myself well.” (Courage to Change, p. 42).

Questions for the group discussion:

1. What can I do to accept that I am worthy of love and acceptance from others (A Little Time for Myself, p. 207).
2. How have my expectations of those I love/loved caused problems for me? (Blueprint for Progress, p. 60-62)
3. What can I do today that will show my love for others and for myself? (Blueprint for Progress, p. 60-62)

There was a time limit, and many discussions ran over. It was also a great time to meet other Al-Anon friends.

Another topic was: What is the difference between Humility and Humiliation? “Humility is a state of mind where we recognize we cannot do it alone.... After a time of being self-sufficient, (trials help us see) that we have limits and we need help.” Humiliation is a form of abuse and does not promote spiritual growth. (How Al-Anon Works, p. 56, Step Seven).” We despair over how we can react the same way over and over again (A Merry Go Round Named Denial). This is a teachable moment and a call to change things we can - ourselves.

Question for discussion:

1. Do you feel humiliated when you are unsuccessful with your reactions in troubling times?
2. Can you remember when you experienced something good that came from a humbling experience?
3. Where does my making, or receiving, amends fit in this picture?

Al-Anon group closing says: “Talk to each other, reason things out with someone else, but let there be no gossip of criticism of one another. Instead, let the love, understanding and peace of the program grow in you one day at a time.”

Our District 12 and 14 monthly workshop creators are considering this format for our Fall workshops that follow each first Saturday after the in-person meeting at the church. Consider, as a one-time service, helping plan a workshop? Contact Jeanette H. for more information.