

Lifeline

June - July 2012

Connecticut Area 7 Newsletter for Al-Anon / Alateen

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2013 CT AFG Convention

Note the new address
for Lifeline submissions:
lifeline@ctalanon.org



Announcements:

Need Support:

- Thursday 7:00-8:00 pm Stafford Springs
at Stafford Senior Center
Rt 190 / Buckley Highway
Stafford Springs, CT 06076
- Friday 7:00-8:30 pm Bristol
at Bristol Recovery Club
67 West St., Bristol, CT 06010
All are welcome ~ Please join us!
- Saturday 4:00-5:00 pm Kent
at High Watch Recovery Center
62 Carter Rd., Kent, CT
Open meeting, Handicap Access
Newcomers need your support

Convention Theme Contest:

Entries due by September 8, 2012
Win a free weekend. See page 8.

Time Change:

- Tuesday 7:00 - 8:30 pm Newington Step Meeting
changing start to 7:00 pm (from 7:30 pm)
United Methodist Church
401 New Britain Ave., Newington, CT
(corner of Church St.) Please Join Us!
- Wednesday 12:00 noon - 1:30 pm Shelton
Journey to Recovery afternoon meeting
changing start to 12:00 pm (from 1:00 pm)
Spooner House, 30 Todd Rd., Shelton. CT

Location Change:

- Sunday 7:00 pm Wallingford Serenity Al-Anon Group
moved to Gaylord Hospital at Chauncey Building
(same building as Monday night Al-Anon meeting)
from Dry Dock

New Meeting:

- Thursdays 7:00-8:30 pm
Lourdes Shrine in Litchfield - Montfort House
50 Montfort Rd. Litchfield, CT 06759
Al-Anon Adult Children
Pass the grotto and lower parking area.
Continue to the top of the hill.
All Al-Anon members welcome, open meeting.

Meeting Change:

- Find out about yourself Friday nights in Hamden.
We are changing to a 4th Step meeting
using the *Blueprint for Progress*.
Friday 8:00 pm Hamden, CT
at the Arden House (conference room)
850 Mix Avenue (corner of Mix Ave. and Skiff St.)
Enjoy our A/C this summer!



Anniversary:

- Monday, June 25, 2012, 6:00 pm, Higganum “Al-Anon Spoken Here” 20th anniversary Higganum United Methodist Church 248 Saybrook Rd (Rt. 154), Higganum, CT 6:00 pm Dinner (Finger foods & Pot Luck appreciated) 7:00 pm Al-Anon, AA & Alateen speakers Raffle (conference approved gifts appreciated)



Events:

- Rompiendo Fronteras / Breaking Frontiers (Bilingual Sharing Day) Sunday, July 29, 2012 112 East Main St., Meriden, CT Interpreters available, lunch included
- AA CT 2012 Convention with Al-Anon participation September 7-9, 2012 CoCo Key Water Resort, Hotel and Convention Center 3580 East Main St., Waterbury, CT 06705
- Al-Anon CT 2013 Convention Planning meeting September 16, 2012, 1:00 pm (join the fun) Crowne Plaza Hotel 100 Berlin Rd., Cromwell, CT 06416
- CSCYPAA with Al-Anon participation November 23-25, 2012 CoCo Key Water Resort, Hotel and Convention Center 3580 East Main St., Waterbury, CT 06705
- Al-Anon CT 2013 Convention **March 15-17, 2013 (SAVE THE DATE)** Crowne Plaza Hotel 100 Berlin Rd., Cromwell, CT 06416
- Al-Anon International Convention July 5-7, 2013, Vancouver, BC (save up now, passport needed) Information available in the fall of 2012.
- AA Speaker meeting with Al-Anon and AA Speakers First Saturday of the month 8:00 pm to 9:30 pm Gaylord Hospital, Wallingford Chauncy Pavilion (rear entrance of hospital)

Alateen Sharings from the Guilford Tuesday Night “You’re Worth It” Alateen Group

- I come back because I feel I could trust the other Alateens with my abuse issues.
- My first few meetings of Alateen everyone was much older and very intimidating. But after a short amount of time they welcomed me into their family and I soon felt the love. I gained their trust and they gained mine. Alateen became my place to reflect, meditate, and listen. Growing up with the program really helped shape me as a person and I’m so thankful for it. I keep coming back because I love to make new relationships with the newcomers and share the love and welcome that I was brought into.
- What made me come back was the support, the safe feeling and knowing I’m not the only teen with an alcoholic parent or someone in their life that is one. It makes me feel like I can fit in and say what’s going on in my life and how I feel and not worry about the drama and gossip.
- During the first few meetings, although I didn’t know it yet, I was introduced to an unconditional love that came from my fellow Alateens. These special persons were in my age group and were experiencing the same feelings as I. when I’m away from the group, I almost feel a sense of loss that can only be filled with the supportive words of others, my Alateen family. Now that I’m back, I realize that the Alateens in my meeting have always been there for me, and it’s time that I return the favor and pay it forward to the newcomers.

Editors note: Without Alateen Sponsors there can be no Alateen to help these young people deal with the effects of alcoholism.

Could you be an Alateen Sponsor?

Talk to an Alateen sponsor or see www.ctalanon.org/members Alateen Forms Alateen Sponsors Handbook for more information.



Healthy Groups

As the GR (Group Representative) for the Tuesday/ Old Saybrook group, I have been approached by some members recently about a variety of different things, mainly, how our members feel about the structure of the meetings, and if we need to make improvements or changes to the way we've been conducting them. The topic I chose is Healthy Meetings.



I read a copy of the January 2006 Delegates Report, and it was about "What can we do as Al-Anon members, individually and collectively, to maintain healthy groups, allowing each member to grow in relationship with his/her Higher Power and attract newcomers who want to stay because they see and want what we have received in Al-Anon?" I thought this would open up somewhat of a "Group Inventory" in the way of a topic meeting. I borrowed some of the ideas from the Delegate's Report to share.

* Sharing should be brief. Keep the sharing on your own Experience, Strength, and Hope. DO NOT give advice.

* DO NOT talk about the alcoholic. Sharing should be on YOUR OWN recovery. Sharing should be brief at meetings to allow each member to share. If you are in a crisis, or need to share more, you can do so before or after a meeting. Use the phone list or a Sponsor to speak more on a one-on-one basis

* A group conscience should be held on a regular basis to ensure that we are doing our best job for the greatest number of people in the group. If you have any questions or concerns, you can ask for a group conscience at any time.

* Take a group inventory from time to time, to see where members are in their recovery, to help them to move forward. Our Beginners meeting is for the newcomers to learn the "basics" of our program (Steps 1-2-3), how it works, and what it is all about. Newcomers are those who come to at least 6 weeks of meetings, and are then encouraged to move on to regular meetings. Regular meetings are there to help you "work the program" and guide you through your recovery process.

* DO NOT dominate or discuss religion in the groups.

* Remember that "Al-Anon is spoken here." Al-Anon is for people who are affected by another person's drinking, other 12 Step programs should stay at the door.

* Anonymity should be maintained at all times. DO NOT gossip in or outside of the group.

* There should be no cross-talk, only share briefly about yourself; we learn from listening. "Take what you want, and leave the rest."

* Groups should have a Group Representative and an Alternate. There should be a GR report at each meeting to announce any District or Group notices.

* Members should take on other group and service responsibilities; we should not have the same people doing everything all the time. We need different members to sign up to program each week and volunteer for conventions and assemblies, etc.

Our individual recovery is made stronger by the group.

RoseAnn, District 12

Joys of Service at the Convention

I had my first opportunity to do service at the convention this year and I can't begin to express my gratitude to my service sponsor for asking me! I am service oriented; I am usually involved in several service events each year, as well as at the area, district and meeting levels. I always thought of the convention as my "day off," as a time for me to get lost in the crowd and "enjoy" the convention. I could not have been more wrong! I have never enjoyed a convention more than I did this year! Knowing I had a hand in putting together the best convention to date (my personal opinion!) makes me so proud and added to my enjoyment of the weekend exponentially! I had the opportunity to feel pride and satisfaction when people complimented the program, speakers and meetings. I also learned so much about working together and compromise. The most wonderful lesson was that people valued what I had to offer, my



ideas, my input. To realize that I was an important part of the team, that I have value and my voice will not only be heard, but that I added to the success of the program. That feeling is priceless!

The convention committee meets once a month. This brought me out of my corner of the state, out of my comfort zone and into the arms of a welcoming group of people! It was so much fun to participate in, and be a part of, a group of some of the greatest people I have ever had the pleasure of meeting. I am humbled by the amount of positive feedback we received, and I am learning from the constructive criticism too. Every voice, every volunteer is important! Thank you to the 2012 Convention Committee, Hand in Hand We Can, And We Did!!

Kim C.

P.S. I can't wait to be on the committee again next year! (:

My Al-Anon Story

My name is Cecilia, and I was born on a small island off the coast of Chile. My father was a Navy Captain, Engineer and I grew up in different places in Chile.

My first lesson I had in life that impacted me, was when one of my classmates was having a party at her dad's home, and I told my dad I needed to buy silk so the dressmaker could make me the dress. He said to me "No, I don't have money to buy silk, if you want to go, you will have a cotton dress, or else you cannot go." I thought "O my God I will be different than the rest"but I thought ... "so what!" I went to the party in my white cotton dress, I had the night full of dances. I looked different and everyone liked it! My dad asked "How was the party?" I told him I had a terrific time! He said to me "Now you learn, it is not what you wear that makes you special, it is what you are!" I will never forget that, it has helped me so much in life!

I started to work at probably one of the biggest factories for chemical products in the country. After about a year of working, I was invited by a navy friend to come to his house, because 2 USA navy lieutenants that had come to our port in Chile had asked him if he and a friend could meet some Chilean girls. Families, then, did not approve of their daughter's going with foreigners.

When I got there I met Ed (my husband of 47 years). Ed said "I am so sorry I cannot stay; I must return to my ship, but I would like to see you again."

I said "It is not necessary to see me again."

For 10 minutes, he said "yes," I said "no."

Finally I said "Well if you want to see me again you must come to my house."

Ed said "Sounds great I will be at your home tomorrow around 8 PM."

He arrived and conquered my mom and dad at dinner by getting up and helping the maid to take the dishes off the table.....(only time in 47 years I ever saw him doing that!)

Ed kept asking mom and dad if I could accompany him the next day. My mom kept saying "Sorry we cannot let Cecilia go out with someone we do not know well." (Those were the times....) But they finally agreed and I went the next day and helped him buy a few things for his mom, dad and sister, then dinner and back home by 10 PM!

Next day at the Navy Club, there was a party for the navy "gringos" and I saw Ed again. This time he and a group of officers went to the piano and played "Cecilia," with his buddies singing. I felt in love with him then.....

After the party he brought me back home in a taxi and for the first time I sensed that he was a bit off. But I could understand that when you are in a foreign country, sometimes drinks are different. In this case "pisco sour" is a very strong drink with taste of lemon or orange in it. So he apologized and the next day called me to apologize again.

The following day they were leaving the port, so he came so say goodbye to me at home, and asked my mom if he

and I could take a short walk to chat a bit. We went up hill walking and there he went on his knees and said:

"I found what I looked all my life in you."

I responded "What are you talking about:

You are American, I am South American,

You speak English, I speak Spanish,

You are Protestant, I am Catholic.

We have nothing in common!"

He said something that penetrated in my heart for all these years, "There is nothing in this world that you cannot do, if you make up your mind."

After he left my mom said "I am sorry he left, he is such a nice young man, and you will never see him again."

I said, "Yes I will."

He called me when he arrived in the States, and asked:

"When are you coming to NY?"

I said "We are coming in June"

He said "We?" and I said "Yes my mom and I."

We arrived in NYC and mother and I looked up to the people waving and she said "You know where he is?" I said "Mom I don't have a picture of him, and everyone looks the same, crew cut and blonde!" He was there with his mother, drove us to their house in the East Side of NY, and invited us to spend sometime with them. The family was lovely, very proper people; we had a terrific 2 weeks and came back home to Chile. He came probably, 3 times to visit me in Chile. Every time he would come, he would stay with us. For the wedding in March 1961, his mom, dad and sister also came. We had a nice party, then went to a very nice German Hotel on the beach. I must share this, because is so funnnnnny.....

Went to a lovely bedroom, he went to the bathroom and did not come back for about 20 minutes, I was wearing a white night gown waiting and thinking "Maybe he changed his mind." Then he came out and said "I am so sorry I don't know how to flush the toilet." (It was an old fashioned toilet with a chain on the top box on the ceiling.)

We moved to NY and Ed had a job with a big car company. When our daughter was 3 months old, we were transfer to Buenos Aires. It was perfect because it was so close to home... Then the nightmare came to me... I started to see him getting drunk at night, never during the day, only at night. I did not know what to do, I did not have that problem at my home so I did not know the answer, plus in those days in South America AA was not known. So I did what I thought it was the best, endured it. Maybe it will go away.

It continued the same, always at night. We were transferred to Caracas, Venezuela. Those were the worst years of my life. They called me once from the Police to come and pick him up, he was drunk driving. Another time he came on the garage on my side and banged my car, and his, thinking it was his side of the garage. I got to the point that in the evening when he would come home I would, come and search the car for bottles, since our bar room at the house was always locked! No bottle, nothing. What he was doing was tossing the bottle before getting to the house at the

neighbor's garden, then come at night and get it! These guys are smart, always a way to find the bottle!

It was so embarrassing when at parties with friends he would be asked to play the piano (he was a terrific piano player in his good days) and be drunk!

The height of this story comes when one evening, he was trying to open the bar door with a hammer, I took the hammer and hammered him once in the head! Blood coming all the way down on his face and shoulders, and our 4 year old daughter crying "My daddy is dead."

That is when my miracle was made. I went on my knees and said "Blessed Virgin, please don't kill him or me. Just give me the light, you know I cannot continue this life. Because I know nothing is free in this life, I will give you in return a whole year of every day mass and communion." About a month after the event, we were transferred to NY and moved into an apartment on the upper East side, near where his parents had their house. They asked me "What is wrong with the marriage?" and I said "I do not know." His father had caught him in the basement of his house drinking a bottle of gin. He said to him "Get out of my house, take the bottle with you and go live with the bums in the street. I do not want to see you anymore." He told me that episode later when he recovered, and it had impacted him.

His father told his doctor the problem his son was having. The doctor said "I have a patient that had the same problem; he went to a group called AA and is doing fine, I will ask him to call your son." Steve called Ed on the phone and came to pick him up for a private conversation at a bar. Ed loved to drink there, even though Steve had only a Coke. When Steve returned he said to us "When Ed is ready for help you call me; I will come immediately." Two days later Ed asked me to call Steve. He came right away and took him to a wonderful rehab. place in Connecticut. Instead of staying 2 weeks, he stayed 6 weeks, and came out of it like a new person. My miracle had taken place...and the promise was fulfilled, one year of mass and communion.

New life started for him, he was offered a very nice job in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; he accepted. He was advised by the AA friends that it was not a good idea to move out of the USA, since he did not speak Portuguese. But he always wanted to continue working overseas and we left for Brazil. He was so happy there. Then after 3 years I began to notice that he was getting back where he was before... not drinking but taking a lot of medicine with alcohol in it... then eventually the nightmare came back in our lives. Our daughter was older and realizing that there was something wrong I discovered later in life when I read letters that my mother-in-law had received from her, complaining how terrible her life was with mom and dad fighting all the time....

But this time I knew where the solution was, so I called his boss and said "We must leave." and told him the problem. Because Ed was in such bad shape, and in those years there were no recovery centers like now in South America, he was put in an asylum while I got packed. He told me when he woke up there, he wondered where he was....then went

out in a nice garden outside. A man was walking so he asked him "How long have you been here?" The man responded "14 years." He thought "O my God I will never be free again!"

When we left Brazil for NY at the airport my dear brother in law was waiting for him and took him immediately to the recovery center in Connecticut. He stayed there 3 days. He said it was raining, he was sitting on a rock outside and said to himself "What am I doing here again? This is crazy, no more...." and said to the director "I am leaving now." The director responded "You cannot leave, you must stay a minimum of 2 weeks, or else never come back." Ed responded "I promise you I will never come back, only to help you, or give a talk about my experience in AA."

He came back home, like a new man again, the one I loved. We had just purchased a house. He had decided that perhaps he did not want to work for anyone but have his own business and travel. Six months after this decision, our house burned to the ground....The miracle had happened again (I thought because he was so shocked he would drink again.) No, I saw him coming into the room and I knew he was sober. That was the best test I ever had!!! Everyone was saying to me, how come you do not get upset about your house burning, I would say "It is OK; it could have been worse." And my thoughts were immediately HE IS SOBER!

The train insurance company that had started the fire, paid for the new house, which we decided to rebuild in the same spot, plus they paid us US 30,000 which helped us in this first year of Ed trying to start his own business in South America and for me to get a job to help him.

He has been 34 years in AA and our life has been peaceful. Not perfect, there is no perfection in this world, but there is great communication between him in AA and myself in my favorite group Al-Anon. I have been going to Al Anon at least 30 years. I started after my husband started his program. Al-Anon was in Ridgefield in an old Church at that time.... I belong to other groups and do other activities, but nothing to me is like Al-Anon. There I have been able to find happiness with my life, sharing our lives, and even if it has been so many years ago, I will never want to forget how lucky I am and share that feeling with my friends. My husband still travels a lot and enjoys his work, but for him to help anyone is his priority.

So we keep going ONE DAY AT A TIME, and it works wonders for us! What Al-Anon did for me was to come to realize in those years that I was not alone on that road...it was instrumental for my recovery also. I always say Al-Anon is very important for me to keep going, it also makes me feel so good when I can help someone, or when someone says something that I needed to hear. It is the only place where you can say what you feel (it may sound silly, the only place you can expose yourself without being criticized, and don't get me wrong I mean saying WHAT YOU FEEL FROM YOUR HEART). I have lots of friends, but my most special friends are my Al-Anon friends.

Expectations Topic for Men's Group May 2012

I'm Bruce, a grateful member of Al-Anon and an Adult Child of an Alcoholic mother and my codependent Father.

This discussion topic has great meaning for me since I have only realized several years ago that my whole life, until 24 years ago, was the product of my original family's dreams and expectations. Dreams can be the passion which motivates us to change but they can also be the passion which blinds us to reality. I never dreamed dreams for me until 1989. And the reason for that was the defense mechanism I developed to avoid my father's anger.

My father, an otherwise exemplary individual, tried so hard to change my mother's alcoholism that he became, by before I was born I am sure, frustrated and angry with all of his responsibilities including his children. His expectations for her and for us were his passion.

Dad inspired high expectations in all of us and his stern visage impressed it on us. My older brother eventually broke under the strain and exited the family for the west coast. My younger brother hid in his bedroom and then moved 900 miles south to the Carolinas.

I got around Dad's anger by working to fulfill his dream for me; to be a great student, to be a great athlete, and to make enough money to be a family man just like he was. Even though he never expressed that to me, I knew that was what he expected me to do. His expectations drove me for 20 years after he died and impacted what I expected from my first wife, what I expected from my children, and what I expected from myself.

So what are expectations or dreams? They could be just what you consider is most likely to happen. But what if they become so powerful that you become invested in working incessantly and attempting to control others so that the future becomes reality? Expectations of others which are not shared are just resentments waiting to happen.

Let me talk about the expectations I had about my role, my ex-wife's role, and my expectations for my children.

My role was to become just like my father (to please him) and so when my **studying** and working were "not perfect" I worked even harder and came home late. And I always paid more attention to the work than my wife and kids. After all, that came first as I had learned from my Dad's behavior. Only in the last few years have I come to understand that he was probably avoiding the pain in his marriage.

And I remember choosing my first wife because I believed and expected her to continue to be an independent professional who would, after raising several children, return to her nursing profession. And that we would be economic partners who shared the financial load. I expected that, without ever talking seriously to her about it. Our early fights, I now recall, were always about my earning enough money so she could avoid working for money.

I made an early attempt to break out of my Dad-inspired expectations by continuing my graduate work when the

"right" post-college job did not present itself. My pregnant wife nearly left me then because of the relative poverty that entailed.

And then several years later came her anger (and my confusion) about my refusing to buy enough life insurance on me to replace her future earnings after the kids were in school. She resented that she would have to work and reminded me of this decision regularly for the next 30 years. And then, 10 years later, when the kids were finally away all day in school, she made no attempt to resume her visiting nurse career and I became angry and resentful.

And so our **expectations game** with each other continued. I expected to be praised for being a family man who worked long hours and earned money. She expected that I should support them and believed that my long hours were not needed. And I made things worse by saying that I enjoyed my work and co-workers.

Because of our original families' dysfunctions, we both struggled with intimacy and talking with each other. And those disappointments of both of our expectations for each other continued for 33 years until my anger and dreams motivated me to move out and divorce. The initial "coldness" of both of us had seemed so normal when we began.

But the real expectations damage was done to my children. The first sign was my wife's insistence on naming my son after me. He had no chance of escaping the expectations pressure from us. And he, like my older brother before him (also named after his father) was overwhelmed by the pressure and exited the family through addictions long before we threw him out of our home.

And my unspoken expectations pressure on my daughter to be a financially independent woman (not like her mother) resulted, after her junior year in college, with her secretly running away to join an Indian guru in Oregon and then to Maui to escape us. I was aware of her stress over her heavy academic schedule but thought it "normal." She had started abusing alcohol as a teenager and after 24 stressful years recovered 7 years ago with AA's help. And most of that time I was confused and wondered what I might have done to cause this. Luckily, I had finally joined Al-Anon 9 years ago when I finally accepted her responsibility for her disease.

It took me so long to understand the damage done to me and my family which was caused by my unexpressed expectations of others and my lack of attention. And then more recently I was able to trace the causes of my expectation syndrome back to my Dad's frustrations with my mother. Al-Anon has helped me peel back the onion and embrace serenity.

I have learned to suppress my expectations of others and, instead, to pay close attention to what others say and what they do. Because that is who they are. This is my new reality. And when my son died 3 1/2 years ago, I quickly realized how much I had missed because I could see what **he** had made of himself. And how much I had lost.

Bruce

Gratitude



I have been feeling so over-whelmed lately that I almost missed writing this for the June Lifeline. One thing that Al-Anon taught me is that when I feel the way I am feeling—that gratitude can help me.

And I am a grateful member of Al-Anon.

The first thing I am grateful for is that I just saw the e-mail about writing something for the Lifeline.

Thanks to Al-Anon, I have developed a relationship with my HP (God).

I have let go of feeling a victim and learned to focus on and be responsible for myself.

Thanks to the Twelve Steps, I have had awarenesses as to how I can become the best Judith I can be.

I have done a lot of work on reducing my ego and I pray about how I can be of maximum service to God and others.

This weekend I realized that I was back to being self-centered and allowing myself to be focused on and affected by people, places and things.

I was saying the Serenity Prayer but was not accepting the things that I could not change.

Although I still am not feeling as grounded as I would like to feel, I am filled with gratitude with my awarenesses.

I have learned in Al-Anon that even when a situation might not change, my perspective can change and I can "be as happy as I make up my mind to be." (Thanks Mr. Lincoln.)



Judith

The Coffee Pot

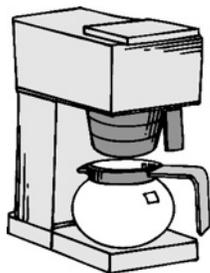
Years ago, prior to coming into the Al-Anon program, I had a coffee pot that annoyed the #&!\$ out of me. It spilled and dribbled coffee all over my counter top, EVERY TIME I used it to pour myself a cup of coffee. Especially maddening in the morning, when of course, I was in a mad whirlwind of chaos, trying to get sooo many things done and accomplished in the short period of time I had every morning, before getting myself ready and out the door for my work.

Yep, darn that old coffee pot. I was sure that every morning I would have to wipe up those spills and drips, and you know, I did. Of course this made me even more frustrated because I had to stop and cleanup something that should have been designed better, so I thought. How stupid and careless of the manufacturer to make this pot with such an obvious flaw. I didn't have time for this every cup of coffee. I had much better things to do, like be crazy with trying to do everything all at once.

Well, as a few years went by, this coffee machine stopped working. "Great," I thought, "I'll get another machine and it won't leak or dribble and I'll save so much time in the morning." So I researched every coffee pot in the world, just like the good Al-Anon I was, wanting the new item to be **the perfect one**, and finally settled on a model, not too much different from the one I had, but I was sure it would be better.

So, I took my proud purchase, new time saving, no-drip machine home, plugged it in, followed the directions and made the first pot. How wonderful and marvelous this would be. When the pot filled with the freshly brewed coffee, I excitedly went to pour myself a cup of this perfect coffee.....

Much to my surprise and chagrin, immediately upon pouring my coffee, I looked down to see drips and dribbles JUST LIKE THE OLD ONE. This can't be I thought. It's new. It's different. It's better because, it's not the same. What's wrong here? Could I have gotten another defectively designed coffee pot?



Well this was around the time in my recovery where I was doing my Step 4 inventory. Part of that process allowed me to start looking at my behaviors and my patterns. In a typically Al-Anon way, I eventually realized that I was crazy/busy with trying to do too much at any given time.

Good awareness my sponsor says. I also realized I had always considered everything that didn't work in my life to be broken. Good awareness my sponsor says. It also became apparent to me as I worked through the inventory, that my patterns, quirks, irritations with people, places and things had something in common: ME.

What had never occurred to me was that at the heart of every situation, at the beginning of every single thing that I did that bothered me, at the core of everything that wasn't right in my life, was a central theme..... ME !! My inventory suggested that no matter where I was, or what I was doing, or who was doing something to me, or anything that happened and included me, That No Matter Where I Went, There I Was.....still there ME.

Hmmm, I got to thinking. Perhaps all my interactions could use this insight. So I ran the idea past my sponsor, who actually AGREED with me (perhaps this was a sign in and of itself). And I started to look at ME a little closer. Hey, do you know, things got easier, better, some actually improved, some didn't, others did. Less things continued to irritate me. My life felt better. Al-Anon says to think about my interactions with others. Al-Anon says I am 100% responsible for 50% of any interaction with another individual. Al-Anon says continue to take personal inventory, look at my behaviors, look at my patterns, perhaps the key is ME.

Do you know what happened next? A miracle occurred in my kitchen overnight. I didn't know how, but the next time I poured my morning cup of coffee, with a bit of Al-Anon Serenity thrown into my life, that same coffee pot did not drip one bit. And it never has caused me any extra clean-up time since.....

Love to you all,
Bruce G. - District 6



Hello Everyone,

“Alcoholism is an enormously powerful family disease. Even in the best of times, we who have experienced the effects of this disease may struggle to maintain a sense of balance in our lives. ... The Al-Anon program offers us the support, as well as the tools, to acknowledge, accept, and deal with these problems in a safe and loving atmosphere.”

The above paragraph was taken from one of our books: “*In All Our Affairs, Making Crises Work For You*” (B15 page 1).

It is wonderful to have such wonderful books and pamphlets to turn to when we need support. I have used a lot of our literature when laying wide awake late at night and sleep will not come. It has helped me a lot to just read

a few paragraphs from a book like *In All Our Affairs*. And what usually happens is I find a solution right there in front of me.

Literature is one of the tools that show me that by following the Al-Anon path to recovery we too may have a spiritual awakening and come to “practice these principles in all our affairs.”

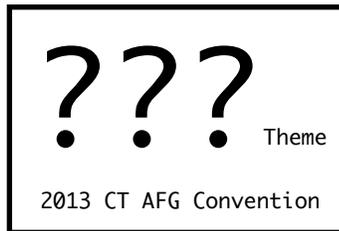
Maybe a piece of literature on your nightstand is the sleeping pill you need some night.

I hope you are all looking forward to a wonderful summer.

In Serenity, CAL



2013 CT AFG Convention



We need a theme!!!

You could win a *free* weekend (registration and room) if *your* theme is chosen from those submitted.

Submit your ideas to themecontest@ctalanon.org by September 8, 2012.

“You can’t win if you don’t submit an idea.”

Plans are underway for the 2013 CT AFG Convention to be held March 15-17, 2013 in Cromwell. The first planning meeting will be held Sunday, September 16, 2012, at 1:00 pm at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Cromwell, CT. And the first order of business will be to choose a theme. Come get involved. Many committees still need members.

New address! Thank you for your sharings this month! - Sue

Deadline for August-September Contributions is Aug. 13, 2012

- Al-Anon **announcements**
- **Sharings** on using the Al-Anon tools
- Email **Subscriptions** available
- Send your items to lifeline@ctalanon.org by **Aug.13** for the August issue.

Please contribute a sharing this month!

➔ **Lifeline** is also available online at www.ctalanon.org Lifeline tab

