

# SHARINGS

DISTRICT 3, GREATER JACKSONVILLE, FL  
SERVING BAKER, CLAY, DUVAL AND NASSAU COUNTIES

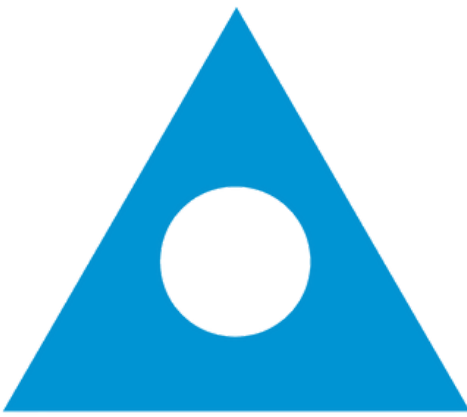
Sharing our...



Experience

Strength

Hope



## WORKING MY PROBLEM OR WORKING MY PROGRAM

I was attending a meeting where the group was studying *How Al-Anon Works for Families and Friends of Alcoholics* (B-32). The person reading the text aloud misread the line "I continued to work my program" as "I continued to work my problem." I was glad we were meeting online and my microphone was muted so I didn't disrupt the meeting when I laughed out loud.

As I thought about the difference between working the Al-Anon program and "working my problem," I remembered when I first attended Al-Anon and didn't understand how the tools of the program could help me. In those early days, I "worked my problem" by: obsessing about the alcoholic's drinking, drug use, and destructive behaviors; waking in the middle of the night with my mind racing;

waiting for the dreaded phone calls; fretting and trying to force him to get to school or work on time; and feeling knots in my stomach whenever it was time to discuss anything with him.

Gradually, as I continued to attend meetings, I learned that the Serenity Prayer can be useful to slow my racing mind so I can go back to sleep. I learned that sometimes I may need to read Al-Anon literature or something spiritual to help me meditate and stop the obsessive thinking. I learned I don't have to answer those calls; I can call back when I am ready to hear about and respond to whatever is happening in his life. His problem does not have to become my problem. Getting him to school or work is not my job. Natural consequences are more appropriate and

effective than my nagging. Discussions go better when I can calmly say what I mean without saying it in a mean way. These are a few of the Al-Anon tools I have learned to use. They help me work through a problem by working my Al-Anon program.

I'm glad that I can laugh about occasionally still "working my problem." Now, however, I have a good grasp of the Al-Anon tools and can more quickly get back to working the program! I can live a happier, more balanced life. - Golda C., Oregon

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## MEETING TREASURE CHEST

**If you have a short one (or two) liner and would like to share that treasure, text our editor at 904-508-8094 or send it to [newslettereditore@jaxafg.org](mailto:newslettereditore@jaxafg.org). These have all been shared anonymously. Take what you like and leave the rest.**

- "NEW" to me stands for "Nothing Else Worked."
- Like many alcoholics need A.A. before their first drink, I needed Al-Anon long before I took my first "think."
- When I am talking to my Sponsor, I start noticing that my problems shrink down to real size and not the enormity that they were in my head.
- I am taking small steps, reconnecting and checking in with God several times a day, slowing down, listening to learn God's will, getting back to meetings, and recovering and rediscovering my God-given powers.
- Self-love is a bridge to loving others. Self-care is a bridge to caring for others.
- My recovery swings on the hinges of gratitude.



- I used to have a PhD in catastrophizing.
- Sometimes I think I don't need Al-Anon; that's when I really need it.
- Growing up I never heard that it was healthy to keep the focus on myself.



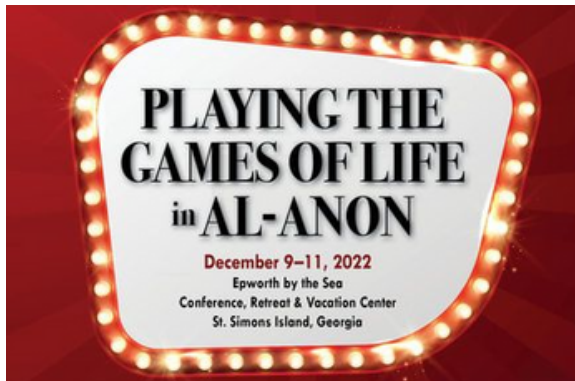
## CONCEPT FOUR IN ACTION

I have been around service-oriented Al-Anons since I started the program. For example, I saw a friend help organize a potluck, my Sponsor served on the district service panel (amongst lots of other things), another friend chaired a workshop, and I listened to another friend share her story at a speaker meeting.

Seeing the way these people volunteered their time to making the program better demonstrated to me the value of service. I heard "When I got busy, I got better" and have done my best to be as busy as my serenity allows me. A friend and I even co-chaired a workshop at the N Florida Area Convention a few weeks back! My Higher Power has a sense of humor and the pre-assigned topic was "Participation is the key to harmony." The picture to the left is what was created by the different groups we had coloring separate "puzzle pieces" that we assembled at the end. I was so grateful for the experience and the push to grow. - A Grateful Servant

## COMING EVENTS

- **October 1** District 9 Gratitude Luncheon, Sebring, FL More information available at [afgarea9.org](http://afgarea9.org)
- **October 10** District 6 Gratitude Luncheon Mt Dora, FL More information available at [afgarea9.org](http://afgarea9.org)
- **October 22** District 1 Gratitude Luncheon Tallahassee, FL More information available at [afgarea9.org](http://afgarea9.org)
- **December 3** District Fun Day - info TBA
- **December 9-11** Tri-State Winter Weekend, St. Simons Island, GA



REGISTER  
BY 9/30  
TO  
SAVE \$\$

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit [jaxafg.org](http://jaxafg.org) for listings on local meetings (in-person, Zoom, and hybrid) or for any of the events listed here.

Other useful resources are found at N FL area website [afgarea9.org](http://afgarea9.org). Further information about Al-Anon can be found at Al-Anon.org.

## A FINAL THOUGHT

Steps Eight and Nine have been an ongoing process for me throughout my recovery. Coming to the place of making the list, then working through it to identify the things I feel that I have done that need amends made have been both soothing and freeing for me. I seek freedom from the ties that bind me, not forgiveness from those I feel that I have wronged.

I decided I wanted to place my once-beloved grandmother on my list. The final years of her life were difficult on our entire family. But for me, an untreated Al-Anon at the time, I shouldered a lot more responsibility than I was capable of doing kindly. I was not healthy in taking care of my own needs and built layers of resentment towards her. While I have given myself love and acceptance that I truly did the best that I could at the time, I still carried a lot of guilt and shame over how I had treated her during that time. When I first worked Step Nine, I agreed that I could make living amends by treating elderly people with an added degree of kindness.

In the past year, I have found myself exhibiting similar behavior and attitudes towards my own mother as she has started aging and dealing with the changes in her life that challenge and frustrate her. During a recent meeting, my Higher Power gently urged me to pick up a pen. I wrote "Living amends to Grandma means treating her daughter with the kindness I wish I had given her." It was a moment of perfect clarity to me and one I am so grateful to the rooms of the program for giving me. - Grace A.

## Panel 61

January 1, 2021-December 31, 2023

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