



# the bits newsletter

Seattle Al-Anon Information Service

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September 2023



## Out of the Toolbox

by BITS Columnist Callie D.

# The Agony and Ecstasy of Sobriety

There have been small windows of time where the alcoholic was sober. Within a few days the physical and cognitive improvements were quite remarkable. The core person that was submerged under the liquid toxin, began to resurface. The emotional volatility mellowed to some extent. There was a semblance of rationality. The fullness of their personality and wit were present for a brief interlude.

I could feel a tenuous hope rising within me. Maybe? Is it possible that they may make the choice to live their life differently? Will they give up the familiar enveloping darkness for the unknown light of recovery? I don't



think there is anything more agonizing than to watch someone you love disappear back into the abyss of disease and addiction, once again.

I believe that prolonged denial is the deadliest of defense mechanisms ... whether it is the alcoholic, or the one that loves the alcoholic. I am still stunned by the extent of self-induced blindness that is required to refute realities that exist in plain view. The trashed front end of a vehicle and immense insurance premiums. The slurred speech and impaired cognition. The medical report that spells out "alcoholism" or AUD. The uneven gait, and periodic falls. The broken promises and well-oiled deceptions.

I was raised in a chaotic dysfunctional environment, surrounded by alcoholics and self-absorbed caregivers. These traumatizing family dynamics were hidden behind beautiful exteriors. All I knew as a child and teenager was that I longed for my parents to be healthy, and for them to love and protect us. I prayed for the verbal and physical abuse to stop. I wished it could be like those fleeting moments of happiness, where everyone was content, and allowed to be themselves.

Many years into my recovery, within the “rooms”, I discovered I was “emotionally intoxicated” and “addicted to excitement!” It took numerous failed relationships, with me constantly chasing after love and friendship. Vying for a “hit” of attention from an unavailable cheating partner. Working in bars where fights broke out and the atmosphere was unpredictable. Remaining in friendships where I was betrayed and exploited. It took the extreme pain of realizing I was the common denominator in the mix. The suffering caused by this ingrained cycle finally broke through the haze of my denial. I was trying to “fix” my alcoholic family through repeated maladaptive experiences.

I am no longer attracted to mayhem. Emotional sobriety gives me a better foundation for navigating life.

“We examine our role in the family disease not to blame ourselves, but rather to deepen our understanding and compassion for those parts of ourselves we want to change.”  
(*Opening Our Hearts, Transforming Our Losses*) <https://al-anon.org/blog/opening-hearts-transforming-losses>

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# Ice Cream Social Reflections

by Dave M - Vice Chair

The Ice Cream Social held August 20th, was a rousing success! Despite hot weather, smoky skies, highway closures and the chronic parking shortage around the church, 35 to 40 brave, adventurous Al-Anon’s showed up to the party. Attendees were rewarded with a great afternoon of fellowship in a beautiful garden setting. The neat thing for me was that I got to meet several “Zoomies” in person for the first time! WooHoo! That was particularly exciting for me!

Ice cream sundaes and root beer floats were front and center in the garden area as attendees enjoyed both! The scoopers were magnanimous, supplying copious amounts of ice cream for both floats and sundaes, while encouraging us to return for more! Nobody is quite sure who had the record for most return visits, I am sure we had all the ice cream we wanted!

AIS Bingo was another hit with attendees. The bingo card was a cleverly crafted series of Al-Anon related questions that could only be answered by talking with each other! Funny how the answers are always in the room! Lots of interaction, lots of fun! The Bingo winner had already purchased a copy of the BINGO prize Al-Anon's newest daily reader, A Little Time for Myself, so they paid it forward by giving it to a newcomer! However, everyone that played was a winner to me!

We had a special Archives Table this year! Lots of interesting stuff was displayed. It was interesting to look at Al-Anon from a historical

perspective, and it helps me understand how and why it works!

Some literature was sold, some given away, and all showcased the library! Just another day at the office!

Thanks to all the volunteers who put on the show; we couldn't have done it without you! Your service is appreciated. Thanks also to all attendees. It was great to see you, meet you and spend time with you! I'm grateful for our time together.

August 2024 is only 12 months away; counting down the days.



## Has Your Meeting Changed?

- Gone back to meeting in person
- Become hybrid or concurrent
- Has a new physical location
- Made other changes that members need to know about
- Has an alternate Holiday Schedule
- Has disbanded

Please send all meeting changes to the WA Area Group Records Coordinator <https://wa-al-anon.org/meeting-changes/>

Changes and Updates are made Weekly. (Seattle AIS is automatically cc'd in the change request)

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the Seattle AIS updated meeting schedule, please contact [meetingdirectoryeditor@seattle-al-anon.org](mailto:meetingdirectoryeditor@seattle-al-anon.org)

## Order the Forum Magazine



Al-Anon's monthly magazine features timely sharings from Al-Anon and Alateen members, suggested meeting topics, and the latest information on worldwide Al-Anon recovery. Experience and insight you won't find anywhere else!

**NOT EVERYONE TRAPPED BY ALCOHOL IS AN ALCOHOLIC.**

Families and friends are suffering too.

Do you worry about how much someone drinks?

Al-Anon and Alateen can help.

Join the Alateen Zoom Meeting Monday Nights At 7 pm!

AL-ANON.ORG

1. Go to the Play Store app on your phone
2. Search for and download "Al-Anon Family Groups" app
3. Open the app and create your account
4. At the bottom, click on "Meetings"
5. Under "Meetings" search for "WA Area Alateen Room"
6. When it is time for the meeting, the "Join" button will be red. Click on "Join"

Al-Anon Family Groups  
Help and hope for families and friends of alcoholics





## Step Nine

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

Making amends for wrongs I've done to you.



## Al-Anon Mailbag

**Mattie from Magnolia asks:**

I've heard people in meetings refer to something they called Al-Anon Slogans. What are they? And when can they be used?

**Clif H (Newsletter Associate) responds:**  
There are many slogans (a brief, striking or memorable phrase) adopted by Al-Anon. I use them to trigger my thoughts in a way that allows me to refocus on positive aspects of my thinking about a situation. My goal is always to direct myself away from 'stinkin thinkin' while dealing with a difficult situation and to head myself back toward serenity. Below is a small sampling of the slogans I use as I practice my program.

- Easy Does it.
- One day at a time.
- How important is it?
- Progress not perfection.
- Let go and let God.

# “What Seattle AIS Is ... and Isn’t” Workshop

## – September 20, 2023


by Karen L - Chair

Everyone is invited and welcome! Bring your questions!

AIS’s (Al-Anon Information Services), like ours for the Greater Seattle area, are created to make it easier for centrally located Districts (D14-D22 for us) to communicate and share information to our members and newcomers. The most used tool and example is the one Seattle AIS website that includes all the meetings in Districts 14-22 versus each of the nine districts having to develop and maintain their own meeting directory and website.



Seattle AIS does not do everything for everyone however. We are just one of the Al-Anon Service Arms to support members and Al-Anon Family Groups. As Concept 10 states: “Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority and double-headed management is avoided.” Personally, my understanding of the service



GREATER SEATTLE AL-ANON INFORMATION SERVICES


### "WHAT SEATTLE AIS IS...AND ISN'T" WORKSHOP

**SEPTEMBER 20, 2023  
WEDNESDAY  
7:00-9:00PM**

**JOIN WITH ZOOM**  
**ZOOM MEETING ID: 839 6957 0120**  
**PASSCODE: 001086**

GUIDED BY OUR TOOLS (TRADITIONS, CONCEPTS, SERVICE MANUAL, BYLAWS AND STANDARD RULES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL) WE OPERATE SEATTLE AIS AS BEST WE CAN. WE WILL DISCUSS HOW WE USE THESE TOOLS TO MAKE DECISIONS.

We welcome all Al-Anon members, especially those volunteering or interested in volunteering at Seattle AIS.  
Contact [chair@seattle-al-anon.org](mailto:chair@seattle-al-anon.org) for more information.





structure is clarified when I learn what AIS does not do. I guess it isn't just me because at the May workshop, a couple members asked to hear what we don't do. (Preview: AIS doesn't register Groups, that is the Area's responsibility.)

Outreach is another major support service that we will be able to do this year with your generous donations. I saw members taking advantage of the free pamphlets at the Ice Cream Social to use for their local neighborhood outreach.

Please come to the virtual workshop and learn what AIS does to support our community, our Groups and our members. Wednesday, September 20th, 7:00-9:00 pm.

Any questions, email [chair@seattle-al-anon.org](mailto:chair@seattle-al-anon.org)

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**EASY Alateen Outreach Event**

Panel Speaker Meeting

Wednesday September 6<sup>th</sup>  
From 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM


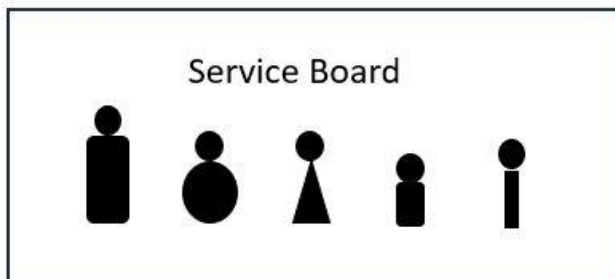
Snacks and drinks will be provided  
Feel free to bring an appetizer/snack &/or dessert

This is a open event, so everyone is invited  
bring along your family and friends!

Maplewood Presbyterian Church  
19523 84<sup>th</sup> Ave W Edmonds 98026  
(corner at 196<sup>th</sup> St)

## Tradition Nine

Our groups, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.



The sure knowledge that God is always with me, and expresses Himself through me, will guide me in every difficulty.

ODAT Sept 4



**Horas de Aperatura  
de Seattle AIS**  
El Primer SÁBADO del Mes

**11 AM - 3 PM**

*No se requiere cubrebocas*

**All Pilgrims Church**  
509 10th Ave E. Seattle, WA 98102

¡Únate a nosotros para disfrutar de golosinas, café y compañerismo! Sin oradores, solo mucha literatura aprobada por la Conferencia para echar un vistazo y/o comprar y ver a los amigos! ¡Los recién llegados y veteranos todos son bienvenidos!

Recogida en la acera disponible.

Nota: Ingrese por la 10th Ave por la PUERTA AZUL (NO por la Broadway). PRESIONE EL TIMBRE DE AL-ANON. Estacionamiento gratis en la calle. Hay dos sitios que se paga el estacionamiento que es QFC y E. Republican entre Broadway y Harvard.

Voluntarios: ¿Te necesitamos? ¡Por supuesto!  
Envíe correo electrónico al  
vicechair@seattle-al-anon.org




## AIS Council Meeting

The next Council meeting is Thursday, September 14th, 2023, 7:30-9:00 pm. Click the AIS website 2023 *Calendar* link on the *Events* page (<https://www.seattle-al-anon.org/events>) for the zoom information.

## AIS Board Meeting

Thursday, October 19th, 2023, 7:00-8:30 pm. Click the AIS website 2023 *Calendar* link on the *Events* page (<https://www.seattle-al-anon.org/events>) for the zoom information.



**Seattle AIS Office Hours**  
First SATURDAYS of Every Month

**11 AM - 3 PM**

*Masks OPTIONAL*

**All Pilgrims Church**  
509 10th Ave E. Seattle, WA 98102

Join us for treats, coffee and fellowship! No speakers, just lots of Conference Approved Literature to browse/buy and friends to see. Newcomers and Long Timers Welcome!

*Curbside pickup available!*

Note: Enter on 10th Ave via the BLUE DOOR (NOT on Broadway). PUSH THE AL-ANON DOORBELL. Free street parking available. Paid Parking at the QFC or on E. Republican between Broadway and Harvard.

Volunteers: Do we need you? Of course we do: Email  
vicechair@seattle-al-anon.org for more info




## Concept Nine

Good personal leadership at all service levels is a necessity. In the field of world service the Board of Trustees assumes the primary leadership.

WSO Board of Trustees  
assumes primary  
leadership



## Need a Free Newcomer Packet?

Anyone local to Seattle who is a newcomer and wants an individual newcomer packet (or in Spanish, too!), please send an email to [outreach@seattle-al-anon.org](mailto:outreach@seattle-al-anon.org) with the name and mailing address.

# The Al-Anon Declaration

by Allen L



One of my favorite meetings often ends with the Al-Anon Declaration.

*“Let it Begin with Me.  
When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help,  
Let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always be there, and  
Let It Begin with Me.”*

In the daily reading from *Courage to Change*, September 23rd, I found a new way to look at the declaration. The story is about a person who always responded to unkindness from others with a like unkindness. They watched an Al-Anon friend respond to a rude clerk with unflinching kindness and questioned them.

*“Doesn’t Al-Anon tell us that we don’t have to accept unacceptable behavior?”*

The friend replied “... *she doesn’t have to permit them to goad her into lowering her own standards for herself.*”

I suddenly realized that “*let it begin with me*” included my responses to other people’s behavior and not just to carrying the Al-Anon message. If I am to grow and change into the person I want to be then I have to learn to live the loving kindness that the program recommends.

I have often thought, “I want what they have” be it a clear understanding of the program, serenity in the face of chaos, or simply a kind and loving attitude. My first step in getting what they have is simply deciding to *let it begin with me.*

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## August 2023 AIS Council Meeting Minutes (Summary, not yet approved)

**Meeting Opened** at 7:30 PM with the Serenity Prayer

**Attendance:** 16 individuals

**Introductions:** all

**Readings:** Concept 8 by Pierre

**Secretary:** Kathy K: Reading of the July Minutes. Approval of July minutes.

**Chair:** Dave M, Vice Chair: AWSC held Aug 5th 2023-Karen attended and Seattle groups were well represented. The Fall Assembly will be in person. Further questions regarding the petition for a hybrid meeting fall assembly should go to the DRs to avoid double headed management.

A motion was passed on PEM that will be forwarded to the Fall Assembly to vote. Address any questions to your DR.

**Treasurer:** Gary H: Financial reports: Seattle AIS remains financially stable, as they work toward achieving the accepted Ample Reserve.

**Vice Chair Report:** Dave M: August Open House Report: Lots of people came and were engaged in fellowship with some literature sold. The new daily reader is sold out and should be back in stock by September but WSO is out of stock. He is sending thank-you notes to groups and individuals who are donating.

**Coordinators:**

**Outreach:** Solveig W: She continues to answer emails and send out Newcomer packets. Decisions still need to be made on any upcoming advertising campaign. She has discussed with Karen L. ideas for more local

campaigns with the idea of AIS funding more outreach that individual groups may want to pursue.

**Communications:** Jackie T: Everything is going well.

**LDC:** Mary R. There is a new volunteer for shipping starting in Sept. They have sold 4 cases of the new reader but are now sold out. New shipments expected in Sept. as WSO is sold out.

**Phones:** Dave M (outgoing Coordinator): It was a very quiet month. There were 60 calls in July with 44 being AI-Anon related. He has been checking calls on the weekend. The texting feature is very useful. There are no new volunteers but the phones are very quiet. Dave will continue until Dec. 2023 as Phone coordinator unless someone steps up sooner. A new coordinator is needed.

**Tech:** Pierre J: Please contact him if help is needed.

**Old Business:** Need phone coordinator. Ice Cream Social Sun Aug. 20, 2:00-5:00 PM at the AIS office. Planning is smooth at this point.

**New Business:** none

**Seventh Tradition:** <https://www.seattle-al-anon.org/donationinfo.html>

**Next Council Meeting:** Thursday, September 14, 2023 from 7:30-9:00 PM

**Next Board Meeting:** Thursday, October 19th, 2023 at 7:00 PM

**Adjournment:** AI-Anon/Alateen Declaration at 8:21 PM

Submitted by Kathy K, Secretary

## Thank you for your donations and your support of AIS!

Our funding now comes primarily from:

- \*Donations by Members, Groups, and Districts
- \*Literature Sales

Please send all AIS mail, including checks for literature orders and donations, to:

**Seattle AIS**  
505 Broadway E #400  
Seattle, WA 98102-5023

[Donate Now](#)

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## And More ...

**MEETING SCHEDULE:** registered Al-Anon groups in the Greater Seattle Area. Hybrid, Concurrent, and in-person meetings are listed

### **MEETING SCHEDULE**

Please visit our **Members** section for the most up-to-date information on:

- [List of AIS Officers and Coordinators](#)
  - [Where to Send Donations](#)
  - [District Representatives and Business Meeting Information](#)
  - [AIS Financial Information](#)
  - [Calendar of Events](#)
- 

## Meeting News

### News from the Meeting Directory Editor

The following changes were made from June 15 through July 30.

- Sunday, 8:30 AM, Sunday AM Fresh Start AFG, Changed to concurrent meetings (Zoom and in person) {7/31}
- Saturday, 10:00 AM, Saturday Morning AFG, This meeting will be in-person only on August 19th, returning to Zoom after {8/5}
- Monday, 10:30 AM, Monday Morning Jump Start, This meeting is now in-person only {8/8}

Best,

Wren B  
Seattle Al-Anon Information Service  
Meeting Directory Editor

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