

DISTRICT 18

NEWS

Humor Corner

A funny twist on a prayer with which we are all familiar:

God, grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked anyway, the good fortune to run into the ones I do, and the eyesight to tell the difference. - Ron Sims

Note: My mother and grandmother both succumbed to dementia in their declining years...it's no joke. Remembering to have a sense of humor about our human experience can help us through trying times.

Next Topic

Resentment : a feeling of deep and bitter anger and ill will

- do you dislike or are you angry at someone or something because you have been hurt or treated unfairly?
- are you holding onto unspoken pain and finding it hard to forgive?



Editor's Note

Patience: *the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble or suffering without getting angry, upset; quiet steady perseverance; even-tempered care; diligence*

My first lesson in patience that I recall is when I had my first child. When he was around age 2, as I was in a hurry getting him into the car, and loading all the “stuff” that needed to go along, I had an “Aha” moment. I realized everything would take at least twice as long with a toddler so I needed to adjust my pace.

Another lesson was the Mother's Day gift the same child, now in First Grade, made for me. It was a poster with the acronym M-O-T-H-E-R. The “H” stood for...”oes in a hree” (a first grader's phonetic spelling of “always in a hurry”). Out of the mouths of babes! Fortunately the “R” was for “relea buteful”. So it was easy to forgive him his honest observation of me.

I've had many opportunities in my life to develop my patience, however, I've found that it's a trait that doesn't generalize well for me. It seems that in specific areas of my journey, I need to learn

From Courage to Change January 1

I will trust the process of recovery. I will let time take time.



District News

Serenity in Yosemite

- Yosemite Summit Conference
- November 17, 18, 19, 2017
- AA speakers, Al-Anon speakers, Alateen speakers, 12 Step meetings & more!
- Food, Raffles & Dancing
- Contact your Group Rep for more information

Happy Halloween

Autumn...the year's last, loveliest smile.

-John Howard Bryant



to apply it over and over again. Since I've joined Al-Anon it's an area I'm revisiting and discovering just how impatient I can be. When I started work with my sponsor earlier this year she asked me to make a list of the things I "wanted to be restored to". So, being visual, and liking tangible things to remind me, I made myself a bookmark. I lost track of my bookmark in the last couple of months but found it again while writing this. Surprise surprise! The very first trait I had listed was *Patience*! So, it was no surprise to me that, without remembering that bookmark, I chose *Patience* as this quarter's topic. Clearly, on some level, I know it's something I need to keep working on.

Which takes me to my next thought...*perhaps one of the people I need to be most patient with is myself.* Now that seems tricky to me. I want to be accountable and not constantly making excuses for myself (disguised as patience). At the same time, I need to be gentle to myself and bear in mind that **Al-Anon is a gentle healing program (January 19 Courage to Change)**. I especially like one of the Member Submissions that talks of 40,000 steps to get into the forest (see below). It takes time to heal something that has been years in the making. I found it interesting that January 1st of Courage to Change is about patience...*I will trust the process of recovery. I will let time take time.* In reading ODAT and Courage to Change, over and over again I'm struck by the gentleness and nonjudgmental approach to the program that reminds us to keep moving forward, keep making progress, and have patience with ourselves and others.

-Newsletter Kate





Grant me patience Lord - and hurry!

April 12 Courage to Change

Trusted Servants Needed

There are several service positions still open. They are listed below. For detailed info see District 18 Al-Anon website.

- Institutions Coordinator
- Literature Coordinator
- Media Coordinator
- Special Events Coordinator
- Website Coordinator
- Alateen Coordinator
- Answering Service Coordinator
- Archives Coordinator
- Group Records Coordinator
- Hispanic Liaison

Al-Anon Forum Reprint

No one deserves my love as much as I do

I went to my first meeting the same day my doctor suggested it. It couldn't have come at a better time. For almost a year, I cried at every meeting - and still can. These tears cleanse my soul, and I feel better when I come out of a meeting. I need meetings now just like I need water.

I am 31, and I spent half of my life close to one addicted person or another. I had no knowledge of the disease and its effects on me. The changes were so subtle. I lost my sense of self-worth because I wasn't focused on me. I found people whom I wanted to change so I could feel worthy and important. Now, because of Al-Anon, I realize I was, and still am, addicted to chaos. That's what has become familiar and, unfortunately, makes me comfortable. I am aware now, and my addiction to chaos needs to change if I really want to live.



I have to work on me every day and will for a long time to come. But I need to be ***patient with myself*** and accept where I am. I don't want chaos. I want peace and serenity, but addiction is baffling, powerful, and cunning. I don't need to understand. I just need to be open and willing to change.

My habit of focusing on others for so long has made me sick. It will take time to get healthy. I have gotten better. At least, I am aware now. As long as I go to my meetings and bring my body, my mind does absorb the words. My behaviors are taking longer to



A Day In Al-Anon Report

A day in Al-Anon 2017 was a wonderful, successful event. Thank you to everyone who attended and brought their experience, strength, and hope to the workshop. Here are some of the highlights:

- Tammy E. from Sonora shared the healing of the 12 Steps and her story
- Best decorated table was the Valor Para Cambiar meeting. (see picture above) Congratulations!
- We say at every meeting the program works if you work it...a day in Al-Anon was a living example of working a program and the growth each of us experiences when members come together for a common purpose, opening their hearts and sharing their genuine selves with one another. We had the privilege of getting to know one another better and making new friends.

submitted by Sandi

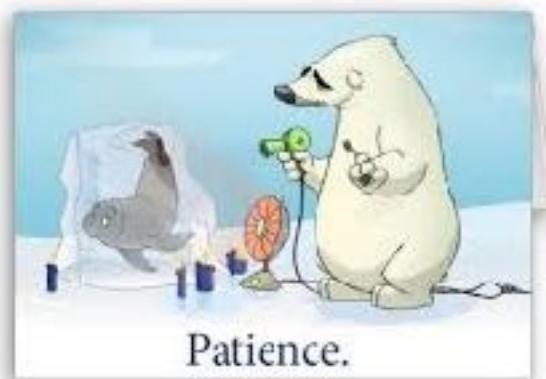
change, but I am a *work in progress*.

I don't need to beat myself up because the alcoholics and addicts did that for me. I can sound like a textbook if that's what it takes for me to learn. I can be flawed because, after all, I am still human. As long as I strive to have a better day than yesterday and not insist for things to go my way, everything will be okay.

I heard that no one deserves my love as much as I do. Putting my needs first is okay. Only then can I be of help to others, and *only* when they ask. Most importantly, I have learned to pray for strength and not for life to be easier. Life and its problems will happen. At times, it will be painful, but how I react is up to me. I don't have to be upset forever and continue to suffer in self-pity or fear. I'm allowed to have these feelings, but at some point I have to release them in order to move on.

I used to question everything, and honestly, this habit may never change, but I have learned it is easier to let go and accept. In Al-Anon, I can trust people, because they don't question *me*. They just listen. They help me be less judgmental. They have shown me many lessons and, most especially what it means to truly love. I can love myself and the addicted persons in my life most be letting them go. I pray for me, I pray for them, and then I work on me.

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Member Submissions

***Have patience with everything that remains unsolved in your heart.
Try to love the questions themselves...Rainer Maria Rilke***

Yesterday my son decided that he was ready to go to rehab. I was so excited and started to plan what to pack for him. I asked him to go up in the attic to bring down the suitcase. He said, "I will later - I'm busy now." When my son says "later", that can mean 3 days later. I kept asking him over and over, acting very impatiently.

Finally at 10 o'clock at night when I was ready to go to bed, I asked him again and he looked at me and said, "Be patient Mom. I will be ready tomorrow morning at 7:30 to go to rehab." I thought about that as I was getting ready for bed...that what a waste of time and energy on my part...asking him over and over again. He was going to rehab, not me! If he didn't have the things he wanted when he was up there, it was none of my problem and besides I would have been better off, and happier, if I had been practicing patience.

Today at 7:30 my son's suitcase was packed and he climbed into the car, ready to start this long journey toward recovery (and me too).

submitted by Charlotte



This is a song I learned growing up

Have patience, have patience,
don't be in such a hurry.
If you get impatient
you only start to worry.
Remember! Remember!
That God is patient too
and think of all the times that
others had to wait on you!

submitted by Becky



Patience is also a form of action...Auguste Rodin

Patience is not always being in such a hurry. Slow down. Breathe. The world nowadays is too busy, too fast. It makes us crazy. Take time to look for pictures in clouds, to see the blessings in each day, to play with kids or grandkids. It reminds me of a poem I had on the wall when my kids were small:

*Cleaning & scrubbing can wait till tomorrow
For babies grow up we've learned to our sorrow
So quiet down cobwebs, dust go to sleep
I'm rocking my baby and babies don't keep*

If we apply this to our daily lives...that "cleaning and scrubbing can wait till tomorrow"...one can add in *anything* that stressed us needlessly (arguments, lists, etc.). We can gain some sanity. Patience is a gift we can give ourselves!

submitted by Becky

Is it Patience or is it Fear?

Who have I been deceiving all these years but myself? I have always prided myself with always wanting to avoid confrontation. I told myself, to be **patient**. If I confront, I will be cutting the other person down and damaging their self-esteem. I was lying to myself. It wasn't out of noble attributes that I wasn't confronting it was out of **fear** of further damage to my relationships by throwing gasoline on a fire, making the situation even worse.

My idea of **patience** was ... back off, it will blow over and no one will have to get hurt. **Wrong!!** After enduring the initial berating, without responding, I would receive Round Two of the same ... as I must not



have heard or gotten the point. Still not listening, Round Three....I would usually leave in hurt and anger and nothing was resolved. **The beast was buried and would rear its ugly head later!!** Only next time with more vengeance. This was my "M.O.", in my work place, my casual relationships, and my intimate relationships and it was **100% DISASTROUS!**

After working the steps in Al-anon, I had learned I needed to change. It had been **'my bad'** for not responding when I was confronted. I found that I was running from my responsibilities in relationships out of my **cowardice**, and I knew it, and that was constantly tanking my own self-esteem. So the mistakes that I had been making became more obvious to me as I studied the Steps and read of other people having to tackle similar problems.

Operating on my new found knowledge, I allowed the pendulum to swing in the other direction. I would face the things in my life that were hurtful, and life would get better, **Yes?? No!!!** Who had been my teacher on how to **"lay all my cards on the table?"** My qualifier. So, **I GOT IT!** Lay them cards down, and I did ... **unvarnished and to the point.**

What did that get me but a damaged and maybe irreparable friendship? Lesson learned, more to come. I should **patiently** assess my situations. **How important is it?** How can I tactfully say what I am going to say, with the least collateral damage and yet make my point? Great question! Until I am wise enough to address these challenges on my own, I need to read, attend meetings, contact my sponsor before I shoot my mouth or my texting finger off, and pray for **patience** for my contender!

submitted by Larry S.

Patience is the key to paradise. - a Turkish Proverb

In the past months there have been a constant source of stressors... deadlines, long waits on things others are supposed to do that impact my choices, volatile subjects popping up unexpectedly with loved ones, and the possible loss of money if certain expectations aren't met. My house has sold and I have to divest myself of almost all the furnishings, decor and tools I've used for cooking. Amidst all of this, I have had a core of peacefulness I am grateful to have. I wake up each morning, feed my 4 cats and then read my daily Al-Anon readers. I meditate for about 10-15 minutes on the ideas I've read about and say my prayers that God will guide my day and be with my son as well.



I am, thanks to Al-Anon, navigating an enormous amount of required chores and decisions that normally would stress me out and make me cry. Thank you Al-Anon!

submitted by Mary

God may be slow, but he is never late!

I have learned in Al-Anon how to be patient with myself when it comes to changing old behavior. For many years I heard in meetings that change takes time. I walked 40,000 steps deep into the forest, it's going to take 40,000 steps to come out of the forest. Then one day a wise man shared with me...you may have walked 40,000 steps into the forest, however you only need to take 12 Steps to get out!

I can't fix a spiritual problem with a human solution.

submitted by Peeps E.

Have patience and the results will show

Patience = waiting silently and praying. Patience means I don't have to be in a hurry and worry. I learned patience from a great grandfather who walked slow and told long stories. He would call me Suzie (not my name) and tell me stories of his life. At first I was restless but I soon realized he was interested in having a relationship with me. I still hold those stories and those long slow walks in my heart. I am glad God gave me patience or I would have missed it all.

submitted by Deb L.

I try to take one day at a time, but sometimes several days attack me at once!

How has Al-Anon helped me be patient? Al-Anon helps me be patient by monitoring what triggers me to become impatient. This happens when I have expectations of myself and I am not able to meet them. When I realize that I am feeling impatient I say The Serenity Prayer and I try to change my *attitude to one of gratitude*. I become impatient when I do not get my way and not fast enough. I try to use the principles of Al-Anon. I use the slogans, "*How Important is it*" and "*Let Go and Let God*". When I feel frustrated due to my impatience, I do something that I enjoy like going for a walk or call my sponsor. By using different Al-Anon tools, I try to live my life with more serenity and less irritation and frustration.



submitted by Anonymous

Patience has been a concept I've struggled with in the past. Today, through working the steps, traditions, and concepts I have told that I can use. I have a Higher Power I can turn to and ask for guidance. I can use a slogan like *Let go and let God* or *How important is it?* Today I've been blessed with others that surround me with love and understanding. I've learned that I'm powerless over people, places and things. today I can turn to gratitude and find peace and serenity through fellowship and the kindness of others. Thank you God and Al-Anon for being with me.

submitted by Ann B.



Listening For Your Higher Power

Patience is God's answer to my prayers. When I pray, I pray for God's will. My sponsor shared with me that he will answer, "Yes", "No", "Wait". It's easy to be patient in non-crisis situations, but when there's a crisis (or what I perceive as a crisis) I scream out to God, "What do you want me to do??!! I need an answer now!!"

What I have learned in Al-Anon is that I am exactly where he need me to be. If I follow His will instead of trying to figure it out myself then I will have more peace inside. I am done running the show. I turn all of it (people, places, things) over to my Higher Power. He has a plan bigger and better than I can ever imagine. When the crisis is over, things work out exactly as they're supposed to.

There will always be crises, and with each crisis, I learn that there is a Power out there greater than myself. I'm thankful for patience and waiting to hear what God's answer is to my prayers. I've also learned to thank Him even before I hear the answers. I sometimes pray the words, "Help. Thank you." It gives me instant peace.

submitted by Anonymous

I am most patient when I have taken the time to give my day over to God. When I let Him be in charge of the outcomes for myself and the inventories of others, peace can exist despite what is happening.

submitted by Anonymous

THINK



Don't just do something...stand there!!

*Before you speak...**THINK** Is it **T**houghtful, **H**onest, **I**ntelligent, **N**ecessary, **K**ind?*

"If only I can learn to quiet my mind before I speak! I do not want to act with impatience and hostility, for I know it will react on me. It is a mistake to think this requires self-control; patience can be acquired by learning to let go of self-will. Jonathan Swift said: "Whoever is out of patience is out of possession of his soul. Men must not turn into bees who kill themselves in stinging others."

One day At a Time in Al-Anon - January 20