
District 18's *Voice of Reason*

Self Care & Self Acceptance ~

When I was new, I listened to the people at the meetings to learn about self-care because I didn't know much about it. I tried naps because I heard it often as a way that people took care of themselves. It messed up my sleeping that night. I heard people talking about movie marathons and just "binge-watching" shows. That didn't work for me. I had to figure out what did work for me. How did I do that? I worked the Steps. I had to find out who I was first.

I set boundaries for myself. They aren't about others - they are for me. It's so I remember that others get to be exactly who they are.

The most living thing I can do for myself is to accept myself. In order to accept myself I needed to know myself. To know myself I needed to work the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts. I don't have to like my defects in order to accept them.

In service I learned how to talk to people, how to communicate. I didn't learn this from my family. I had to learn how to ask for help too. I always thought I should just power through a problem to figure it out.

Self care is always evolving for me.

Illness was a weakness in my family. When I caught Covid last year, I had to change the way I thought about being sick. Recovering from it took (is taking really) longer than I want it to. I still have issues. I still don't have the energy I used to. I don't sleep well or feel well some days. I don't know how to be gentle with myself. I have no patience and want to be well right now.

I need to guard my time. I used to say yes all the time but sometimes I need to say no.

I thought I'd work on my "to do" list this week but I have been tired. Some asked me what I would tell a friend who was tired and wasn't able to get things done. I wouldn't be anywhere near as hard on a friend as I am on myself.

I know how to take baths, take a break when work gets hard, and read from my CAL. And sometimes that's all I need. I've also learned there are other things I can do to take care of myself too. I am not an expert on everything. I can ask someone who knows more than I do to help with financial planning. I can study and learn new things that help me. I can take a class.

At a meeting I attend, we read the Do's and Don'ts. It reminds me I need to balance mental, physical and emotional needs. How? What came to me is to do an inventory.

I spend a lot of my day taking care of others. I have found that if I get up a little earlier I can do the readings and prayers/meditation. But by the end of the day I am exhausted. I don't want to do anything.

I have been taking an inventory, I do well with taking my meds. I see the doctor 2x a year as recommended. But I don't do exercise. I know that it would benefit me greatly. I know that I get a lot of my mental health by participating in Al-Anon. I set a timer for 10 minutes to meditate. My space is quiet; my body is quiet; my mind is not. I'm still working on this.

I don't think I knew what self-care was when I started Al-Anon. I'm a workaholic so when I wake up I want to immediately start doing things. I still have trouble with self-care even after all of these years in the program. When I tackle new things, I build in self-care. In old relationships, I have a lot harder time drawing a boundary.

I almost didn't make it to the meeting today. I wanted to sleep in! But the meeting is part of my self-care. I am working over 40 hours right now so I am tired. I know that at the end of the day I need a walk. When I go outside I purposefully walk where it is pretty. During the day I can pray for HP to help me. I don't know what I need so I can ask.

I have a list of things I need to do: Get my eyes checked, go to the doctor, see the dentist. But my list is long. It stresses me out when I see the list. What am I willing to do next? I can just do the next right thing. I fix everything today.

We have a health challenge going on at work right now. There is a board for us to put our goal on a sticky note anonymously and post it. It's a place that most of the staff walk past everyday. It's a way to hold ourselves accountable without the pressure of putting my name on it.

When I first heard about self-care I can say I do the medical well. I work in healthcare so I do go to the doctor, etc. I can see what happens when people don't. The rest - emotional, spiritual, etc I'd never heard of. I am working on my emotional health. Today self-care is accepting where I am and not beating myself up over what I am doing...just like buying junk food. I'd never heard of a self-care inventory. I think I will do that.

Knowing my limitations helps me.

I can ask for help today. I asked my husband to help with something today. My head is screaming because he isn't doing it the way I think he should be doing things. I have made some suggestions, I won't lie. But I am letting him do things his way.

Sometimes people ask me to do things that are in THEIR best interest and not mine so I say no.

One of the things I do for myself is I journal. I get it out. Then I shred what I write. After I am gone I don't want people to read what I wrote. It can be really ugly.

For me my favorite thing to do is to use the HALTS. It's really my version of a daily checklist.

I have a friend who says "Let God and Let Go". It helps me let it go because I started with God.

There is self-care in planning self-care! I am planning a trip so there is a cost in getting there. When I get there I will be staying with a friend. I will need to balance his needs with my needs. When he asked what I need / want and he is willing to buy it, my first thought is No, I don't need anything. But I am picky about a few things! It was a struggle to tell him and let it go.

When I play, I play hard. When I work, I work hard. When I come home from work, I let go of my work and I rest really hard. The problem with that is I rest so well that I don't get anything done at home like cleaning!



Happy **O**ur **P**rogram **E**xists

I'm finding hope in topics and shares at meetings. Even seeing people struggle and get emotional in meetings. That reminds me I am human. It also reminds me to have hope. I am not alone now. I started to feel hope as I kept coming back.

Buying Hope for Today was on my to-do list. At the new meeting I started to attend they used it all the time. I did new inventory after starting to read it. There's always a new layer to peel off.

I am tired of living in fear. I am not tired of taking care of myself. I have hope now that the future is going to get better.

It's like not seeing well. I don't know I don't see well and I don't know what I am missing. Then I got glasses. Wow, all the new things I can now see.

The beginning of the year I list my goals for the year. I have goals that are financial, physical, career related, etc. I just need to know things are possible. That gives me a more positive view and hope.

I continue to be grateful.

The readings at the beginning and the end of the meeting keep me coming back. It says I can be happy whether the alcoholic is still drinking or not. That there's no unhappiness too great to be lessened. They tell me where to go and what to do. And that I am loved.

The teacher comes when I am willing.

When I was new, part of the wellcome and the closing I didn't believe. I didn't think it was possible to be happy whether he was drinking or not. I started to hear shares and I started to believe it was possible.

I heard take what I liked and leave the rest. I got to try new ideas with that. They might work today, might work tomorrow, maybe next week or next month.

I didn't have to hide. Others had similar things happen and I wasn't alone anymore.

For me step 2 is about hope. It gives me something to do, a place to go. The tools of the program and what people share at meetings give me hope.

Hearing other people's experiences.

Today I can look forward with hope - to the end of my nose.

Hope does not mean getting my way or being happy.

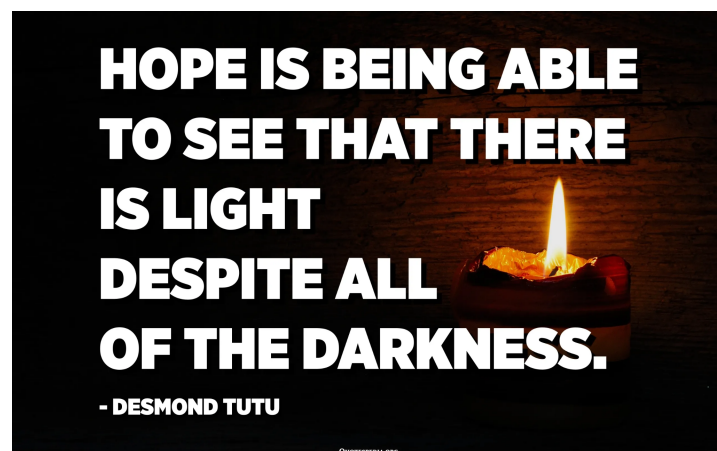
How do we do this when I have awful scenarios going on in my life? I might do it differently from you. But it's about options for me. By listening to your experiences I am not stuck. I'll get through it. How will I do it? With hope? With anger? With resentment? It's up to me.

I am tired of being sick. I am tired of having to recover. I want my life to be easier, smoother, happier. When I go to meetings, when I listen, I get hope. I can move from despair to hope. I can repeat it as often as I need.

Every day I get perspective from meetings in literature. The Serenity prayer to "wisdom to know the difference" gives me hope. Hearing other people's experiences gives me options.

The opening and closing give me hope. I use prayers and meditation, a God box, journaling, and steps. I am working on my 4th Step right now. I'm not done yet but I now have hope.

Hope gets me out of bed every morning.



Hope = Faith = Miracles

Sometimes hope gets me in trouble. I have hope that the alcoholic would get sober but it doesn't happen. I struggle with it because my hopes don't pan out. I need to give it over to my HP. In time, things change and the miracles do happen.

Reading my daily readers gives me hope because I see how others have had miracles in their lives.

I was hoping to change some relationships. It dawned on me that I wasn't Honest, Open, & Willing. What do I want? I need to figure that out first.

Whenever things are going wrong, to figure things out and get out of the dumps I need the 4th & 9th steps. I'm human and I make mistakes and my life becomes unmanageable. When I go through the process of the Steps, there is always hope as a result.

When I work step 1, I feel like I don't have hope. Luckily there are 11 more steps. Step 2 says it will restore me to sanity so I have hope.

The title of one of our daily readers gives me hope: Hope for today. The title gives me hope for today, now, not next week, next year. I needed to have a changed attitude.

Hope used to be expectations. Today it is not.

I started hoping for what the future would be for my son. Will he be safe? Will he be ok? I can't do anything about it. All I can do is have hope and pray for him.

When I hear people share explicitly in meetings about what they are going through and they share what they are doing, I have hope. What kept me coming back was the reading that I could be happy whether the alcoholic is drinking or not. That told me that I wouldn't lose relationships.

The hope I have is the toolbox I got from Al-Anon. When I have a resentment, I go to my toolbox. I call my sponsor. I talk about it at a meeting. I learned how to use the Al-Anon tools. What keeps me here is what I hear from you on how you use those tools.

I have hope everyday. It's why I get out of bed.

I heard in Al-Anon that I should keep coming back. You told me it would work for me if I worked the program. You all gave me hope that my life would get better and it has.

How do I carry the message of hope? Step 12 tells me how. By carrying the message to others, I share the hope of the program. I have a message to share and it's that there is hope.

Hope is an action step for me. If I envision something better, I need to do something different.



The 7th International Al-Anon Convention Albuquerque, New Mexico June 29, 2023 - July 2, 2023

Registration has opened!

The registration fees are as follows:

- Prior to May 10, 2023 \$200 US
- After May 10, 2023 \$225 US

This registration

includes access to the following events:

- **The Party in the Plaza** (Thursday night)
- **International Big Meeting**, including the Language of Love Parade (Friday morning)
- **Family Big Meeting** (Saturday night)
- **Spiritual Big Meeting** (Sunday morning)
- **Your choice of many sessions throughout the event**

Al-Anon has negotiated reasonable room rates that are dependent on members reserving housing through the International Convention Housing Room Block. This helps the registration fee remain as low as possible. Information on rooms is provided at registration.

Check the event page al-anon.org/international for more information

SPECIAL EVENTS

Oct 13-15 will be the NCWSA Assembly here in Modesto. We will need lots of help! Contact April M to volunteer now or attend the planning meeting 4/22 at 11:00 at the Harvest Presbyterian Church, 1813 Moffett Road, Ceres. More information to come about how you can be of service!

Check the calendar on the District 18 website for more events including speaker meetings:
<http://alanonsanjoaquinvalley.org/events.htm>

Check the NCWSA calendar for events in other districts:
<https://northerncaliforniaal-anon.org/calendar/>

Want to subscribe to the newsletter? Send me an email using the email below. It's free!
newsletter@alanonsanjoaquinvalley.org

District Meetings:

When: The 1st Sunday of every month from 1:30-3:30
Where: New Beginnings: 1425 Standiford Ave, Modesto (behind Fleet Feet store)
Who: Open to everyone!

In The Loop News from the WSO

To sign up to receive the monthly emails from the WSO, click on the link below, fill in the following fields and click on Submit. [In the Loop Sign-Up](#)

Did you know that the WSO has a blog where you can share on the current topic?
 Here is the website: [Member's Blog](#).

Young Al-Anon Members Meeting list: [Young People Focus Meeting List](#)