

District 18's

Voice of Reason

How do you get back on track when you feel your program slipping away?
What do you do when it ebbs and flows?

When my program is flowing, I feel in alignment with my Higher Power, full of love for myself, my fellows, my sponsor and my program. I am eager to reach out, I feel open, service is a joy and I attend meetings regularly. When my program is ebbing, I want to isolate, I skip meetings, I take things personally, I feel disconnected and spiritually lost. Last Fall I had an upsetting set of circumstances that landed me in a few months of my program ebbing. This had happened before so I recognized it as a season of my recovery that I did not like or understand. But, I had faith that it would pass. It was uncomfortable and challenging, I wanted to do something to make it change, but it persisted. I keep up my daily readings, prayer and service commitments; and I waited. A new year brought just enough motivation for me to get back to two meetings I regularly attend, and when I did, my spirit was re-awakened. Having an Al-Anon/Alateen event to plan for in January - being of service - was the spark I needed to restart the flow of God's ease, balance and grace that I once again feel in my life.

Sarah E.

Whenever I keep thinking or talking about the same people I know something is wrong with me : I'm experiencing a slip. Sitting down to meditate has been very helpful. I also reach out to people. Call an old friend, call my Sponsor. I will journal. Make extra time to read in my books. Work on the steps and traditions. I always feel better going to meetings. Listening to others helps me to detach from my own stories. But in addition I also take a look at what kind of needs I have. I might have just been too busy and dutiful. Maybe time to get out of town, have some fun, do something completely different and delightful. Like an art class or go for a long walk in nature, go see a show, listen to music. Exercise, in- or outdoors. Sometimes I get that I only need to change my attitude and my life begins to flow in a positive direction again. I'm thinking of what I'm grateful for. Finding time to be alone always helps. Detachment with Love. Once I fill myself with good, positive energy I feel transformed. Because I have learnt to take better care of myself thanks to the Al-Anon program I can love myself again. I can also see my partner with new eyes. We can actually have a good time together when I stop being critical.

Mary L

*When things are going well or I am out of town, I think that I am "well" so I don't need to do my readings, I don't need to call my sponsor. Then I get slapped on the side of my head and I am aware.

*Ebb and flow is a natural thing in Al-Anon. I've made friends with that.

*I can't put a price on what I have received from the program. I feel that giving back is as important as receiving.

*Consistency, security and friendship. Service helps me be consistent and secure. And the friendships I've made in the few years I've been here - I would confide in them more than I would people I've known all of my life.

*When I am inside my own head, if I share it with Al-Anon friends and with my sponsor, it makes the progression easier.

*Go to more meetings my sponsor said, that will "inoculate" me. I didn't buy it at first during the pandemic. As time went on, I started to go to more meetings outside of my area. Going to 6 meetings a week doesn't necessarily mean I will not slip. It has to do with the quality of the meetings too.

*I use the phone! I call my sponsor and Al-Anon friends.

*I go to more meetings. I used to go to 1 meeting. Now I can go to more since it is easier to get to one at any time. I also bought a new Al-Anon book someone suggested. It has been a big help.

*The program has a step for that: Sought through prayer and meditation to improve my conscious contact with God..... to get back on track.

*The best I can do is be human. That means I will make mistakes.

*I try *not* to be *not* working the steps. It causes me to look at ME.

*I double my self-care. I start thinking about other people more than me. I don't eat as well, I don't sleep as well, etc. My mind is busy thinking about them. I mind their business more than mine.

*Working with others. When I am coasting, someone will call me. I share something with the person who called me and I know that what I am saying applies to me. It's the way my HP speaks to me.

*First I need to recognize that I am in a funk. I need to start doing my reading. I need to see who I am criticizing? Who am I trying to teach someone something? I need to keep the focus on me.

*When I am here, I listen to people telling my story. It sounds so eloquent. It helps me put words to my feelings. I'm still new so it's hard to express them. I can feel my feelings today. I'm listening.

*I'm on a "program holiday". I'm an adult. My sponsor isn't keeping an eye on me. I just want to relax and sit on the recliner. I don't know why, I just do. I need to be able to recognize that behavior.

* Doesn't letting your Higher Power run your life make more sense than letting somebody else's illness run it?

There are 3 phases of life

1st stage you worry what people think of you.

2nd stage you don't care what people think of you.

3rd stage you realize people aren't thinking about you.



*I have the freedom to take what I like and leave the rest.

*I have the freedom to make choices. Sometimes they come with consequences.

*I have the freedom of detachment.

*I have the freedom to accept without understanding today.

*I have freedom today because I did what the program told me -I got a sponsor, worked the steps, shared at meetings.

*Freedom from unnecessary conversation. Banter. Especially from people who I thought expected me to have an answer. I thought they brought things to me so I could solve their problems. I have the freedom to be silent and not respond.

*I felt free about a month ago when I found out that my loved one was using. I was free from trying to control it. I was free to choose my reaction. I was free to feel my feelings.

*Freedom to be me - whoever that is today. I am still trying to figure that out. I don't have to bend and twist myself to be what I thought you wanted me to be. I am OK with where I am today whether he/she/they are OK with it.

*Freedom not to know what you think about me. I used to worry about what you thought about it.

*I am more courageous and am free to try new things.

*I've never had the freedom to have the roof over my head be mine. I've been at the mercy of landlords. I have worked hard to save so that I could buy my own home someday. I don't come from money. Alcoholism ran my family. Money was never discussed. I still have financial fears. I have the freedom today to have a HP that is kind and loving, not mean and abusive.

*Freedom was chaos when I was growing up. I tried to control it all. I couldn't see anything other than the chaos that I was growing up in. Today I see that freedom is having choices. Even though in my head I don't always believe that.

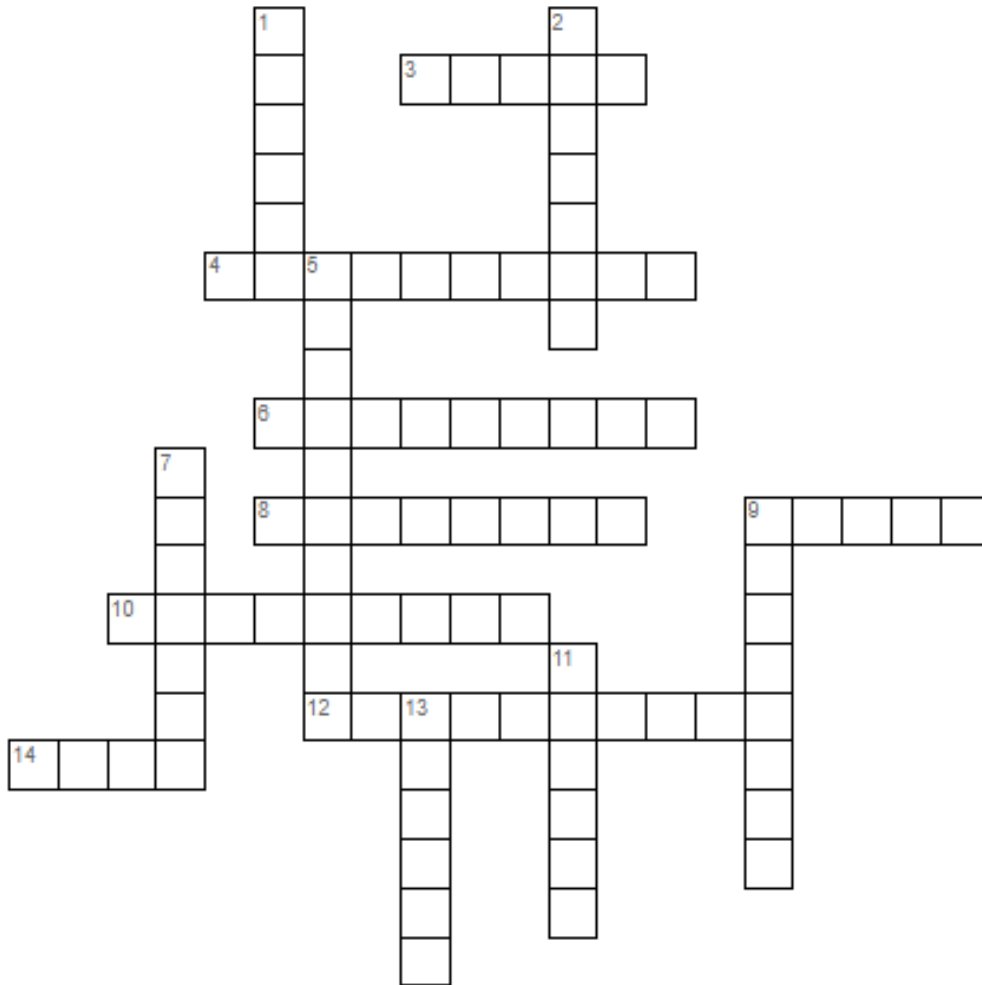
*I was bugging my wife recently while driving home. I kept telling her what to do and how to do it. She finally had enough and started chewing me out. At that moment I knew I had a choice. Al-Anon gave me the freedom to stop, and apologize, and to ask if we can start over. Things were so much better the rest of the day and even the next day.

*I realized that I have the freedom not to say the thoughts that are in my head. They just come and today I know I don't have to do anything with them.

*I have so many more freedoms today. I didn't get them by just sitting in a chair at a meeting. When I realized I had freedom of choice, it was trial and error with consequences. If I didn't have a sponsor, I wouldn't have those freedoms. I had to try different things to get something different.

*Freedom to do the opposite of the 1st thought that comes into my head.



**Across**

- 3 An instance of being or attempting to be comical or amusing
 4 How to play nice with my family
 6 Lacking power to act; helpless
 8 How to play nice in service
 9 Stairs to recovery
 10 The quality or feeling of being thankful
 12 Continued or extended thought; reflection; contemplation
 14 To believe, desire, or trust

Down

- 1 The act or practice of praying to God or an object of worship
 2 The situation of being under the regulation, domination, or command of another:
 5 A family disease
 7 The quality of mind or spirit that enables a person to face difficulty, danger, pain, etc., without fear
 9 The state or quality of being calm or tranquil
 11 A person who seeks sympathy or attention by feigning or exaggerating pain, deprivation, etc.
 13 Disbelief in the existence or reality of a thing

Answers on the last page.

Topics for the next Newsletter **Due 6/1/2022**

1. How are you living a full life?
2. What would you tell your pre-Al-Anon self?

You can type your response in an email to [**Newsletter Coordinator**](#), [click on this link for a form](#), email a picture of this page filled out, or print and mail it to: D18-Newsletter, PO Box 579491, Modesto, Ca 95357-9491



SERVICE

I had noticed in the last few months that something was missing from my Al-Anon program. Possibly it needed to be in the rooms of A-Anon. I missed looking into people's eyes and feeling love through the hugs. Something was definitely missing

I spent some time thinking and talking to my sponsor and decided maybe a bit of service would work in this situation. I packed up my pencils and went to a district meeting. The topic for the day was Attraction and Co-operation. It got me thinking what might bring in new members? Dianna was looking for someone to chair the March Event and so the story goes. The event focused on co-operating with AA. We had a wonderful turnout. Everyone in attendance had a good time and had a better understanding of both AA and AlAnon. There were a few suggestions for next time and all we're interested in next time.

One of the biggest gifts for me was the possibility to do more service. I was able to get the approval of AA to reopen the Wednesday Noon meeting. Our first meeting was the 23rd of March. We did not have time to really announce it because we started sooner than planned. We had 10 in attendance with 4 newcomers, all AA members. That being said, please join us Wednesday at noon on the corner of Oakdale and Sylvan. It is the Room where Northside meets. Turn in off Oakdale, it's at the back of the building.

If your program is in a slump try service. Go to a District 18 meeting, see what's available and dive in. I promise more will be revealed.

Hugs, Lin

My thoughts on our day in Al-Anon

I was a part of the committee for the Day in In Al-anon October 2021. I think I speak for most if not all of my Committee members when I say our thoughts were united on the goal of having some old fashioned live fellowship. Something that has been missed over the last 2 years. For me this goal was achieved. I enjoyed the process of the planning days as we bounced ideas between each other face to

face is a part of my program I have missed. I thank our group of actors who participated in our play based on the characters in the pamphlet Merry Go Round. We have some great Ad Lib actors in our district. Some even said as they were performing what they used to be like there wasn't much acting. It was their reality, experience, strength and hope. The Al-Anon AA panel was honest, informative and enlightening. The food which if I am honest, got me to go to a lot of speaker meetings and special events, was off the hook delicious. The charades, an item the committee had no idea how it would work, was fun, creative and joyful. I saw a lot of smiles and heard a lot of laughter. It capped off the day. We got to inform newcomers with our great literature and newsletter and interaction. This was an example to the newcomers of the love of our program.

To sum it up for me, if I want to improve or help my recovery, God and I have to take action. This event did that for me. It helped get back to the Al-Anon that I knew, and grew up with. Thank you all who participated!!! Thanks for the smiles and laughter!!!

Greg

Sometimes, your antics are entertaining.

Sometimes, I am the entertainment.



SPECIAL EVENTS

The 7th International Al-Anon Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico. June 29, 2023 - July 2, 2023.
- More to come!

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/>

Can't find a newsletter?? You can log into our website and go to the Newsletter tab to find it or click on this link: <http://alanonsanjoaquinvalley.org/newsletter.htm>

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](#)

