

<https://www.alanonsanjoaquinvalley.org/index.htm>

Easy Does It, One Day at a Time

This month, I've been reminded that recovery isn't about getting it right—it's about coming back when we drift. Al-Anon gives us that space to return, to breathe, and to remember that we are not responsible for anyone else's choices. Wherever you are today, you belong here.

While this month has been difficult, it has also been filled with gratitude. I am grateful to have a program and a relationship with the God of my understanding. I am not alone. I do not have to figure this out by myself. I have my Higher Power, a wonderful sponsor, Al-Anon friends, meetings, and Conference Approved Literature (CAL).

I want to be honest—this issue of the newsletter was hard for me to put together. It felt overwhelming at times. But I've heard members share in meetings that we *can* do hard things. And that reminder stayed with me. Yes, I can do hard things, even when they feel uncomfortable. I can use my program to support me. I can lean on slogans like *Easy Does It* and *Keep It Simple* instead of trying to do everything all at once.

This morning, I spent time with my Higher Power and read from *One Day at a Time in Al-Anon* (ODAT, B-6), focusing on the slogan *Easy Does It*. I'd like to share a reflection from my journal:

I tend to take on too much at once. I wait until the last minute and then crowd too much into my waking hours, leaving myself tired and overwhelmed. I am learning that I can cope with only as much as is possible in one day. The *Just for Today* bookmark reminds me to live through this day only. What can I do today? Not, "How do I finish everything right now?"

Easy Does It applies here because I often feel pressured by my own expectations. I make my life busy and confuse being busy with making progress. When I slow down, it feels uncomfortable—like I'm not being productive. But I'm becoming aware that slowing down is sometimes exactly what I need. Awareness helps me recognize my behaviors, practice acceptance, and then take appropriate action.

In a meeting, I heard a member share how she takes a slogan and applies it directly to her life. That really stayed with me. I realized that instead of stewing in obsessive thoughts, I can use a slogan and meditation to gently redirect my mind.

Keep It Simple helps me especially when I overthink or make situations more complicated than they need to be. When a task feels unmanageable, I can pause, meditate, and break it down into smaller, more manageable pieces. Most importantly, it reminds me to be gentle with myself.

Teri G. ~ Newsletter Coordinator and a grateful Al-Anon Member.



The Al-Anon Slogans

“Slogans serve as a gentle, calming reminders that our circumstances might not be as impossible or as desperate as they at first appear.” ~ How Al-Anon Works page 65.

- But for the Grace of God
- Easy Does It
- First Things First
- How Important Is It
- Just for Today
- Keep an Open Mind
- Keep Coming Back
- Keep It Simple
- Let Go and Let Go
- Let It Begin with Me
- Listen and Learn
- Live and Let Live
- One Day at a Time
- Progress Not Perfection
- Think

Click here on member shares on each of the slogans <https://al-anon.org/for-members/members-resources/literature/al-anon-slogans/> .

If you have a slogan that has helped you, please submit it to newsletter@alanonsanjoaquinvalley.org



District 18 Newsletter December 2025

<https://www.alanonsanjoaquinvalley.org/newsletter.htm>

Member Shares



Here are member shares when asked the following questions:

What is your favorite slogan and why?

How do you use the slogans?

- When I don't understand or I've been in a situation like that before I go to judgment and fear. I saw a quote / saying one day: Clarity comes when you ask questions rather than assume. Stop and ask the questions before I shift to judgmental and angry. Listen & Learn goes with it. I need to take a deep breath before listening or talking.
- Slogans get me through difficult situations.
- First things first. I had a tooth infection that was painful and probably infected. I'd never had this situation before so I didn't know what to do. I had to take it one step at a time. Without dental insurance the cost was a lot. It wasn't the way I wanted to spend my savings. But how important is it? It's the reason I have an emergency fund.
- Keep it Simple. This is how I live my life. Is it boring? Sometimes. But really I like keeping things simple. The alcoholic brought all sorts of chaos into my life. This is much better.
- Think - I thought I was funny. People thought so too. I was "punny" which was actually sarcastic and probably painful. It's in my nature now to try to be kind and to watch my words.
- Let Go & Let God: When my term on the homeowner's board was up, I stepped down. I was stressing and worried because no one was stepping up for any positions. I was losing sleep one night over it. Finally I realized I needed to let it go. When I was new to Al-Anon, God boxes were popular. I never related back then but that night I decided to try it. I found a box and put this in it. I stepped back and am waiting to see what happens. I don't need to be in charge and fix it. The next night I slept really well.

Thank you for the members from District 18 for these shares.

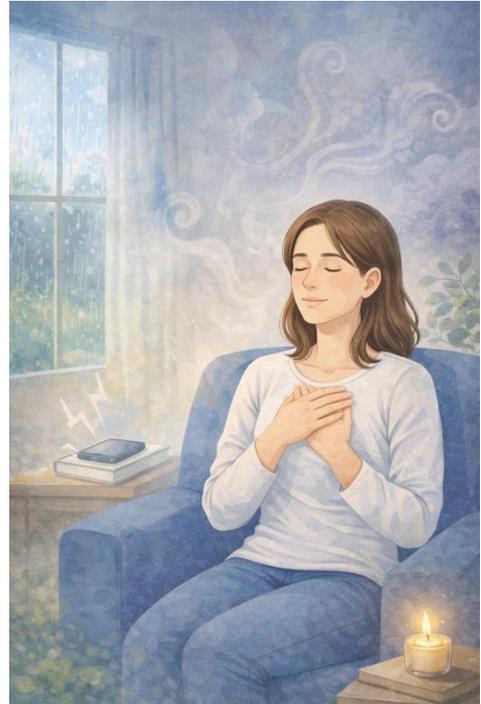
District 18 Newsletter December 2025

<https://www.alanonsanjoaquinvalley.org/newsletter.htm>

Serenity in Times of Stress

I find the [Al-Anon slogans](#) very handy to use as reminders on my journey to recovery. My two favorites are “Let Go and Let God” and “Let It Begin with Me.” These slogans capture the essence of the [Serenity Prayer](#) for me. By letting go and letting God handle things, I accept the things I cannot change more easily. It is a reminder that I am powerless over many things, and those are best handled by God. This allows me to have peace and serenity in times of stress, anxiety, or indecision.

Next, “Let It Begin with Me” prompts me to change the things I can to improve my situation. Sometimes, I forget that things may not improve if I simply sit back or just complain about my situation or my needs not being met. In those times, this slogan reminds me to think about things I could do, such as finding alternatives if I am unhappy with my situation. I could simply ask another person for their company or help if the person I first had in mind is not able or willing.



By Anonymous

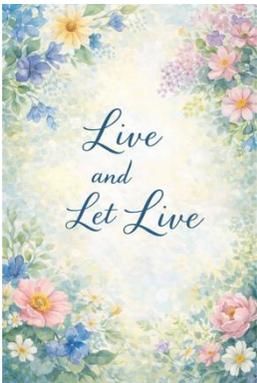
The Forum, April 2025

**Reprinted with permission of *The Forum*, Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.,
Virginia Beach, Virginia, USA.**

Learning to “Live and Let Live”

Before I attended my first meeting, I was much too focused on my alcoholic wife’s behavior and not nearly focused enough on my own. In fact, I was heavily focused on anyone’s behavior besides my own. I tried to make others live the way I wanted them to, thinking I could change them.

Despite my repeated attempts to curb my wife’s behavior through subtle manipulation, my words



always fell short, and, if anything, the behavior got worse—both hers and mine. So, when I first heard the slogan “Live and Let Live,” I knew it was something I had to learn right away.

It wasn’t long before I saw some progress in myself. I still had a lot to work on, there was no doubt about that, but the constant watching and repeated attempts to control decreased. I learned that I could not control anyone else, and after a handful of meetings, even the thought of trying sounded completely ridiculous. It had never worked before, so what would make me think it would now?

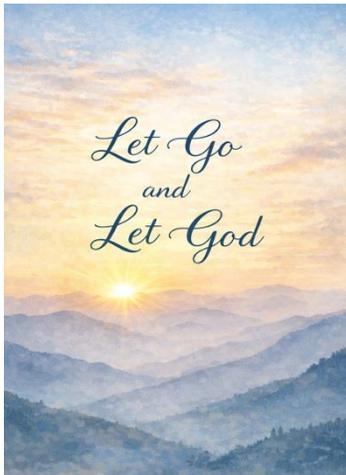
I’m constantly working to get better in this area—keeping track of my own life and letting other people deal with theirs. I strive to make significant and constant progress, knowing that it will be a lifelong process. But I know if all else fails, this slogan has real-life meaning to me. It will constantly be there as a reminder that I have to take care of myself first and let everyone else do the same... if they want to. And if they don’t, that’s their choice too.

By Peter B.

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Virginia Beach, Virginia, USA.

Let Go and Let God

Before I came to Al-Anon, I thought my son's drinking was never going to end. I was either going to have to find a way to stop it or totally give him up and never see him again. That's how it was in my mind—all or nothing. When I got desperate enough, I found my way to Al-Anon. You showed me that there are other solutions and that if I kept coming back, I might learn to



look at the situation in a different light. I did keep coming, and you were right.

I found a glimmer of hope, and when I surrendered to a Higher Power, that glimmer grew into a ray of sunshine. I started by using the slogans, reading the literature, and working the Steps. By changing myself and my attitudes, I found hope—hope for a future with my son in which I could love and respect him whether he was drinking or not. I could detach from the disease and care for him unconditionally. I “Let Go and Let God” until my son's Higher Power got him into recovery and sobriety. I also learned, with God's help, a whole new way of living—the Al-Anon way. Now, instead of feeling powerless and helpless, I am filled with hope, faith, and trust.

By Carol H., Florida

The Forum, August 2022

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Virginia Beach, VA.

Sometimes Miracles Happen

I am the oldest child of two alcoholics. That statement tells you a lot about some of the ways the family disease of alcoholism shows up in my life—controlling, caretaking, and people-pleasing being at the top of the list. When I was six years old, my only brother was born, and he became my responsibility. I have spent a lifetime being told to take care of my brother. I believed that it was my job to make sure his needs were met and that he was okay.

He has spent a lifetime perceiving himself as a victim, believing that he couldn't take care of himself. He lived with our dad all his adult life until Dad passed away. He dropped out of school and has alternated between low-paying jobs and periods of unemployment. He has been homeless off and on and bounced from one crisis to another.

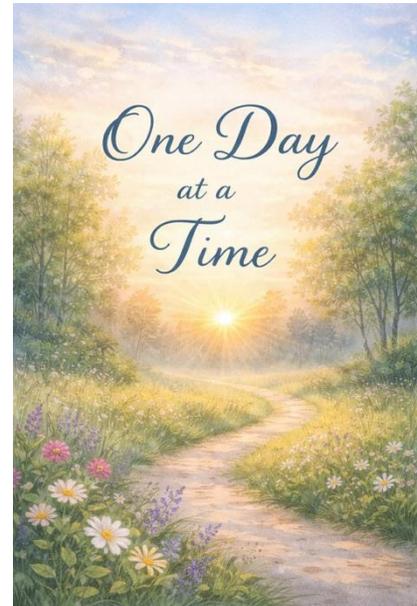
My dad's deathbed wish was for me to promise to "take care" of my brother, and I have always tried to keep that promise, swooping in whenever he was in crisis to help him, for instance, buy a car, find a place to live, apply for social assistance, get a job, or pay his phone bill. After many years in Al-Anon, you would think I would know how to "Let Go and Let God" take care of my brother as I learned to do with the alcoholics in my life.

But the challenge for me was that my brother is not an alcoholic or addict. He has no diagnosed mental illness. But, like me, he is a child of alcoholic parents. My Sponsor told me that some people affected by this disease just fail to launch. My brother is one of them. I have spent a lifetime trying to launch him into my version of a better life for him.

Several months ago, my brother lost yet another job and began circling the drain towards homelessness once again. This time, with the help of my Sponsor, my Al-Anon friends, the tools

of the program, and the grace of my Higher Power, I have been able to detach from his situation and quit trying to control the outcome. I talked to him when he called, but during those conversations, I did not grill him about what he was doing to fix his situation, nor did I offer to help solve his problems. I did not shame or berate him. I kept the conversations civil and pleasant. This was not easy for me, but with constant repetition of “Let Go and Let God” as my mantra, I am finally coming to believe that my brother’s life and its outcome are not my responsibility.

And sometimes, miracles happen! My brother called a few days ago to say that he got a job, on his own, without my help (aka interference)! The gratitude and relief I feel is overwhelming. I do not know how long this job will last or what the future holds, but right now I am so very proud of him. And I am proud of myself and the growth I have achieved by using the tools of the Al-Anon program. “One Day at a Time,” I am learning to “Let Go and Let God” take care of my brother.



By Denise C., Saskatchewan

The Forum, March 2023

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Virginia Beach, VA.**

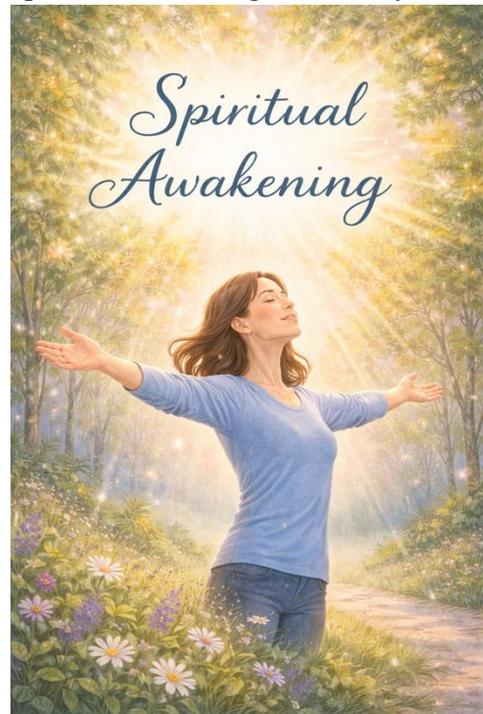
A Spiritual Awakening

I heard at a speaker meeting once that the difference between a “Spiritual Experience” and a “Spiritual Awakening” is that with a “Spiritual Awakening” I am changed, I am not the same. I must say, I agree with this perspective. Spiritual experiences feel good but do not necessitate change, whereas, spiritual awakenings always illicit change because once you see, you cannot unsee.

As an active Al-Anon member, I have experienced many spiritual awakenings over the years and each time I am in awe of how deeply they seem to penetrate my very being and alter my perspective on Higher Power (HP) on myself and on others. This empowers me to become more of my authentic self, while accepting others for their authentic selves. It also helps me to know my HP more intimately.

The following is an example of an awakening that I had recently and it is definitely changing me. I work a full-time job and my immediate supervisor is someone I affectionally refer to as, “Me, before Al-anon”. Imagine having someone as controlling as you were before program, someone who has no program, overseeing you. This is my situation.

As is my practice, I was seeking HP in the morning and laying my list of grievances before Him regarding how challenging this situation is. During this time of conscious contact with HP, I became aware of a fundamental piece of what was bothering me and it was the following:



“I was **not being invited into decisions** that were made

even though **they would affect me** and **I was the one with the most experience.**”

I thanked HP for this awareness and proceeded to get ready for my day. As I was driving to work that morning, I hear the following from HP...

“**How many decisions do you make Toni, that you do not invite me into?**”

“**This affects our relationship**”

“**I do have a little more experience than you do?**”

Yikes! I do with HP exactly what I was experiencing. I do not always seek HP experience and guidance, I dictate what “I want” and what “I think”. I had to agree with HP and I called my sponsor and shared my awakening. This practice of sharing with my sponsor helps me to anchor down the truth of the awakening inside of me.

As a result of this awakening, I find myself stopping and inviting HP into my decisions. This pausing enables me to listen more intently and yield more willingly. It also enables me to judge my supervisor less. While her behavior has not changed, my response to it has. All of this leads to more serenity for me and the ability to give more grace to her.

What a wealth of wisdom I miss out on when I do not seek HP experience. I love this program.

Toni M. A Grateful Member

SERVICE CORNER

Step into Service

Why Is Service Important?

Service is considered a **tool for personal growth and recovery**. It helps members:

- Stay connected and committed to the program
- Step outside of themselves and practice humility
- Develop confidence and leadership skills
- “Give back” after benefiting from the program

It also ensures the long-term sustainability of the group and makes the program accessible to newcomers in need of support.

District 18

There are two service positions open within District 18:

- Hispanic Liaison/Diversity
- Public Outreach

If you are feeling a nudge please come to the next District 18 Meeting, the first Sunday of every month to learn more about these positions. (See Save the Date section for time and location)

[District 18 Events](https://alanonsanjoaquinvalley.org/events.htm) (<https://alanonsanjoaquinvalley.org/events.htm>)

NCWSA Convention 2026

I am the Donations Committee Chair for the 2026 NCWSA Convention, I am looking for Volunteers to help with the Donation Draw. Please call or text if you are interested.

Teri G. 209-985-2039

Save the Date: Upcoming Events

Your Essential Calendar for the Season

Every season brings with it a tapestry of events—moments that invite us to gather, celebrate, learn, and connect. Marking your calendar early ensures you won't miss out on the experiences that matter most. Below you'll find a curated selection of upcoming events. Save the dates and let anticipation grow as these special days draw near.

Why Save the Date?

The world moves quickly, and schedules fill up faster than we expect. A save the date acts as a gentle reminder—an invitation to pause and prioritize what brings joy, connection, and meaning to your life. By bookmarking these key moments, you give yourself and your loved ones the gift of anticipation and, ultimately, participation.

Featured Events

Changing Attitudes AFG Speaker Meeting

Date: Wednesday, December 30th, 2025

Time: 6:45 PM

Location: Davis Park Church (In the back) 901 W Rumble Road, Modesto

Description: Speaker Meeting with Darlene D.

District 18 Business Meeting ~ Hybrid

Date: First Sunday of every month

Time: 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM

Location: 1425 Standiford Ave, Modesto

Zoom Meeting ID: 838 4051 8924

Password: Serenity

Day In Al-Anon

Date: Saturday, January 10th, 2026

Time: 8:30 am Registration Opens

Location: Harvest Hall – 3800 Cornucopia Way, Modesto CA 95358

Questions: Contact Lisa Z. 209-402-3470

NCWSA Al-Anon/Alateen Convention

Date: March 6th-8th, 2026

Time: Starts at 5:00 pm on Friday, ends at 1:30 pm on Sunday

Location: Maidu Community Center, 1550 Maidu Dr. Roseville, CA

Questions: Email convention@ncwsa.org

Al-Anon Family Groups' 75th Anniversary

Date: Saturday, April 25, 2026

Open House: 12:00 – 3:00 PM Eastern Time

Gala Banquet: 6:00 – 10:00 PM Eastern Time

Location: Newport News Marriott at City Center, Newport News, Virginia

Tickets: \$75

Purchase Tickets: al-anon.org/75thBanquet

In need of a meeting, click the link below for District 18 Meetings:

<https://www.alanonsanjoaquinvalley.org/meetings.htm>

Topic for Edition 19 Newsletter

✍ Next Edition's Focus:

Steps One, Two & Three
Traditions One, Two & Three
Concepts One, Two & Three

Deadline: March 1st, 2026

As this is my final year serving as newsletter coordinator, I've been spending time asking my Higher Power for direction and guidance. While doing that, I found myself browsing the WSO website and The Loop, reading through Al-Anon literature. I picked up *The Forum*, and the page I opened to was titled “**What's Your Recovery Resolution?**”

That moment felt like a nudge. My recovery resolution is to give the 2026 newsletter a unifying theme—and what better way than to walk together through the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts.

The next *Voice of Reason* will be sent out at the end of March. I invite you to submit your experience, strength, and hope on **Steps, Traditions, and/or Concepts One, Two, or Three**. Please remember, this is *our* District's newsletter. Submissions of any kind are always welcome, regardless of topic. A single sentence, a photo, or a simple thought may be exactly what someone needs to see.

On the next page, you'll find prompts to help get you started if needed.

Thank you for being part of this fellowship. Whether you shared your experience or quietly reflected, you are not alone.

Your experiences may be just what another member needs to hear.

✉ Please send your reflections to [Newsletter Submission](#) by March 15, 2025.

Together, let's explore how these timeless words of wisdom continue to bring serenity, clarity, and hope.

Your submission does not have to be topic related. Consider writing about your progress, a quote, picture or whatever is in your heart.

Al-Anon *Voice of Reason* Submission Prompts

Steps, Traditions & Concepts One, Two, and Three

These prompts are offered to inspire personal sharing for the **Voice of Reason**. Reflections may be short or long, written from any stage of recovery. You don't need to be an expert—your lived experience is what matters.

STEP ONE

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.

Reflection Prompts:

- What finally helped you recognize powerlessness?
- What did “unmanageable” look like for you—internally, emotionally, or spiritually?
- How did Step One change the way you saw yourself or your loved one?
- What was hardest to let go of when accepting Step One?
- How do you still practice Step One today?

STEP TWO

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Reflection Prompts:

- What did “a Power greater than ourselves” mean to you at first?
- How has your understanding of hope changed in Al-Anon?
- What helped you begin to trust something beyond yourself?
- When have you noticed your thinking becoming more sane?
- How does Step Two show up in your daily life?

STEP THREE

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

Reflection Prompts:

- What does “turning it over” look like for you in practice?
- Is there an area of life where Step Three is easier—or harder—for you?
- How has your concept of God (or Higher Power) evolved?
- What happens when you take your will back?
- How does Step Three bring you peace—or challenge you?

TRADITION ONE

Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity.

Reflection Prompts:

- What has Tradition One taught you about unity?
- When have you seen this Tradition at work in your group?
- How does putting “common welfare first” show up for you personally?
- What challenges to unity have helped you grow?

TRADITION TWO

For our group purpose there is but one authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants – they do not govern.

Reflection Prompts:

- What has been your experience with group conscience?
- How do you practice listening for a loving authority?
- When has Tradition Two been difficult—or reassuring—for you?
- How does this Tradition help balance leadership and humility?

TRADITION THREE

The relatives of alcoholics, when gathered together for mutual aid, may call themselves an Al-Anon Family Group, provided that as a group they have no other affiliation. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend.

Reflection Prompts:

- What does belonging in Al-Anon mean to you?
- How has Tradition Three helped you feel included or safe?
- What freedoms does this Tradition protect?

- How does focusing on Al-Anon’s primary purpose help your recovery?
-

CONCEPT ONE

The ultimate responsibility and authority for Al-Anon world services belongs to the Al-Anon groups.

Reflection Prompts:

- How does Concept One help you trust Al-Anon as a whole?
 - What does responsibility mean to you as a group member?
 - How does your participation support Al-Anon unity?
-

CONCEPT TWO

The Al-Anon Family Groups have delegated complete administrative and operational authority to their Conference and its service arms.

Reflection Prompts:

- What helps you practice trust in Al-Anon leadership and service?
 - How has service strengthened your recovery?
 - When has letting go of control helped you grow?
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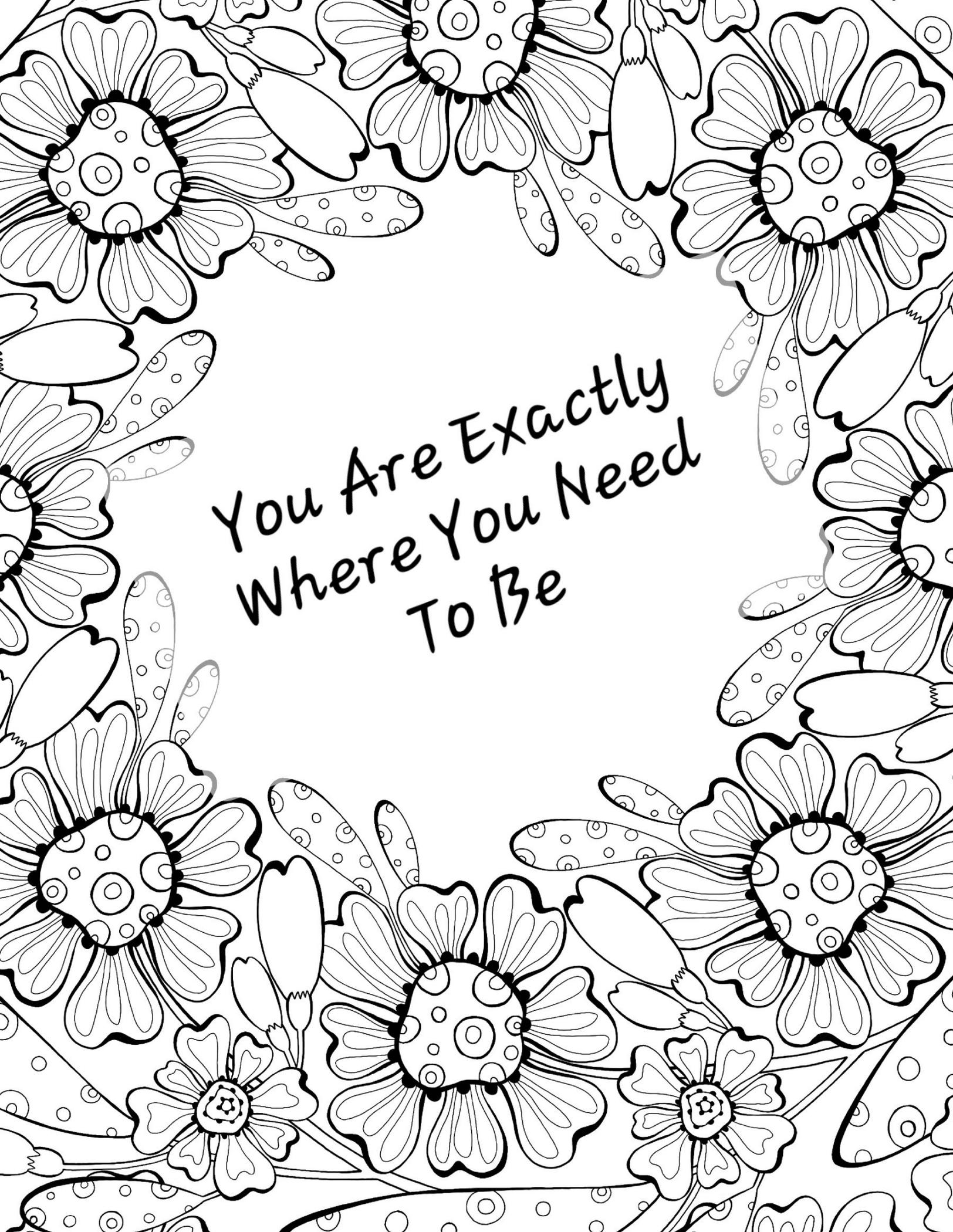
CONCEPT THREE

The right of decision makes effective leadership possible.

Reflection Prompts:

- How have you experienced the right of decision in service or recovery?
 - When has being trusted—or trusting others—made a difference?
 - How does Concept Three support growth and accountability?
-

All voices are welcome—newcomer or long-timer. Your experience may be exactly what another member needs to hear.



You Are Exactly
Where You Need
To Be

AL-Anon Resources

District 18 Website:

<https://www.alanonsanjoaquinvalley.org/index.htm>

Northern California World Service Area Website (NCWSA):

<https://northerncaliforniaal-anon.org/>

NCWSA calendar:

<https://northerncaliforniaal-anon.org/calendar/>

World Service Office (WSO):

<https://al-anon.org/>

Online Bookstore:

<https://ecomm.al-anon.org/>

eBooks:

al-anon.org/digital-products

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Convention 2026:

<https://northerncaliforniaal-anon.org/convention-2026/>