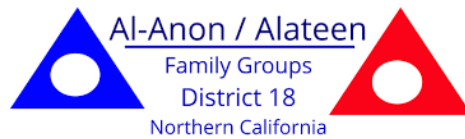


VOICE OF REASON

EDITION 16

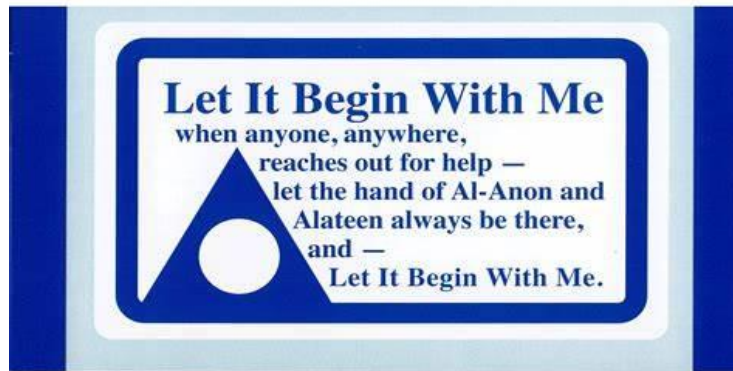
MAY 2025



Picture by Teri G. – Grand Teton National Forest

“Montana is where the soul goes to find its peace.”

I took this picture while visiting Montana. I was so at peace, and I took time to reflect on my personal growth while taking in the beautiful landscape. It was a beautiful day, and I felt very connected to my Higher Power.



Share Your Experience, Strength, and Hope

While each edition of the Voice of Reason highlights a central theme—this issue focusing on the experiences from the NCCAA Spring Conference—I warmly welcome submissions on any topic that resonates with your personal journey. Your stories, reflections, and insights are invaluable in fostering connection and support within our Al-Anon community.

If you have questions, ideas, or would like to contribute to a future edition, please don't hesitate to reach out. You can contact me, Teri G., at newslettercoordinator@alanonsanjoaquinvalley.org.

Together, we can continue to share our collective wisdom and encouragement, one story at a time.



In March 2025, the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous (NCCAA) hosted its 76th Annual Spring Conference at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Modesto, CA. This event brought together members from AA and Al-Anon communities for a weekend of shared experiences, spiritual enrichment, and fellowship. I want to say a heart filled thank you to Nancy T and Marcus B for sharing their experience at this event. It was full of fun and great recovery.

"Cooperation Without Affiliation: Al-Anon's Sixth Tradition in Action"

The NCCAA Spring Conference held in Modesto in March was a wonderful opportunity to see Al-Anon's 6th Tradition in action, "Our Family Groups ought never endorse, finance or lend our name to any outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim. Although a separate entity, we should always cooperate with Alcoholics Anonymous." (emphasis added) In Reaching For Personal Freedom it states "Cooperation means working together for our mutual benefit. In this spirit of teamwork, we can have loving, supportive relationships, and still exercise our independence."

At the conference Al-Anon shared space, sold donation draw tickets at a price that we chose, sold Al-Anon literature, retained all of the funds from drawing tickets and literature sales, scheduled meetings at times and with topics of our choosing, had Al-Anon members chair and be the readers at all of the Al-Anon meetings, and chose our own main speaker. Because AA covered all of the facility expenses we passed on the 7th Tradition funds to them in our spirit of cooperation. We also ensured that we didn't schedule meetings opposite their main speaker meetings or panels. Al-Anon received very positive feedback from the AA conference committee members for our participation. and enthusiasm.

Attending and being of service at an event like this reinforces to me how fortunate I am to have found this way of life. I belonged, and had a great time over the weekend. I had the opportunity to visit with old friends, and make new ones. I got to read our Traditions from the podium, in addition to participating in the fun of meeting people while selling tickets and calling out the winning

numbers. I learned more about the disease as I listened to AA speakers and related to Al-Anon speakers. I have been to many conferences over the years and they all brought something to my spiritual health and well being. I highly encourage anyone to attend events as you find them, and raise your hand for service. I believe it will bring you joy!

Nancy T

Try to be a rainbow
in someone's cloud. - Maya Angelou

✿ Embracing Service: A Path to Personal Growth

I decided to volunteer for the position because I find one of my character assets has been being outgoing / driven as I found on my step 4 with my sponsor.

I also felt like with experience at the group levels with being speaker seeker for various groups over the years it was kind of like a stepping stone to participating with district. I asked someone to be my service sponsor who had a lot of experience at District because it felt a little intimidating being at District meetings as a group rep, and not knowing all the procedures. The ways I felt like it has helped my recovery has been in a few ways; one was asking people for help. I cannot do every event on my own or do every bit of planning and preparation by myself. People in the fellowship demonstrated this to me, and my service sponsor helped me see I can ask people to be on a committee and most importantly trust that people can do their job without me interfering which is a big Al-Anon problem for me. Over the last 2 years as special events coordinator I have grown in that sense, and even when things feel like they're not going exactly as I planned, things always turn out for the best when I just Let Go and Let God. I also have grown to see how all aspects of NCWSA, WSO and the districts all function, and I enjoy going to district meetings now!

Marcus B.

Thank you, Nancy T and Marcus B for sharing your personal journey for your reflections. They illustrate how service in Al-Anon fosters personal growth and recovery.

Stepping Out, Growing Within

One of the many reasons I chose to be of service to our district was to challenge myself—to step out of my shell and grow. But above all, my main motivation was to work my program and stay committed to my recovery. Taking on the role of newsletter coordinator gave me the perfect opportunity to do just that. It was also the reason I attended the NCCAA 76th Annual Spring Conference with Al-Anon Participation—and I'm so glad I did.

The experience was truly uplifting. I met new people, reconnected with familiar, friendly faces, and was inspired by a heartfelt speaker. As an added bonus, I even won a beautiful basket! But

beyond the surface-level joy, the conference gave me something far deeper: a moment to reflect on how far I've come in my recovery. It reminded me that the program works.

I attended the conference with someone who is not in the program. Being with them reminded me of who I used to be—before Al-Anon. Like them, I once held many limiting beliefs and skepticism around spirituality. I didn't grow up with any strong spiritual or religious foundation. While my grandparents went to church and spoke of God, to me, their actions didn't align with their words. As a result, I became disillusioned. My immediate family wasn't religious, so I never thought spirituality was something I wanted—or needed—in my life.

For years, I searched for a sense of spiritual belonging that wouldn't spark conflict within my family. Every time I tried to discuss these ideas, it became a debate. Spirituality felt like a box I didn't fit into.

Fast forward 30 years: I entered Al-Anon in 2023, broken and desperate for change. I was tired of the pain, tired of the chaos. I knew I couldn't continue living the way I was. Through meetings, listening to members, reading the literature, and connecting with a sponsor who shared her experience, strength, and hope, I realized—I wanted what you all had.

Today, I have a relationship with the God of my understanding. It's a relationship that continues to grow, rooted in compassion, grace, and acceptance. I've learned that I get to define what my relationship with my Higher Power looks like. And just as importantly, I've learned I have no right to judge anyone else's relationship with theirs.

After the conference, the person I brought with me struggled with the speaker's frequent mention of "God," "the God of my understanding," and "Higher Power." I wasn't surprised. In my family, those words—God, prayer, blessed—are fighting words. Any mention of faith tends to erupt into a battle of science versus religion. In that world, believing in something greater than yourself means you're naive or irrational. I've been mocked for such beliefs and made to feel small.

But in that moment of discomfort, I had a conversation with the individual that meant everything to me. I explained that my beliefs are simply different from theirs—not right or wrong, just mine. And while they hoped I might change my views, I stood firm, knowing my spirituality is no longer something I need to justify or shrink.

As it says in *Courage to Change* page 117:

"Many of us need time to come to terms with the spiritual nature of the Al-Anon program. If we were required to believe in a Higher Power in order to participate in Al-Anon, we might never have continued to attend meetings. Eventually, many of us do come to believe in a Higher Power because we are free to come to our own understanding in our own time. That way, whatever we learn will have meaning for us."

Thank you for letting be of service. Teri G.



❀ Ladies Luncheon – Merced, May 3rd, 2025 ❀

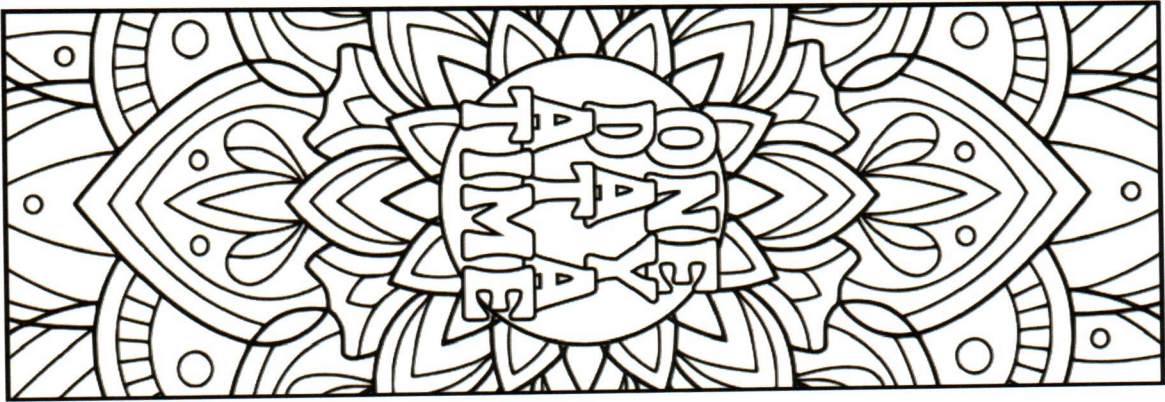
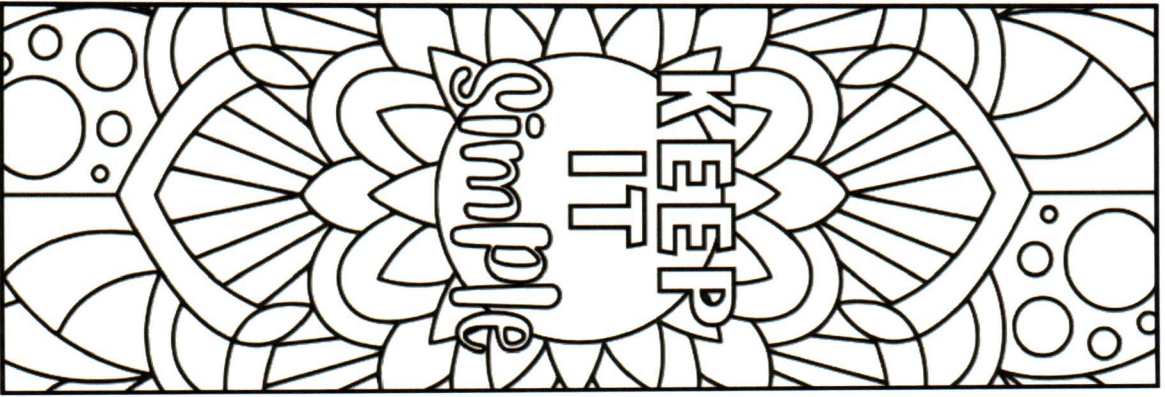
I would like to extend my heartfelt **thanks to Antonia M., Carmen A., Patty L., Diana C., Shawneller B., Amy H. and Emma H.** for hosting such a **wonderful Ladies Luncheon on Saturday, May 3rd, 2025, in Merced at Ravello's Restaurant.** Also, thank you to **Erin H.** for having the Al-Anon Literature table. It was truly a **lovely experience**, filled with joy, connection, and the spirit of recovery.

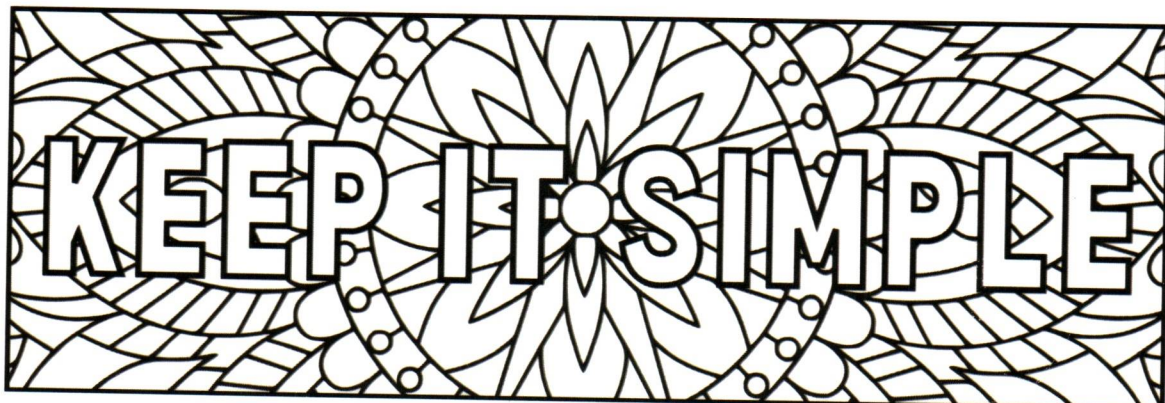
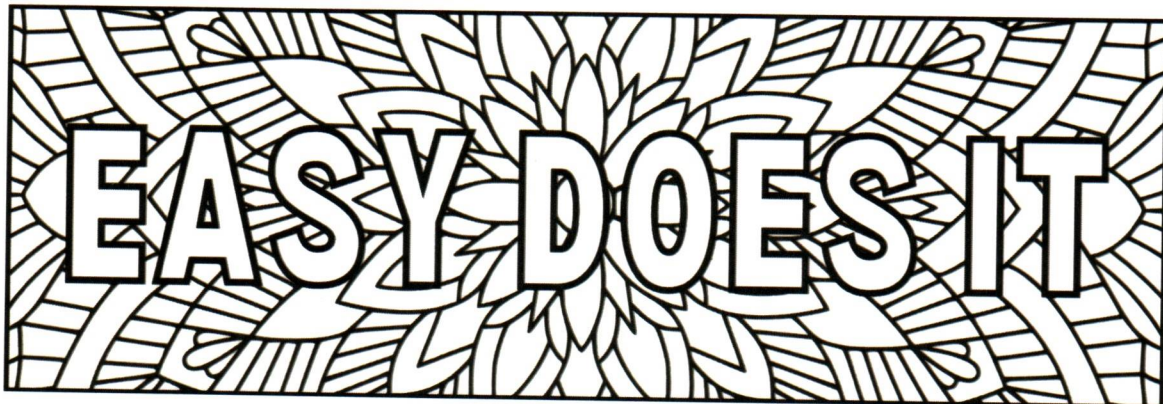
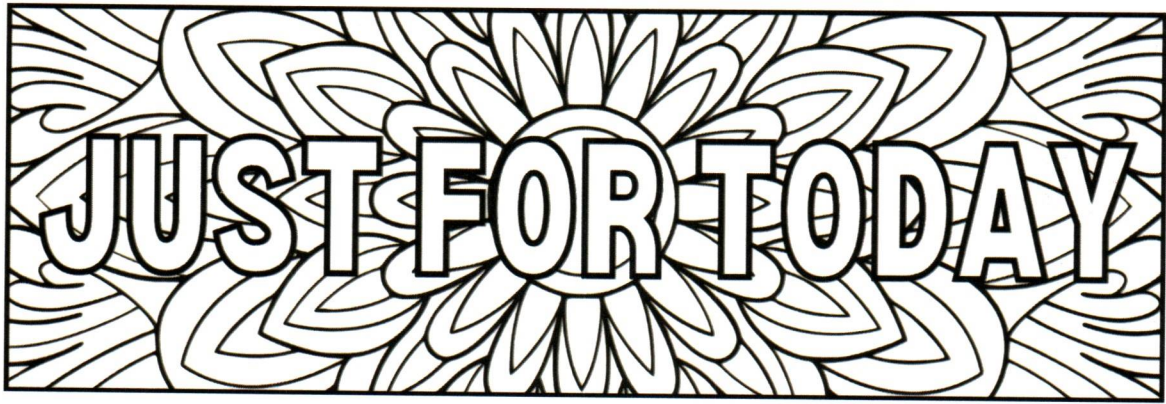
The **food was delicious**, the **atmosphere was warm and full of laughter**, and the **decorations were charming**, adorned thoughtfully with **Al-Anon slogans** that reminded us all of our shared journey. Special thanks to **Antonia M.**, who provided **coloring bookmarks** (shared here with her permission) that added a unique and personal touch.

A total of **fifty-nine attendees** joined us—including **two Alateens** and **three little ones**—filling the space with community and love. There were **fourteen beautiful donation baskets**, each one amazing in its own right.

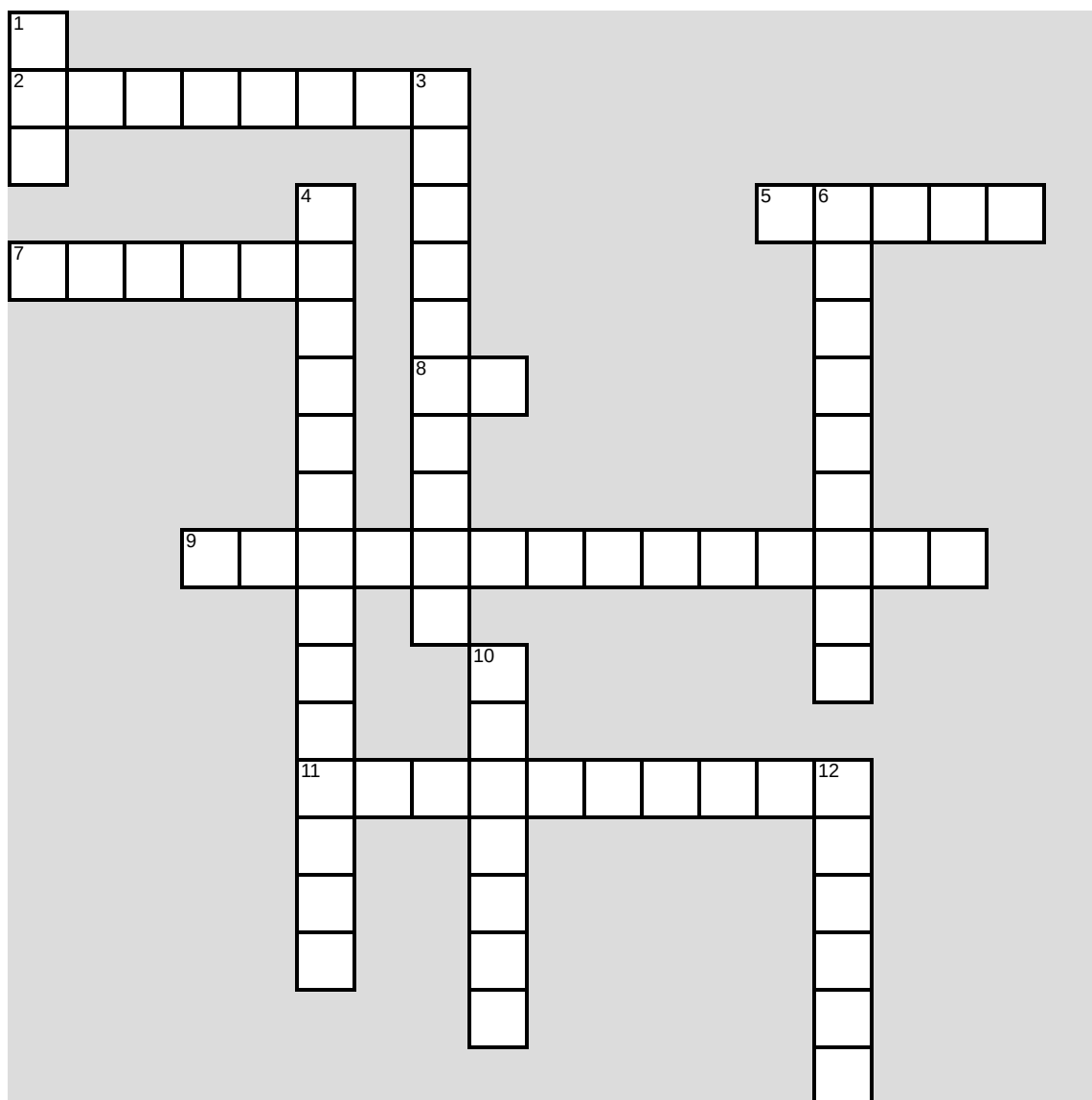
We were also deeply moved by the words of **two Al-Anon** and **two AA speakers**, who shared their **experience, strength, and hope**. The room was filled with a powerful sense of **recovery and unity**.

This was truly a memorable event, and I hope we'll have the opportunity to gather again next year!





Al-Anon Crossword Puzzle



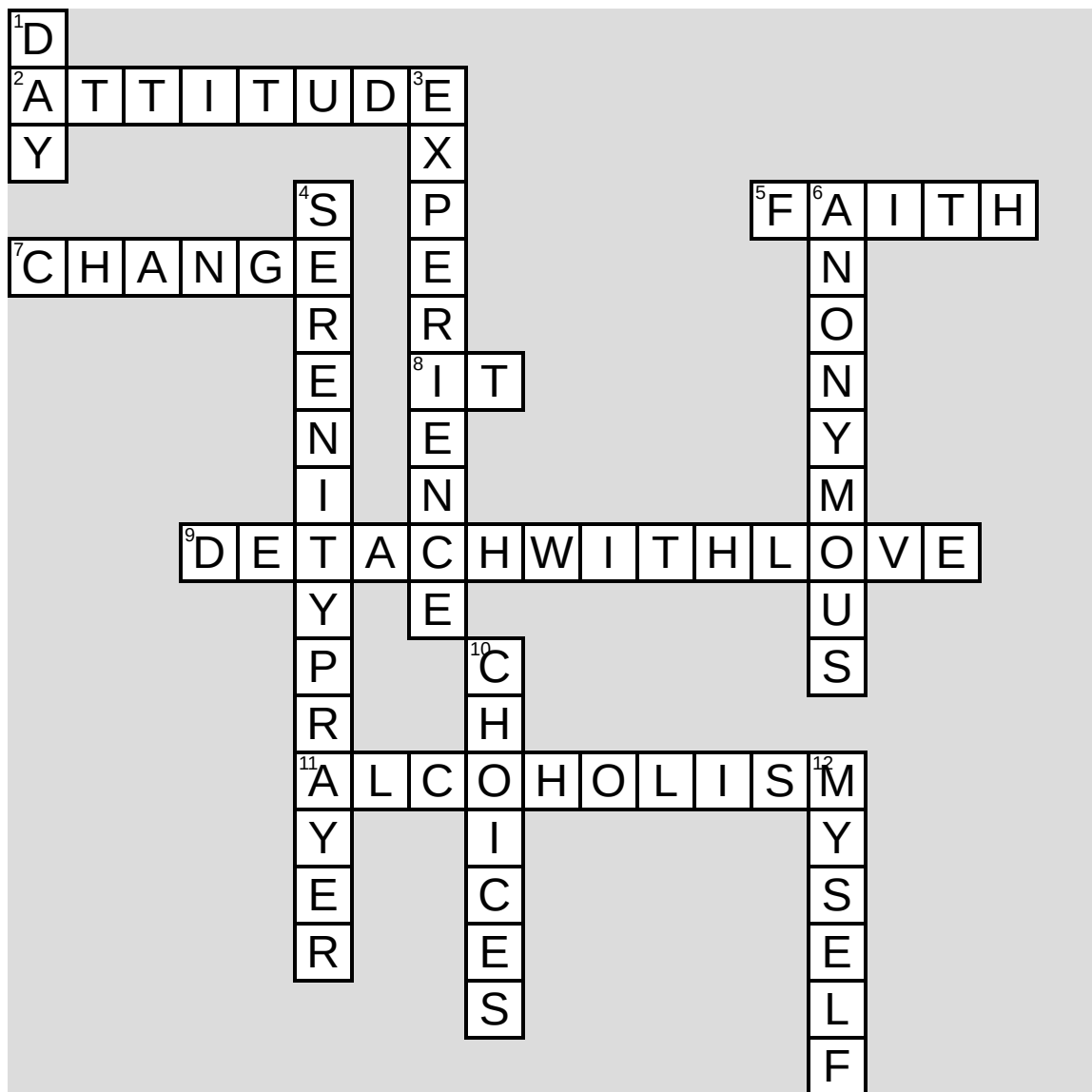
Across

- 2** Famous acronym for what we can change: Ourselves and our _____.
- 5** The 12 steps help build this type of relationship
- 7** Sponsor relationships promote this kind of growth.
- 8** "Let ____ begin with me"
- 9** Tool used to keep serenity and avoid control (3 words)
- 11** Many Al-Anon members are affected by someone's _____

Down

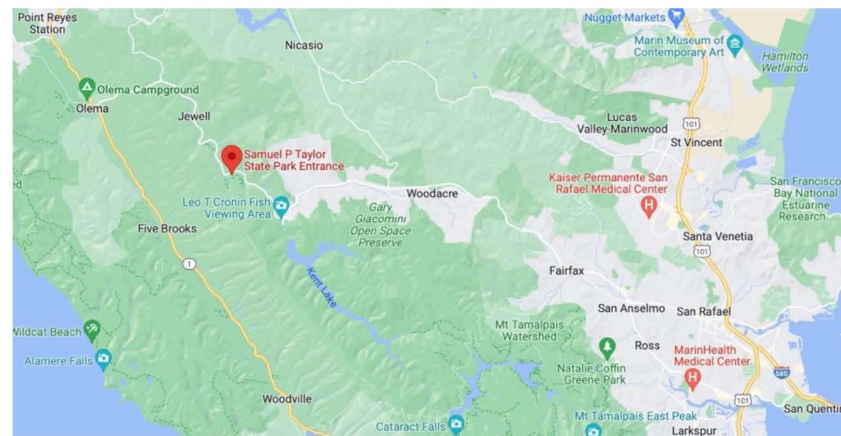
- 1** A key concept in Al-Anon: taking things one ____ at a time.
- 3** We are here to share our _____, strength and hope.
- 4** A meeting often starts with this reading (2 words)
- 6** Al-Anon is a _____ group of(nonprofessional)
- 10** We are not responsible for another person's _____.
- 12** A central concept of Al-Anon: taking care of _____.

Al-Anon Crossword Puzzle



A DAY IN THE REDWOODS

Overcoming Shame Through Community



The Park is located 15 miles/30 minutes west of San Rafael on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard. Look for the “Camp Taylor” entrance.

We have reserved the Redwood Grove Group Picnic Area at Samuel P. Taylor State Park. Parking and bathrooms are nearby.



14th Annual Corte Madera Men's Al-Anon Event

Sponsored by Monday Night Men's AFG, District 11

Saturday May 17, 2025

Samuel P. Taylor State Park
Redwood Grove Group Picnic Area
8889 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard Lagunitas, CA

9:00 AM to Sunset

Setup begins at 8:00 AM

Al-Anon  Family Groups

PROTOCOLS

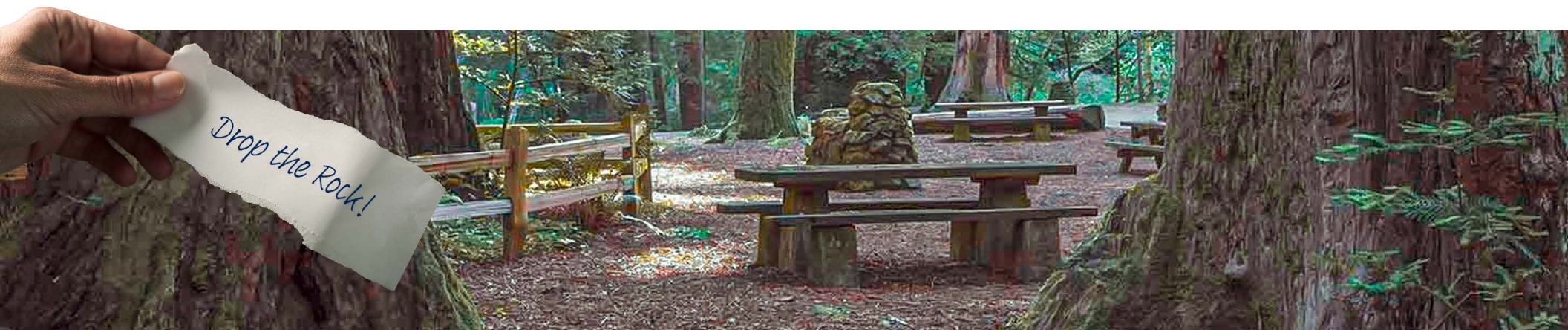
1. Please bring a camp chair or 2 if you can.
2. The Park enjoys a mild climate and is usually cooler than San Rafael. The picnic area is shaded. There is a fire pit. Layered clothing is best. If you can, bring an extra coat and a poncho in case of rain.
3. A light breakfast (coffee, pastries, fruit), lunch, soft drinks, afternoon snacks, and dinner are provided.
4. Speakers will share for up to 20 minutes, followed by member shares. Breakout groups are used to encourage intimacy and closer communications. Each participant chooses which breakout group to be in.
5. Multiple shares on a topic are called loving interchanges. Service Manual page 42 explains: "Experience suggests that more can be accomplished when members share on a single topic during the meeting and as many members as possible have the opportunity to share."
6. Alateen young men are welcome.
7. For more information contact the Committee members:
MarinMensMeetingEvents@gmail.com

Cost: \$40 (park registration fee, breakfast, lunch, dinner, drinks, firewood, and snacks). **Scholarships are available.**

- **PLEASE RSVP** to MarinMensMeetingEvents@gmail.com by 5/10/25
- Payments can be made by check or Venmo
- Make checks payable to: Monday Men AFG

PROGRAM

- 8:00am Check-in, Setup and Breakfast
- 9:00am Welcome and Introductions
- 9:30-9:50 1st Speaker
- 9:50-10:45 Shares and Breakout Groups
- 10:45am Break
- 11:00am Group singing led by Kyle
- 12:00pm - 1:00pm Lunch (vegetarian option available)
- 1:00pm - 2:00pm Free Time
- 2:00pm - 2:45pm Group Improv
- 2:45pm - 3:05pm 2nd Speaker
- 3:05pm - 3:45pm Group Shares
- 3:45pm Break
- 4:00pm Feedback session
- 4:30pm Concluding ritual
- 5:00pm Serenity Prayer and Dinner
- 6:00pm Singing (optional) and fellowship around the campfire
- 8:00pm Cleanup



CERES AFG

Invites you to spend an evening with

STEVE W.

From San Diego, California

**As he shares his
Experience, Strength and Hope
in Al-Anon**

Monday, May 19, 2025

At 6:30 PM

1813 Moffett Road, Ceres

**We will be celebrating Al-Anon birthdays for
April, May and June**

Hope to see you there!!!

If you need more info., please call Greg F. 209 614 4167



The District 18 Public Outreach Committee

INVITES YOU to OUR NEXT MEETING

**WHEN: Saturday, June 14th
11:00 AM - 12:30 PM**

**WHERE: Harvest Presbyterian Church
1813 Moffett Road, Ceres, CA**

Central Valley Intergroup
presents



Saturday, June 14, 2025
12pm—4pm

Harvest Hall

3800 Cornucopia Way, Modesto, CA 95358

Doors Open at Noon

\$2 Suggested Donation

Chili Tasting 1pm—2:15pm

CVI will provide chili toppings and condiments

SPEAKER MEETING AT 2:30PM

Wanda T. with 37 Years

50/50 Raffle

Best Chili Awards:

♦ **People's Choice Award** ♦

For information on how to enter your chili (just bring your chili—no toppings), contact Jessica H., @ 209-756-6650.

Deadline to enter is June 9th





alanonsanjoaquinvalley.org

Zoom Meetings					In-			
Day	Time	Meeting Name	Meeting ID	Password	Day	Time	Meeting Name	Location
Mon	12:00 PM	Hope for Today Downtown	887577339	495117	Tues	12:00 PM	Courage to Change AFG	154 W. Tenth Street., Tracy
Mon	5:30 PM	Woman's topic Meeting	861-5411-8094	861-533	Tues	12:00 PM	PM Coed Step Study	Alano Club 19421 Village Drive, Sonora
Mon	6:30 PM	Mon Night in Recovery	89991040914	serenity	Tues	5:00 PM	Vive y Deja Vivir GFA	Los Banos United Methodist Church, 1031 Iowa Ave, Los Banos
Tues	12:00 PM	Sonora, Coed Topic Meeting	847-0726-8764	20122	Tues	6:00 PM	Changing Attitude AFG (NEWCOMER MEETING)	901 W. Rumble Rd. Modesto
Tues	6:00 PM	Young ADULTs Learning to Live	5779208887	457893	Tues	6:45 PM	Changing Attitude AFG	901 W. Rumble Rd. Modesto
Tues	6:30 PM	Mountain High Serenity	89706220096	serenity	Tues	6:00 PM	Amor Propio	Our Lady of Fatima Church 505 Granger Ave., Modesto
Wed	12:00 PM	Sonora, Coed Topic Meeting	847-0726-8764	20122	Tues	7:00 PM	Sierra AFG	353 E. Donna Dr. Merced (portables behind the church)
Wed	12:30 PM	Daily Reading Into Recovery	88094721390	serenity	Wed	12:00 PM	Let it Begin with Me AFG	3460 Oakdale Rd Suite B (at Sylvan Ave), Modesto
Wed	6:00 PM	Open Hand	892 0653 9123	258880	Wed	5:00 PM	Vive y Deja Vivir GFA	Los Banos United Methodist Church, 1031 Iowa Ave, Los Banos
Thurs	10:00 AM	Thurs AM Turlock AFG	89436700710	586018	Wed	5:45 PM	Path to Serenity AFG	St. Joseph's Catholic Church 1813 Oakdale Rd. St. John Paul II Center, Room 10, Modesto
Thurs	6:30 PM	Happy Joyous & Free	5779208887	457893	Wed	6:00 PM	Empezando A Vivir	St Francis Episcopal Church, 915 E. Main St., Turlock
Sat	9:30 AM	Keep it Simple AFG	5846466683	170773	Wed	6:30 PM	Murphys Parents of Alcoholic Children	First Congregational Church 509 N. Algiers St., Murphy's
Sat	10:00 AM	Sat Morning Easy Does It	8108522609	easy	Wed	7:00 PM	Serenity AFG	Our Fathers House, 1005 I Street, Los Banos
Sat	12:00 PM	Hope-N-AFG	4201729921	472870	Thurs	9:30 AM	GFA Unidad y Esperanza	Manteca Fellowship, 332 E. Yosemite Ave., Ste C, Manteca
Alateen Meetings					Thurs	10:00 AM	Beachwood Fellowship	Summit Church 500 Buena Vista Drive, Merced
Mon	7:00	Do It Daily Alateen	Hutton House, 2004 W Briggsmore Ave, Modesto		Thurs	12:30 PM	Willow Springs AFG	Willow Springs Clubhouse 20522 Willow Springs Drive, Willow Springs
Tues	7:00	Unity Alateen	Central Presbyterian Church, 520 W. 20th Street (patio lounge), Merced		Thurs	1:00 PM	Oakdale AFG	Community United Methodist Church 1480 Poplar St. Oakdale
Wed	5:45PM-7:15PM	Courage to Be Me	St. Joseph's Catholic Church, 1813 Oakdale Rd, Room 8, Modesto		Thurs	5:30 PM	Thurs Women's Meeting AFG	Alano Club 19421 Village Drive, Sonora
In-Person Meetings					Thurs	6:00 PM	Just for Today AFG	Harvest Presbyterian Church, 1813 Moffett Rd, Ceres
Day	Time	Meeting Name	Location		Thurs	8:00 PM	Manteca AFG	332 E. Yosemite Ave Suite C, Manteca
1st Sun	1:30-3:30	D18 Business Meeting - Hybrid	1425 Standiford Ave, Modesto Zoom: 838 4051 8924, Passcode: Serenity		Fri	9:30 AM	Turlock AFG	2101 Geer Road, Suite 120, Turlock
Sun	9:00 AM	A New Path AFG	1425 Standiford Ave, Modesto		Fri	5:30 PM	Sonora AFG	Alano Club 19421 Village Drive, Sonora
Mon	10:00 AM	Stepping Stones AFG	The Gathering Place Church, 11281 Highway 49, Sonora		Fri	6:00 PM	Friends of Lois AFG	St Francis Episcopal Church, 915 E. Main St., Turlock
Mon	12:00 PM	Hope for Today Downtown	First United Methodist Church, 850 16th St. (Library Room), Modesto (Hybrid)		Fri	6:00 PM	Valor para cambiar	St. Joseph's Catholic Church 1813 Oakdale Rd. St. John Paul II Center, Room 10, Modesto
Mon	5:00 PM	Vive y Deja Vivir GFA	Los Banos United Methodist Church, 1031 Iowa Ave, Los Banos		Fri	6:00 PM	Joy of Discovery AFG	Renew Church, 4825 Stoddard Rd, Modesto
Mon	6:00 PM	Oakdale AFG	Community United Methodist Church, 1480 Poplar St. Oakdale		Fri	7:00 PM	Oakdale AFG	Community United Methodist Church 1480 Poplar St. Oakdale
Mon	6:30 PM	Ceres AFG	Harvest Presbyterian Church, 1813 Moffett Rd, Ceres		Sat	10:00 AM	Groveland AFG	11699 Merrell Road/Hwy120, Groveland
Mon	6:30 PM	Murphy's Foothills AFG	Congregational Church 509 N. Algiers St., Murphys		Sat	10:00 AM	Sat Morning Easy Does It	Central Presbyterian Church-Music room 520 W. 20th Street, Merced (Hybrid)
					Sat	4:00 PM	Sat of Serenity, Men's Group	1425 Standiford Ave, Modesto
Link to AI-Anon site for all meetings click HERE								

Link to Al-Anon site for all meetings click [HERE](#)