

4824 Constitution Suite 1-C Baton Rouge, LA 70808 924-0029
(24 hours)

April
1991

WHEN I THINK ABOUT SERENITY, I REMEMBER TWO INSIGHTS SHARED BY MY EARLY AL-ANON GUIDES. ONE OF THEM SUGGESTED THAT "THE REASON AL-ANON'S DON'T GET 'CHIPS' IS BECAUSE ALL WE COULD EARN WOULD BE 'DESIRE CHIPS', SINCE WE NEVER MAKE IT THROUGH A DAY WITHOUT A SLIP. BUT IF WE AL-ANON'S GUARDED OUR SERENITY AS ZEALOUSLY AS AA'S GUARD THEIR SOBRIETY, WE WOULDN'T HAVE TO SPEND SO MUCH TIME WITH THE 'THREE R'S', REGRETTING, RESENTING, AND REPEATING." IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR MY RECOVERY TO APPRECIATE THAT EVEN THOUGH SERENITY IS CLEARLY A GIFT, THE DONOR EXPECTS US TO ACKNOWLEDGE, VALUE, AND PRESERVE THIS BLESSING.

DURING MY FIRST YEAR IN THE PROGRAM, ONE OF MY AL-ANON PILOTS CAME TO OUR WEDNESDAY NOON MEETING IN OBVIOUS DISTRESS. I HAD WATCHED HER NAVIGATE THROUGH STORMY SEAS WITH A LIGHT HAND AND A LIGHT HEART. I ENVIED HER FAITH, HER CONFIDENCE, HER QUIRKY HUMOR, AND HER SERENITY, BUT ON THIS DAY I COULD SEE THAT SHE HAD "LOST IT". DESPITE ALL HER WORK AND FAITH AND PREVIOUS SUCCESS, SHE WAS SINKING IN ONE OF THOSE BAD PLACES WE ALL FEAR AND RECOGNIZE, AND I THOUGHT, "WELL, THIS DOESN'T WORK." BUT SHE DIDN'T THROW UP HER HANDS AND SUCCUMB TO SELF PITY. SHE SHARED SOME OF WHAT HAD TRIPPED HER UP, BUT SHE ALSO RECOGNIZED HER OWN PART IN LOSING HER SERENITY. SHE WAS DOWN BUT NOT OUT. SHE SAID, "THE THING ABOUT SERENITY, IS THAT ONCE YOU GET IT, YOU KNOW YOU CAN HAVE IT AGAIN." WHEN I WAS UNDER SIEGE IT WAS HARD TO BELIEVE IN THE POSSIBILITY OF SERENITY, YET I SAW PEOPLE WHO HAD ACHIEVED SERENITY THROUGH WORKING THE PROGRAM. IT WAS A RELIEF TO HEAR THAT THE KNACK OF SERENE LIVING WAS LIKE RIDING A BICYCLE, ALWAYS THERE, ONCE I LEARNED HOW. IT WAS NECESSARY FOR MY RECOVERY TO UNDERSTAND THAT AL-ANON PROMISED ME A GOOD LIFE, NOT A NICE DAY.

M.M.R.





SERENITY - unruffled, tranquil,
unclouded, fair.



I once thought living a serene life meant living without any problems. Because I did something about everything that happened around me and everything that someone said to me, I was reacting to everything that occurred. I used a variety of defenses to overcome any difficulties I came up against. I was very good at "making mountains out of molehills". I lived with a constant emotional hangover caused by an excess of negative emotions - fear, anger, jealousy.

I felt my first calmness after repeating the Serenity Prayer continuously when confronted with a particularly stressful occurrence. During the period of time that I was repeating the Serenity Prayer, I was making a conscious effort to change my direction of thinking from the chaos around me toward a loving God of my understanding. For a short time I was restored to an emotional balance and a positive attitude.

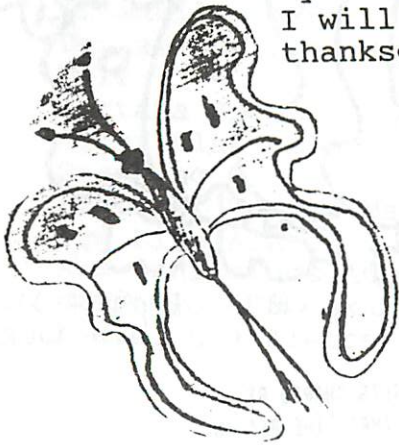
If I stop and think I am able to keep things in perspective. I can enjoy fully what I do have. Alone, I can not find real peace. I need help - God's help. I guard my peace of mind by reminding myself God lovingly watches over me. When I humbly turn to Him, all will be well with me. I now know meditation and prayer bring a peace to me with can stand firm in the face of difficult circumstances.

I now pray for more serenity - more tolerance, less fear and less anger. I receive special strength that helps me face my problems and work through them.



Pebble B.

My Serenity is in my control today.
I will look to this day with trust and
thanksgiving and my spirit will soar.



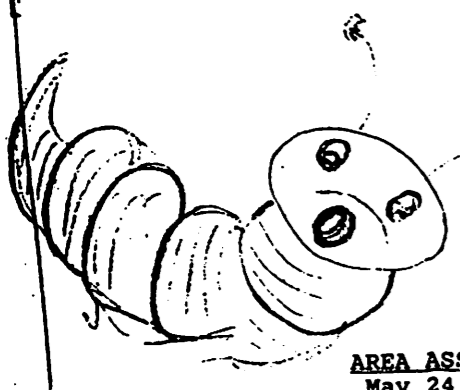
I once thought my only duty was to help others. I spent all my time trying to make family members and friends happy. I know just what to do or say to them to make things better. I would try to fix it. But, all the while I was unhappy with my life. I tried to do everything everyone else wanted me to do. Then I found the AlAnon program. Here I found friends who told me as it was and let me try to be myself. It's been four years now and for the first time I can truly say the I have my serenity. My AlAnon friends have always told me to like myself and take time for myself. After a lot of searching and not finding what I wanted, I finally listened. I started doing things for ME and staying with ME instead of surrounding myself with my friends in hope of not seeing ME. It's been months now and its hard to explain the feelings I have inside. I feel as if something has been lifted. I learned to look at the good and bad side of ME and I've learned through this program what I have to do for ME. I've learned to like myself but most of all I can now say I'm by myself and not that I'm alone. I have an inner peace (which I call my serenity) which I've never felt before. I know now my true feelings, what I want in my life, and that through the help of God by letting go and letting Him have the control that I will have my serenity through the good times and the bad times. I guess it's like a friend told me the other day, I have finally grown up. I can now show and tell friends and family how I feel and not be afraid. I've learned to cry and show my true feelings. I've learned to turn it over. Thank you.

Bulletin Board

At the recent Delegate's meeting in Oklahoma City, there was some sharing from the different areas, and it was announced that several people were concerned with the "cheer" at the end of the closing prayer at meetings. You know, "Keep coming back, it works if you work it!!" Also, the phrase sometimes said at the beginning of the closing prayer, "Whose Father?" One of the Delegates said that she had discovered that these particular phrases had started in Narcotics Anonymous and then to Naranon. I have been wondering for quite some time where these started from. We didn't used to feel we had to get cutesy with the closing prayer or cheer at the end. My home group has taken a group conscience and decided not to say the thing at the end. We have never used the preface. I never thought that our program needed a cheer. I think it's strong enough to stand on its own merits, and I thought I would share this information and if any of you have been wondering, like me, where these came from, now you know. With this information, maybe more groups would also like to take a group conscience on this.

Love in the Program,

Barbara
Barbara M., Panel 30
World Service Delegate
Missiana



AREA ASSEMBLY

May 24 & 25

Lafayette Hilton and Towers (rooms - \$53.00)
318-235-6111

AGENDA

Saturday, May 24:

- 10:30 a.m. - Area World Service Coordinator/Directors/Officers meeting
- 1:30 p.m. - Workshop
- 4:00 p.m. - Information Forum
- 6:30 p.m. - Banquet
- 8:00 p.m. - Speakers (Al-Anon & AA)

Sunday, May 25:

- 9:00 a.m. - Business Meeting

AL-ANON

MARATHON MEETING

(FOR ANYONE AFFECTED BY ANOTHER'S DRINKING)

SAT., MAY 25, 1991

8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Ballroom E Lafayette Hilton

CHAIRPERSONS

- 8 to 9-----Ruby W. (Bastrop)
- 9 to 10--- Renee S. (Lafayette)
- 10 to 11----Gertie (Baton Rouge)

Come share experience, strength & hope

18TH ANNUAL AL-ANON CONFERENCE

May 31, June 1 & 2

Lafayette Hilton and Towers

318-235-6111

rooms - \$55.00

registration - \$10.00 (Al-Anon & AA)
\$5.00 (Alateen)

Great Speakers/Good Food/Live Band/Skits/Fellowship

AIS QUARTERLY

Tuesday, July 2

AIS Office at 4884 Constitution

pot luck at 5:45p.m./business meeting 6:30 p.m

AL-ANON CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

Barbara M. - LA State Delegate
at

World Service Conference - "Sharing Vision"

April 29 - May 4

Sheraton Stanford Hotel and Towers
Stanford, Conn. 06902

Remember her in your prayers during this time and drop her a note of encouragement since she will be representing LA Al-Anons during this Conference.

DISTRICT NEWS

Districts 4 and 14 held a joint meeting on Saturday, March 2, at Club 12. Ten groups were represented.

Information presented and discussed included a calendar of activities, the tape library, new literature, schedules, 24 hour telephone, benefits of AIS, fund raisers, 7th tradition, financial reports, Al-Anon's 40th Birthday, committees and guidelines.

*New
Alateen meeting
Saturday 6:30
St. John's Catholic
Church
Prairieville, LA*

SERENITY

SERENITY IS A GIFT. IT IS GRANTED TO US WHEN WE FAITHFULLY FOLLOW THE AL-ANON PROGRAM. IT IS NOT A SKILL WE ACQUIRE BY PRACTICING A SET OF ARBITRARY RULES FOR BEHAVIOR. IT IS NOT SOMETHING WE ACQUIRE BY READING BOOKS. IT IS A SPIRITUAL GIFT GRANTED TO US BY GOD WHEN WE ARE READY TO RECEIVE IT. IT IS NOT SOMETHING WE CAN GIVE AWAY, BUT WE CAN SHARE IT WITH OTHERS. WE CAN LOSE IT, TEMPORARILY, BUT WE KNOW HOW TO OPEN THE DOORS AND LET IT FIND US AGAIN.

SERENITY IS FOLLOWING A DIFFERENT ROAD AND OPENING NEW DOORS AND KNOWING THAT WE WILL BE "OK" NO MATTER WHAT IS ON THE PATH AHEAD OR BEHIND THE DOOR.

A.D.R.

PLEASE CUT OUT



EMOTIONAL MATURITY

The mature person has developed attitudes in relation to himself and his environment which have lifted him above "childishness" in thought and behavior.


My Mind Is My Garden
My Thoughts Are My Seeds.
I Will Harvest
Either Flowers or Weeds.

There is no growth without pain (pain is not optional), so hurt a little bit.

There is no laughter without tears, so cry often (don't be ashamed to cry for if you don't you will be ever secure but always lonely).

There is no peace without first knowing turmoil in the soul (so be at war with yourself sometimes).

There is no grace without first wrestling with guilt. If you're wrestling, let God's grace engulf you and give you new life.



SERENITY

Before Al-Anon, my search for serenity was very frustrating. My criteria for serenity was that everyone and everything in my life be OK. On the rare occasions when this occurred, the voices in my head immediately took over: "How can you be happy when your grandparents are lonely? You could visit them." "Your alcoholic brother is in a cold jail, how can you enjoy your comfortable warm home when you could be doing something for him?" "So you've worked hard and one a good job, but how dare you rest when you can do more". "There is dissension going on in the family, you've got to get it resolved".

Today I know I can have serenity if the alcoholic is drinking or not. When I slip out of serenity, I plug the reason I'm not serene into the steps where it says alcohol. This process gives me the solution to restoring my life to sanity and serenity.

I am powerless over other people, things and my own "stinking thinking". The steps do restore me to sanity when I surrender and tell my higher power - "I can't, You can, I think I'll let You." Next I must do an inventory and process my feelings about the situation and my part in the incident "my character defects" with my sponsor.

I have found the same character defects of control, people pleasing, pride, and dishonesty recurring. In seeing these defects and asking my higher power to remove the, I have clearly seen my part in every situation (for which formerly, I blamed others). The amends I needed to make have been easy to see and easy to make, when I allow God to guide me.

It's so comforting to know that I'm no longer in charge of every person and every problem situation in my family, and my community. When I let go and let God, the gift of serenity for me. The bonus in our family is that people are having to deal with their own consequences without "fix-it" Faye in the middle.

Another bonus of taking the focus off of other people and their problems is that I've learned to take care of me by setting limits or boundaries. Today I'm my own best friend and treat myself accordingly. I protect myself fro negative people and negative thinking that threaten my serenity. I've learned to take risks to be honest and share how I feel.

I have everything I need to help me. These tools are the steps, my higher power, my sponsor, my home group and our literature. For all of this I am eternally grateful.

Faye G.

29
25)

CONTRIBUTIONS

Faith & Hope ACOA	\$35.00	LTI Alateen	\$42.00
TGSM	50.00	Listen & Learn	14.65
Recovering Parents	40.00	Saturday New Comers	20.00
Friday Step	3.04	Stepping Stones	25.50
Brownville AFG	50.00	Friday ACOA	20.00
Denham Springs Alateen	3.75	Monday ACOA	30.00
TGIF	20.00	Denham Springs Friday	
Cortana Group	47.00	Night	20.00
Bayou Plaquemine	10.00	Good Shepard	15.00
Starting Over	19.00	Powerless Step	9.00
Together We Can Make It	25.00	Discovery	10.00
New Life Alanon	90.00	Tuesday Faith & Hope	15.40
New Beginnings ACOA	30.00	Serenity Seekers ACOA	20.00
Triangle AFG	40.00	Steps to Serenity	28.00
Laurel Lea Alateen	61.00	Came to Believe	2.00
Comite AFG		\$30.00	

Mountains to Molehills

110 Al-Anons attended the workshop, "Mountains to Molehills", held January 19, 1991 at the South Baton Rouge Church of Christ, sponsored by the Baton Rouge AIS Office.

Two films, "Lois' Story" and "Walk This Path of Hope", were shown. Fine skits: Alfie or Climb Every Mountain, Wizard of Program, Supernon, F-Troop, and many hats were presented by Al-Anons representing 10 groups. Music and laughter highlighted the program.

Thank you one and all.

Thank you to those who were able to attend our workshop.

Thank you to Pebbles for being Alfie...

...to Susie, Shirley and Barbara for registration.

...to the office workers for answering the phone calls.

...to Sandy G for the designing the mountain logo.

...to Joe, the Church, and Ted for audio-visual assist.

...to LSU Audio-Visual Dept. for their assistance.

...to Ann who designed the mountain prop.

...to Audrey K and Ann for making, preparing the Alfie props.

...to Joe and Joe, Ann F., Lynn and Marna for setting up.

...to the Seattle Panel: Tammeryn, Gertie, Barbara M. and Pat D.

...to Judy G., Gerelyn, Layne, Jim B., Ruth H. and Brenda T. for coordinating the skits.

...to all those who were members of the skits.

...to Lee, Lillie, Lynn, Gennie, Cecile and Janet for reading the traditions and concepts.

...to Gennie and Amy for selling Literature.

...to Audry, Edith and Diane for kitchen duty.

...to the clean-up committee and anyone I forgot.

And to Judy G. for being a super co-chair.

Thank you one and all. It was a great day.

Clara E.