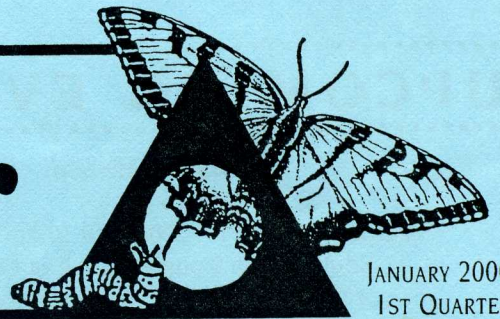


THE Caterpillar



JANUARY 2000
1ST QUARTER

Welcome to Year 2000!

Happy New Year to all! Despite the months of worry over Y2K problems, we have survived. Life has returned to its customary "business as usual." Not much has changed except maybe teaching ourselves to write "00" instead of "99" in our checkbooks. Al-Anon hasn't changed either. It's still helping people around the world deal with the disease of alcoholism. The promises of Al-Anon still remain true if we continue to work the program. As we begin this wonderful new year, I thought this would be a good opportunity to review the promises of Al-Anon.

—Robin J.

The Promises

- ▲ If we willingly surrender ourselves to the spiritual discipline of the twelve steps, our lives will be transformed.
- ▲ We will become mature, responsible individuals with a great capacity for joy, fulfillment, and wonder.
- ▲ Though we may never be perfect, continued spiritual progress will reveal to us our enormous potential.
- ▲ We will discover that we are both worthy of love and loving.
- ▲ We will love others without losing ourselves, and will learn to accept love in return.
- ▲ Our sight once clouded and confused, will clear and we will be able to perceive reality and recognize truth.
- ▲ Courage and fellowship will replace fear.
- ▲ We will be able to risk failure to develop new, hidden talents.
- ▲ Our lives, no matter how battered and degraded, will yield hope to share with others.
- ▲ We will begin to feel and come to know the vastness of our emotions, but we will not be slaves to them.
- ▲ Our secrets will no longer bind us in shame.
- ▲ As we gain the ability to forgive ourselves, our families, and the world, our choices will expand.
- ▲ With dignity we will stand for ourselves, but not against our fellows.
- ▲ Serenity and peace will have meaning for us as we allow our lives and the lives of those we love to flow day by day with God's ease, balance and grace.
- ▲ No longer terrified, we will discover we are free to delight in life's paradox, mystery and awe.
- ▲ We will laugh more.
- ▲ Fear will be replaced by faith, and gratitude will come naturally as we realize that our higher power is doing for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

Being Powerless Sets Me Free

Powerless. Sanity. Decision. These words taken from the first three steps of the twelve steps of Al-Anon certainly pack a wallop. When I first started going to Al-Anon several years ago, and as I read these steps, I thought, "this will be easy to learn, I'll be out of here in no time." As I continued to attend meetings, read literature and listened attentively, I soon realized there was more to these steps than met the eye.

Powerless. I certainly did not think that I was powerless. I was very good at taking care of myself and everyone around me. As long as everyone did what I thought they should be doing, everything went along smoothly—except I just couldn't seem to get the alcoholic in my life to quit drinking! But certainly I couldn't be powerless.

When I came to Al-Anon, I knew I was unhappy, and yes, perhaps just a little insane too. I thought there must still be something I could do to make my life happier and I had gained enough insight to know fixing the problems had to begin with me. Luckily I have been blessed with a generous measure of faith in a power greater than myself, who I refer to as God. I had already spent many hours talking, pleading and praying to Him but it seemed He didn't always agree with what I thought was the best for me.

Since coming to Al-Anon I have learned that being powerless has set me free. Free to take care of myself and leave others to God. Much of the insanity has left me, even though it is always easy to get back to into it. When I made the decision to turn my life and my will over to God, I found out that I didn't have to control everything and manipulate everyone to have things run my way. Over the years, God has demonstrated to me time and again that His way is always the best way for my ultimate good and happiness.

If we practice these steps, even though they are not always so easy, what a better world we will live in and how much happier we will all be.

—Madeleine S.

Meeting Information

- *Papillion* is now called *Gonzales Tuesday AFG*. They meet at the Stepping Stones Clubhouse, 1027 N. Burnside, Gonzales LA—Tuesday 6:30 pm.
- Keep it Simple, Friday 7:30 pm has a new location: 7519 Amite Church Road. *Denham Springs*.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Al-Anon Workshop

"Back to Basics"

Saturday, January 15, 2000 • 9:30 am - 3:30 pm

South Baton Rouge Church of Christ

8725 Jefferson Hwy. • Baton Rouge

\$11.00 for workshop and box lunch with drink

\$5.00 for workshop only

Pre-registration for box lunch needed by January 12.

4th Annual Red Stick Round-Up

January 28-30

Red Roof Inns and Suites

1480 Nicholson Drive • Baton Rouge

Kathy H., Al-Anon, Cincinnati, Ohio will speak at 2:00 pm.

Saturday Night Dinner - 6:00 pm

Saturday Night Dance featuring the Andy Smith Band

For more information call: Irving 225/648-3193,

Angie 225/675-5074, or Joy 225/924-7732

Local Monthly AIS Board Meeting

February 8, 2000 • 5:45 pm • AIS Office

Louisiana Area Assembly

February 19 & 20, 2000 • Alexandria Convention Center

21st Deep South Alateen Conference (D-SAC)

March 10, 11, and 12, 2000

"Recovery the Alateen Way"

Dry Creek Baptist Camp • Dry Creek, LA

Early Registration Fee \$55.00

Deadline for early registration - February 26, 2000

Late Registration Fee \$60.00

Deadline for late registration - March 3, 2000

For more information contact:

Debora Hurwitz • 669 New Port Circle,

Terrytown, LA 70056 • 504/393/8662

Local Monthly AIS Board Meeting

March 14, 2000 • 5:45 pm • AIS Office

Quarterly AIS Board Meeting

April 11, 2000 • 6:45 pm

South Baton Rouge Church of Christ

8725 Jefferson Highway • Baton Rouge

US South Central Regional Service Seminar

August 11-13, 2000 • Springdale, Arkansas

Other Upcoming Event News

Al-Anon will participate in AA's next International Convention, to be held in Minneapolis in July 2000. Al-Anon members everywhere will have the opportunity to celebrate Al-Anon's 50th Anniversary in the year 2001, as local and area-wide events will be held around the world.



Nightly Phone List

Please recognize that with the new year, the listing of the groups has been revised to coincide with the meeting list. The AIS Al-Anon telephone can only be forwarded to local phone numbers. Hence, the "out of range" meetings are not asked to take the night telephone. There are 28-30 reliable groups who will be asked once every seven months. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

—Mary S.

AIS Night Telephone Coordinator

Wooddale Sunday Step	January 10-16
Listen & Learn	January 17-23
Recovering Parents North	January 24-30
Recovering Parents South	January 31-February 6
Monday Al-Anon Discussion	February 7-13
Triangle	February 14-20
Comite	February 21-27
TGIM	February 28-March 5
University AFG	March 6-12
Steps to Serenity	March 13-19
Came to Believe	March 20-26
Strength and Hope	March 27-April 2
STP	April 3-9
Tuesday's Children	April 10-16
Courage to Change	April 17-23



WSO Web Site

www.al-anon.alateen.org



This web site offers services and items of interest for potential newcomers, professionals, and members. Recently added features include:

- 15-second "Message of Hope" TV PSA
- Literature and Forum subscription forms for electronic credit card, fax, or "snail mail" orders

SHARINGS NEEDED!

Please help keep *The Caterpillar* rich in sharings. Your words and experiences are so important. Sharing your experiences as a result of the Al-Anon program is an important healing factor in recovery—not only for the reader, but for the writer as well. You can send your articles to: AIS Office, c/o The Caterpillar, 9425 Lindale Ave., Suite B, Baton Rouge, LA 70815.

For the next issue, sharings about steps 4, 5, and 6 are being accepted. **The deadline is March 15, 2000.**

Many thanks to Madeleine S. who contributed an article for this issue of *The Caterpillar*.