

THE CATERPILLAR



OCTOBER
2000

Spiritual Awakenings— A Matter of Discovery

“Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps . . .,” is a key result from working the Al-Anon Program. What does it mean to “have a spiritual awakening?” I’m sure it means different things to different people. Here are some possibilities that I have discovered in my life.

When someone says to me, “Well you screwed up again,” I have a tendency to get defensive, resentful and angry with the person making the statement. I sometimes even point out some areas where he or she screwed up even more than me.

On an occasion when I hear that comment, I evaluate what I did to warrant the statement or wonder if the person talking has had a bad day. At that point I am not emotionally moved to react. When I am in that mind-set I discover that I have had a spiritual awakening. I have grown since the last time someone commented in such a manner.

When my alcoholic does something I think is totally irrational and irresponsible, I have reacted with strong criticism in the past. Then sometimes I take a deep breath and realize that it is just the alcoholic behavior and the disease is winning at

the moment. I ask my Higher Power how I can love him more than criticize or reject him. When that happens, I realize I have had a spiritual awakening.

I sometimes go to a meeting and hear someone talk about not being able to cope with some problem he or she is facing with the alcoholic. On occasion, when that has happened, I have said to myself, “Don’t they get it? It’s clear to me just what to do about that problem.”

Then occasionally, I listen to that person talk about their pain again in a meeting and I share with them my strength, hope and courage on how the Program has been working in my life in similar circumstances. When that happens, I discover I have had a spiritual awakening.

I believe “spiritual awakenings” come in small step by step actions. We may be looking for flash of light to penetrate our lives; however spiritual awakenings may come like a flash of light with not a lot of fanfare. It is very real, though, and shows that the Program is working for us.

—Ken N.

Mark Your Calendar

AREA ASSEMBLY
November 11-12, 2000

AIS BOARD MEETING
November 14, 2000

AIS QUARTERLY BOARD
MEETING
January 9, 2001

AL-ANON WORKSHOP
January 2001
Date to be announced

AL-ANON STATE
CONVENTION
June 1-3, 2001
New Iberia, LA

Message From AIS Coordinator

Thanks to all of you for prayers and help given while I was out-of-pocket the last month.

I appreciate all the people standing in at the office from 9am to 3pm. I’d also like to thank the members so willing to answer the phone after hours. You are all jewels and make this service as a coordinator a breeze.

—Joyce G.

Do You Attend One of the Following Meetings?

Gonzales Tuesday Night Alateens
 St. John Catholic Church Alateens
 River Road Al-Anon
 Listen & Learn
 Recovering Parents North or South
 Steps to Serenity
 T.G.I.M. Step Meeting
 Gonzales AFG
 Conscious Contact
 ACOA Stepping Stones
 Saturday Newcomers
 Prairieville AFG

If so, we need your help at Area Assembly in Alexandria November 11-12. Our districts (9 and 14) are responsible for the raffle.

We need items to raffle and folks at Area Assembly to sell the tickets. (The money helps to defray the cost of Assembly.)

Phone now to make your reservations at Hampton Inn Alexandria, LA 1-800-426-7866 or 318-487-8500 \$58.00 per room per night

If you cannot attend Assembly but can donate something that you would like to win at a raffle, before November 4 please leave your donation at the Al-Anon Office marked Area Assembly Raffle. We need need at least one item for the raffle from each group. Thanks for your help and we hope you will come join the fun at Assembly in November.

Oh, What a Relief It Is

It never occurred to me before Al-Anon that it was acceptable for me to have feelings, all of them. I used to label my feelings as good or bad. Acceptable or unacceptable. It's a relief not to label them any longer.

Al-Anon has taught me that there's no morality in feelings—only in behavior. It's a relief to hear that feelings aren't facts. It's the very essence of freedom to know that I don't have to "act" on every feeling I have. Sometimes it's still difficult to just let myself feel whatever I feel without trying to change it. It's a gift to be surrounded by people who are willing to listen to me express my feelings without judgment, blame or criticism. Like so many of us, I was told time and time again "You shouldn't feel that way. You should be ashamed of yourself." Occasionally, I regress and tell myself those same things. But Al-Anon reminds me not to "should" on myself.

In my home, we weren't allowed to be angry. I grew up very afraid and threatened by anger. Anger still frightens me, but through the program, I'm learning very slowly that even anger is only a feeling and that it doesn't last forever. I'm working, little by little, that it's even okay for ME to be angry. Wow! I never knew that!

How I choose to express that anger is what I need to watch and that's when my friends in the program are so helpful. I'm learning to listen to what my feelings are telling me. I'm learning to share my feelings with an Al-Anon friend before I act on them—if I act on them at all. Sometimes just the sharing is all the catharsis I need. What I mainly feel now is RELIEF. I don't have to keep my feelings a secret anymore. I have resources where I can deal with them openly and without guilt, shame or fear. Thank you, Al-Anon!

—Anonymous

CONTRIBUTIONS

July 2000	
Just For Today	\$200.00
Monday Steps to Serenity	\$10.00
Monday Noon	\$50.00
Stepping Stones	\$120.00
Listen & Learn	\$275.00
I Am Important	\$50.00
Triangle Family	\$25.00
TGIM	\$40.00

August 2000	
Saturday Newcomer	\$10.00
Conscious Contact	\$40.00
Faith & Hope	\$25.00
Recovering Parents South	\$75.00
Morning Glory	\$130.00
Courage To Change	\$40.00
Powerless Step Study	\$25.00
Steps to Serenity	\$10.00
Recovering Parents	\$60.00
Brownsfield	\$30.00
Bayou Al-Anon	\$37.75

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Fund raising projects as well as group contributions play an important role in helping to maintain the operation of the Al-Anon office.

In addition to these contributions, many successful fund raising projects have helped our account balance grow and remain healthy.

Many thanks to Fund Raising Coordinator Teresa B. for all her hard work in planning these events.

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Night Phone List

This is a list of groups responsible for the night phone during the months of November 6 through February 4, 2001. A letter requesting volunteers will be mailed to each group representative (G.R.) a couple of weeks prior to that group's turn. Sometimes the G.R. has a problem getting people to sign up for the weekend. So, if you feel reluctant to take the phone on a weekend here's an idea. If you need to be away from the phone for several hours leave a message on your answering machine explaining you will be out. Give a list of meeting times and locations and ask anyone who needs their call returned to leave a message. (Taken from August issue of *Forum*.)

Service is the heart of Al-Anon. Our program is dependent on each of us doing our share. Without service, Al-Anon would soon disappear. We can contribute simply by taking the phone. We want to share experience, strength and hope because part of our awakening is the understanding that we are not alone—but part of the human community. It is also important to remember that others still suffer as we suffered before we found Al-Anon. Also, if you would like to be added to the list of volunteer substitutes, please call me at 272-2877 or leave a message at the AIS office—924-0029. Thanks for your help!

Evie V.
Telephone Coordinator

Wednesday Noon AFG	November 6 - 12
Molly Sharp	November 13 - 19
Stepping Stones	November 20 - 26
Faith and Hope	November 27 - December 3
Conscious Contact	December 4 - 10
Goodwood	December 11 - 17
Brownsfield	December 18 - 24
I Am Important	December 25 - 31

2001

Powerless Step Study	January 1 - 7
TGIF	January 8 - 14
Just for Today	January 15 - 21
Morning Glory	January 22 - 28
Saturday Newcomers	January 29 - February 4

Looking for the perfect Al-Anon Christmas Gift?

AL-ANON'S 2001 CALENDARS ARE FOR SALE!

This calendar, which celebrates Al-Anon's 50th Anniversary, lists historic Al-Anon dates and has beautiful photographs coupled with quotes from Al-Anon approved literature.

\$7.00 each or 2 for \$12.00

- AVAILABLE AT THE AIS OFFICE -

The Many Forms of Spiritual Awakenings

My journey through the Twelve Steps has greatly deepened my faith in my higher power, whom I choose to call God. I believe it is because of my strengthened relationship with God that I have become better aware of the spiritual awakenings that occur in my life.

These spiritual awakenings present themselves to me in different forms. Sometimes, when I am struggling with a problem, I'll pray about it and the answer will clearly come to mind. When that happens, I know it is God's words I have heard.

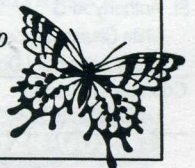
Another type of spiritual awakening comes in the form of the joy I experience when I watch hummingbirds feed and dart about my backyard deck. I know that the deep sense of peace and serenity I feel is God-given.

Even in dark moments when my spirits are low, something will all of a sudden happen to cheer me up or remind that things are not as bad as they seem and I know that God has held my hand.

Then there are the times, when I least suspect it, I will read something that speaks directly to my heart at a precise moment of need. My latest spiritual awakening occurred when I read the sharing on page two of this newsletter. Once again, through God's guidance I learned something I could not understand on my own.

—Robin J.

Many thanks to all those who contributed sharings and announcements to this issue of "The Caterpillar."





IS IT TIME FOR A MEETING?



Meeting Schedule - October 2000 - January 2001

AL-ANON MEETINGS

SUNDAY

Wooddale Sunday Step Meeting 6:00 pm
Club 12 (No Smoking) / 1695 Beaumont Dr. ◆

River Road Al-Anon 7:00 pm
St. Joseph's Church / Paulina, LA

Listen & Learn 7:00 pm
The Tau Center / 8080 Margaret Ann Drive ◆

Recovering Parents North 7:00 pm
Baton Rouge General Hospital
3600 Florida Blvd., Human Resources Conf. Room ◆

Recovering Parents South 8:00 pm
Baton Rouge General Health Center
8585 Picardy off Bluebonnet

MONDAY

Monday Al-Anon 12:00 pm
AIS Office (No smoking) / 9425 Lindale, Suite B

Steps to Serenity 12:00 pm
Club 12 (Step Meeting) / 1695 Beaumont Dr. ◆

Happiness Is 12:00 pm
First United Methodist Church
23645 Church Street / Plaquemine, LA

New Roads 7:15 pm
Library, 201 Claiborne / New Roads, LA

St. Anthony AFG 6:00 - 7:30 pm
White Church Hall behind Ascension Catholic Church
716 Mississippi, Donaldsonville, LA

Triangle Al-Anon 7:30 pm
Broadmoor Methodist Church
10230 Mollylea (Corner Mollylea & Sharp) ◆

Comite AFG 7:30 pm
Blackwater Methodist Church/1000 Blackwater Rd. ◆

T.G.I.M. Step Meeting 7:30 pm
St. George New Library / 7880 Siegen Lane ◆

University AFG 8:00 pm
University Methodist Church (No smoking)
3350 Dalrymple Drive ◆

TUESDAY

Came To Believe 12:00 pm
University Presbyterian Church (No smoking)
3240 Dalrymple Drive ◆

Strength & Courage 12:00 pm
Al-Anon Adult Children Step Meeting
AIS Office / 9425 Lindale, Suite B

Gonzales AFG 6:30 pm
1027 N. Burnside / Stepping Stones Club House
Gonzales, LA *

S.T.P. AFG 7:00 pm
AIS Office (No smoking) / 9425 Lindale, Suite B
(Speaker meeting last Tuesday each month)

Tuesday's Children 7:00 pm
Al-Anon Adult Children
Unity Church of Christianity / 15525 Old Jefferson Hwy.

St. Anthony AFG 7:15 - 8:45 pm
White Church hall behind Ascension Catholic Church
716 Mississippi / Donaldsonville, LA

Courage to Change 8:00 pm
Lutheran Church of Our Savior / 3555 Jones Creek Rd.

WEDNESDAY

Wednesday Noon AFG 12:00 pm
AIS Office (No smoking) / 9425 Lindale, Suite B

Mollysharp Discussion 8:00 pm
Broadmoor Methodist Church (No smoking)
10230 Mollylea / Mollylea at Sharp Road ◆

Stepping Stones (Step Meeting) 8:00 pm
Magnolia Methodist Church (No smoking)
16116 Greenwell Springs Road ◆

Starting Over 8:00 pm
St. Catherine's Catholic Church/Bayou Sorrel, LA ◆

THURSDAY

Step Ahead (Step Meeting) 12:00 pm
Donaldsonville Library / Mississippi & Lessard
Donaldsonville, LA

Faith & Hope 12:00 pm
Al-Anon Adult Children
AIS Office (No smoking) / 9425 Lindale, Suite B

Conscious Contact 12:00 pm
First Methodist Church (America St. Entrance)
950 North Blvd. / Room 108

Live and Let Live 6:00 pm
AIS Office (No smoking) / 9425 Lindale, Suite B

Bayou Al-Anon 7:00 pm
First United Methodist Church
23645 Church St. / Plaquemine, LA

Goodwood AFG 8:00 pm
Broadmoor Baptist Church Scout Hut
9755 Goodwood Blvd. *

ACOA Stepping Stones 8:00 pm
107 N. Burnside / Gonzales, LA * ◆

Brownsfield AFG 8:00 pm
St. Isidore Catholic Church Bishop Center
(enter around side of old church-not new church)
Plank & Thomas Roads

I Am Important 8:00 pm
Al-Anon Adult Child
AIS Office (No smoking) / 9425 Lindale, Suite B ◆

FRIDAY

Powerless Step Study 12:00 pm
AIS Office (No smoking) / 9425 Lindale, Suite B

Keep It Simple (smoking) 7:30 pm
7519 Amite Church Road / Denham Springs

DENHAM SPRINGS WEEKEND RELIEF ... 8:00 pm
(non-smoking)
Courthouse Lobby, 941 Government Dr.
Denham Springs, LA

T.G.I.F. 8:00 pm
AIS Office (No smoking) / 9425 Lindale, Suite B

SATURDAY

Just For Today 9:00 am
University Methodist Church / 3350 Dalrymple Dr. ◆

Morning Glory 9:00 am
AIS Office (No smoking) 9425 Lindale, Suite B

Saturday Newcomers 2:00 pm
Club 12 / 1695 Beaumont Drive ◆

Prairieville AFG 6:30 pm
St. John Catholic Church / CCD Building
Hwy. 73 / Prairieville, LA * ◆

ALATEEN MEETINGS

TUESDAY

Listening Learners 5:30 - 7:00 pm
White Church Hall behind Ascension Catholic Church
716 Mississippi / Donaldsonville, LA

Gonzales Tuesday Night 6:30 pm
1027 N. Burnside / Stepping Stones Club House
Gonzales, LA ▲

THURSDAY

Broadmoor Alateen 8:00 p.m.
Broadmoor Baptist Church Scout Hut
9755 Goodwood Blvd. (Ages 13 & up) ▲ ◆

SATURDAY

St. John Catholic Church Alateens 6:30 p.m.
Hwy. 73 / CCC Building / Prairieville, LA ▲ ◆

▲ Al-Anon also meets * Alateen also meets
◆ AA also meets



www.al-anon.alateen.org

Alcoholics Anonymous
(24 Hour Phone)
924-0030

NEXT ISSUE

One of the most important responsibilities we have in Al-Anon is to keep all forms of service work alive and healthy. There are many types of service work such as sponsorship, holding an office on the AIS Board, being a District or Group Representative, volunteering to answer the nightly phone, chair a meeting or talk with a newcomer. All facets of service work are equally important.

For the next issue of *The Caterpillar*, send in your thoughts on any type of experience you have had in doing service work for Al-Anon. Please send sharings to the AIS Office, c/o The Caterpillar, 9425 Lindale Ave., Baton Rouge LA 70815.

The deadline for sending in sharings is December 15, 2000.