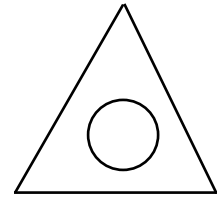


# SCV AFG Intergroup Newsletter



<http://www.ncwsa.org/scvafg>

Santa Clara Valley Al-Anon Family Groups Intergroup Newsletter ~ June 2009

## Al-Anon and Alateen in England

Drinking in England is quite rampant and recovery is much less pronounced than in the U.S. A headline in the May 21st London Daily Telegraph reads, "One in four at risk from drinking too much." As my friends and I went to dinner, we often received some incredulous stares when we declined an alcoholic drink. In some restaurants, the waitress automatically brought a liqueur as part of the dessert.

I experienced a wonderful opportunity to travel in England with several friends of Lois. My visit included a Thursday night Al-Anon meeting in Henley, near Maidenhead. When we arrived, my Al-Anon friend introduced me to other members of the group, about 15 people. The secretary welcomed me and asked if I wanted tea. When I said yes, she went to the teapot, poured a cup, added milk, two teaspoons of sugar and handed it to me. The meeting topic was the 6th step and the group read the chapter in the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, each one reading a paragraph in turn without comment. Following the reading, members shared how they experienced the step. The meeting lasted ninety minutes. One member introduced himself to me after the meeting and let me know he was from Oakland, CA. Small world!

I learned that England recently passed very strict laws concerning the care of teens. Their laws do not allow anonymity to prevail when teens are cared for by adults who are not their parents or guardians. Most Al-Anon members there are unwilling to allow their names to be available publicly to become sponsors, so the Alateen program is currently suffering as a result.

The island of Great Britain, which consists of England, Wales, Cornwall and Scotland, as well as Ireland, has a General Service Conference (GSC) (similar to the World Service Conference (WSC) in the U.S.). The GSC publishes its own service manual, but uses Conference Approved Literature produced in the U.S. They do have their own monthly magazine similar to the Forum (a meeting in your pocket). While the title of the Conference in the U.S. includes the

word "World," the WSC has responsibility for AFG only in the U.S. and Canada. While other countries have their own service structure, their own interpretation of the Traditions and Concepts, and their own country's laws to obey within the Traditions, they do look to the WSC and the WSO for guidance. You can find an Al-Anon meeting in many countries outside the U.S., by visiting the webpage at <http://www.al-anon.org/meetings/international.html>. This webpage is provided by the World Service Office and includes links to Al-Anon websites around the world.

It was a great experience not only to visit a group outside my country, but also to travel with friends who are steeped in Al-Anon principles.

By Art B.

## Focus: Tools of Al-Anon

My life has a way of taking turns and dips. It can throw me curves. When I am in a situation that is pressing my panic button, I remember the tools of Al-Anon. I first say the serenity prayer, and I say it until I begin to get my serenity back. I then call my sponsor and other people that are walking the same recovery path as me. This helps to get my mind off of the emotional merry-go-round, and talking it out changes my focus from the problem to a solution.

Recently I began to create my own acronym for FEAR. This helps me to see a little bit more clearly every time that I am dealing with a situation that involves one of my qualifiers.

Here it is:  
F-Focusing on  
E-Experiences/ Emotions that  
A-Allow  
R-Rejection and lack of self-respect



An old saying states, "Perfect love casts out fear."

Here is an acronym for Love:  
L-Leaving the past  
O-Owning the present  
V- Value my being, myself  
E- Encourage growth



By Kimberley S.

## Upcoming Events

### District 20 Open Speakers Meeting

7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.  
Immanuel Lutheran Church  
14103 Saratoga Avenue  
Saratoga, CA 95070

~

Friday, June 26, 2009

Speakers:

Alateen speaker to be announced,  
Kara K. (AA and Al-Anon),  
and Kayne W. (Al-Anon).

Come listen to great speakers and celebrate May and June Al-Anon birthdays.

Friday, August 28, 2009

Speakers:

Alateen speaker  
to be announced,  
Janice P. (AA), and Keith P. (Al-Anon)  
Husband and Wife in Recovery

~

The District 20 Speaker Meeting abides by the NCWSA Requirement for Alateen Member Safety.

## What's Inside!

H-E-L-P  
12-Step Placard

Events  
Page 3 – NCWSA Convention

What's New  
Message from the  
Intergroup Chairperson

## District 20 Invites Your Al-Anon Group to Volunteer!

District 20 invites your Al-Anon group to volunteer to host a District 20 Speaker Meeting. District 20 Speaker Meetings are held on the 4th Friday of even-numbered months (February, April, June, August and October) at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 14103 Saratoga Ave., Saratoga.

All that is required is a willingness to get together with the members of your Al-Anon group and set up the District 20 Speaker Meeting. For more information or to volunteer to host this important event, please contact Rhonda D. at (408) 720-9718. Come and be a part of fun and fellowship with the members of your Al-Anon group.

## September Newsletter Items

This newsletter is published four times per year—in March, June, September and December. Please send items for the SCV AFG Intergroup September Newsletter to Michael D. at [mdivinia@comcast.net](mailto:mdivinia@comcast.net). Our goal is to have items for the September newsletter submitted by September 1, 2009. Al-Anon news and information and the sharing of experience, strength and hope by Al-Anon members are welcome. — Michael D., Newsletter Co-Coordinator

## You are amazing

(To My Alateens)

You are amazing  
A gift from God  
A life full of hope  
And a heart full of love  
I look up to you  
And learn from your life  
From all your joys  
And all your strife  
Thank you for being  
Just who you are  
You have touched my soul  
And blazed through my life  
As a shining star!

With Love,  
Anita R.  
Alateen Sponsor

## Institutions: Donations of Al-Anon Books and Literature Needed

Donations of Al-Anon books and literature are needed for Al-Anon meetings in prisons and for prison libraries. Used Al-Anon Forums are very helpful. Also, we welcome monetary contributions for the purchase of Al-Anon books and literature to be used in California prisons. In addition, we are looking for Al-Anon members to volunteer to help conduct Al-Anon meetings in California prisons.

For more information, please contact Louise M., NCWSA Institutions Coordinator, at (408) 266-4200, or at [lkmore@earthlink.net](mailto:lkmore@earthlink.net), or contact Yvonne D., NCWSA Institutions Co-Coordinator, at (925) 705-1905, or at [tantetje12@yahoo.com](mailto:tantetje12@yahoo.com).

To donate Al-Anon books and literature (including Forums) to be used in California prisons, please bring these items to the Intergroup Bookstore, an Intergroup Meeting, or a District Meeting.

Checks, made payable to - "NCWSA Institutions," may be mailed to: Louise M. NCWSA Institutions Coordinator c/o SCV AFG Intergroup, Room Q-82 1 W. Campbell Avenue Campbell, CA 95008

## Newsletter Email Distribution List

If you are not currently receiving the Intergroup newsletter via email and you would like to receive this newsletter in your email inbox, please send an email message to [mdivinia@comcast.net](mailto:mdivinia@comcast.net) requesting that your email address be added to the Intergroup newsletter email distribution list.

— Michael D., Newsletter Co-Coordinator

## Updated Address for Donations to the NCWSA

For donations to the Northern California World Service Area (NCWSA), please make checks payable to "NCWSA Treasurer," and mail checks to the following address:  
NCWSA Treasurer  
P.O. Box 277771  
Sacramento, CA 95827-7771

## Intimacy (Into-Me-You-See)

I had a good life when I was young  
Until I was seven. Then everything changed

Life, as I knew it ceased

Mom got sick, at first legitimate,  
In the jungles of West Africa  
But then, she made herself sick  
We had come back, without dad  
She began drinking, drinking from a bottle

Where was dad? Why didn't he come back too?

She came home from work, and drank herself to sleep  
In the middle of the day

I took care of my little brother and sister  
I was an adult, and I was 7

We went to babysitters  
That was where I learned I couldn't talk  
Couldn't tell anybody anything was wrong

The babysitters 3 sons did what they wanted to me  
I wasn't allowed to speak, I would be hurt, or someone  
Would be hurt

I was afraid for years, couldn't tell a soul  
I was unworthy, ugly, dirty

I was different. No one to understand. No one to care.

Dad came back, but never came home. Eventually,  
He got custody; mom wasn't fit; she was a drunk,  
A pass out drunk

School happened. But how could I make friends?  
I couldn't let anyone know, couldn't let anyone in.

I was alone. Just wanted to be loved, to love, to be  
accepted. To be ok

I gave myself away, gave my soul away

For a little attention. Searching to be loved, searching  
to be the same.

Searching for something;  
Something that couldn't be found in someone else.  
Something that only could be found in myself.

I did for others, to be ok, to be liked,  
To fit in, to be loved.

Never to share who I really was.  
Always afraid to be found out. To be judged.  
To be rejected. Would do whatever I could, to be  
accepted, not to be rejected

I came into these rooms, crawling, desperate.

You loved me. You took me in. You accepted me  
Just as I am and just as I'm not

Slowly, I shared, waiting for the other shoe to drop.  
Waiting for you to run away.

But you stayed. You loved me. Just as I am and just as I'm not.

All of a sudden, I could be a kid again. My heart  
erupted with love, With joy, with freedom.

When I was 7, I was old, very old. You gave me  
back my youth, my childhood.

I had done it backwards. Grew up fast, lost my in-  
nocence, lost my youth.

Today, I am not old anymore. I'm still growing up.  
~Rex

## Message From the Intergroup Chairperson

Hello there Intergroup Friends,

It's me, Chris A.C., your IG chairperson. We are now in the middle of 2009 and I thought I'd send you a mid-year hello. First, let me take this opportunity to thank those who do service in Intergroup and beyond. From those who work the bookstore to all of our coordinators to the Service Board members who keep me in line when I meet with you every month. I am so inspired by all you do for us. And it's never too late to serve. Currently, our public information coordinator has informed me that she cannot serve so we need someone to serve in this position. We also need co-coordinators for Directories, Financial, and Insurance. These coordinators really need your help and assistance. If you've never served or have served and can offer your expertise and talents to us, your service would be greatly appreciated. Please feel free to contact any of the members listed in your directory.

The summer is upon us and lots of activity abounds. Last weekend, I attended the Hospitals and Institutions Conference in Galt. I heard an excellent panel of professionals who serve in the field of alcohol, addictions and mental health treatment. Two of the professionals we heard were also members of Al-Anon. I was so inspired that I am working to bring a few of them to our Unity Day event in August.

I am looking forward to our NCWSA Convention in a few weeks. In case you haven't heard, it's taking place at the Marriott right here in Santa Clara, about a ten-minute drive from my house. If you can't make the whole weekend, I would encourage you to go on Saturday, or maybe come to the speaker meetings. This is a wonderful way of connecting with fellow Al-Anon and Alateen members from other areas on Northern California. Hope to see you there.

I am also very excited about the Al-Anon publication, [Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism 2009](http://www.al-anon.org/pdf/afa2009.pdf). This is a public outreach magazine that comes out every year in an effort to let professionals and the public know about our program and how it can help families of alcoholics. The literature office has many copies of this publication, and, if you would like to help distribute them, please contact me. You can read [Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism 2009](http://www.al-anon.org/pdf/afa2009.pdf) online at <http://www.al-anon.org/pdf/afa2009.pdf>.

If you have any questions about Intergroup, you are always welcome to contact me or any of our Intergroup coordinators. My phone number is (408) 691-3242 and my email address is [mrs\\_gratitude@sbeglobal.net](mailto:mrs_gratitude@sbeglobal.net).

Yours in Service, Chris A. C.  
Intergroup Chairperson

## Changing Life-Long Habits—Learning to Trust

I grew up in a dysfunctional family environment. I was taught to think for myself and solve my own problems—or my parents would solve them for me, especially if my thinking wasn't in line with theirs. I was taught that family problems were to stay in the family: “outsiders” had no need to know our business.

Thus, I was isolated from others. It did not take long for me to become isolated from my own family members as well, especially my stepfather, who was very abusive to all of us.

I found it was difficult to trust anyone other than myself, since I had learned not to trust my parents or siblings. I just didn't want to be hurt anymore by anyone.

When I began to attend Al-Anon meetings, it was hard to trust my home group, my Sponsor, or my Higher Power. After all, I was supposed to be self-reliant. But that had gotten me to where I was and, as I later learned, it was the root of all of my problems.

I found that I would have to trust in someone or something if I were to have any hope of getting better physically, emotionally or spiritually.

With time, I began to trust in my home group as a Power greater than myself that could provide me with some sanity. When it was suggested that I get a Sponsor, I had to take a giant leap of faith to trust someone else enough to ask him to be my Sponsor. Sometimes I had to pretend to trust until I actually did.

My sponsor suggested I do the Steps with him. With some trepidation, I slowly began to trust him, and I made an honest effort to do the Steps with him. I believed him when he said that Al-Anon and the Steps would not work for me if I were not entirely honest with him, my Higher Power, and myself.

Soon I came to trust that my Higher Power would know what was best for me. My faith in God sustains me, and I trust that following His will leads me to inner peace and happiness. I get a little better each day, so long as I surrender my will.

Today I am not isolated, because I belong to my new family of Al-Anon friends and others whom I have grown to trust and love. I have extended periods of inner peace and happiness so long as I keep “self” out of the way. This is not to say that every day is easy or without trials, but my Higher Power does not give me anything I can't handle “One Day at a Time.”

People, places, and things come and go, but my God never leaves me. Today I would not trade my life for any other, thanks to the tools I've received from Al-Anon.

By Larry M., Florida

*Reprinted with permission of The Forum, Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., Virginia Beach, VA. To subscribe to The Forum, go to <http://www.al-anon.org/forum.html>*

## Upcoming Events

**NCWSA Al-Anon/Alateen 2009 Convention**, June 12-14, 2009, Marriott Santa Clara, 2700 Mission College Boulevard, Santa Clara, CA 95054. Theme: “Keep the Change” – “Manten El Cambio.” Registration: \$30 at the door. Opens at 3:00 p.m. on Friday. Dinner Saturday \$25. Al-Anon speakers: Gabriela, Kim H., Larcine G., Tom W. AA Speaker: Butch G. For more information or to volunteer to help, contact [convention@ncwsa.org](mailto:convention@ncwsa.org).

**NCWSC Meeting** – June 19, 2009, Dinner at 6:00 p.m. Meeting from 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and June 20, 2009, 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. NCWSA One Day Assembly - June 20, 2009, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Friday (June 19th): Sheraton Pleasanton Hotel, 5990 Stoneridge Mall Road, Pleasanton, CA 94588. Saturday (June 20th): Pleasanton Middle School, 5001 Case Avenue, Pleasanton, CA 94566. Contact Lori K. at (925) 846-5420 or Karen H.A. at (925) 417-8719. Online event registration: [www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/NCWSA](http://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/NCWSA)

**District 20 Open Speakers Meeting**, 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Friday, June 26, 2009, Immanuel Lutheran Church, 14103 Saratoga Avenue, Saratoga, CA 95070. Speakers: Alateen speaker to be announced, Kara K. (AA and Al-Anon), and Kayne W. (Al-Anon).

**NoCAC Fundraiser**, June 26–28, 2009, Friday, 5:00 p.m. to Sunday, 12:00 noon. Sunset State Beach, 201 Sunset Beach Road, Watsonville, CA. (The beach is 16 miles south of Santa Cruz. Take Highway 1, exit on San Andreas Road, and follow signs south.) Bring your own tent, camping gear, swimsuit, toiletries and food to share. Campfire meetings, speakers, workshops. Registration to cover site expenses is \$30 per person for the weekend. No coed sharing of tents. For more information, contact Jasper R., NoCAC Chair, at (831) 345-7836 or Chris M., NoCAC Sponsor, at (831) 247-4497. Also see [www.ncwsa.org](http://www.ncwsa.org) for more information and forms.

**Unity Day: “Enthusiasm and Gratitude in Action”** - Sunday, August 23, 2009, 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., Milpitas Community Center, 457 East Calaveras Boulevard, Milpitas. This is an AA event with Al-Anon participation. Al-Anon will have a room from 11:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. To volunteer to serve at the literature table or for more information, contact Kimberly S. at (408) 410-6115.

## Upcoming Events

**NoCAC 2009 Last Chance Summer Bash**, August 14 – 16, 2009, Group Camping at Big Basin Redwoods State Park, Sky Meadow Group Site. Directions to Big Basin Redwoods State Park: From San Jose take Highway 880/17 south, exit Bear Creek Road to the right, then left—continue about 13 miles then left on Highway 9, then right on Big Basin Way/Highway 236 for about 9 miles. Follow signs to group campsite Sky Meadow—parking is free. Bring your own tent, camping gear, swimsuit, toiletries and food to share. Campfire meetings, speakers, workshops. Registration to cover site expenses is \$30 per person for the weekend. No coed sharing of tents. For more information, contact Jasper R., NoCAC Chair, at (831) 345-7836 or Chris M., NoCAC Sponsor, at (831) 247-4497. Also see [www.ncwsa.org](http://www.ncwsa.org) for more information and forms.

**District 20 Open Speakers Meeting**, 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Friday, August 28, 2009, Immanuel Lutheran Church, 14103 Saratoga Avenue, Saratoga, CA 95070. Speakers: Alateen speaker to be announced, Janice P. (AA), and Keith P. (Al-Anon) Husband and Wife in Recovery.

**Intergroup Special Event 2009: “Courage to be Me”** – Saturday, October 10, 2009, 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Christ the Good Shepherd Church, 1550 Meridian Avenue, San Jose, CA 95125. For more information or to volunteer to help, please contact Lisa M. or Moriah W. at (408) 316-8246 or at [specialevent2009@live.com](mailto:specialevent2009@live.com)

**NoCAC 2009: “Reaching for Recovery”** – November 13 – 15, 2009, Wyndham Hotel, 1350 N. First Street, San Jose, CA 95112. Registration includes hotel and meals: \$180 for a quad/\$220 for a double. Registration deadline: October 10, 2009. Speakers, talent show, workshops, dance, banquet dinner and more. Scholarships for 50% of the registration cost are available upon request. For more information, contact Jasper R., NoCAC Chair, at (831) 345-7836 or Chris M., NoCAC Sponsor, at (831) 247-4497. Also see [www.ncwsa.org](http://www.ncwsa.org) for more information and forms.

Please note that all events involving Alateens abide by the NCWSA requirement for Alateen member safety.

## H-E-L-P 12-Step Placard by Cheyenne

H	<i>urt enough to stop the denial eard "Hope" by association eld out invitation to "Higher Power"</i>	1 2 3
E	<i>xamined personal past mbraced by H.P. &amp; another human being xercised willingness to let H.P. remain in the lead</i>	4 5 6
L	<i>et past harmful habits discontinue isted names of those hurt by past behaviors iving differently in concrete ways</i>	7 8 9
P	<i>ersonal inventory &amp; resolution on a regular basis racticng daily connection with H.P. roviding support for others who are hurting</i>	10 11 12

## Intergroup Bookstore

The new Al-Anon book, [Discovering Choices](#), is available at the Intergroup Bookstore. This book explores many facets of our recovery in relationships.

The Intergroup Bookstore is located at the Campbell Community Center:  
Room Q-82  
1 West Campbell Avenue  
Campbell, CA 95008  
(408) 379-9375

Before making a trip to the bookstore, please call to verify that it is open. If you are interested in serving as a bookstore volunteer, please contact Anne C. at (408) 314-0883.

The current bookstore hours are as follows:

Monday	5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday	4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday	9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Thursday	12:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Saturday	9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

The bookstore is closed on holidays.