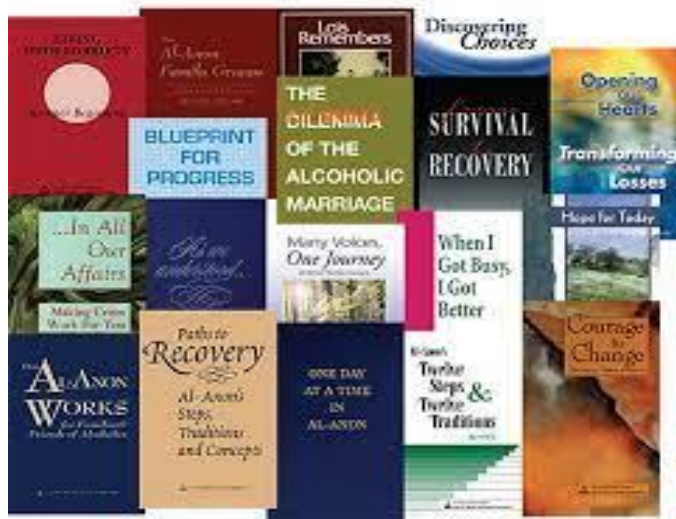


Ohio Al-A-Notes

Fall 2024

www.ohioal-anon.org

What Concept has Impacted our Recovery!



From our Delegate

Writing about the Concepts is difficult because they are such an “undiscussed” subject in a lot of our meeting rooms. I remember groaning (loudly) when they were brought up as a meeting idea and wanting to choose anything else but the Concepts! As I get further into service though and read our Service Manual (P24/27) along with the CAL Paths to Recovery (B-24), my opinions change, and my knowledge grows. It’s taken me a long time to reach this point, and since I have been your Delegate it’s necessary to study and know this wonderful part of our Legacies. The Knowledge of how things are supposed to work are very important to me so I can speak and act with the entire Al-Anon program and its members in mind. The abundance of information provided by our literature is my guideline and to know it’s written by members before me sharing their experience, strength and hope make it all the more amazing.

That being said, I’ve chosen to write about Concept 9 - “Good personal leadership at all service levels is a necessity. In the field of world service, the Board of Trustees assumes the primary leadership.” This Concept shows me the importance of choosing members that want to give back what they have received by working the Steps and Traditions in their recovery. Everyone can be a leader. I didn’t know this in the past, nor did I learn it from growing up, going to school or working out in the real world. I never felt like a leader of anything. Ever. When I stepped into the service spotlight, I was sure I would not do it right or complete any commitment that I made. In my past that’s what my pattern was so why would I think it was any different now? The main difference was that others who were my mentors (my sponsor, home group members) let me know that they had faith in me to carry out my duties. Starting small with group jobs, secretary, treasurer, chairing a meeting once a

month, were my first signs that I just might be able to do this! Group Representative was the first time that I felt I could actually be a part of decisions being made on a larger scale of the Al-Anon process. When I stepped up to be District Representative, I don't think I fully realized what that responsibility entailed at first. What's really eye opening for me is I didn't do great the first or second round. Now I see our District Representatives, and how they work together, visiting meetings and trying to solve the problems in their District and I'm so very proud of the members that were chosen and agreed to step up because they are truly dedicated to doing the job to the best of their ability.

As your Delegate those old thoughts appear again of not being good enough or smart enough and my age leaves a lot to be desired for memory lapses! However, as I look at this Concept and read about Bill W's description of leadership in our service manual, I know that as long as I keep in mind who I represent and what I am striving to accomplish, I can do this. As I gain more experience, my enthusiasm grows. That doesn't mean I don't listen to others and only carry out my agenda, it means I keep my mind open and listen to ideas of other members even if I don't agree. As it states in Paths to Recovery; "Good leadership knows that a fine plan or idea can come from anyone, anywhere." (pg. 304)

The Board of Trustees has a solid commitment to keep Al-Anon functioning worldwide. They have the responsibility of uniting all of us and establishing things such as the International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM) which includes Delegates from all over the world united in our primary purpose of helping friends and families of alcoholics. We are privileged to elect these Trustees. As an Al-Anon member each and every one of us has the opportunity to serve at this level if we desire. There is a process where we apply and list our experience on a resume and submit it to serve in this amazing capacity. Each and every member of Al-Anon can be a leader at any given time. Whether we chair a meeting, bring a friend or family member to a meeting for the first time, serve our group as a secretary, treasurer or GR. All this helps us to become leaders and as we grow and become more aware of our capabilities, I feel we can become more willing to be of service to this wonderful program. We are at a point that I see as pivotal in our area when it comes to filling positions within our groups and districts. I don't have exact numbers, but I know that in the Toledo area we have approximately 31 meetings and 24 GR's. That's 7 meetings who don't have a voice at the Assembly. In Ohio we have 43 Districts and only 19 DR's! That leaves 24 Districts without representation. As "seasoned" members step down and offer the rotation of service to others, I'm hoping that we can fill some of these spots. One last quote from Paths to Recovery that quotes from Bill's essay; "A leader is a person who can put principles, plans, and policies into such dedicated and effective action that the rest of us want to back him up and help him with his job." (pg. 303)

I pray that myself and the officers you've elected for Panel 64 can do our jobs in such a way that you all will want to help us move forward and step into the rotation of this wonderful opportunity to serve in Al-Anon.

With Love and Abundance of Gratitude,

Rose R Delegate Panel 64 - In Service We Soar!

From our Alternate Delegate

Concept 5 states that the rights of appeal and petition protect minorities and insure that they be **heard**.

Is a liberating concept when applied but if ignored, the meeting becomes **absurd**.

Today, I see the wisdom in only allowing a person 3 minutes at the **mic**.

Because more than that seems to open the door for some members to either fight or **flight**.

This concept encourages the minority to file a report if they feel a decision might affect Al-Anon as a **whole**. But when there is strong intimidation by some, it becomes tit for tat and that is not good for the **soul**. The angry majority is often led by one or more strong personalities who try to influence others to vote their **way**. Which causes the minority voice to shrink because they are made to feel foolish no matter what they **say**. I learned that if the WSO employees and members of the executive committee have a grievance or **complaint**. They can carry their frustration to the Board of Trustees who are there to listen like a true **saint**. This concept encourages the minority voice to speak up and share their thoughts but not to expect an **overturn**. For example, when the Minimum Safety and Behavioral Requirements for Alateen sponsors were introduced, it caused some stomachs to **churn**. Because there were Alateen sponsors who had to step down which was a sad **fate**. However, the World Service office had to make the change in order to continue offering Alateen in our **state**. This concept also requires a two-thirds vote for the election of a delegate when there is more than one **candidate**. This two-thirds method strengthens the spirit of democracy and is likely to diminish minority **debate**. The World Service Office does not consider any changes binding unless they have a two-thirds **vote**. This gives ample time to make sure that decisions are made without haste or an emotionalism **jolt**. What I have learned in this concept is that unity can only be achieved when the minority voice gets to **speak**. However, if this falters and the minority voice is not heard then Letting Go and Letting God is the peace I will **seek**.

Love In Service

Merri G, Alternate Delegate, Panel 64

From our Ohio Chairperson

I remember early Al-Anon meetings, and one particular long-timer who liked to chair a local meeting using the Concepts of Service. I thought they were so boring! And how did they apply to me and my life? I suspect I sat through some of those meetings with my mind focused on trying to fix my problems, not on what was being shared.

I began to understand the Concepts by studying Concept 4, Participation is the key to harmony. For me, growing up with alcoholism and being surrounded by it in my adult life, I had done everything I could to avoid conflict. In my mind, the avoidance of conflict was confused with harmony. I thought if I remained silent, uninvolved and detached (hadn't I learned about detachment in Al-Anon?), then things would be peaceful and that would promote harmony.

Unfortunately, my idea of conflict avoidance left me bitter, resentful and often depressed. What was I doing wrong? I was trying so hard to find peace and serenity.

“Participation” is the key to harmony. When I finally realized that to participate, I needed to find my voice and to express my opinion; only then could I have harmony within myself and with others. I no longer needed to keep my thoughts and

feelings bottled up to avoid conflict. I came to understand that other people's opinion of me was none of my business!
Wow!

Using Concept 4 within the Al-Anon fellowship and in my other relationships was the beginning of understanding how all of the Concepts of Service help me interact with the world around me. Thank you, Al-Anon!

Ann F, Ohio Chairperson, Panel 64

FROM OUR SECRETARY

Concept six in action

One of my favorite concepts is Concept six which states, "The conference acknowledges the primary administrative responsibility of the Trustees". This concept dissects the relationship between responsibility, authority and trust. I use this concept in my life pretty much everywhere, especially at work. I am a college instructor where I teach large classes. Therefore, I have a graduate assistant and an undergraduate assistant helping me in each of those large classes. One of the jobs of the graduate assistant is taking attendance. At the beginning of the semester, I create a spreadsheet of my roster and instruct them to track attendance for the semester, but I do not tell them how to track it. Over the years I have had many assistants and each of them have tracked attendance in their own way – some have ones and zeroes, and some have had green and red colored cells on the spread sheet for present and absent respectively and some have tracked in a totally different way. I have noticed concept six in action here. I assign them a responsibility (tracking attendance), never instruct them how to track it (communicating and giving authority) and trust them to accomplish the task in their best way. I am very happy to report that I have had great success in teaching these classes as I follow our program in all my affairs, especially at my job.

In service, Daisy

From our Treasurer

I am partial to Concept Four - Participation is the key to harmony.

Participation was not a part of my family growing up in an alcoholic home. Since coming to Al-Anon I have discovered that sharing how I feel as well as listening to others is a big part of healing. I no longer feel isolated and look forward to going to meetings and spending time with my sponsor and Al-Anon friends. Participating in Al-Anon by chairing meetings, speaking and doing service work has also provided me the opportunity to grow in the Al-Anon program.

In loving service, Carol R, AFG of Ohio Treasurer, Panel 64

From our Past Delegates

Favorite Concept and How do I use it in my personal life?

That is a hard question. I have learned over the years to adapt and implement them all in my life. The one I selected is:

Concept Three: The right of decision making makes effective leadership possible.

Currently my loved one and I are redecorating the condo we moved into late in 2023. OOOOO this is difficult to get started on, as we just did the house, we moved from to up-date it to sell.

We procrastinated, worked on a few inside minor projects. Then, after consulting with the Condo Association as to what our responsibilities for outside maintenance were, we decided to paint our fence and deck.

The biggest decision was on paint color and quality. We went through the selection process with numerous trips to paint stores for samples. I will admit to narrowing it down to the one I liked the best after choosing four possibilities. My loved one did not care what color it was. We talked about what quality and finish we wanted and decided that together. Then I did choose the color.

It took eight days and six gallons of paint, but WE got it done together.

Sandra F. Past Delegate

My Favorite Concept

This is tough for me to choose as I see all 36 of our Legacies relating to each other. However, if I must choose a favorite, it is Concept 12: The General Warranties of the Conference. As it says in our *Al-Anon Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27, p. 215) “All the Warranties counsel prudence – prudence in money matters, and prudence in the world all around us.” Not only in the World Service Conference, but in my daily life, observing “the spirit of our Traditions” helps to keep me sane!

Living prudently for me means living a life **of** balance and **in** balance – to the extent that I am able to do so at any given time, at any given moment. It means recognizing that I am far from perfect and that I will have relapses of those familiar unhealthy learned attitudes: perfectionism, obsessive thinking, and not recognizing or accepting the reality of certain situations. Practicing prudence helps me to act with acceptance, courage and wisdom, and achieve serenity.

Many of the spiritual principles that are contained in Concept 12 are found throughout our literature. These include prudence, humility, substantial unanimity, personal responsibility, avoidance of controversy, mutual respect and equality. Keeping an ample reserve relates to Tradition Seven by reminding me that being self-supporting is more than a fiscal responsibility. I need to keep my Al-Anon bank account up to date with respect to my physical, emotional and spiritual needs. The slogan H.A.L.T. reminds me how to do so!

It is all keeping my equilibrium as I take life one day at a time.

Theresa M, Panel 58 Delegate

From our District Representatives

My favorite Concept is #4 Participation is the key to harmony, I love this concept. This is the heart of the Al-Anon program, sharing our experience, strength and hope and it is so important that we share at meetings from the newest member to the oldest member. Sharing our experience, strength, and hope in our meetings is such a great tool of the program, and I love it when at the meeting we get to read one page, or one little phrase and we share around the table the whole hour without having to read anything else. This type of a meeting is a great meeting and that’s why this concept is so powerful to me. I have to be honest I didn’t even read the concepts until recently. In fact, I have an older ODAT book, and it doesn’t even have the concepts in it but then I participated in our area convention, and we really stressed the legacies of the program, and this is when I fell in love with this concept. Now, when people don’t really want to talk at the meeting, I just share this concept and then I smile. Thank you, Al-Anon for bringing us harmony as we participate.

Terri N DR #6, Budget Chair

The Fourth Concept of Service in Al-Anon states, "Participation is the key to harmony." It's the shortest concept of the Twelve Concepts. But, for me, it's power packed and one I regularly practice in my life. As a child, I was dependent on parents and surrounded by family members suffering from the diseases of alcoholism and mental illness. I was never certain what was going on beneath the surface of silence, absence, and anger.

My parents did not communicate. If they did communicate it was usually in raging outbursts that sometimes turned violent followed by silence with no decision, no resolution and no clearing of the air. Just a toxic, suffocating fog composed of fear, hurt and despair. I learned not to speak and not to be seen.

In Al-Anon I discovered Concept Four. The words it contained leaped off the page and into my soul.

Concept Four tells me participation is the key to harmony. Harmony is defined as combining things to create a pleasing whole. Harmony was something I wanted in my life.

I practice Concept Four by taking part in my life. This involves service in Al-Anon at the group, district and area levels. I can avoid disappointments and resentments by communicating my needs and asking concise direct questions, so others understand me, and I understand them. I experience harmony when I participate by showing up, working toward a common goal, sharing my ideas and communicating clearly. I place principles above personalities by not taking offense, if others don't agree with or accept my suggestions. This is what Concept Four means to me.

Chris E. District 10 Representative

"My favorite Concept is Concept 4 - "Participation is the Key to Harmony." I am often surprised that there are A-Anon members who do not know that the Concepts of Service exist. The Concepts have so much to offer us on the path to personal freedom. When I first read Concept 4, I felt a sense of relief! I thought "Ahh, I don't have to do everything myself." I used to think that the only way to keep things harmonious in any situation was for me to do everything for everybody. Sometimes that meant that I didn't take care of myself, but my definition of harmony back then was more like "keeping the peace" and meant everyone else was happy. Keeping the peace has been replaced with Participation now that I am in Al-Anon. By attending meetings, reading CAL, talks with my sponsor, working the steps, traditions and concepts - I found that participation is what leads to harmony - not being addicted to service but having my life in balance. To me, this concept explains how Al-Anon is a "WE" program. WE all participate together and that is the Key to Harmony. Not only is this valuable in Al-Anon but it is valuable in every other area of my life and relationship - at work, at home and with my family and friends.

With Participation comes Serenity, Harmony and Recovery, Sharon B. Ohio Public Outreach Coordinator"

Al-Anon Convention Share

In January 2024, the Cincinnati planning committee for the 2024 OAC met to begin planning the conference. We were excited and nervous about hosting the event. When the discussion moved to coming up with a theme for the Convention, Mimi R suggested using the newest Al-Anon Daily Reader as the theme. The vote was unanimous, and Mimi became program chair for the convention.

With the advice of Sandy F, we removed "A Little" from the title of the reader and left the theme at "Time for Myself". This seemed appropriate for a 3-day convention for Al-Anon Recovery. Until Recovery, many of us just worked and rarely played. The work done in Recovery is crucial to changing that. So much of Al-Anon Recovery is about learning to let go of fear and anxiety if we are NOT working! Over time, with continuing effort on a personal inventory, we begin to relax and tentatively take "me" time, to pursue personal interests. Al-Anon teaches us to put the focus on balancing between work obligations and taking that valuable time we need for ourselves. The committee strived for programming reflecting many facets of Al-Anon Recovery during the weekend. Yes, all the readers are wonderful. But A Little Time for Myself

has expanded the message to so many more who are now part of our Fellowship. As the Preface says, the readings “reflect the current diversity of our Fellowship”. Yes, indeed!

When designing the artwork for the convention, the original design was very gender specific, but when a committee member pointed out that we needed something less so, and simpler, our designer got the gist and complied. And the background color in both the program schedules and the convention t-shirts reflected the beautiful turquoise color of the reader.

The Cincinnati committee did our best with the program to make sure it was inclusive, insightful, and gave participants opportunities to latch onto Al-Anon principles, relationship “tools”, and concepts that would help expand and improve our relationships. It was important to us to build a multifaceted program benefitting all who attended, inclusive of family, friends, and our Al-Anon Fellowship. While Al-Anon has certainly evolved and expanded its reach, the foundation laid all those years ago remains rock-solid. From the feedback of participants who attended, and in our wrap-up meeting, it sounds like our committee succeeded in fulfilling the theme of our 2024 Convention!

Submitted by, Mimi R.

AA Convention Share

2024 A.A. Convention, Double Tree Hotel Independence, OH., August 23-25

Jolene A. and Sydney P. Co-Chairs from Cleveland Al-Anon Council with help from Al-Anon members, Liz, Doreen H., Doreen K., Theresa, Betty, Mary, and Linda.
Sue S. – Speaker

Al-Anon and Alateen Literature was for sale Friday and Saturday, 1 copy of Courage to Change was sold, pamphlets were given away to those interested.

We assisted with staffing the Hospitality Room in shifts on Friday and Saturday.

Sue S. gave a lead on Saturday afternoon that was well attended.

Rose R. from Toledo participated in a panel discussion along with A.A. members.

Saturday afternoon Al-Anon hosted a God Box/Toolbox craft hour that drew 5-10 crafters.

We found the experience to be very enriching and are grateful for the opportunity to cooperate with Cleveland Area 54 Alcoholics Anonymous.

Sincerely, Jolene A.

District News/Workshops/Conferences

District 48

September 20-22, 2024

"FALL INTO SERENITY" DISTRICT 48 CONFERENCE

Amish Door Inn

Wilmot, OH

FLYER https://www.ohioal-anon.org/documents/2024_Fall_Into_Serenity.pdf

For more information

fallintoserenity@neo.rr.com

District 51

From DR 51, Irena H. from Akron, Firestone Park AFG

AKRON AREA AL-ANON ZOOM WORKSHOPS FOR 2024

2nd Saturday of the month, at 9 am, log in time 8:45.

Meeting ID: 813 5635 1017

Passcode: 010355

Sep 14 Anger – defense, offense?? (Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage)

Oct 12 Double-Headed Management - of my life

Nov 9 Steps 1, 2, 3 – “The Al-Anon Waltz”

Dec14 Focus on the “Safe Port “ – transition from Step 4 to Step 5

These workshops are a form of the fundraiser and awareness for the Akron Area Al-Anon (AAA) Intergroup

2024 Ohio Area Calendar of Events:

September 20-22, 2024

“Fall Into Serenity”

District 48 Conference

Amish Door Inn

Wilmot Ohio.

(See the Ohio Website for more information: ohioal-anon.org)

October 12-13, 2024

2-Day Fall OAA (hybrid)

Findlay Inn and Conference Center

200 East Main Cross Street

Findlay Ohio 45840

2025 Calendar Events in Ohio-Mark your Calendars:

2025 Ohio Area Al-Anon Convention

Location: Independence Convention Center, Holiday Inn

Date: August 2-4, 2025

“Rockin’ Our Recovery”

Fabulous Speaker, Workshops, Panels, meetings with AA Participation.

Raffle Baskets, Grateful Gifts Boutique, and Presale Merchandise.

Saturday Evening Banquet followed by an 80s Dance Party + Line Dancing.

Saturday Lunch and Breakfast Buffets and to top it off there will be Deluxe Accommodations

2025 Calendar outside of the United States:

Vancouver: AA International Convention with Al-Anon Participation.

Language of the Heart-Celebrating 90 Years

July 3-6

Registration opens September 10, 2024, at 12pm EDT online at:

<https://www.aa.org/international-convention>

You'll need to register right away to secure downtown hotels!

NOTE: Members wishing to book a hotel room from the block reserved for the International Convention must complete registration first.

There will be Al-Anon daytime sessions on Friday and Saturday at the Hyatt Regency Vancouver Hotel. The sessions will include speaker meetings, service workshops, book studies, and panels on various topics.

We hope you will join the 4,000 Al-Anon attendees, including members of Alateen, whom we are expecting along with 50,000 A.A. members.

MOTIONS THAT WILL BE PROPOSED AT THE OCTOBER ASSEMBLY

The full motions can be found on the Ohio Area website (www.ohioal-anon.org) under calendar and documents pages)

Motion #1

Thought Force on the future of Area Meetings-Ann F. Chair:

To hold Ohio Area meetings (4/year, two AWSC and two Assembly) in a Hybrid Format. (both at a physical location and on zoom), on a 3-year trial basis, provided facilities and funds are available. 2024 will be considered the first year of this trial.

Motion #2

AAPP & ASBR Task Force -Irene B. Chair:

Motion to accept the Ohio Area 44 Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements (ASBR), as revised by the ASBR Alateen Task Force, and reviewed by Ohio legal counsel.

Please click on the link <https://www.ohioal-anon.org/> to view the Fall AWSC Reports regarding Alateen Safety and Behavior Requirements (ASBR). Once you click on the link above then follow these steps in order to view the report: Click_ Calendar, then Click_ Fall AWSC, then Click_ AFG of Ohio ASBR Review

OR

You can copy and paste the entire link in the box below in your browser and it will take you directly to the report: Don't you just love having choices:

<p>https://www.ohioal-anon.org/documents/ARCHIVES/2024-FALL-AWSC/05b_2024%20Fall%20AWSC%20AFG%20of%20Ohio%20ASBR%20review.pdf</p>
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Motion #3

Belle Valley AFG-Judith T. Chair:

To allow the Belle Valley AFG ID# 30623419, to move from the Ohio Area (44) into West Virginia area (60) at the request of the group.