

IDAHO

AL-ANON NEWSLETTER

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Newsletter by and for Idaho Al-Anon Family Groups

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Editor: Gail L. [redacted] Pocatello, Idaho 83201

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DISCUSSION OF THE FIRST TRADITION

Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity.

Very early in Al-Anon's existence the need for universal group guidelines was recognized. We turned to AA, as we had so often. They had shortly before adopted their Twelve Traditions. With their approval and after minor changes in wording to fit Al-Anon, our adaptation was sent to all registered groups for suggestions or approval.

An overwhelming number favored adoption and the Traditions were put into practice at once. Here and there a few groups clung to their old ways. But so clearly stated was each Tradition and so evident was the purpose behind it that most members were enthusiastic in their support.

As an example, it does not take much thought for a normal person to recognize the urgency of putting the good of all Al-Anon or of the group itself above that of any one member. If someone had felt the need of Al-Anon, worked hard to establish a group and helped it to grow, it is understandable that that member now takes special pride in the group. All is well if the founder subscribes to this First Tradition and accepts a role as a regular member.

Should pride show itself by a founder's feeling of proprietorship, an attempt to dictate all practice and policy, then trouble is ahead not only for the founder but for the unfortunate group as well. "Hands off" and "Let Go and Let God" are needed here.

Al-Anon is not a specialized program for one person's benefit nor for building up one's ego at the expense of others. It is for all who seek its help. If a member can be happy only by telling all the others what to do and how to do it, then that person is not practicing this First Tradition, not even if he founded the group or is its oldest member.

Bad as this situation is, it is infinitely worse if a group of oldtimers see their role as watchdogs to ensure that things are done "as we've always done them." Sometimes, yes frequently, quite new newcomers suggest better ways of handling group affairs. They should be heard and not made to feel brash and intrusive when they propose them. Thoughtful consideration of new ideas usually helps everyone's growth.

All groups need a healthy balance of wise, experienced oldtimers and eager young timers. Better Al-Anon is achieved when both work together cordially, cooperatively and with mutual respect.

It is for growth we seek Al-Anon help, whether or not we recognize that as the reason. We were unable to straighten out our own lives, to live tranquilly before Al-Anon. We cannot attain the growth we look for in an atmosphere where one or several of a clique act as traffic policemen, letting one person talk but immediately shutting down on another.

We need chairmen at meetings to keep discussions from straying off the subject. We do not need censorship based on personal idiosyncracies or feelings of group "ownership."

Where everyone is encouraged to express thoughts pertaining to the subject, where everyone feels free to air fresh ideas, there good Al-Anon is found. The group is relaxed; members are willing to give and take, not always feeling they must insist upon a point others find unacceptable. There is a sense of cohesion, of belonging to something bigger and better than any single member could be of himself and thereby greater progress is made by each. M.M.D.

Al-Anon Forum January 1973

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## DISTRICTS

### District #3

The District #3 held their first meeting of 1975 on January 30. The Boise Daytime Group hosted the meeting which was held at Vera's. The Area Delegate, Darlene P., from Idaho Falls was present. It was voted to have a different group host the District meetings on the last Thursday of every month.

On February 27 the meeting will be held at Mary J.'s Boise, and hosted by the Tuesday Night Group.

### District #5

District #5 had their first meeting January 11 at Stan's Cafe in Blackfoot. Those in attendance were Darlene P., Ruth L., Gail L., Lib B., and Burt S.

It was voted to hold district meetings every two months with the next meeting set for March 15 at 4pm at Lib's house.

Lib B. was elected District Representative. Her address is Firth, Idaho 83236. Carla W. was elected District Secretary-Treasurer. Her address is Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401.

A fund was started for the District Representative's expenses.

## GROUPS

### Boise Groups

New Groups include:

Thursday Nite Group meets at St. Stephens Episcopal Church-  
2206 N. Cole Road.

2nd Daytime Group meets Tuesday at 1pm at the Catholic Student  
Center across from Boise State University.

Emmett Al-Anon Group meets Tuesday at 10am in the new library.  
Naomi S.

### Idaho Falls

In keeping with the tone of cooperation the Idaho Falls Al-Anon talks at the Cares Center once a month. This is the Combined Alcoholic Rehabilitation Program.

Once again the talks at Ricks College are taking place. There have been seventeen talks scheduled for this semester. This is a rewarding experience and bringing results with a few students introducing the programs to their families.

The beginners group has changed from Friday afternoons to Monday afternoons at 2pm in a private home. Call 523-0289 for address.

The Al-Ateen group meets Monday Nights 1064 Hillview. Their group growth is small but the individual growth such an inspiration. They have been cleaning the AA meeting room. Their efforts were shared with a pizza party and games during the holiday. They have a great desire to meet with other groups and will save some of the money toward a trip to a nearby meeting. Beth D.

### Pocatello

Thursday Serenity Group-Our group had our 2nd anniversary January 30, 1975. We had our Welcome, Steps, Traditions, Prayer. Speakers from Al-Anon, AA, and Al-Ateen were present. Following the open meeting a Potluck Dinner was held with anniversary cake and ice cream as the highlight. Visitors from out of town attended and we really had a great time. We hope next year it will be even greater.

We are looking forward to the Regional Conference in Salt Lake City March 1 and then our own State Assembly May 1 in Nampa. Hope to see you all there. Ruth L.

### Nampa Al-Ateen

Nampa Al-Ateens held their 1st meeting in the Fall Room at Mercy Hospital at 8pm. Naomi S. is their sponsor and Gordon B. is their AA co-sponsor. Naomi S.

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## PUBLIC INFORMATION

It is my hope that each Al-Anon Group and each Al-Anon will feel the need of our schools in Idaho placing the Al-Ateen book on school shelves; that each counselor knows of Al-Anon and Al-Ateen. With combined efforts this would be a beautiful state project. WHAT DO YOU THINK???? Please write your ideas or thoughts on this to: Al-Anon , Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401. Let's work together. Beth D.

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AREA HIGHLIGHTS

Policy Committee Meeting-December 10, 1974

Many problems directed to the Policy Committee were resolved in light of existing policies.

Re: TV Appearances

Tradition XI is sustained if, when appearing on a television program as an Al-Anon or Alateen member, anonymity is maintained and precautions are taken to avoid recognition of the participants, e.g., back to camera or silhouette; face to camera with appearance altered to preclude recognition (wig, moustache, dark glasses, etc.).

In either of the above cases a pseudonym or first name only should be used. This policy applies equally to visual tapes for closed circuit TV (schools, etc.).

\*\*\*When appearing on a TV program as the relative of an alcoholic, a member can face the camera and give his full name, providing he does not reveal his membership in Al-Anon or Alateen.

This format is being used a great deal on TV programs in the United States and Canada and is proving to be most effective. The individuals talk as relatives of alcoholics-explain how important it was for them to find help and information-but do not state that they found this help and information in Al-Anon.

Other participants in the program inform the viewers that Al-Anon and Alateen are the primary resource for people whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking problem. And then, of course, telephone numbers and/or addresses of Al-Anon and Alateen Information Services are announced during the program, together with information about other community resources.

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NEXT DEADLINE IS APRIL 1, 1975. LET'S HEAR FROM ALL THE GROUPS INCLUDING ALATEENS AND THE DISTRICTS!!!!!!

Remember--LET IT BEGIN WITH ME

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