

# ALATEEN TALK

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The quarterly publication  
from Al-Anon Family Group's  
younger members worldwide.

## My self esteem has changed since coming to Alateen

### Willow, WI

When I first came to Alateen, I was a way different person. I didn't talk to other people and felt nothing but hurt, anger, and rage. I knew that I couldn't blame my mom for my dad's drinking, so I blamed myself. I cried myself to sleep every night. The blame and guilt had gotten so bad I thought that the only way out was to end it—permanently. Then I came to Alateen and everything got a little bit brighter. I met new people and started to smile again. Alateen is an amazing group and has taught me how to live, not only with my dad's drinking and drug use, but also with my feelings towards other things in my life. I can't thank my group enough for their support and compassion. My life today has its ups and downs, but I have confidence in myself and take each day one at a time. If it wasn't for Alateen I might not be here today. Alateen has changed my life. That's definitely something to be happy and smile about.

### Shelby, WA

Before Alateen I felt overweight, dirty, and ashamed. I hated who I was and what I was. I hated my body and my heart. I uncovered past experiences involving sexual abuse as a result of someone else's alcohol abuse. As a result, I started building up walls to keep myself protected from the damage my heart went through. I tried to bottle up my pain. I began hating myself more. I went through depression and then a miracle happened; I found Alateen. I started to accept who I was on the outside and started working on the person I was on the inside. Now, I have been here two years and I still have insecurities, but now I know that with the help of my Higher Power I can get through it.



Photo by Making a Change Alateen Group, NC

# Sharings from

## (Northern Mid-Atlantic Alateen Assembly and

### Step One

**Anonymous, PA**

I admitted I am powerless over my alcoholic mother. I am powerless over her strange acts and her moody ways. I admitted I am powerless over having things my way. I don't live in this world by myself. I am powerless over losing my brother due to violence. It hurt me terribly to lose my brother, but I can pray about it. What I do have control over is that I can express my love for each and every one of my relatives and friends because tomorrow is not promised. The program does work.

### Powerless

**Anonymous, PA**

I am powerless over everything and everyone. Even as I'm writing this, I don't want to admit that I'm powerless.

For some reason I thought that being a senior in high school would give me all the power. However, I do have more responsibilities. As they say: "With great power comes great responsibility and vice versa." Power is a five letter word that can cause so much damage. I have the option of choosing any college I want because I've worked so hard academically. But I am tired, just plain tired. I work entirely too hard and I don't give myself enough credit.

At my job, we have a sandwich that has five ingredients and it's the most annoying thing to make. Every time I have to make it, I get so annoyed. I have to think no matter how much it annoys me, I still have to make it.

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I'm powerless over rude people I deal with.

I'm powerless over a mom who is scared to let me grow up and be an adult

I'm powerless over colleges accepting me.

I'm powerless over my chaotic household.

I'm powerless over a partner who's so far away.

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## Calling all Alateen Conferences!

Please send YOUR  
Area Alateen events  
to *Alateen Talk*!

Include name of event, location, dates, and AMIAS contact name, phone and/or e-mail. Please send at least six months in advance to allow for production schedules. We hope you will plan on holding a conference writing workshop, and sending your sharings to *Alateen Talk*, so we can share your experience, strength, and hope with others in the pages of the newsletter!

*Alateen Talk* ISSN#1054-1411 is a publication printed quarterly and copyrighted by Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. and may not be reproduced without permission. Alateen members from all over the world share their experience, strength, and hope through the written words of *Alateen Talk*. Their sharings relate to their personal lives, how their Alateen group is functioning, and ways in which to carry the Alateen message to young people who are still suffering from someone else's drinking. Subscriptions to this publication: \$2.50 per year for single issues; multiple rate, \$7.50 per year for 10 copies of each issue.

# NOMIAC

## Conference)



Photo by Making a Change Alateen Group, NC

## Alateen Helps

**Sarah, KS**

I have started to think more clearly ever since I started going to Alateen. I have become a much happier person. I stop and think before I do something now. I am still afraid of my dad. He started drinking again after he got out of his halfway house. I haven't talked to him since I moved out of his house and moved back with Mom. I just hope he realizes he is losing his family and gets the helps he needs. The good thing is that I have an Alateen group where I can share. I go to Alateen meetings twice a week. If I need to, I can use my favorite slogans: "Think," "Let Go and Let God," and "Live and Let Live."

## I Don't Have To Be Perfect

**Cole, WA**

Sometimes I can accept that our insides can match our outsides but I believe that beauty is only skin deep. Before Alateen, I was very quiet. I tried to be a perfect kid. However, I thought of myself as a piece of garbage. Today, I can be sarcastic and screw up sometimes (not everyone is perfect). People get over it. Now I make friends easily because I can show my true colors.

## Self-Esteem

**Kaylee, WA**

I think that my self-esteem is the hardest thing to change. Since coming to Alateen, I have decided I am free to be myself more. But I do still have issues with feeling like I am not good enough for anyone. When Dad left us to go three hours away from us, I felt damaged. Now he tries to buy me off. He pretends that he didn't leave us. My self-esteem still hasn't recovered from his leaving, but it is getting there.

# more Sharings

## Self-Worth

**Taylor, AR**

I know that the Alateen group has helped me. Now, I can turn to a Higher Power and take one step at a time. I also don't stress as much, but I do still stress. I feel better about myself because I am not judged. There are people who have the same problem as me. Not long ago, I came out of my comfort zone. When I first came to Alateen, I didn't say a word. I was scared, but finally I got enough courage to read in the meetings. Now I do it every week. It took time to get out of my comfort zone, but I was able to do it. I know that the Alateen members love me.



Photo by Patsy E., TX

## Expectations

**Alec, IA**

Before I came to Alateen, I was afraid of expectations. I always thought I had to live up to every expectation people had of me. I became overwhelmed and stressed. I wanted to bottle myself up, curl in a ball, and try to escape the world. Once I came into the program, I learned that trying to please everyone all the time can have bad outcomes. I have learned that all I can do is try to live up to my own expectations.

## I Keep Coming Back

**Anonymous, CT**

In my first few meetings of Alateen everyone was much older and very intimidating. After a short amount of time, they welcomed me into their family. Soon I felt the love. I gained their trust and they gained mine. Alateen became a place to reflect, meditate, and listen. Growing up with the program really helped me shape my personality. I am thankful for it. I keep coming back because I love to make new relationships with the newcomers and to share the love and welcome that I received.

## Loneliness

**Alexa, CT**

Before Alateen, when I felt alone, I did nothing but sit in my room and listen to music. When I tried talking to my friends, I still felt lonely. They didn't understand what it was like to deal with an alcoholic father. A lot of people don't and that's the hard part of loneliness. I wished more people understood me when I felt lonely. When I came to Alateen, I realized that I am not alone. Alateen helps me with feeling of loneliness and dealing with an alcoholic father.

## For the Love of Alateen

**Anonymous, CT**

During the first few meetings, although I didn't know it yet, I was introduced to an unconditional love that came from my fellow Alateens. These special people were in my age group and were experiencing the same feelings that I was. When I am away from the group, I almost feel a sense of loss that can only be filled with the supportive words of others, my Alateen family. Now that I am back, I realize that the Alateens in my meeting have always been there for me, and it is time that I return the favor and pay it forward to the newcomers.

**Join in**

## Alateen Chat Meetings!

Alateen meetings are available in cyberspace! Newcomers are finding their way to the WSO-administered chat rooms. Alateen Group Sponsors (certified by the host Area of each chat room) are present at posted meeting times. Alateen members are needed to share their program with newcomers in the chat meetings. It's a quick process to register at <https://chat.alateen.net>.



# From WSO

Mary Lou M., Associate Director Member Services

Plans are underway for Al-Anon/Alateen's International Convention, to be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, July 5-7, 2013. There will be Alateen workshops during the day on Friday, July 5 and Saturday July 6. Alateen members will chair the workshops, and Area-certified Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) will serve as Alateen Group Sponsors in the workshops. Questions about Alateen at the Convention are already coming in to the WSO, and we thought this would be a good opportunity to share with our Alateen groups and Alateen Group Sponsors how it will work!

Convention registration forms were mailed to every Al-Anon and Alateen group in the U.S. and Canada, and on-line registration is available at [www.al-anoninternationalconvention.org](http://www.al-anoninternationalconvention.org).

**Alateen registration:** Alateens age 12 and over must register for the Convention. Children under 12 do not have to be registered.

**AMIAS participation:** When Al-Anon members register for the Convention, look for the question, "Are you willing to serve in your capacity as an Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS)?" Those who check that box may be invited by WSO to serve in the Alateen workshops. All certified AMIAS who visit the Alateen meeting area Friday and Saturday will have the opportunity to receive a colorful tag to hang on their badge letting the Convention know that they are a certified AMIAS!

**Closed Alateen workshops:** The "closed" Alateen workshops are attended only by the Alateens and the WSO-assigned AMIAS. Alateens age 12 through 19 wearing an Alateen Convention badge may attend closed Alateen workshops. Children aged 9 thru 11 may also attend the closed workshops (a parent must check them in before the meeting and pick them up afterwards).

**Open Alateen workshops:** Two open meetings are planned; check the program when you arrive. All registered for the Convention are welcome to attend!

Of course, in addition to the workshops, the Convention offers "Big Meetings" with speakers, the "Language of Love" parade, A.A. activities, dances, and lots more! We hope to see you in Vancouver!

## CELEBRATING WORLDWIDE UNITY

[www.al-anoninternationalconvention.org](http://www.al-anoninternationalconvention.org)

2013 Al-Anon/Alateen International Convention

July 5-7, 2013

Vancouver, British Columbia



Photo by Making a Change Alateen Group, NC

## ALATEEN Group Sponsor Corner

### Overcoming Fear

Anonymous, NV

If you would have told me a few years ago that I would be an Alateen chat meeting Sponsor I wouldn't have believed it! I have very poor computer skills and I am fearful of trying new things. When my Area decided to set up an Alateen chat meeting with the WSO, I was scared. What helped me be willing to try was the support and kindness of the other Area AMIAS involved. From the beginning, I learned how special they are. Their dedication to the program and unexpected humor kept me grateful and willing to keep trying. We waited months for our first continuing members and chose abundant thoughts and fellowship to keep us motivated. I look forward to our meeting every week. What a treat to talk with teens from all over the US and Canada. The conversations and shares have been a big part of my on-going recovery. The Alateen shares are from the heart and our laughter is equally genuine. I am very grateful for being brave enough to try something different. Now I can feel more self-confidence as I help the circle of hope be a part of the Internet. Thank you to my program and my fellow members of our chat meeting.

**Together we can make it!**

# Groups in Action

## Alateen Report

Sarah, Group Representative, UK

South Croydon Alateen Group is a fairly well attended group. We have on average four to eight teens each week. Over the past four months we have had about five to six newcomers who have kept coming each week.

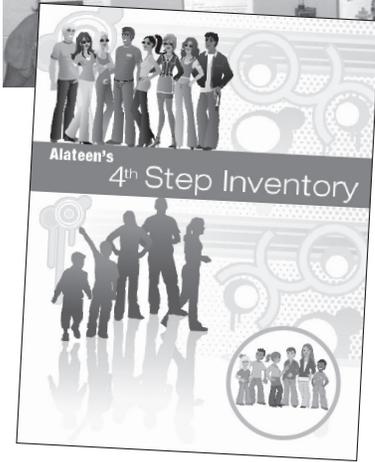
In the meetings we have two subjects to talk about. We have a negative subject that the Alateens chose in a previous meeting. For example the negative subject could be: "blaming myself for the alcoholic's drinking." We would go round the circle and say how we feel and when or if this has been something we have had to deal with. Then we have a positive subject to end the meeting, for example, "Hope." We end the meeting on a positive so that we can all go home feeling good.

On the first meeting of every month instead of two subjects we have the Fourth Step inventory. The *Alateen's 4th Step inventory* (P-64) is a workbook with general subjects in it like self-esteem. It also has questions we can answer like; "How has my self-esteem changed since coming to Alateen?" We really enjoy using this workbook. It helps the Alateens a lot and it's fun to use too.

We have two Alateen Group Sponsors sitting in our meetings. They mostly are with us to make sure that we keep on focus and use the time well. Sometimes they also share on what it's like from an adult perspective. I can't stress how grateful we are for the Alateen Group Sponsors. We wouldn't have our Alateen meetings if the Sponsors didn't volunteer to use their time to sit in our meetings. We really love having the Sponsors with us and they help us get the best out of Alateen!



Photo by Sheryl T., FL



## Calling all Alateen Group Sponsors!

Alateen Group Sponsors are invited to share in the "Alateen Group Sponsor Corner" or for the "Groups in Action" section about group challenges, activities, outreach projects, or other experiences in Alateen service. Please note that personal Al-Anon recovery stories from Alateen Group Sponsors and other AMIAS should be submitted to *The Forum*.



Photo by Vicki L., GA

Answers to puzzle on page 8.

Across

2. kindness
6. responsible
7. serenity
8. love
11. self-esteem
13. friendship
14. health
15. positive

Down

1. decision
3. sadness
4. attitudes
5. feelings
8. laugh
9. respect
10. heart
12. think

# Younger Members

## Attitude of Gratitude

**Angela, 12, ON**

Thanks to Alateen I realize that I should be more grateful for the things I have. And I realize that the things I have in my life now make me happy. I am glad that people care for me and I am grateful for it. Alateen has taught me to be glad for the things I have and not to always expect more. In the Serenity Prayer it says: "to accept the things I cannot change" and "wisdom to know the difference." This has helped me become aware.

## Expectations

**Anonymous, IA**

I don't expect too much of myself. If I expect too much of myself and I don't achieve my goals, it makes me feel bad, like I failed. So if I expect less of myself, I get more than what I expected. I feel like I accomplished more than I wanted.

## Choices

**Ceara, 10, TX**

The program has helped me become a friendlier person. I used to fight a lot with my brothers and sister before I came to Alateen. After I started attending Alateen meetings, I found it easier to get along with my siblings. My favorite slogan is "Let Go and Let God" because I can turn my problem over to God and I don't have to worry about it anymore. The program has also helped me not to steal or do anything rude. Once I found a dollar and I gave it back to the teacher. Alateen has really helped me be a better person.

## Worry

**Kailey, 8, IA**

Before I came to Alateen I was worried about everything. I learned that I don't have to be worried all the time, but it is okay if I am. Today I do not worry about everything.



Photo by Kathy C., ON

## How Alateen Helps

**Amanda, 12, WA**

Before Alateen I was very confused on what to do. Not a lot was clear to me. Now that I have Alateen I am very positive about most things. I feel confident to go through situations that come to me. My mom is in recovery from her alcoholism and we are all working through this. My parents recently broke up and I switch between my parents. My dad lives in our house and my mom has an apartment but I deal with it, one step at a time.

## Alateens,

please keep your sharings and stories coming for

## **Alateen Talk...**

you can e-mail  
wso@al-anon.org  
(subject line: *Alateen Talk*).

### **Alateen Talk Writing Guidelines**

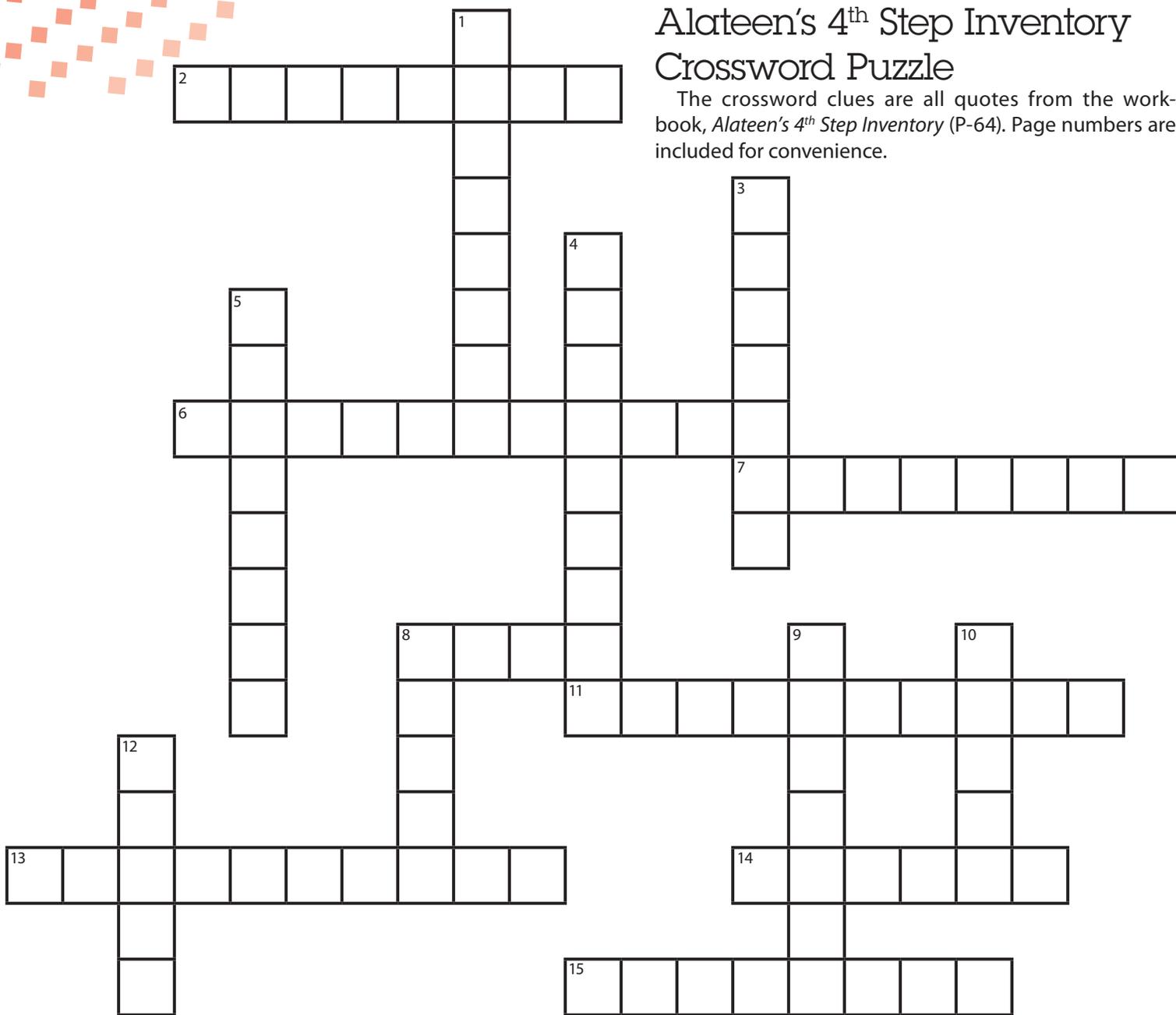
- Share an experience from the heart with the focus on yourself, not the alcoholic, the non-drinking parent, or anyone else.
- Try to write about one topic.
- Tell what has happened to you and what it was like—how Alateen has helped you and how your life has changed.
- Use words like "I," "me," and "my" when sharing about your personal story, and words like "we," "us," and "our" when referring to your family or group experience. Be sure your sharing agrees with Alateen Traditions.

Sharings may be sent to the WSO, Attention: *Alateen Talk* by e-mail to WSO@Al-Anon.org (*Alateen Talk* in the subject line), by fax at (757) 563-1655, or by postal mail to the Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454.

# Tear it out and Keep it

## Alateen's 4<sup>th</sup> Step Inventory Crossword Puzzle

The crossword clues are all quotes from the workbook, *Alateen's 4<sup>th</sup> Step Inventory* (P-64). Page numbers are included for convenience.



### Across

2. Have I learned to treat my parents and others with \_\_\_\_\_ and respect? (page 10)
6. In Alateen we begin to understand the difference between acting \_\_\_\_\_ for everything and not being responsible at all. (page 26)
7. Today we let go of our need to win, to gain the greater gifts of acceptance and \_\_\_\_\_. (page 38)
8. To experience \_\_\_\_, our walls of mistrust must come down, brick by brick. (page 20)
11. In Alateen, I learned how to build up my \_\_\_\_\_ and live a happy life. (page 14)

13. In Alateen, I came to know the real meaning of \_\_\_\_\_. (page 38)

14. Do I take proper care of my \_\_\_\_\_ by eating the rights foods and getting enough exercise and rest? (page 15)
15. \_\_\_\_\_ attitudes make it easier to enjoy our family, ourselves and others. (page 8)

### Down

1. When I have to make a \_\_\_\_\_, do I consider what is best for me? (page 28)
3. Have I learned that sharing my anger, \_\_\_\_\_ and other feelings does not cause someone to drink? (page 34)

4. I need to remember that I can control my own \_\_\_\_\_ toward an unpleasant situation. (page 8)

5. \_\_\_\_ aren't right or wrong—they just are. They're a special part of me. (page 31)
8. Do I have a healthy sense of humor—can I \_\_\_\_\_ at myself? (page 33)
9. Do I \_\_\_\_\_ the property of my brothers and sisters? My parents? (page 39)
10. Do my actions show the love I feel in my \_\_\_\_\_? (page 22)
12. From this moment on we can start changing how we \_\_\_\_ of ourselves. (page 17)