

ALATEEN TALK

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www.al-anon.alateen.org

How has Alateen helped me to be happier?

Anjuu, India

Before I came to Alateen, I didn't know how to handle my problems. I am a middle class normal teenager. My father is an alcoholic and my mom works day and night. Before Alateen, my life was miserable. I wasn't studying because of my father's drinking. Every night my father came home drunk and I faced my worst fears. Mom used to cry a lot and this discouraged me. When my father lost his job I thought that my life was over. We had no money. We were on the streets. One day my mom found a place for my father's illness; A.A. for him and Al-Anon and Alateen for us. The first time I came to Alateen I didn't understand anything. When I attended my second meeting, I listened carefully and started learning how to face my day to day problems. I am learning to follow the Twelve Steps and now my life is happier. I like surrendering, writing letters, and admitting I am powerless. "Keep Coming Back," it works!

Katie

Alateen has saved my life in so many ways. Alateen has allowed me to love myself. It brought amazing people into my life that I consider to be my closest family. It has also given me the power to make the hardest decision of my life. It changed my family forever. My mom was always verbally abusive. It hurt so much to hear all my flaws thrown at me every day. Things she would say I wouldn't tell someone I hated. January 3, 2011 changed my life forever. My mom ended up kicking me in my face. My face was swollen, and black and blue. I called my close cousin and she came and picked me up. When I got in the car, my uncle was on the phone and asked me if I wanted all this to end. Of course I wanted all the pain and hurt to be over, so I said yes. He then told me that I had to make a police report against my mom. I was immediately scared, not for myself but for my mom. I was only 16. I shouldn't be the one making all these decisions. I looked over at my brother who was 13 and crying his eyes out. I then looked at my face in the reflection of the window. I knew I had to be strong and make the hard decision, not for myself but for my family. When I walked out of the police station, I finally felt relief. Without Alateen I never would have had the courage or spiritual support to take care of myself. I would still be the little girl stuck in an alcoholic's world. Instead I graduated high school a year and a half early and I am going to start college in the fall. My life has been terrifying and meaningful and I have finally found my serenity. ☺



Sharings

Sharings on the "Monsters in our Lives"

Amanda, KS

My temper is a "monster" in my life because I yell at people and then they get mad at me. I also yell at my mom when I get mad at her. I then get grounded or she yells back at me. It has gotten a lot better since I've been in Alateen, but I still have a lot of work to do. I get mad very easily. So the fact that I've gotten just a little better is very cool to me. I thank the Alateen program for that. I am going to continue working on dealing with my anger.

Josh, KS

There were "monsters" that controlled my life. Anger was the main monster that controlled me until the day I realized I had control. In Alateen I had realized I can control this monster in my life instead of letting it control me. The person that I fear the most is myself. If I don't control myself, I will go crazier than I already am.

Sara, KS

The "monster" in my life is acceptance. It is hard for me to socialize because I am afraid that people won't accept me, or will judge me and think badly of me. I want people to accept me and like me, but I am afraid of the outcome. It makes me want to be what everyone else wants me to be.

Trevor, KS

The "monster" in my life is lying. I would always lie when my mom called and asked if my dad had been drinking. I would always say "no" because I feared my parents would get divorced. I also knew that my father would sober up by the time Mom got home. Since I started Alateen, my thinking has become a lot clearer. Now I lie a lot less, because I know that in the end, it isn't helping my dad's drinking. I am afraid of my father. He can be very scary when he is drunk. Currently, I have an Alateen group that I go to every Wednesday. I like to use the slogans and Steps.

John

One of the "monsters" in my life is my alcoholic father. What he did to me and my mother when I was growing up was monstrous. I started Alateen nine years ago. When I first joined I was hyper and unpredictable. I was also spontaneous and acted without warning but with the help of Alateen and my Higher Power I have made a change for my own good. Now, I can talk to my father without running. I have friends now thanks to Alateen. The Alateen tools that helped me the most were "Easy Does It" and the three C's: You cannot control it, you didn't cause it and you cannot cure it.

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@AI-Anon.org (*Alateen Talk* in the subject line), by fax at (757) 563-1655, or by postal mail to the AI-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454.



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Sharings from "Speaking from the Heart" Alateen in California.

Miranda, CA

I grew up without a father and with a mother who was always drunk. I am a chain breaker. Alateen has brought me to the realization that I can make a difference. The program and the members are what saved me from my fears. I doubted myself and held on to grief and guilt about not being able to change my mother. Today I am happy to be me and come from where I came. I've spent the last six years of my life in Juvenile Hall and group homes because I had nowhere to live. I have been sexually, physically, and emotionally abused. I have posttraumatic stress disorder and severe anxiety. I struggle with many things. I would never change anything that has ever happened to me in life, because it has made me who I am today. I love who I am. Alateen has helped me to realize that I can change the way I look at things in life. I can make different choices. When I worry about my future, I just think about what I can do to make it better in that very day. My favorite quotes that keep me going every morning are: "Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss you will land among the stars," and "Never give up." I will "Keep Coming Back" to Alateen!

Becky, CA

The Alateen program has helped me to not regret the past, and to know I can change my future fate. I accept what I can and cannot change. By cooperating with my Higher Power to give me the guidance I need, I can accept the things that cause me problems. This is without having mixed emotions or being angry. This program has helped me find some self-esteem and make decisions. I know I can make positive choices with my group's support. I am no longer alone. I don't need to hide. I can let people in without getting hurt. Also the slogan "Just for Today" has helped me cope with myself and my future. Not to expect, but just to accept what will come my way. Also, reading my Alateen book, talking to group members, and sharing my feelings has helped me get rid of negative thoughts. Now I know I am not alone, that Alateen is with me. Support is all I need. Especially from the people that understand what I have been through.

Linda, CA

When I came into the Alateen program, I believed it was nothing but a place to gossip. When I started to go, at first, I wouldn't speak. I was tired of trusting everybody with my emotions. After a while, I met other teenagers like me who were scared to trust and scared not to trust. That was me. I was always trusting people, letting them come into my life and walk over me, like I was nothing but a doormat. When I opened up to people they saw that as a weakness and used it against me. I wanted to be tough and show people I wasn't weak. I started hanging out with people who drank and used drugs. I was changing, not for myself, but for the wrong people. I believed they were there for me.

Today Alateen has taught me to make positive choices for me and only me. I don't need to care what people think of me. What matters is what I think of myself. If I hadn't started to attend Alateen, I never would have found some amazing warriors that are just like me. Together they have made me realize that the choices I make don't need to reflect on somebody else. I don't need to change for people to make myself wanted.

I am a beautiful unique warrior woman. The choices I have started to make since I attended Alateen have made me who I am today. I am proud that I choose to be who I am now and not care what people think. I got myself this far and I will succeed even further. A wise woman told me once: "Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, and today is a gift, that's why we call it the present!" I want to thank my beautiful Alateen warriors for believing I can. Thank you!

From *Serenity Sentinel* newsletter, MI

Michaela, MI

During KOMIAC we did an activity where we threw balloons at a wall to let go of something that had been bugging us. At the time, I had a lot of resentments toward my mom because I blamed her for my dad's drinking. I decided to let go of those resentments. When I went home, my relationship with my mom got so much better. We weren't fighting as much and I felt less angry around her. I am grateful I had the opportunity to go to KOMIAC because without it, I might still have all those resentments against her.

Alateens, please keep your sharings and stories coming for *Alateen Talk*. . . you can e-mail wso@al-anon.org (subject line: *Alateen Talk*).



The Eagle Alateen group, Eagle, ID.

2012 Alateen Conferences

Northern California Alateen Conference (NoCAC)

Nov. 9-11, 2012
Modesto, CA
Contact: Bonnie M. (209) 996-5282

2013 Al-Anon/Alateen International Convention

July 5-7, 2013
Vancouver, British Columbia
Registration begins in September 2012
www.al-anon.alateen.org/members



Texas East Alateen Conference (TEAC)



**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 Group Sponsor Corner

Being an Alateen Chat Sponsor

Judy, NV

A friend of mine always says, "Change with the times or go the way of the dinosaur." With that in mind, I chose to embrace technology in recovery and be an on-line Alateen Chat Sponsor. What fun it has been!

We "opened" our Area Alateen Chat Room last May. The first week no teens signed on. We were disappointed, but continued to sign on anyway. To keep occupied, we held our own meeting. This allowed us to experiment with the chat room format and practice using its features.

Then one day someone appeared. A cute personal icon was on the screen! Its appearance reminded me of fishing without any luck, but then suddenly, unexpectedly, there was a bite on the line. Then someone else signed on. How exciting! At first our conversations felt stiff, but after some months, the sharing is more spontaneous and frequent. Not long ago, we talked about a name for our group, how it feels to communicate on-line, and how we all have found friendship and encouragement. We are building an identity, just like a home group. If someone does not sign on, we miss them. I cannot "see" anyone's faces, but that is what might be great about it. I know the participants simply by what they share.

The Alateen Chat feels like more fun each week. We experiment with different colors and font sizes. The different colors help me know who is talking. I pick a color to match my mood. Last week we had red, green, blue, and coral responses. We also insert smiles or frowns, and sometimes someone receives a rose. We share how our week went, what tools we are applying, and discuss what we are grateful for. I find myself watching the clock and wanting to sign on before it's time. Being in the Alateen Chat is an easy and wonderful way to reach across time zones and even countries. The hour flies by. It's still three days away from our next meeting, but already I am looking forward to signing on to our weekly Alateen Chat. Try it—you might like it!

(Alateens: go to <https://chat.alateen.net> to register.)

Alateen Chat a New Adventure in Recovery

Denise, NV

When the Alateen Chat room became active in my Area I thought, why not register to be a moderator/Sponsor. I have never participated in an Al-Anon on-line meeting but figured I was tech savvy enough to give it a try. I did the training offered by WSO and began my new journey in participating in an Alateen Chat meeting.

My experience has been that the number of teens is usually different each week, with a few core members. As with face-to-face meetings members come and go.

The meeting I participate in is during the late afternoon for me. Kind of that time of day when I start to get sluggish, however, once I log in to the meeting my spirits are lifted. I like the type of interaction we are able to have as moderators/Sponsors and the teens who attend the meeting. At times it seems like we are all talking at one time, and most likely it feels like that because we are. I like when we use a slogan for the meeting topic and we all have a different way to look at it. I use the emotion symbols when I share and usually it is the laugh symbol. The meeting does cover serious issues and when I read the words I can feel the pain and fear being shared. I also feel the joy and laughter with the words and emotion symbols.

To me the Alateen Chat meeting offers a feeling of freedom to just share openly and honestly. One meeting we talked about having an invisible shield or cape to protect us. Maybe that is why Alateen Chat meetings are so great for me. We share but in a way are invisible; no judging happening. Just this past week I finally learned how to select an icon for my profile face. All this time I have just been a shadow, what a laugh we had about that one. Just like face-to-face Alateen meetings I learn more from the members than I ever imagined possible. I am glad the meetings are offered and continue to work on ways to spread the news. I am always hopeful new members will be there when I sign in each week.

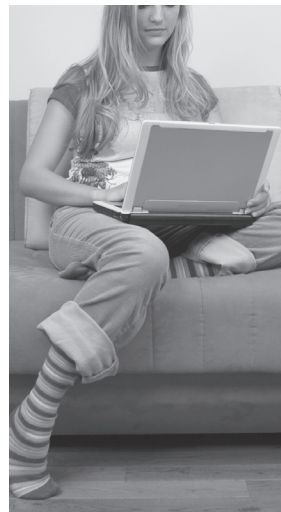
Calling all Alateen Group Sponsors!

Alateen Group Sponsors are invited to share about their Alateen service in the "Alateen Group Sponsor Corner," or for the "Groups in Action" section, sharing about group 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*.

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 to open the chatroom for sharing (read "Alateen Group Sponsor Corner" for sharings from chat Sponsors!). 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>



Groups in Action

Viki M. WA

This year the Alateen group I work with decided to use the *4th Step Inventory* for our meetings. In addition to the opening part of our meeting, we pull out the inventory work books. We go around the room and answer the question one-by-one. We have been working with this for two months. It has been a great experience

Younger Members

Sharings on Gratitude from Westside Alateen, SD

I am grateful for Alateen

I am grateful for friends who have the same problem in their house who I can talk to.

I am grateful that I can share about my troubles and there is no gossip.

I am grateful for the slogan "Let Go and Let God." It reminds me of my Alateen program.

I can let go of my worries and concentrate on my studies.

Paige, 10

I am sad because of my dad's situation. Sometimes, I don't want to get up and go to school. I realized I have a lot of feelings I am going through. Alateen reminded me of "HALT." If I am Hungry, Angry, Lonely or Tired, I can admit it and take care of myself by taking a nap or expressing my anger in a healthy way.

Marcus, 8

I get frustrated when I am pushed around. If I push them back, I get in trouble. I know that I can react differently next time. And in time, change will be a stepping stone to react differently.

Angela, 12

I try to accept my feelings because sometimes I do not understand them. I mostly handle my feelings by telling someone or expressing them to myself. In Alateen I can do both in the meeting and it helps me a lot coping with them.

Clara

I came back to Alateen because of the support and the feeling of safety. I know I am not the only teen with an alcoholic parent. It makes me feel like I can fit in and say what is going on in my life. Also I can express how I feel and not worry about the drama and gossip.

Emily, 11

I felt sad when people in school made me feel dumb. Alateen helped me to know I am smart no matter what other people say.



Alateen Poster Contest!

Don't forget that our poster contest is underway!

Please send your poster ideas, based on the theme,

"Is someone else's drinking tearing you apart?"

The poster should also include:

- Al-Anon/Alateen's toll free meeting line number (888-4AL-ANON, 888-425-2666)
- the Public Outreach Web site URL (www.al-anon.alateen.org)
- leave space for members to insert local contact information

Please submit your own photo, drawing, painting, or graphic design for consideration.

Do not submit copyrighted material, unless the copyright belongs to you.

All submissions become the property of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.

Submissions should be:

JPEG or PDF files

No larger than 11" X 17"

No smaller than 5 1/2" X 8 1/2"

200-300 dpi at 100% print size

No more than 10MB

Please send your submission to the Public Outreach Department at the World Service Office at wso@al-anon.org Att: Public Outreach.

Or submit a hard copy/CD to:
AFG, Inc.

Public Outreach Department
1600 Corporate Landing Parkway
Virginia Beach, VA 23454

Winning entries will be posted on the Members' Web site for use as Public Outreach posters.

One of our Alateen pieces of literature is the daily reader *Living Today in Alateen* (B-26). Here are some sentences with blanks for you to fill in. You may come up with many options for the blanks! Then go to the indicated clue in the book and find the big word or phrase in graphics. See if your list includes that word. For a meeting topic, pick one number to discuss, then read the clue page to keep the discussion going. *Happy hunting!*



1. Thanks to Alateen I found _____

Clue: December 2

2. Al-Anon/Alateen is a program of _____

Clue: May 18

3. A slogan that helps put problems in perspective is _____

Clue: August 31

4. When I try to do too much, feel overwhelmed, I can _____

Clue: August 18

5. In Alateen we learn _____

Clue: March 28



Tear It Out and Keep It Clues
 1. December 2 – Hope
 2. May 18 – Love
 3. August 31 – “This Too Shall Pass”
 4. August 18 – Go one Step at a time
 5. March 28 – Attitude of gratitude