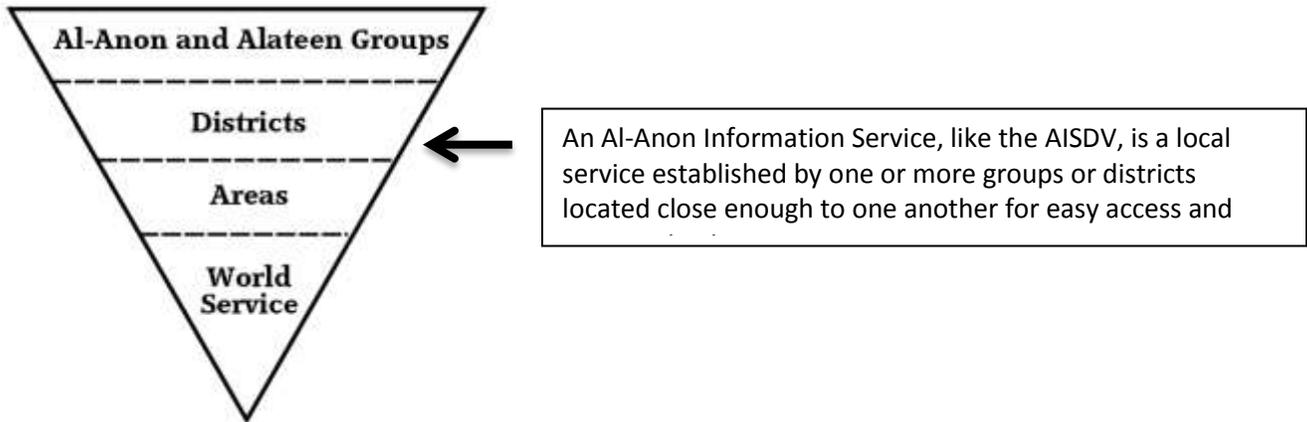




**THE R.A.P.**  
**Reaching Al-Anon People**  
**Al-Anon Information Service of the Delaware Valley (AISDV)**  
**March 2018**

Welcome back! It's been quite some time since we've had a new edition of *The R.A.P.* Overall *The R.A.P.* is a work in progress; we hope you will find some useful information in this issue. Consider it a back to basics edition. We're keeping this one simple.



### What is the AISDV?

The AISDV is Al-Anon Information Service of the Delaware Valley. It is made up of 10 Districts, 172 Groups, and more than 1,500 members. The AISDV serves the greater Philadelphia area plus Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery counties, including Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 19, 20, 31, and 32.

The primary purpose of the AISDV is to help families and friends of alcoholics in the Philadelphia area by offering experience, strength and hope. The AISDV is a service arm of the Al-Anon fellowship and works in conjunction with Al-Anon's World Service Organization and the Pennsylvania Al-Anon Assembly.

The specific purposes of the AISDV are as follows:

1. To encourage unity of purpose and growth of individual Al-Anon groups in our service area, the Greater Delaware Valley of Pennsylvania.
2. To provide information and serve as a resource to anyone seeking help with problems connected with an alcoholic relative or friend.
3. To serve as the communications center for individual member groups with respect to matters of policy, publicity and interest.
4. To promote the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Al-Anon in our service area.
5. To establish and maintain a central business office as a clearing house for Al-Anon activities in the Delaware Valley.

## Refreshing *The R.A.P.*

For the time being, *The R.A.P.* will be posted on the AISDV website, distributed via email, and hard copies shared at the AISDV quarterly meetings. Please consider being an email buddy and print a hard copy for someone who may not have internet access.

Moving forward, *The R.A.P.* team is taking into consideration the feedback received from our recent *R.A.P.* survey. In 2018, we plan to publish four standard issues of *The R.A.P.* to coincide with the AISDV quarterly meetings (March 15, May 17, September 20 and November 15). Your participation is requested. Please consider sending a written contribution.

Our **May** issue will highlight Steps, Traditions and Concepts four (4), five (5) and six (6). All themes are welcome – maybe share on your home group’s anniversary or a workshop you attended. **Deadline** to submit writing is **April 12**.

Our **September** issue will focus on Steps, Traditions and Concepts seven (7), eight (8) and nine (9). Will you be attending the State or International Convention, Assembly or NOMMAC? Think about sharing your experience in writing. **Deadline** to submit writing is **August 9**.

Our **November** issue will focus on Steps, Traditions and Concepts ten (10), eleven (11) and twelve (12). Share your gratitude list; write about what you are thankful for. **Deadline** to submit writing is **October 11**.

In addition to the four standard issues, we hope to publish two special editions—“Al-Anon Doesn’t Go on Vacation” (July) and “Surviving the Holidays, Al-Anon Style” (December). Your input is needed for these special editions. Consider sharing your tips for vacationing with your alcoholic, traveling with loved ones, attending holiday dinners with family, celebrating New Year’s Eve with your sober friends, etc.

*The R.A.P.* would not be possible without your participation. Sharing your experience, strength and hope by writing is a tool for recovery. Writing for *The R.A.P.* is service. We appreciate your contribution; email news from your district, send a story, share vacation or holiday tips to [RAP@aisdv.org](mailto:RAP@aisdv.org)

*Celebrating One Day at a Time*  
Al-Anon’s International Convention 2018

## Save the Date(s)

For most up-to-date event details, and more events, be sure to check [www.aisdv.org/calendar.html](http://www.aisdv.org/calendar.html)

- April 14 Workshop for Districts 4 & 5, Lima United Methodist Church, Media
- May 5 Higher Power Day Spring Workshop, Church of St Martin-in-the-Fields, Philadelphia
- May 17 AISDV Service Board Meeting, Reformed Church of the Ascension, West Norriton  
For Information Service Reps (ISRs) & the AISDV Board
- May 18 -20 Area World Service Committee (AWSC) Meeting, Comfort Inn Duncansville, Altoona  
This meeting is for AWSC Officers, Coordinators, and District Representatives (DRs)
- June 1-3 46th Annual PA Al-Anon Convention, Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove
- July 5-8 Al-Anon's Sixth International Convention, Baltimore Convention Center, Baltimore MD
- July NOMAAC
- August 17-19 PA Area Assembly, Harrisburg Hilton, Harrisburg PA  
This meeting is for AWSC Officers, Coordinators, DRs and Group Representatives (GRs)



## Survey Says...

Thank you to everyone who participated in *The R.A.P.* survey this past January. A total of 61 surveys were completed! The feedback provided gives some insight to our readership.

For example, nearly 41% received *The R.A.P.* via email while 8% received a hard copy in the mail and 37% picked up hard copies at a meeting. Moving forward 72% of participating members would prefer to receive *The R.A.P.* in their email box.

In the opinion of survey participants, communicating local, area and AISDV news is the main purpose of *The R.A.P.* Encouraging attendance at service events and attracting Al-Anon members into service came in second and third respectively.

Members ranked their interest in reading about the topics as follows: (1 being most and 10 being least)

1. Reports from DRs and GRs: "District Happenings," meeting announcements, workshops, special events, group anniversaries, etc.
2. Information about special Area/district workshops or events.
3. Regular column(s) such as, "Things to Think About" or "Tips On..."
4. Reports from Area and local Coordinators (Alateen, Public Outreach, Literature, Forum, Group Records, Archives, etc.).
5. Personal recovery stories
6. Information and agendas for upcoming Assemblies/service meetings.
7. Upcoming voting issues—publish job descriptions of officer and Coordinator positions before elections to encourage members to participate.
8. Sharings on how service helps recovery from Officers, Coordinators and DRs.
9. Area Assembly highlights reports.
10. Reports from Area officers: Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Secretary, Area Chairperson, and Treasurer's financial report.

Finally, when asked if interested in writing for *The R.A.P.*, 43% responded "no", 39% responded "maybe" and 17% "yes".

These responses and the additional comments that were shared are very much appreciated and will help to shape future issues of *The R.A.P.* For those who included contact information, you've been added to our mailing list.

## **"Keep It Simple"**

*(reprinted from August 2015)*

Today I'm having a hard time. So it's an especially good day to be writing about slogans, and about "keep it simple" in particular. I know I'm having a hard time because I'm making everything complicated. I see everything as something to worry and agitate over. I feel overwhelmed.

Having worked many of the steps in this program with a sponsor, I've come to understand that each step helps me by bringing me closer to my Higher Power. But before I had a sponsor to work the steps with, before I even had any real understanding of my Higher Power, I had the slogans. They were my introduction to recovery. And like the steps, the slogans worked on me by steering me away from unhealthy thinking and toward my Higher Power -- even before I knew that I had a Higher Power.

"Keep it Simple" is a great example of that guidance. It helps direct me away from my own unhealthy thinking and toward the love, acceptance and care of God. The fact of the matter is, before I found a Higher Power in this program, I had my own higher power, and it was my own unhealthy thinking and worrying. The slogan of my old higher power was "it's complicated." My life's complications made me feel special and unique, but also alone and beyond help -- who would possibly understand what I was going through? My own complicated over-thinking made my head dizzy and numb. I appreciate that this kept me from feeling painful feelings, but the answers to my problems always seemed obscure and out of reach -- just a little bit more complicated than anticipated, requiring even more complicated solutions.

Today I know the true solution, and it's my Higher Power. To access that solution, I have to reject my old slogan "it's complicated!" and all the negative thinking that kept me from a conscious contact with God. If I want to have my Higher Power in my life always, I need to "Keep it Simple" every day. And for me that means keeping the focus on my feelings instead of my thoughts. My feelings are simple. They're not always easy to feel, but they're simple. They just are.

Take today. I was about to make my life very complicated trying to figure out what was wrong and why I felt bad. I was going to spend the day agitated, running from one invented crisis to the next. But instead this morning I spent a moment meditating -- getting my mind as simple as I could. And in that moment I realized that I was afraid because my cat was sick. He doesn't have a life-threatening illness, but I'm still afraid that he will die. I'm afraid because my last cat did die. She was sick and I didn't take her to the vet in time. I think her death was my fault.

So there's a very simple reason why I'm upset today -- I have a lot of unresolved grief and guilt in my heart. But I initially missed that simple reason. I didn't see the connection because I'm never looking for the simple answer. I need my Higher Power's help to see the simple connections in my life. And if I want that help, I need to ask for it. "Keep it Simple" is how I ask. It's my promise to myself that, just for today, I will live the kind of life that makes me available for God's help.

By: Alex T. Philadelphia, PA