

Group members who respond to answering service calls provide the most effective and compelling help to families and friends of alcoholics.

It's fun and easy to do this work.  
It takes very little time,  
and it feels good.

Welcoming families and friends by taking calls from the answering service is the Twelfth Step in action.

Thank you for participating in our Al-Anon Information Service outreach effort.



The reason we use an answering service is to help callers find their first meeting.

We are not a crisis line.  
The Crisis Line for Pierce County is:  
800-576-7764.

Tradition Five:  
"Each Al-Anon Family Group has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics."

Tacoma & Pierce County  
Al-Anon/Alateen AIS  
pierce\_co\_ais@wa-al-anon.org  
August, 2014

## TELEPHONE ANSWERING SERVICE



800-726-8094  
AL-ANON & ALATEEN

# POLICIES & PROCEDURES FOR ANSWERING SERVICE CALLS

## HOW TO RETRIEVE CALLS

- Call phone tree: 1-800-726-8094.
- Wait until recording starts.
- Enter "9".
- Then enter code: "1234."
- Follow menu options.
- Delete message at call's end.

## ABOUT ANONYMITY

It's important that our volunteers remain anonymous. If the caller insists on knowing who you are, remind them about our commitment to anonymity.

## MEETING SCHEDULE REQUESTS

- Provide two different meeting locations.
- Email meeting schedule requests to [piercecounreachdist1213@gmail.com](mailto:piercecounreachdist1213@gmail.com).
- Schedules will be sent by email or postal service as caller requests.
- Inform caller schedules and literature are available at all Al-Anon meetings.

## OTHER REQUESTS

- Requests for Alateen information should be directed to District 12 Chair:  
[dr\\_district\\_12@wa-al-anon.org](mailto:dr_district_12@wa-al-anon.org)
- Refer requests for Al-Anon speakers to [pierce\\_co\\_ais@wa-al-anon.org](mailto:pierce_co_ais@wa-al-anon.org)
- Requests for community outreach appearances are referred to [pierce\\_co\\_ais@wa-al-anon.org](mailto:pierce_co_ais@wa-al-anon.org)

## RESPONDING TO A CALL

- When returning a call be sure you speak to the person who placed the call.
- Avoid using the name 'Al-Anon' until you confirm the person you are talking to is the same person who left the message.
- If someone else answers you needn't leave a message; just say you'll call back at another time.
- If your call-back goes to voice mail you may hang up or leave the answering service number. Again, avoid using the name 'Al-Anon.'

## SUGGESTED APPROACH

- Say, "Hello, this is (your first name) from Al-Anon. How may I help you?"
- Let your tone be warm and friendly. Speak distinctly so you can be heard.
- Engage the caller as personally as possible. Share your experience.
- Keep smiling - it actually improves the tone of your voice.
- Speak in a gentle, but confident, manner.
- Be ready to listen, and be open to whatever the caller has to say. But don't allow the call to go on for too long.
- Avoid sharing your phone number or phone numbers of other members.

## HELPING

- Callers need to hear acceptance in your voice. Our responses must be non-judgmental, no matter what is said.
- Empathy, neutrality and understanding are the most important points of connection we have.
- If you need help reach out to another Al-Anon member for assistance.

## ACTIVE LISTENING

- Be a good listener. Keep the conversation open and moving.
- Allowing people to talk is often the most helpful approach.

## EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

- Our caring attitude and good-will reassure the caller there is hope in Al-Anon.
- Callers are interested in Al-Anon but don't know what our program offers or what questions they should ask.
- Remember our goal is to bring the caller to their first Al-Anon meeting, not to provide answers to their problems.
- Bring the conversation to a close gradually. This is best done in a timely manner.
- When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help. let the hand of Al-Anon & Alateen always be there, and let it begin with us.