



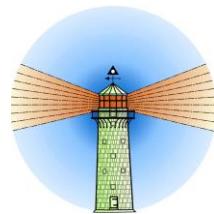
AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS

## Northern New South Wales Area

for families and friends of alcoholics

# THE NORTHERN LIGHT

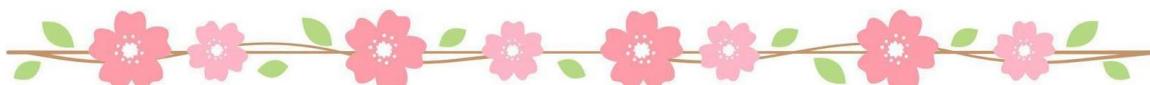
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## Northern NSW Area Assembly – A Wrap Up

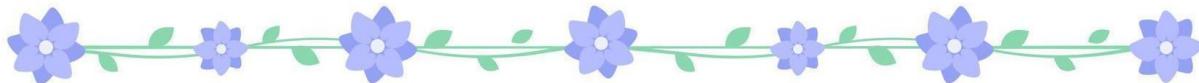
I came away from the Northern NSW (NNSW) Area Assembly 2025 feeling it was more relaxed than last year and the year before that! Is it me, or are we all relaxing as we all recover together?

This year's theme was '**Practicing These Principles in All Our Affairs**' and if there's anywhere we get to practice, it's at Assembly with so many Al-Anon members from so many parts of our Area. There were familiar faces and new ones, and the event was kickstarted with a 'getting to know you' on Friday evening.



The Acting Area Chairperson, Woody, introduced our agenda for Saturday and an able Timekeeper was appointed (Chris P), which was requested as a priority by the Assembly last year. The Area Communications Coordinator, Michelle E, did a condensed version of the infamous Al-Anon Area Structure Presentation on a whiteboard, which showed the NNSW Area, Districts and Groups, Australian Areas and AGSO (Australian General Service Office) on a hand drawn map. The Area Literature Coordinator, Woody, fielded some questions on the NNSW Area Literature Service, which is self-supporting through the donation of a Council cupboard at Watanobbi on the Central Coast, free of charge. The Literature Service has donated Al-Anon literature to the Council library in kind.

Woody, as Chairperson, Literature Coordinator and Treasurer presented the Treasurer's Report and the Assembly accepted it unanimously. Throughout the Assembly, members of the Area Service Committee presented talks on the Al-Anon Concepts of Service, which were worthy of a closer listen and learn. After a scrumptious quiche and salad luncheon, one of the districts ran a Workshop titled, "Service: Joy or Job?", where all members shared their experience of a joy or job in service. This was one of the highlights for me hearing the many stories of how we've each taken on service, dropped service, been rewarded by service and sometimes taken on too much service, but in the end, all agreeing service was a joy and also by necessity, a job too, but one that we could find enjoyment in.



The Delegate, Marion H, shared her first experience as NNSW Area Delegate at the Australian Service Conference. (The Delegate represents Groups and Districts at the Australian Service Conference in May, then reports back to Groups and Districts at Area Assembly in June). It sounded much like my first experience of Assembly - overwhelming! We gratefully received her Conference summary which included updates on Handbooks, Finances, Public Information (PI), Survey 2025 and Convention & Assembly Dates 2026.

**Handbooks:** All Groups should have a copy of The Al-Anon Alateen Groups at Work 2022-2025 (spiral bound) and The Australian Service Handbook 2021 (Current). The Australian Service Handbook will be updated in 2026 with inserts. The Al-Anon Alateen Groups at Work 2022-2025 is also available for individuals for meetings (paperback). Please contact the Literature Service for more information.

**Finances:** There is a budget deficit of \$28,715 forecast for 2025, which doesn't mean there aren't funds to pay for expenses. There is an ample reserve, plus funds held to allow for variations in income and expenses from year to year. AGSO donations are tax deductible. Please send an email to request a receipt.

**Public Information (PI):** There's an updated P1-02 *Guide for Public Information Activities* and updated Open Letters which will be further updated. There are also local radio campaign instructions and tracks available on the website.

**Membership Survey 2025:** A membership survey will be held in 2025. These can be completed anonymously, and we encourage your participation

**Convention & Assembly Dates 2026:** Gold Coast AA with Al-Anon and Alateen participation convention will be held from Friday 1 May to Monday 4 May 2026, and the NNSW Area Assembly will be held 19-21 June 2026, in Bonny Hills.

~~ Continued overleaf ~~

Once the Delegates report was received, we went into voting for NNSW Area Service Committee and NNSW Area Association Committee Members. These positions have been vacant since the NNSW Area Assembly 2025 and start immediately.

#### NNSW Area (Traditional) Positions Filled

- Chairperson: Lyndsay
- Newsheet Coordinator: Kirrily
- Alateen Coordinator: Byron

#### NNSW Area Association (Legal) Positions Filled

Ordinary Member: Di M  
Area Alateen Process Person (AAPP): Nellie

At the end of the day, after a warm roast meal and hot pudding, we were ready for our fun evening, MC'd by the Central Coast DR, Gerry. The Warringah District began with a colourful skit based on the Pac-Man game, where the objective of the game is to '*Live and Let Live*' (there was much more to it than that, but you had to be there!).

The Central Coast District did slogan charades, which we all knew the answers to, but had some trouble interpreting the actions, with the exception of '*But for the grace of God*'...I'll leave that one to your imagination!

The Far North Coast District's skit, prepared by Grafton GR Shirlee, was on the Al-Anon Police who gave infringements whenever any of the Al-Anon 'rules' were broken, leaving no one in the room for a meeting. Perhaps the '*But for the grace of God*' slogan highlights why we're not called to be enforcement officers!



The Acting Area Chairperson, Woody, introduced our agenda for Sunday. Throughout the Assembly, Al-Anon members presented their 3 minute talks on the Assembly theme, '*Practicing these Principles in All Our Affairs*', which will be submitted to AustraLink.

The Alateen Coordinator, Byron S had the most unwieldy item on the agenda which was the Alateen Safety and Behavioural Requirements document. There were a few suggestions on how to make the document clearer and some amendments will be made. The Assembly unanimously voted to accept the document in principle, with amendments to be made by the Alateen Coordinator and reviewed by the Area Service Committee prior to coming into force.

Thank you, Central Coast District for your service organising the Area Assembly 2025 and to everyone for your "participation", which, according to Concept 4, "is the key to harmony". Take it easy.

**New Area Newsheet Coordinator and Mosman GR, Kirrily A**

## EVENTS!

### AA80 Coffs Clarence Rally

#### with Al-Anon Participation

(Formerly the Banana Coast Rally)

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2025**  
at the Coffs Harbour Show Ground

**Al-Anon Program (Panorama Room)**

**Theme: Carrying the Message**

**9:00** Registration and a fellowship cuppa

**9:30** ID Meeting: *Welcoming Newcomers*

**10:45** Morning Tea

**11:00** Meeting: *Practicing these Principles*

**12:30** Lunch and Raffle Draw

**1:30** Workshop: *Love's Expression*

**2:00** Adult Children Meeting:

*Expanding our Circle of Hope*

**3:15** Afternoon Tea

**3:30** Spiritual Concepts Meeting:

*Spiritual Awakening*

**4:30** Close

**Registration \$10 with lunch included**

**Registered AA participants welcome free**

### Friends of Lois Day

SAVE THE DATE

**25**  
**October**  
**2025**



**"Friends of Lois" DAY**

The HIVE Community Hall  
150 Beaumont Street  
HAMILTON

For information PH: 0401 441 534

# Service: Joy or Job?

At our recent Area Assembly, Warringah District lovingly led us through a relaxed and engaging workshop exploring the theme "Service: Joy or Job?" The session invited open discussion and honest reflection as we split into five groups to consider what aspects of service feel joyful, and what aspects can sometimes feel like a job.

With big sheets of paper and even bigger hearts, each group created their own "JOY" and "JOB" columns.

It was heartening to see how much overlap there was - many of us had similar thoughts and experiences, reminding us that we're not alone in how we feel.

It was also uplifting to notice that many of the so-called "JOB" aspects could shift towards "JOY" with a simple change in attitude or perspective.

Each group brought something unique to the session, especially in how they chose to present their reflections back to the room. This beautiful diversity of expression reminded us why many voices truly matter in Al-Anon.

## JOY 😊 What We Love About Service

### 💡 Personal Growth & Recovery

- Strengthens recovery
- Deepens understanding of the program / yourself
- Builds self-confidence
- Experience overcoming fears
- Learning how to ask for help
- It's okay to make mistakes
- Expands your capabilities
- Learn about boundaries
- Builds self-care
- Satisfaction
- Find a passion
- Learn new skills
- Encourages regular attendance

### 🤝 Connection & Belonging

- Feeling of belonging
- Connecting with other members
- Making new friends (for life)
- Fellowship
- Helping newcomers
- Feel needed
- Feel trusted
- A chance to give back
- Get more back than you give
- Service sponsors help

### 📝 Learning & Structure

- Learn about the guidelines / manual / handbook
- Clear guidelines are almost always available
- Great role models
- See the Traditions in action
- See democracy in action
- Learning about how to cooperate with AA

### 🌈 Flexibility & Accessibility

- No need for qualifications
- Roles available for everyone
- Can choose a role you enjoy
- Can delegate tasks and/or share roles
- Rotation of service keeps things fresh
- Time away from other responsibilities

### 🌐 Community & Contribution

- Connecting to the wider community
- Taking part in keeping Al-Anon alive
- Helping Al-Anon remain welcoming and safe
- Practice letting go of outcomes
- Feels good to hand the baton on

### 🎁 Bonus Joys

- Often good food and in beautiful locations
- Lots of fun
- It's free!

## JOB 😞 When Service Feels Hard

### 💡 Inner Challenges

- Fear of failure / making mistakes / inadequacy
- Fear of authority / technology
- Perfectionism can get in the way
- Feelings of guilt (e.g. about other responsibilities)
- Not everyone will love you or what you do
- Expectations
- Resentments
- Uncomfortable feeling responsible

### 😞 Emotional & Mental Strain

- Overwhelm / stress / burn-out
- Feeling trapped in a role
- It's boring
- Hard to get motivated (esp. with low numbers)
- Disheartening (e.g. when PI doesn't seem to work)

### 💔 Relational & Support Issues

- Personality clashes or negative interactions
- Lack of support
- Lack of appreciation
- Not enough people helping

### ⌚ Time & Life Balance

- Time poor
- Don't want to commit
- Feel obligated to take on too much
- Too hard / hard work
- Need to have some discipline

### 🤷 Readiness & Confidence

- Too early in recovery
- Unsure what to do

During the workshop, our groups shared openly about the more challenging aspects of service. While these reflections might feel heavy at times, naming them honestly is a key part of growth. Many of these "job" feelings are common — and often shift over time as we gain support, perspective, and experience. Here's what came up when we asked: **What makes service feel like a job?**

feelings  
burn-out  
commit  
failure  
trapped  
responsible  
guilt  
emotional  
resentments  
strain  
personality  
obligated  
poor  
uncomfortable  
clashes  
perfectionism  
unsure  
disheartening  
early  
expectations  
interactions  
inadequacy  
stress  
boring  
discipline

Al-Anon is built on service, and it only works because we all do our bit. Whether it's setting up chairs, welcoming a newcomer, or helping at Area Assembly, every act of service matters. When many hands come together, the work feels lighter, the load is shared, and the magic happens.

**This program needs members in service to survive**, and the good news is we don't have to do it all. If each of us does a little bit, and we remember to use the tools of recovery, the hard stuff begins to fade and the joy starts to shine through. What once felt like a burden can become a blessing, especially when we're in it together.

A huge thank you to every member who pitched in at Assembly. Your contributions, big and small, helped create such a warm and welcoming space. **Here's what our workshop groups shared about the joyful side of service:**

understanding  
growth  
connection  
help  
flexibility  
democracy  
program  
recovery  
friends  
capabilities  
everyone  
action  
strengthens  
available  
overcoming  
life  
personal  
experience  
ask  
accessibility  
trusted  
passion  
feeling  
deepens  
service  
great  
good  
guidelines  
community  
okay  
expands  
skills  
self-confidence  
members  
encourages  
fellowship  
self-care

The workshop was a powerful reminder that service in Al-Anon is both a gift and a challenge... and that's okay! What matters most is that we continue to support each other with honesty, compassion, and a sense of humour. Sometimes what feels like a "job" today can become a "joy" tomorrow, especially when we stay connected and remember that we're never doing it alone ❤ **Area Communications Coordinator, Michelle E**

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**Contact the Northern NSW Area:**

★ Phone: 1300 252 666 (forwarded to volunteers)  
★ Email: [alanonnorthernwstnsw@bigpond.com](mailto:alanonnorthernwstnsw@bigpond.com)

**Contact AGSO:**

★ Email: [office@al-anon.org.au](mailto:office@al-anon.org.au)

AI-Anon Australia's Website: [www.al-anon.org.au](http://www.al-anon.org.au)

Send anything newsworthy for inclusion in the next issue to **KIRRILY** at [northernlightnnsw@gmail.com](mailto:northernlightnnsw@gmail.com)