

MEMBER STORIES

Celebrating anniversaries, making amends

The disease of alcoholism brought my husband and me to a point where it became difficult to live together under one roof. We had been staying away from each other for the last ten months when we agreed to meet on the anniversary of our marriage.

Together we paid obeisance at our holy place. He offered to drop me home. He had brought a bouquet for me. I received it and sat in his car. As the car moved, a brand new bottle of whiskey rolled into my feet.

In an instant, my sanity flew away. I left the bouquet, said some nasty words (I am very good at it), and left. He, too, reacted. He threw the flowers on the road, and drove away hurt and mad.

Soon I felt very uncomfortable. One look within myself and remorse gripped me. I had forgotten my First Step, had lashed at my husband, and had ruined the lovely moments God had given us. The awareness of the presence of the bottle had become more powerful than the presence of my Higher Power. This was my insanity, my disease.

I remembered having read somewhere, "Do not look where you've fallen, look at where you slipped," and that I could "after a fall, pick myself up, dust myself off, and move on." So I moved on "One Day at a Time." Occasionally, I saw him at A.A. meetings.

I am fortunate that another anniversary came. I was given the opportunity to make amends. I took flowers to my husband. He had been ailing for quite some time.

As he opened the door, a look of pleasant surprise and moist eyes welcomed the flowers. I felt I was greeting the most important man in the world. We stood in a warm embrace and parted after we said the Serenity Prayer together. Those divine moments were my reward of the day.

I will not have any more "happy anniversaries," for he passed away a month later. Thanks to the tools of this program, I could realize my part in the harms done.

Staying busy through service allows me to make the best of what I have. I feel grateful for the sharings and the literature that tells me I am not alone. The pain of having lost a loved one is intense, but regular attendance at meetings keeps reminding me that suffering is indeed optional.

*By Anonymous, India
The Forum, March 2009*