

Doing for Me...

By - Vali F., Executive Director, World Service Office .

Upon leaving the World Service Conference my very first year as a Delegate, I felt a sense of gratitude and humility beyond description. Growing up in the family disease of alcoholism, I had never experienced such a consistent commitment to my success and the ongoing well-being of an organization as I did throughout that and all subsequent Conferences. I felt inspired and suddenly in awe of my responsibility as a Delegate to relay not only the great information shared at the Conference, but also to convey the experience - the passion, warmth and dedication. It seemed like a daunting task.

After a few anxious moments, though, I turned again to the foundations of my program to remind me that I don't have to do anything alone and that my Higher Power would ensure I conveyed the right information. While many of my fellow Delegates had very short timeframes to prepare their thoughts and some had only brief timeslots to give their reports, I felt a sense of gratitude that my Area provided me four hours to share my Delegate's report and that I had over a month to prepare.

So, I turned my report over to my Higher

Power and started to do the footwork. I reached out to my fellow Area Officers to help coordinate members to present and participate in skits. I did my best to make the report a demonstration of how ours is a "we" program. When it was over, and I heard members share that they had come to feel more connected to the work of the World Service Office as "us" rather than a distant "them," I knew the report was a success.

My time as a Delegate taught me greater reliance upon my Higher Power as I realized it was not possible, even given the four hours provided by my Area to report, to adequately convey all the work that occurs at the Conference to advance the primary purpose of Al-Anon Family Groups. I had to trust my Higher Power to point me to the right topics. As I have learned in my personal recovery, I needed to pray only for knowledge of His will for Al-Anon and the power to carry that out. I trust that my Delegate's report and all other aspects of my role, like my life in recovery, will unfold beyond my wildest imagination! Happy reporting, Delegates!

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I Was Finally Able to Be Me.

By - Jeri D., Wisconsin .

As my husband's drinking got worse, I found myself drifting away from my friends because I didn't want them to see what was going on. I stopped inviting people to the house because I wasn't sure what mood he would be in, and I stopped accepting invitations because I wasn't sure what I would come home to. I thought if I were at home, maybe he wouldn't drink or at least not drink so much.

One day I realized I didn't have any close friends anymore - no one I could really confide in or be myself with. I was always pretending things were wonderful when in fact, they weren't. What an exhausting way to live!

Then I found Al-Anon. At first, I was frightened about walking into a room full of strangers and discussing the intimate details of my life, especially since I had gotten so good at hiding them. But all I really had to do was walk into the room,

take a seat and listen. I noted the word friendship in the welcome:

"We welcome you ... and hope you will find in this fellowship the help and friendship we have been privileged to enjoy."

I soon discovered that the people there felt less like strangers once I realized the common bond we shared. I also discovered that I would not find a more kind-hearted, caring group of people on earth than at an Al-Anon meeting.

Slowly I have learned that I can drop the pretence of a perfect life and let people see the real me. I haven't gotten all my old friends back, but that's okay because I now have a new group of friends who truly understand me and with whom I can be myself .

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Literature

Please contact Annalise at the office Mon - Fri between 9am and 1pm, and she will be happy to recommend Al-Anon books and pamphlets that meet your needs...

Just for today . . .

- I'll try to see the positive in ALL situations, even those that seem the most negative . . .
- I'll work on being humble . . .
- I'll give my all in all I do . . .

Compiled by:

CAPE AREA OFFICE

Postal Address

PO Box 727

Goodwood, 7459

Residential Address

Unit B5, N1 City Mews

Frans Conradie Drive

Goodwood, 7460

Tel: 021 595 4517

Fax: 086 523 3030

E-Mail: alanonct@iafrica.com

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