

Blind-sided.

By - SSue K., Missouri .

Like alcoholism, the deer came out of nowhere. My husband and I were on the motorcycle almost home from a ride. I saw it first and yelled, "There's a deer!" and then bam the deer broad-sided our motorcycle. My husband hopped off the bike and was in as much emotional shock as I was in physical shock. The truck behind us pulled over and someone yelled, "We've called 911!" This whole experience so reflects the beginning of my recovery journey.

My husband and I were cruising through life. Neither of us had grown up in alcoholic homes. We married and had three kids. We did what we thought was best, took them to church, passed on the lessons we had learned and talked about the dangers of drugs and alcohol, never realizing the disease was lurking in my family's past. A phone call from the high school came out of nowhere that one of our kids was caught smoking pot and drinking on campus.

My husband and I struggled to keep the family stable and sent that child to a substance addiction program. In the meantime, I was taking all the hits. I had always been the disciplinarian in the house and my usual tools of screaming, manipulation, and guilt just weren't working. My husband and I went to the parents' group at the addiction program and learned a few new tools. Our child was maintaining sobriety, but I was getting more and more obsessed and was getting hit with self-

doubt, guilt and shame. I was literally knocked down by the disease, but some of the parents in our group started talking about Al-Anon and so I went. I walked through the door and found people willing to reach out, pull me off the merry-go-round of the disease, and get me the support, healing, and recovery I needed.

I was able to have a conversation with my mother that revealed my great-grandfather had suffered from this disease. Attending Al-Anon adult children meetings helped me understand my mean, controlling grandfather, who had grown up in an alcoholic home. It helped prepare me and provide the tools I would need as this disease struck my other two children. While two have found recovery through Al-Anon, I have learned that I can be happy whether the alcoholic is drinking or not. I can also build new relationships with my children and seek my own recovery each day.

I am grateful that Al-Anon was here when I was side-swiped by this disease. My recovery gave me the tools I needed to accept help when it was offered. It gave me the Serenity Prayer to relax and let go as my leg was set in the Emergency Room. It has given me the ability to see the blessings and lessons I am learning through the chaos that was created by a deer, much like what I learned from the chaos created by alcoholism.

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The Loners letters from all areas can be found on our website

<https://www.alanon.org.za/members-newsletters/>

Moving On

By - SAutumn A., Maryland .

I remember the pain of dealing with my alcoholic partner in the area of intimacy. Even though he was right next to me, I was alone and aching for human touch, warmth, and affection. Months would go by, and I would get nothing from him but cold indifference. I didn't want to leave him or be unfaithful, but I couldn't take the emptiness I felt inside, either. Whenever I would broach the topic, he would recoil and say I was unattractive, fat, or just not really his type. Usually he made me feel guilty for seeking affection by telling me I was too needy. I would give up trying to initiate any deeper connection for another few months until my longing became unbearable again. I would literally cry out of frustration.

It wasn't until much later that I discovered the reality of the situation. Alcoholism had taken his ability to physically respond, and he would take his shame out on me. But by then I had already started to question my own sanity. Was I really asking for too much? I wondered. After all, I had learned in Al-Anon that an expectation is a premeditated resentment.

In time, though, I realized it was futile to

expect this person to give something he just didn't have. However, I was pursuing an equally futile endeavor trying to learn how to be happy without love and affection. I learned that my needs were legitimate and not unreasonable in a monogamous romantic relationship, but I had to accept his choice not to fulfill those needs. And as long as we remained together, I was not free to pursue a new relationship that could better meet those needs. In the end, I found the serenity I needed to detach with love and part ways with him. Even though he is still active in his disease, we remain friends today. I see now that's probably all we should have been from the beginning.

I eventually met a kind, gentle, and loving man who is all I could have wished for. We have decided that physical intimacy will wait until after marriage, and the decision has allowed our emotional and spiritual connection to flourish. When I came to believe that I deserved more, I found it.

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Literature

Please contact Tania Jacquelin 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 remember to say "thank you" . . .
- I'll share many encouraging words . . .
- I'll be very good to myself . . .

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