

Experience, strength and hope from Al-Anon members for times when you can't get to an Al-Anon group

Dear Loners

March 2020

I have recently been reading the World Service Summary 2019.

The Theme for the conference was *Action is Attraction- there is no growth in the comfort zone.* I found the business information interesting but I really identified with the personal shares of the delegates.

My greatest growth has been during times when I really did not want to get involved in service. In fact I was sure that I was not qualified and there must be someone else that was more suited to the job. I thought that it was someone else's responsibility to help and get involved!

I felt insecure and scared to ask the members that seems to know everything!

But the area/group was desperate and somehow I was 'voluntold' to help.

Fortunately my personal sponsor was also my service sponsor.

She helped me; guided me and pointed out alternative ways to approach the portfolio.

I battled at the beginning but soon understood what was required and much to my amazement actually started to enjoy the work. Together we were able to make a difference. And soon I was able to act as a service sponsor to other people to also get involved. I found that the service manual was able to answer all my questions. There is so much more to our wonderful programme than the daily readers.

Yes the work got done but the real growth and lessons learnt were not about the fellowship but rather about me! My real recovery started when I got involved with helping others in our fellowship.

My skill sets improved and I was able to use these new found skills in my daily life.

I learnt that you can't please all the people all of the time.

In fact when members objected it taught me to keep an open mind and listen to others.

If I expected members to listen to me I needed to listen to everything and not take criticism personally.

If there was too much to do I learnt to ask for help. A really foreign concept....I always believed that I could do everything and do everything better than the next person!

It is humbling to ask for help and accept that others are able and willing to help. All I needed to do was **ask!**

CONTROL.....the master tool of growing up in an alcoholic home!

Service taught me that it's ok to let go and let God. The world does not fall apart because something was not done my way.

Other people have good ideas and I needed to stop and respect that my way is not the only way!

Rotation of jobs keeps our groups healthy and ultimately it is good for the fellowship

I found that more difficult than getting involved was learning when to step back and let others learn the same lessons.

I learnt the hard way that stepping back does not mean never being involved....that leads to complacency and is really not good for my recovery.

The principles learnt in the fellowship are excellent ideas to embrace in my personal life. The principles of honesty, commitment, respect, forgiveness, unity and shared responsibility.

Step Twelve: Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

I learnt that if I want to continue to experience these spiritual awakenings [some smaller than others] I need to continue to help and get involved.

I have started a few groups in my Al-Anon years. It takes commitment and perseverance but in the end groups that meet regularly have helped many people recover from the disease of alcoholism.

I discovered that the group guidelines off the WSO website or on request from our local office, explain step by step how to start a group. The literature is a great resource for help and guidance. Experienced Al-Anon members are available to guide a new group.

In the last year a few new groups have started in rural areas. I invite you to see if you too can start a group. Help is available all you need to do is ASK.

Remember there is no growth in the comfort zone! Together we can make it!

We would love to be able to share your experience, strength and hope with others.

New groups have started all over Gauteng. Please visit our website for details of times of meetings. Literature to help you with the Steps is available from the office. Please phone Julie Mon, Wed and Fri 10:00-14:00. She will be able to help you select the books that are most relevant for your recovery.

ABSA Bank, Oakdene, branch code 632 005). Current account no 1118881482.....in the name of Al-Anon Information Service . Please put your name or group as a reference .

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