

## Time Traveler: My Journey in Al-Anon's History.

*By - Claire R., Associate Director - Public Outreach Professionals.*

Gratitude is the word that sums up my feeling of appreciation to our Cofounders and early volunteers for laying the foundation of our program. I also laughed when I read about Lois W.'s shoe-throwing episode. This is because I knew that, had I been Lois, I would have thrown a more substantial object at my husband. Her story led me to more meetings and study of our three Legacies with a very patient Sponsor.

Opening my mind to the Steps wasn't easy for me. I had a resentment about the "defects of character" phrase in Step Six. It made me feel permanently broken. I also questioned why Step Ten does not give me permission to tell others when I am right. I had lived a lifetime of being wrong or sorry about something. Members and meetings helped me shift my focus to Step One and the principle of acceptance and to let go of the other Steps. When I settled into the program as it is, I opened up to the possibility of changing myself.

Later on, I wanted to give back to my first home group. I volunteered to order literature and read more of it. When I

became the Group Representative, I discovered that Al-Anon is not an accident; it has a structure. Our Twelve Traditions anchor our groups and service arms. Furthermore, I liked the idea of group autonomy in Tradition Four because I was rebellious. My Sponsor encouraged me to read it in its entirety, which helped me to think about our group's actions. Al-Anon's history helped me to understand that our Traditions are based upon the experiences of A.A. members. They help Al-Anon groups to avoid pitfalls and controversy within and outside of the fellowship. I enjoy the "History of the Concepts" and "Introduction" chapters of the "Al-Anon's Twelve Concepts of Service" section of the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27). They are also based upon past experiences and affirm the democratic spirit of our fellowship.

I use Al-Anon's history as a GPS (God's Positioning System) for my recovery journey. There are valuable lessons in both my past and in Al-Anon's history. They give me a trail to follow and help both me and the fellowship to continue to travel safely in time .

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

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

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# You Became My Family.

*By - Elizabeth B., Massachusetts .*

When I was a child, I was adopted into a family of three boys. I was a very quiet little girl and did whatever my parents told me to do. My father was a proclaimed alcoholic, though I only saw him drunk three times that I can remember. My mother was a closet drinker. The two oldest boys later became alcoholics. The home environment was tense, and I did everything to please my parents in the hope of getting some attention and praise from them. I did receive attention from my mom, but it was usually scolding or negative.

I never felt that I belonged in that family. I learned to escape from my pain by participating in sports. As time passed and I married, I thought this was the

answer and we would be a happy family. However, because of some of my defects of character and a fear of confrontation, my marriage fell apart, and I was left with the sole care of our son. Once I was over the loss of my husband, I threw myself into raising our son with all the love and care I could give him. In 2006, I went to my first Al-Anon meeting and I couldn't believe that anyone could accept me. Before the end of the meeting, though, I knew I was in the right place. These people would become my family, and I have never looked back. The fellowship that Al-Anon offers is awesome. I am here to stay!

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## Literature

Please contact Gail 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 make an effort to listen to those who speak to me . . .
- I'll be grateful for my life . . .
- I'll accept others for who they are . . .

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