

Breaking the Cycle.

By - Sasha S.

Walking into my first Al-Anon meeting, I was nervous, not to mention 15 minutes late. I sat down and started to talk. After the meeting, people came up and hugged me, thanked me for coming, and told me to “Keep Coming Back.” Now, almost a year and a half later, I am still going.

I walked out of that meeting feeling a sort of peace and relaxation I hadn't felt before. People were happy, laughing, and talking. I wanted to be around that more. It's part of the reason I kept coming back. I also kept coming back because I knew the disease of alcoholism had affected me long enough and I was ready to end the cycle of sadness, anger, and loneliness I had been feeling my whole life.

As the adult child of an alcoholic mother, and having several generations of alcoholics before her, I finally started to see how this truly was a family disease and a disease of relationships. The more I showed up to meetings, the more I learned about myself, about alcoholism, and about how to lead a more happy and serene life. As long as I keep showing up to meetings, even chairing them from time to time, I know I will not only break the cycle, but I will be the happy, laughing, talking person I wanted to be the first time I walked into an Al-Anon meeting.

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

I Get Better with Every Meeting.

By - Anonymous .

What am I doing here? I thought. I didn't want to be here. I wondered how Al-Anon was going to help me with what I was facing at home. These people didn't even know me, or so I thought, but it turns out they did. Walking through the door to my first Al-Anon meeting was probably one of the scariest, saddest, and most life-giving moments I have ever experienced.

My situation had brought me there, whether I wanted to be there or not. I felt like I was betraying my alcoholic loved one by walking into that meeting, as if I were labeling this individual as an alcoholic to the entire world. I thought, how could I betray someone I love so much in that way? But I sat down in a chair and just listened. There was no pressure to speak, interact, or

commit. I just listened. I started to hear stories that were similar to mine from people of all walks of life stuck in the same mess of living with an alcoholic. That first meeting, I didn't get it all figured out, but I did learn that Al-Anon was the place for me to take my life back, regardless of the recovery or denial of the alcoholic.

Now, a year later, I sometimes still struggle with the fact that I need Al-Anon meetings, but I know that alcoholism is real, so the need is real. I have learned that I have to take care of me before I can take care of anyone else. That's not selfish: it's self-care. I know that I get better every single time I walk through the door.

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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 remember to turn off my cell phone and enjoy a bit of solitude . . .
- I'll practice giving the benefit of the doubt . . .
- I'll keep in mind that what I do this day can affect me and others for many days to come . . .

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