

Affected by Alcoholism, Recovering in Al-Anon.

By - Brooke W.

As a child growing up with an alcoholic father, I often curled myself up into the corner of my bed, plugged my ears, and made myself “invisible” - tuning out the violence in our home. By my teenage years, I didn't have to hide and plug my ears anymore; I was an expert at tuning things out and being the invisible child.

My mother, brothers, sister, and I never talked about what was happening. We really didn't talk about anything. We watched TV and escaped to friends' homes where we still didn't talk about it. I eventually became involved in youth groups and had “healthy” people in my life. I wanted to be healthy, too, so I embraced their God and their way of life. The scared little girl was tucked away.

I married, had two children, divorced, and then remarried. My husband was my best friend, my soulmate. He made me feel valued and safe. Then the disease of alcoholism gripped him. He changed, and the scared little girl inside

me trembled.

My doctor and counselor both recommended Al-Anon. It took a great deal of courage to go to that first meeting, but eventually, I learned to share my story with these people who understood. I came to know the God of my understanding, who gave me strength to stand up for the scared little girl I still was inside.

Al-Anon has helped me find and know myself, and to see the alcoholic, not as a monster, but as a human being with a disease. We are divorced now, but friends. He is now in recovery, and I pray his Higher Power guides him. Meanwhile, I continue with my recovery in Al-Anon - a lifetime journey. No longer invisible, listening and learning, I am a grateful Al-Anon member.

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

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

Released from Shame over My Son's Drinking.

By - Tammy B., Florida.

I woke up filled with dread. It was the day of my monthly breakfast with a small group of moms whose children went to school with mine. My biggest fear was that someone would ask me about my oldest child who had graduated three years earlier.

On that Friday morning, he was 2,000 miles away, with no address, and I did not know whether he was alive or dead. The pain of the last several years consumed me. If only I could feel safe to tell my story, but I knew sharing my secret with this group of moms would brand me and my family in a most unacceptable way.

A short time after that breakfast, I walked into my first Al-Anon meeting. I was greeted by several warm and friendly faces and invited to take a seat. Once settled into my chair, I noticed a folded card

sitting on the table in front of me that read, "I didn't cause it, I cannot control it, and I cannot cure it."

As others shared their stories, I noticed many were like mine. I also became aware that there was no criticism, judgment, or advice given; instead, those in the room simply listened. The strength in the stories shared that day gave me hope, and the warmth and loving interchange among the people in the meeting allowed me to release the shame that had been holding me prisoner.

Shame tells me that anyone who knows my story will think less of me. The truth is, telling my story to safe people in Al-Anon offers me the freedom and opportunity to move forward through my circumstances.

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Literature

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

Just for today . . .

- I'll be thankful for all that I have . . .
- I'll try to maintain a positive perspective, no matter what the situation . . .
- I'll be thankful for the weather, whatever it may be . . .
- I'll remember that letting go is one of the most important abilities in life . . .

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