

  
Al-Anon Family Groups  
Help and hope for families

**Gauteng & Districts**

**Loners' Letter**

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

April 2022

Dear Loners

Today we hear from Premie and her experience of applying the Al-Anon tools to her life.

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Joining Al-Anon and using the Steps in my recovery has helped me to like what I see in the mirror today. Working the program is to live it. I am human and I am allowed to err as long as I use the Al-Anon tools to pick myself up from straying and to get back to living serenely.

Just the other day, I found myself questioning God about my recent challenges. I had doubts about the alcoholic and was wondering whether my trust was being compromised. Had he picked up a drink again?

My first tool was my Sponsor, who listened to me and helped me to realise that I had forgotten the valuable toolbox. She calmed my mind and reminded me about focus. I needed to practice self-care. I picked up *How Al-Anon Works* (B-32), page 65 and read: "If we are at a loss for what to do... to treat ourselves and others with compassion and respect." I then began to read all the slogans and found "Let It Begin with Me" was my answer to my question. I let go of my stinking thinking and let my partner know that his sobriety is his business and not mine. As soon as I let go of the thought, my behaviour changed and my dear husband came up to me apologising for his behaviour, and calm was restored.

An important tool is my Step Eleven time: "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

I find my best time of the day is the early hours of the morning when I am alone with my thoughts. I use this time to listen to a few discourses that make me feel at one with my Higher Power. As outlined on page 113 of

*Paths to Recovery* (B-24): “Seeking, prayer, meditation, improvement, conscious contact, understanding, knowledge, and His will and power are all the gifts of Step Eleven.”

My mind is at its sharpest during this period and I find this helps me to start my day with a very serene tone. It also enables me to get lots done before the world awakens. I use this time to do my reports and other important chores. This certainly is God’s time with me.

Another tool is meetings. Making meetings keeps me honed in and I enjoy this as my own happy pill. However, what I need to remember is that I need to find a balance in my life. It was a shocker when I learnt that most of my children felt I was neglecting them as a family unit as every day involved meetings. I was asked to reschedule my life to leave the weekends open for family time. After giving it some thought, I agreed with them. I was happy but I was selfish in not looking at it from the other side of the coin. I even made some AA meetings as my partner is not a fan of Zoom and wanted face-to-face; it was a good experience.

Some words from *How Al-Anon Works* page 112 provided guidance: “On a personal level, Tradition Four reminds us that although we have a right to do what we believe is best for us, so do those around us... It can be summarized by the slogan ‘Live and Let Live’.”

However, just changing my attitude and being aware of my boundaries does not give me full satisfaction. I need to pass the message on to the still suffering and this enables me to grow tremendously in the fellowship. How do I do this? I need to always be able to show up when I am asked to share my story.

Being in service has prompted me to learn more about our amazing fellowship. Reading the Conference Approved Literature was not enough to quench my thirst for knowledge. I feel so empowered by downloading the World Service Conference summaries and hearing how we are handling matters internationally, and also understanding the strategic planning for Al-Anon. I also better understand how personal recovery and service are connected.

I am happy, confident and proud to be living my life with the lessons learnt by our Al-Anon principles and practicing it in all my affairs. Thank you for letting me be of service.

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Thank you Premie and for letting us know how you are making use of tools from the Al-Anon programme and how you are both learning and giving back by being of service to others in need.

If you would like to send a share for possible publication in the Loners' Letter, please forward your contribution to [alanontvl@absamail.co.za](mailto:alanontvl@absamail.co.za) with the subject "Loners' Letter Submission".

**Tradition Seven:** Every group ought to be self-supporting, declining outside contributions. If you would like to contribute towards our office expenses, our banking details are below. Thank you to everyone who contributes.

Best wishes

Clare

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