



Al-Anon Family Groups

Help and hope for families and friends of alcoholics

Good Day Loners

Greetings on a cold Winters day in KZN. Hope you all keeping well and staying safe with this 3rd wave in SA? Most of us have had our first vaccinations now and lucky for some they've had a once off so we praying for a safer World where we can 'get back to normal'.

We have had some amazing meetings on Zoom National and International. Sharing our ESH with members from all around the World. Most of the meetings have a Topic taken from our Literature and many of the meetings are Sharing on Steps, Traditions and Concepts.

The Book Club meeting on a Sunday afternoon at 2pm is my favourite. We have been working from a few of our Books since January. Such as Paths to Recovery, How Al-Anon Works, Transforming our Losses, Discovering Choices and Many Voices One Journey.

These are all available to purchase from our Durban Office in KZN.

Although I have been in Al-anon over 40 years, my story has been my Recovery from The Dilemma of an alcoholic marriage. (Another very good book for newcomers)

Since the Zoom meetings I realised that I needed to go back to my childhood and grieve my losses as a child. It has been quite an eye opener for me.

Having grown up in a very dysfunctional home I have been affected emotionally,



psychologically, spiritually, and physically

As an Adult I have struggled with fear, anger and anxiety. I grew up with 2 angry parents who didn't like each other much...but had 6 children? I lived with violence and learned that the best way to protect myself was withdrawing.

I also developed an overdeveloped sense of responsibility for my siblings. I didn't trust adults and suffered at School for that.

I was very aware that my anger ruled my life but it's all I knew to cope.

Al-anon taught me that I need to experience my feelings although uncomfortable, as it's important to my recovery. Feelings are just that! Feelings! I was not allowed to be angry, only the Adults were so I turned my feelings inward. I needed to acknowledge them to do something about them.

I have learnt to love myself and channel my anger in the right direction when it lets me know I've been mistreated or hurt, in that way I will not to harm myself and others.

The AAC (Al-anon Adult Children) meetings have helped me to recognise that I need to grieve my childhood. That I need to 'TRACE IT, FACE IT and ERASE IT'

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I have had to forgive my parents to enable me to move on. Ultimately it's the action we take to free ourselves from the pain we've been carrying. Forgiveness creates space in our lives for our healing.

I bought the Book 'Opening our Hearts. Transforming Our Losses' and it's been a tremendous help.

I have attended a few Zoom meetings in June on Step 6 as we do a Step a month. Step 6 says... "Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character"....

The key principle of Step 6 is READINESS !

Being 'entirely ready' is not an easy step to take, but its not 'conditional' it's clear we have to commit to the action of having God remove our defects of character. Our defects are comfortable and familiar. We don't always want them removed. Step 6 asks Us to be ready to have God remove them because we can't do it alone. GOD is our Good Orderly Direction!

My Daily readers ODAT, COURAGE TO CHANGE and HOPE FOR TODAY have been lifesavers during this pandemic.

My favourite reading is June 1st in CTC. "Expectations are premeditated resentments"....Something to think about!

Attached is a share from Ramanie of the HOPE AAC GROUP. Enjoy



Please feel free to share your experience strength and hope with me by return mail. I look forward to hearing from you.

God Bless
Lindsay S
Loner's Co-Ordinator

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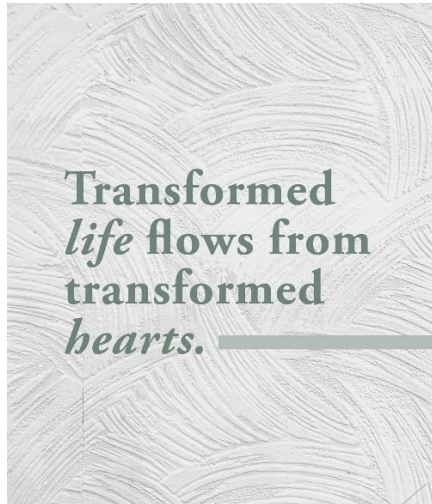
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What on Earth is wrong with me? Something is missing. Something is not right....these were the thoughts that plagued me as a young adult and when I closed my eyes – it was as if, I was watching a Psychological Thriller, on mute. Images would flash in front of my eyes and the sound came, only from the questions above.

I felt confused, life was good on the outside but on the inside, I was a wreck! I was treated for Depression when I was 24years old. I could go from being calm and relaxed to a tornado, in minutes. If I saw a glass in my father's hands or, that all too well known 'shine" on his face – my blood boiled – I had palpitations and I could have physically broken something. I used to be so angry that, how I actually felt, can best be described as RAGE!!!!

I felt completely abandoned by my mother. She should have protected us. How many times did I beg you, plead with you and cry for you to leave, this man? That's what my Dad had become – This man! I barely spoke to him and even if I did, there was zero emotion. It felt like my heart had been covered in concrete. There was NOTHING but Rage, Hate and Disappointment!!

I got married. I had a child. Still, life on the outside was good but on the inside, complete and utter turmoil. Maybe, more so, because by now, my sharp tongue, my

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nastiness and my anger was getting the better of me, in my own home, with my own little family. My thoughts and conscience were plagued by how sharp and painful my words were becoming and by how aggressive my reactions and behavior was. Although I felt completely lost, I kept searching for help.

And then I found it – AL-ANON. I made my first meeting and for the first time in my life (at 32years old), I felt that I finally belonged. I had come home! I felt warmth, love and safety. Al-Anon (the program and the members) gave me an opportunity to recover. Slowly but surely, the concrete slab around my heart started to break down. I began to remember the man, my father once was, and I began to understand that my father was still there, deep down inside. It was the bottle that was the problem. I learned of the compulsion to drink and what a battle it was to actually STOP and, to stay STOPPED. More importantly, I learnt that it was not my responsibility to make him stop and that it was not my business whether he drank or not. A painful pill to swallow

and a harsh reality but learning to accept this, is probably what started to set me free. I also, started appreciating the fact that, my mother had actually done the best that she could, under very difficult circumstances.

I found my Higher Power through Al-Anon. Of course, I had always prayed, even as a little girl, but I learned about Faith and Trust in my Higher Power and how to pray, in Al-Anon. Imagine that, being, close to my mid-thirties and learning how to pray, for the first time?

I learned how to speak a little softer and with more kindness. After a while, the glass in my Dad's hand had ZERO effect on me. I could sit in the same room as him and not be enraged by the drinking and LO AND BEHOLD – I could actually have a conversation with him!!!! What had changed??? I was so excited, when I realized that, for the first time in my life, I had not been affected by my Dad's drinking. I knew the program worked, it had been working in my life from the day that I walked in but, in my wildest dreams, I would never have expected it to work, to that extent. I HAD CHANGED.

I learnt that being lonely and being alone were two completely different things, but most importantly, I learnt to be happy in spite of being alone.....what a liberating

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feeling it is, to be comfortable with ME. That dark hole that I had been suffocating in was finally, getting some light and air. The anger started to lose its power over me as I worked the program. I am so Thankful for that. I have worked hard at being a better human being. It is constant work trying to live a life of Serenity but it is so worth the effort.

Al-Anon has saved my life and I will be forever indebted to this program.

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