

Stories from the Forum magazine: June 2010

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A mother sheds her guilt and finds hope in Al-Anon

I came to Al-Anon because of my son's alcoholism and addiction. He had been arrested and I could no longer ignore what was happening. I was a disaster in every way—spiritually, mentally, and physically. I felt my God had deserted me. How could a loving God let this happen to me? But more importantly, how could He let this happen to this sweet, wonderful child of mine?

I couldn't concentrate on anything. Some days just getting out of bed and brushing my teeth was more than I could handle. I woke up from the nightmare my life had become when I noticed—at work—that I hadn't even brushed my teeth. I realized I couldn't go on this way anymore.

Going to my first Al-Anon meeting was one of the hardest things I have ever done. It felt like an admission of my guilt over how bad a mother I was.

But from my first meeting, I felt a glimmer of hope. People understood how I felt. They had found reasons in their lives to smile and laugh. They didn't judge me. They just kept encouraging me to come back.

They helped me get past my guilt at being a horrible parent. I learned that my son had a disease. I understood that I had done the best I could with the light I had.

I can't imagine what these past years would have been without Al-Anon. Throughout this journey, my son has been homeless, in prison, and in other situations I would never have imagined I could live through. Without my program, I would have continued to be that person who couldn't function enough to brush her teeth.

With Al-Anon, I have survived. I have even come to be happy with the person I am, and appreciate who I am becoming. The way I look at the world has changed. I no longer say that it was my son who brought me to Al-Anon. Now, I say that my son was the opportunity my Higher Power gave me to find Al-Anon. I used to talk about the chaos and crisis in my life. Now, I talk about the opportunities my Higher Power is giving me to grow and become the person I was meant to be.

With the gifts of the program - a new and better understanding of my God, my Sponsor, my Al-Anon friends, the Steps, the literature, and meetings - life is better than I ever thought it could be, even when the people, places, and things in my life haven't changed.

By Anonymous, Nebraska
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