



## A Member Shares... Surrounded by insanity

I met my kid's father when he got out of prison, for what he told me was growing pot. I was smoking a lot of pot those days so I thought he was a hero for being so kind as to make something the rest of us could enjoy. And then I really remember thinking, if we could all love him he would be okay, and I ignored a lot of things like the fact that he had run from his probation, that he only owned things he stole from other people, and he was an irresponsible drunk looking for someone to cover for him. So he had gotten a job through friends and he had me call the work place and say he was sick so he did not have to go to work and they fired him. Within a few months, he went back to prison and I went off to treatment, and then you know, I stayed with him and wrote him letters and waited for him to return because I was sober now and he went to the AA meetings in the prison. I knew nothing about myself and the way Al-Anon might help. It turned out he was not in trouble for growing pot, he had assaulted a policeman with a shotgun and he was stealing from pharmacies and even though I felt really betrayed when I realized I was lied to, I moved out west to be with him when he got out. I covered for him and filled the house with food while he went out and stole everything he needed. The violence escalated and so we bought a cat. I look back and think, wow, I just had no capacity to let people help me, or find safe refuge, or stand up. Actually, I came to peace with the not standing up in this case as I would have been more badly hurt. By the time I found Al-Anon I had done all those things they say not to do and I really fit in and so I've stayed for years and years.

Anonymous

## A Member Shares . . .

### Another peek into the insanity

*Can I accept that I cannot control another person's drinking?*

No. I can manipulate, cajole, be nice, bribe, do for him until it's my turn then he'll do what I want. Holy Cow! Just like husband number two! I gained tons of weight just so we could lose weight together! And now, I'll go to open AA meetings by myself and then I can share all the neat, funny, oh so helpful stuff I'm learning with husband number three. He'll see the light and stop drinking and we'll live happily ever after. And THEN I can be happy.

*Oh Sweetie. You are so cute. And so sincere. And so manipulative. That's dishonest. And not nice. Your intentions were good: make him happy – but only so then YOU could be happy. How about you be willing to be happy first?*

Then how could I remain a martyr? My mother's raging, "After all I've done for you!!!" is still ringing in my head. I still live that today and it's getting really, really old. I'm tired of taking care of everybody but me. I'm tired of trying to fix a bunch of folks who couldn't care less, who let me run me into the ground and then holler, "Bring me some milk and cookies on your way to bed." What the heck! I work all day. Get your own cookies! I'm tired.

Together  
Empowering  
Al-Anon  
Members

SAVE THE DATE!

TEAM Florida South Event  
April 5 – 6, 2014

-  Power Up your Al-Anon Program
-  Energize your Spiritual Quest
-  Activate your Creativity thru Presentations & Workshops

### Step One

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.

*Step One must be learned and repeated until it becomes a part of me. Whenever I give in to my natural impulse and habit to take over and try to force a change, I'm in trouble again. I know I can only make progress when I really believe in, and practice, the First Step.*

One Day at a Time, Page 30

### Tradition One

Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity.

*Tradition One took on new meaning for me when another member shared her interpretation that unity included coming to meetings even when life was going well for her. Her insight helped me look at meeting attendance as both an act of unity with other members and a commitment to my own growth and well-being.*

Hope for Today, Page 31

### Concept One

The ultimate responsibility and authority for Al-Anon world services belongs to the Al-Anon groups.

*Just because someone tries to throw his or her responsibilities my way doesn't mean I have to catch them. My program helps me detach from what doesn't belong to me.*

Hope for Today, Page 29

## Important Dates to Note

- ◆ The next Information Services meeting is Tuesday, January 7<sup>th</sup> 7:00 pm St. Peter's Ministry
- ◆ The next District Meeting is Saturday, January 11<sup>th</sup> 11:30 am 24-Hour Club
- ◆ Florida South Winter AWSC Meeting Feb 22 – 23, Ft Myers
- ◆ TEAM Florida South, April 5-6
- ◆ Florida South Spring Assembly June 6-8, Ft Lauderdale

## Heard it at a meeting...

Don't muddle your puddle! I ask myself: Am I gunna die? Is the world going to end? Am I going to starve to death? If not, then don't freak out about it. [ from an Alateen]

## CAL Corner's Points to Ponder

I will look back upon all the things I have done to make the alcoholic stop drinking. Has it produced one iota of improvement to scold, weep, complain, accuse, reason, appeal or threaten? Am I any better off today for indulging in these futile gestures? Is the drinker any closer to sobriety? Or is the situation worse? "I pray for the wisdom to realize that progress begins only when I am ready to detach myself from the idea that I alone can control and solve another's problem."

*One Day at a Time, Page 32*

## Alateen Meetings

- ◆ Footprints of Alateen, Tuesday, 7:30 pm, St. John's the Evangelist Church, Parish Life Center, 625 111th Ave N, Naples
- ◆ New Life Alateen Meeting Thursday, 4:00 pm, Hensel Room Wesley United Methodist Church 350 S Barfield, Marco Island
- ◆ Sunday Morning Alateen, Sunday, 9:30 am, 24 Hour Club, 1509 Pine Ridge Rd, Naples



## Getting to know you...

Our District's AISL (Area Information Service Liaison) serves as the communication link between Information Service and the Area World Service Committee. Chairing the Information Service meetings every other month and attending the AWSC meetings twice a year are two of the job requirements of this service position.

## Meet our District AISL: [REDACTED]

Being our District's AISL has given me the opportunity to mature and grow in service and relationships with others. My Higher Power shows me the way to each new service position and gives me the words to encourage others to find the rewards of service. As the AISL, I quite often receive emails from people who are reaching out for help. I always see these requests as the opportunity to Let it Begin with Me. It is an honor to have this opportunity and one of the blessings of this position.

I have been in Al-Anon 20 years; I began service at the group level six years ago as a Group Representative. Presently, in addition to my duties as our AISL, I am the Chairperson for Area 10's TEAM Florida South event coming in April 5-6 in Ft. Lauderdale. And finally, a service position that is very near and dear to my heart is that of being an AMIAS (Al-Anon Member Involved In Alateen Service) these past few years. Being a part of the recovery of our amazing teens these past four plus years has meant more to me than words could ever express.

The Biggest Surprise for me so far as AISL has been seeing how successful the Al-Anon process works during Area World Service Meetings: hearing how different opinions are shared and defended with open, honest communication tools; being a part of the final decision (that perhaps was not my original opinion;) and how it was based on Principals not Personalities for the good of Al-Anon.

My Biggest Challenge has been how I am constantly challenging my leadership style. I now confidently ask for help which has resulted in a more collaborative approach to leadership. I know that the Information Service Chairs, our trusted servants, will do their duties their way, guided by their Higher Power and the results will benefit District 159.

I've learned that my way is not the only way or the best way. What a sense of freedom this gives me! I have a deeper appreciation for the many talents our members have who take on service positions. I have become a better listener and more open minded. I have learned to let everyone talk and that an open mind is fertile ground for my continued growth. These gifts of service helped me in the AISL position and continue in all areas of my life especially when differing opinions are expressed.

The AISL position is not daunting; it is a wonderful way for you to use your talents and skills. I loved making lists; therefore, I used this skill to write up the meeting agenda. Come to our next meeting on Jan. 7, 2014 and see how the miracle of Al-Anon plays out.

