

I'm no longer alone

By Ina C. B., British Columbia

My mother didn't drink, but devoted her life to my father, who liked to drink. As a child, the middle of three girls and one younger brother, I found myself feeling sympathy for my father. I blamed the beatings I got from him on my mother.

I had two alcoholic husbands, two children, and four grandchildren. Yet, after all, I found myself totally alone. Had I failed them or had they failed me?

After many months on my own, and my only friends being strangers on Facebook, I read a post about Al-Anon and decided to contact them. A lovely woman picked me up and took me to my first meeting.

The first thing I learned was that alcoholism is a disease. I hadn't realized that, and it gave me food for thought until my next meeting. Because I was alone, I wondered if I was in the right place. I had no one in my life anymore, so why should I keep going to those meetings?

I realized that even though I was alone, I needed to heal. I hung on every word said at the meetings. I realized that years of going to church did not bring me the peace these meetings did. My faith in my God had always been strong. "Let Go and Let God" had been my salvation prior to joining Al-Anon. I am a survivor, a child of God, and I had done my best for all of my family.

At each meeting, I heard a word or phrase that I'd carry with me throughout the week. I continued to go and realized I was right where I needed to be. I had found a family of people who understood the pain caused by alcoholism. They have helped me far more than all the mental health workers I had dealt with in the past did.

I continue to grow in the knowledge that I needed to take care of myself, realizing that the only person I have control over is me. I can't fix my family. I can only take care of me now. Life on my own is a struggle and going to my meetings is my reward. I'm no longer alone.

***Note:** Making Al-Anon available through social media is a connecting point for many families suffering with a loved one's alcoholism. It only takes a few seconds to share our posts, but the potential to reach many people still suffering from a loved one's alcoholism is great. Remember, when sharing, not to violate your anonymity by acknowledging your Al-Anon membership.*

Find us by clicking on the Facebook link on the WSO's Public Outreach Web site, al-anon.org, or by searching on Facebook for "Al-Anon WSO" in English, "Los Grupos de Familia Al-Anon OSM" in Spanish, and "Les Groupes Familiaux Al-Anon BSM" in French.

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