

The Family Situation Can Improve

“I finally understood that my ‘helping’ was hurting him.”

One morning I was riding my bicycle with a group of friends and really enjoying the beautiful day. I have found that little “Aha!” moments sometimes happen unexpectedly when I’m on my bike and my mind is in a peaceful and serene place.

For so long I had felt, as so many do, that I needed to “help” my son get sober. After being in the Al-Anon program for a few years, working the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Service, and trusting my Sponsor, I finally understood that my “helping” was hurting him, and my son needed to get himself sober. He needed to want it. I am so grateful that that miracle has happened!

I shared in meetings that I had nothing to do with my son getting sober, that it was all his doing, which to a very large extent is true. However, on my bike ride that day, it came to me that I *had* helped—just not in the way I was trying to or thought I should or would.

Here’s how I actually helped: 1) I started getting help for myself; 2) I always let my son know I loved him no matter what; 3) I stopped enabling him like I had been doing; 4) I prayed and still pray for him every day; and 5) I let him make his own decisions and choices even though they might cause me a degree of anxiety.

To accomplish those five things, I had to learn deep down to “Let Go and Let God.” I’m so grateful for the insight that the family situation can improve when I apply the Al-Anon ideas.

By Sally M., Iowa

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