

The Dinner-Party Test

I recently attended a dinner party with my husband, my recovering alcoholic son, and my son's girlfriend. The host, not knowing about my son's membership in Alcoholics Anonymous, asked my son what he was drinking. "Water will be fine," he replied. The host persisted. "Are you sure I can't get you something stronger?" he said. Every fiber of my being wanted to run interference, to throw myself between my son and what I perceived to be a temptation.

But I remembered what I had read under Step One in *How Al-Anon Works for Families & Friends of Alcoholics* (B-32): "Whether or not we live with active drinking, life is unmanageable whenever we lose perspective about what is and is not our responsibility" (p. 45). My son's sobriety is his responsibility, not mine. He, of course, handled the question beautifully. "I'm fine with water," he said in a firm, yet loving and polite manner.

I was reminded at that moment that my 33-year-old son, who has been sober for 15 years, has his own Higher Power and his own program. I need to focus on myself and examine why I still feel the need to step in. Just as my son is powerless over alcohol, so am I powerless over my perceived need to mother a competent, full-grown man. I'm thankful that I have a Higher Power and my Al-Anon program to remind me that "One Day at a Time," one minute at a time, one dinner party at a time, I am powerless over alcohol and could easily step back into unmanageability by losing my perspective.

By Susan K., Missouri

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