

## **From Victim to Victory, Using the Tools of Al-Anon**

When I think of the word *victory*, I think of achieving success despite significant obstacles. I see it as living my best life with serenity, dignity, and grace. One of the biggest barriers to my own victory was my victim outlook. I placed an enormous amount of importance on things outside myself: my circumstances, my experiences, and the actions of other people. I have come to understand that that was due to the family disease of alcoholism and the way it distorted my thinking.

I can also say that this point of view was a part of my family for generations. Coming into Al-Anon, I carried the burdens of my own resentments, bitterness, guilt, and shame. But I couldn't see these burdens, let alone work with them, because all of my focus was on others. Using the tools of Al-Anon recovery lifted the fog and allowed me to see the truth.

In meetings, I heard others share their own insights about feeling victimized and growing past it. As I learned to ask for help from my fellow Al-Anon members, I gained a clearer view of who I really was. Working with my Sponsor studying the Twelve Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Service, the broken parts of me were mended, piece by piece. Studying the words of fellow Al-Anon members in our literature, I gained a healthier perspective.

Today, I can say that, instead of burdens, I carry the gifts found in the spiritual principles of Al-Anon: unity, equality, trust, tolerance, patience, freedom, kindness, and forgiveness, among others. I've realized that my journey is summed up in the title of my favorite Al-Anon book: *From Survival to Recovery* (B-21). As long as I viewed the world as a victim, I could only

survive. It was by using these tools that I could rise victorious and really recover. I can truly say that not a moment has been wasted, and I will “Keep Coming Back.”

*By Diane M., Florida*

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