**"Keep Coming Back"**

At one of my first Al-Anon meetings, a member shared that a reading helped to clear up her thinking—like cleaning off a dirty windshield. She felt she had gained some clarity. When I came to Al-Anon 15 years ago, I was in a fog of denial. Even though there was alcoholism on both sides of my family, I smugly believed I came from a "perfect" family. I chose to blame our son's active alcoholism on my husband's family.

When I told my doctor about the troubles our son was having, he recommended Al-Anon. I went reluctantly, and I chose a meeting an hour from my hometown. I felt embarrassed and ashamed! I kept going back to meetings and gained a clearer perspective on alcoholism and the part I play in this family illness.

Every day, I kept going back to the Al-Anon readers. Every week, I attended meetings. I learned that I was there for myself, not for my son or others' problems. My distorted thinking began to clear up, and I gained a clearer perspective. And I kept coming back!

I struggled with finding a Sponsor. Eventually, an Al-Anon friend and I decided to work the [Twelve Steps](#) together. And we did! [Step One](#) taught me I am not in control of alcohol or other people. I am only in charge of myself and the choices I make about my attitudes and behaviors. My vision sharpened as I faced this reality and acquired the spiritual principles of honesty and acceptance. I kept coming back.

Members recommended service work, and I gave it a try. I pushed through social fears to share at meetings. Next, I volunteered to lead meetings. Helping to organize Family Recovery Nights, alongside other Al-Anon and A.A. members, was both fun and rewarding. Service work helps me learn how to cooperate with others in a healthy, non-domineering way.

After all these years, I am grateful I kept coming back to see what I couldn't see without Al-Anon's help.

*By Kathleen O.*

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