

I Felt Empowered

When I first came to Al-Anon, I felt damaged from years spent living with my alcoholic husband. I didn't grow up in a family where alcohol was present. When I married my husband, I realized that he came from an alcoholic family, and I thought I would have to imitate my mother-in-law to make that dynamic work. After years of trying to control the alcoholic and being angry, disheartened, and guilty, I went to therapy. The therapists suggested I go to Al-Anon, saying, "They can help you."

When I went to my first meeting, I expected everyone to share how to make him stop drinking. Instead, I realized that the focus must be on me. *I* was the one who needed help. *My own hurt could be healed.*

I started using the slogan "Let Go and Let God." As I released the anger my husband directed at me, I began to hurt less. I no longer took on his guilt, justification, or anger. I slowly started to heal. I became more focused on myself! I began to renew my relationship with God. I felt it was easier to let go of my guilt. My relationship with my family improved, and I became more involved in life. I felt more empowered.

By working the Steps, going to meetings, working with a Sponsor, and doing daily readings, the healing has begun. I read a saying once that resonated with me: "Healing doesn't mean the damage never existed. It means the damage no longer controls our lives." While I still

rely on Al-Anon meetings, my daily readings, and the support from my Sponsor, I have noticed that the damage that once *controlled* my life is no longer overwhelming.

By Anonymous

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