

Learning to Listen

Before I came to Al-Anon, I thought I was a great listener and that I had the answers to everything. I would often give advice and voice my opinions, even when no one asked. I did this mostly with my husband, who's the alcoholic in my life, but it also extended to my stepchildren, coworkers, and just about anyone else who crossed paths with me.

Then I finally came to the program. One morning, after I made a comment to my stepdaughter about her outfit, my husband confronted me in a fit of rage over my actions. Confused, I called my Sponsor to discuss the situation. After I told her my story, she asked, "Did your stepdaughter ask for your opinion?" I replied, "No." She gently explained that next time I can try to refrain from offering an opinion unless I'm asked. It's been two years since that incident, and I've learned that if I wait and listen to what's being said to me, I will hear much more than I could ever anticipate.

By Vicki M., California

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