

I Found Out Who I Am

Growing up in an alcoholic family, I seemed to have lost my sense of self. I took on everyone's feelings and lived my life according to their moods. My father was an alcoholic, and my mother was very busy taking care of him. In turn, I took care of all my younger siblings. I learned and took on the role of caretaker. That became my profession as well.

I married my best friend, whom I met at a high school dance. He was drunk, and I should have known then. Twelve years later, he confessed he had a drinking problem. At that point, I knew nothing about the disease of alcoholism.

As a child and young adult, I was so afraid to take risks. I simply followed instructions and did what I was told. So, when I was told to go to Al-Anon, I did. At this time, my husband had just left the treatment center. I was handed a card with someone's name on it and a phone number. I called her. My phone felt like it weighed 500 pounds in that moment. She became my first Sponsor, and my journey into recovery began.

I stayed for the miracle. I began the journey of self-discovery. My Sponsor's favorite word to describe me was "willing." I was *willing* to do anything and to learn about this disease.

Through this process I discovered who I am, what I want, and what I need. I learned about my passions and my true self. I continue to live the Steps by sponsoring, going to meetings, and reaching out to people on the phone. I accept life on life's terms. I am at peace, experiencing serenity.

My dad was almost 12 years sober when he died. My husband, whom I chose to stay with, has 33 years of sobriety, just like me, "One Day at a Time." My life is full, rich, and serene most of the time.

By Sarah O., Oregon

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