

Turning Unmanageability into Creativity

I've been in Al-Anon for five years. During this time, I attempted an intervention for my husband, which did not go well. After that, we separated, and now I am in the process of divorcing after 16 years of marriage.

Recently, it was brought to my attention that he is seeing someone and has introduced this new partner and her daughter to our children.

Instead of yelling at him and telling him how he is hurting our children—during an already hard season of losing the family dynamic they have always known and being bounced back and forth between two households, now adding in meeting a new girlfriend and her daughter—I simply asked my children how they felt.

By keeping the focus on myself and my kids, I haven't escalated the situation. This approach has helped me avoid adding drama to a situation that is beyond my control.

Instead, I try to create beauty and focus on what I can influence. Sewing has been a creative outlet I have used during this hard season of separation and divorce (when I got busy, I got better!).

For example, on one particularly hard night, when I was working on the problem rather than the program, I went home after work and spent five hours at my sewing machine. This resulted in a beautiful quilt for my daughter's school auction. I call this "rage sewing."

Now, whenever I struggle with obsessive thinking, I know it's time to start a new sewing project to redirect my energy.

Through these experiences, I have learned there is beauty in the struggle and hope and healing in the journey. I am grateful to Al-Anon for helping me recognize the part I have played in the ongoing drama and showing me how I can do things differently now.

By Jaimee M., Ohio

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