

From Worry to Wonder

I have been a worrier since childhood, and I had reason to be. My mother developed rheumatoid arthritis at 35 and spent years in a wheelchair. My father drank too much beer and had mood swings that ranged from depression to rage. When I was 12, I somehow decided that if I ever stopped worrying, something terrible would happen. I didn't know any better. I became the family's resident worrier.

With my mom's condition, a move to a bigger home, and the responsibility of seven kids, my father became abusive towards us, the older children. The fear and terror from those episodes stayed with me for years.

In my 20s, I thought I married my "knight in shining armor," but I later discovered that he was someone who drank whiskey instead of beer. After leaving with my son and a few belongings, I came across Al-Anon. At my first meeting, I realized I needed help. I found a wonderful Sponsor, started working the Steps, and began to rely on a Power greater than myself that I didn't know how to describe.

It took lots of 24 hours to move from worry to faith, from fear to joy and laughter. Instead of dwelling on the past or dreading the future, I learned to live in today. My Higher Power showed me that wonders are always present when I practice gratitude, show kindness, and remain open to life's gifts. Every time I embrace gratitude and kindness, I discover new blessings and lasting joy.

By Trish S., Illinois

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