

Stepping Off the Merry-Go-Round

Before I came to Al-Anon, there were two merry-go-rounds whirling in my life, like an echo or double vision. One revolved around my older brother, who was also severely affected by alcoholism and who began mimicking our father's sickness, behaving violently toward our mother and me. I, in turn, rode the other merry-go-round, mimicking our sick mother's behavior towards our father. We both acted by default, not by conscious choice.

After my first Al-Anon meeting, I had a powerful realization that *we* as a family are not the only ones caught up in this kind of circus ride. At the time, the pamphlet *Alcoholism, a Merry-Go-Round Named Denial* (P-3) was part of our newcomer's packet. Had I not received it, I doubt I would have questioned my own behavior, let alone recognized our assigned family roles. So first, I am thankful I *came*, but I am equally thankful I *came to* this realization.

Until I could comprehend the reach of alcoholism beyond my narrow, peripheral view of myself, I would never have come to believe, as described in Step Two, that a Power greater than myself could or would restore my sanity. I call this comprehension *insight*.

My thought for today is this: Insight is the ability to comprehend, without distortion, why I do the things I do. This insight comes through my Higher Power's guidance and best intention for myself and my family.

By Gregg L., Ontario

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