

Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism 2017

*Are You Troubled by Someone's Drinking?
Al-Anon Family Groups Can Help*



TABLE OF CONTENTS

4

I felt relief from that first meeting

Kim W., Wisconsin

9

My life was unmanageable

Bill T., California

10

Al-Anon complements traditional therapy

Diane M. Warshofsky, MACC, LMFT, LPCA

Marriage and Family Therapist

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

11

I hoped the door was locked...

Anonymous, Manitoba

13

I found a room full of people with the same problem—an alcoholic in their lives

Donald C., Texas

14

**At my first Al-Anon meeting,
I found understanding**

Vivian M., Florida

15

A father learned in Al-Anon that alcoholism is a family disease

*Dr. Paul Schoenfeld, Clinical Psychologist
Everett, Washington*

17

I remember feeling hopeful

Anonymous

20

Why families of alcoholics need Al-Anon

*C. Scott McMillin, B.A., CAC, and Clinical Trainer
Santa Fe, New Mexico*

22

**My mom gave me the greatest gift—
Alateen**

Katie S., Ohio

23

Getting better faster

*Virginia Fowkes Clark, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist
Stow, Ohio*

24

**I finally gathered enough courage to go
into the meeting**

Ed S., California

How do I know if Al-Anon could help me?

Heavy drinkers commonly say that their drinking is not as serious a problem as some people think. People who are close to them also have a tendency to minimize how seriously the drinker's alcohol abuse has affected *them*. They are trying to keep things as normal as possible under conditions that are sometimes unbearable.

These questions can help you decide if you could benefit from visiting an Al-Anon meeting.

1. Do you worry about how much someone else drinks?
2. Do you have money problems because of some one else's drinking?
3. Do you tell lies to cover up for someone else's drinking?
4. Do you feel that if the drinker cared about you, he or she would stop drinking to please you?
5. Are plans frequently upset or canceled because of the drinker?
6. Do you make threats, such as, "If you don't stop drinking, I'll leave you"?
7. Are you afraid to upset someone for fear it will set off a drinking bout?
8. Have you been hurt or embarrassed by a drinker's behavior?
9. Do you search for hidden alcohol?
10. Have you refused social invitations out of fear or anxiety?
11. Do you feel like a failure because you can't control someone else's drinking?
12. Do you think that if the drinker stopped drinking, your other problems would be solved?

If you answered **"yes"** to one or more of these questions, Al-Anon or Alateen may be helpful.

Al-Anon and Alateen— where you can find help

Al-Anon is a mutual support program for people who are living with (or have lived with) someone whose drinking created problems for themselves or others.



Alateen meetings are held in many locations for young people, usually teenagers, whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking. While Alateen members run their own meetings, adult Group Sponsors are there for safety and to provide guidance. To ensure the safety of Alateen meetings, Group Sponsors must be in compliance with Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements.

When someone close to you drinks too much...

Sometimes the problem drinker is a spouse or partner. Sometimes parents are concerned about their son or daughter's drinking. Sometimes the drinker is (or was) a parent, another relative, a co-worker, or a friend.



I felt relief from that first meeting

Kim W., Wisconsin

I came to Al-Anon as a way of getting my kids to go to Alateen. I told them I would try it out first. We had been living with active alcoholism for 10 years by that point. I was scared to go, but had to show my kids the way. I honestly was very angry I had to go to Al-Anon. I was not the one with the drinking problem. My husband was the alcoholic.

At my first meeting, I had so much anger in me. I am still surprised people did not run for the door. Instead, they nodded their heads, told me they understood, and told me to keep coming back.

I felt relief from that first meeting. It was nice to know I was not alone, and that I was not crazy. I kept coming back and found hope, healing, and comfort.

I have a long way to go, but have already experienced a miracle within Al-Anon. I am not angry anymore. I have put into perspective that my husband is a very sick man, but I can choose to be happy and healthy.

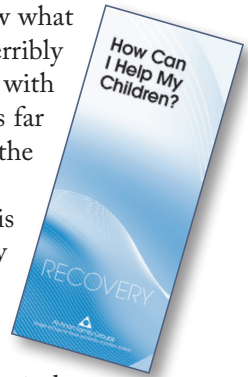
Today, my focus is not on fixing him, but on being the person I want to be. Al-Anon has made me a better mom and person. I am so grateful to this program. It has saved my life.



Explaining the disease to a young child

“We may not want to think that our children know what is going on, but they often *do* know something is terribly wrong. Children have an amazing capacity for dealing with the truth. Shrouding the illness in mystery and lies is far more frightening than a down-to-earth talk about the disease of alcoholism.

“In explaining the disease to young children, it is helpful to compare it to a chronic illness that they know. We can point out that the alcoholic is sick and doesn’t mean all the things said while drinking. We should be careful to explain to our children that they are in no way responsible for the drinking and remind them that they are loved.” From *How Can I Help My Children?* (P-9)



How serious does the drinker’s problem have to be for Al-Anon to help?

From the Al-Anon perspective, it doesn’t matter whether the drinker is an alcoholic or not. What really matters is: does the drinking bother *you*?

Al-Anon members report improved well-being

According to the *2015 Al-Anon Membership Survey*, 92 percent of Al-Anon members reported that their lives have been very positively affected by their membership in Al-Anon. Complete results from the *Membership Survey* are available on the “For Professionals” page of Al-Anon’s Web site, al-anon.org.



What kind of ‘answers’ will I find at Al-Anon?

Al-Anon members find support and understanding, as they share their experiences in applying the Al-Anon principles to their lives.

This peer-to-peer exchange helps them discover new choices and new ways of thinking about how to handle the effects of alcohol abuse. They do not give each other advice or specific direction.

The *First Steps to Al-Anon Recovery* podcast series is available on Al-Anon's Web site, al-anon.org, and offers professionals' perspectives on family recovery and the benefits of Al-Anon Family Groups. Here's what one member of Al-Anon had to say about the podcast titled "Connections between families, the Association for Addiction Professionals, and Al-Anon Family Groups."



"As I listened to this interview, I thought about how great it would have been if the professionals I sought help from had referred me to Al-Anon. The doctor could only recommend antidepressants. A marriage counselor told me the term 'alcoholic' had bad connotations and that I needed to accept my husband's decision to continue drinking. A psychiatrist told me that my husband had deviant behavior. My father referred to my husband as a 'sociopath.'

"I felt hope for future generations."

"I'm glad I trusted my instincts to go to Al-Anon. I could really relate to the loneliness described in this interview. I thought it would never pass.

"This interview explains very clearly how important it is for family members to recover and for the family dynamics to change—not just to help the alcoholic stay sober, but for the family members' well-being.

"I liked hearing how family members are empowered by Al-Anon and can 'pass it (recovery) forward' to other members still struggling with a loved one's drinking, or even when the alcoholic attains sobriety.

"I felt encouraged by this interview, that more therapists and counselors are aware of the importance of family recovery and Al-Anon. I felt hope for future generations."



What ‘anonymity’ is all about

Anonymity helps keep the emphasis on principles that can help solve personal problems, rather than on the personal situations that are part of the problem. No one’s social status, professional standing, or level of education matters at an Al-Anon meeting.

Confidentiality ensures that you can speak from the heart at an Al-Anon meeting, because everything said at the meeting *stays* at the meeting.

You don’t have to worry that someone from the Al-Anon meeting will approach you in a public place and start discussing your personal, confidential problems.



What is the difference between ‘open’ and ‘closed’ meetings?

Anyone concerned about someone else’s drinking is welcome to attend any Al-Anon meeting, whether it is listed as “open” or “closed” in a local meeting schedule.

A “closed” meeting is “open” to anyone who is troubled by someone else’s drinking. An “open” meeting, however, also welcomes guests, students, and interested professionals who want to learn by observing an Al-Anon meeting.

Observers attending open Al-Anon meetings are requested to abide by the principles that guide participation in all Al-Anon Family Group meetings, especially the principles of confidentiality and anonymity that protect its members.

My life was unmanageable

Bill T., California

I remember my first Al-Anon meeting well. Due to the progressive disease of alcoholism in a loved one, I was suddenly left a single father, with a teenage son and a preteen daughter. My life was in chaos. I felt as if I was shipwrecked, with no idea what to think, say, or do. I didn't know up from down. My life was unmanageable.

That evening, as I parked the car outside the meeting, I told my kids, "I don't know how this Al-Anon thing is going to go, but I know we need something, and I really hope they can help us. Let's go in."

As we entered the room, a young woman was setting out books on a table.

*"I don't know how this Al-Anon
thing is going to go, but I know we
need something..."*

I asked her, "Is this the right place? Am I in the right place?" She listened to me stammer out something about my troubles. She saw the look of panic, sadness, and despair in my eyes, and she said, "Oh yes, I'm pretty sure you are in the right place."

She explained a little bit about what Al-Anon was, told my kids they could go into the Alateen meeting, and that I could take a seat in the Al-Anon meeting anywhere I wanted. I sat in the back row, and waited.

The opening was a blur of voices and people talking about this or that. I could not focus on much at first, but as the sharing began, with personal stories of experiences and lessons learned, I felt something.

I felt something move inside my heart, and after listening to three or four more people share, I knew what that feeling was. It was hope.

Al-Anon gave me hope in that first meeting—and in every meeting since.

Al-Anon complements traditional therapy

Diane M. Warshofsky, MACC, LMFT, LPCA
Marriage and Family Therapist
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

As I worked with recovering alcoholics, I began to see how their loved ones unknowingly challenged their lifestyle of sobriety. This led me to invite their partner to therapy in order to clarify my role as a support to the *whole relationship*. In this process, I recognized both the pain shared within the relationship, as well as the individual hurt of each partner related to issues of trust, guilt, and shame.



*“Most are not aware
that even ‘good’
changes can cause
a couple or family
distress.”*

Marriages and families can erode over time, as the unacknowledged events of pain pile up because of the need to survive the present crisis. The absence of a crisis is foreign during recovery. Most are not aware that even “good” changes can cause a couple or family distress. I have found it helpful to provide both individual and couples’ sessions. The goal is to normalize their individual and collective experience, as well as explore their needs in the relationship and for outside supports.

Like Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon provides a safe place for one to receive strength and hope through others’ experience. This complements my focus of each individual’s responsibility of self-care. Significant others who no longer feel alone in their circumstances are given permission inside and outside of therapy to take care of themselves. This type of support can lead to changes that benefit the individual as well as the relationship. Not every relationship survives, but those that do have a working knowledge of how to separate individual from relational needs.

Without the shared experience of Al-Anon, I believe that therapy would not be as effective. As a professional, I am grateful for the support my clients receive from Al-Anon, as I walk with them through a part of their journey of healing.

I hoped the door was locked...

Anonymous, Manitoba

I really didn't want to go to Al-Anon. It wasn't for me. I didn't grow up in an alcoholic home, and I didn't think much about my ex-fiancé's alcoholism. I just thought the chaos that permeated my family life and my relationship with my partner was normal. What other normal was there?

I came to Al-Anon when I couldn't deal with it anymore and had nowhere else to turn. I hoped the door was locked. Maybe, intuitively, I knew I would have to start working through the years of pain and ineffective coping mechanisms that were doing me in.

I am so glad the Al-Anon doors were open. People welcomed me. It was okay to cry. More importantly, the doors of my soul began to open, and I finally understood the reasons for my anxiety, panic attacks, pain, fear, and anger.

I am so grateful to Al-Anon for showing me a new chance at life.



*“What other normal
was there?”*



Lasting effects...

Even if there isn't active alcoholism in your life now, sometimes a relationship with a problem drinker can have long-lasting effects.

Al-Anon and Alateen offer an opportunity for healing and personal growth. Members help each other to understand and unravel the lingering effects that resulted from someone else's drinking—whether the drinking is still active or not.

Someone close to me has a drug problem

Al-Anon Family Groups have one focus: to help friends and families of alcoholics. Al-Anon's *2015 Membership Survey* reported, however, that 40 percent of Al-Anon members *first* came to Al-Anon Family Groups because of a friend or relative who had a drug problem. The survey also showed that 85 percent of these members eventually came to realize that someone's drinking had also negatively affected their lives.

I found a room full of people with the same problem— an alcoholic in their lives

Donald C., Texas

The first time I ever heard about Al-Anon was when the psychiatrist treating the alcoholic in my life met me for the first time. We were introduced, and he pointed his finger in my face and said, “You need to go to Al-Anon.”

I was so angry—livid. How dare this man tell me what to do? How dare he force such a thing on me? Why did I need to go to Al-Anon? I didn’t even drink alcohol.

The next day I spoke to our marriage counselor. I told her what the finger-pointing man had said. Her response was, “You don’t have to go to Al-Anon if you don’t want to.” Later, I realized that going to Al-Anon or not was *my* decision to make. The next day, I was at an Al-Anon meeting.

I thought I was going to a classroom, where I would be given textbooks and pop quizzes, and asked questions. Instead, I found a room full of people who had the same problem—an alcoholic in their lives. These kind people welcomed me, embraced me, and assured me I was in the right place. I had no idea there was an entire world full of people just like me. I was not alone anymore. Through Al-Anon meetings and literature, I have found ways to cope.



*“Why did I need to go to Al-Anon?
I didn’t even drink alcohol.”*

At my first Al-Anon meeting, I found understanding

Vivian M., Florida

I went to my first Al-Anon meeting because I was desperate to help my daughter. I'd tried everything. This was my last chance. A small group of people there were talking and laughing. The meeting began. I was shell-shocked, and I didn't hear a single word until someone said, "My daughter."

I began to cry. I hadn't realized the depth of my despair, and soon I was openly sobbing. Someone handed me a box of tissues, but no one interfered as I cried for the next 45 minutes. I just couldn't stop. It took all my strength to remain in my chair until the end of the meeting, instead of running out in total humiliation.

"I began to cry.

I hadn't realized the depth of my despair..."

I thought they would all look away from me, embarrassed. Instead, several members came up to me, smiled, and took my hand. Two women asked if I needed a hug. I did. They said, "Keep coming back."

I realized this group understood my suffering, sympathized, empathized, and wanted to help me. They *loved* me. And that was exactly what I needed.

'It's not your fault. You didn't cause it.'

R. R. G., California

I first heard about Al-Anon while in the hospital. A wonderful social worker said to me, "It's not your fault. You didn't cause it." At the time, I really didn't know what she was talking about. I was in a dense fog of pain and couldn't see my way out. Her words guided me to my first Al-Anon meeting.

A father learned in Al-Anon that alcoholism is a family disease

*Dr. Paul Schoenfeld, Clinical Psychologist
Everett, Washington*

Larry, a middle-age man, sits in my office talking about Al-Anon—for family and friends of alcoholics.

He tells me his story: “I got a phone call from my son’s school when Joey was 14 years old. He was caught drinking at school with his buddies. At the time, I thought, ‘Boys will be boys,’ and didn’t think much of it. The progression of the disease is slow, so it was hard to see. Later on, I received a call that Joey was in an automobile accident. There were legal issues and court-ordered treatment—the whole nine yards of alcoholism. I attended a family meeting at the rehab program. They recommended I go to Al-Anon. So I did—I’m a man; if I can’t help my son, who can?”

Sadly, Joey died. But Larry wants other parents to know that there is help. I ask him how Al-Anon helps him.

“I learned that alcoholism is a disease. My son didn’t like me judging or berating him because he drank. I’m certain that Joey felt that I lost my love and respect for him. Had I not gone to Al-Anon, we would have continued to be at war.

“I learned to accept him and give him the respect and dignity to make his own decisions in life — to work, hopefully, on his own recovery. But that was up to him. I needed to work on my own healing. I learned my problems were of my own making. This is why alcoholism is called a ‘family disease’ in Al-Anon.”

Al-Anon provides a community of family members who struggle to establish a loving relationship with their ill family member, but at the same time, not to enable their disease. Parents, brothers, sisters, and children begin to realize that dependency on alcohol is not a moral failing or a choice, any more than someone chooses to have cancer, asthma, or diabetes. It’s a condition that their loved one lives with.

As we talked, I shared my frustration as a psychologist. Every year, I encourage scores of family members to attend Al-Anon, but only a few follow through.

Larry said: “If you are thinking about going to Al-Anon, just go. And attend at least six meetings before you decide it’s not for you. Just keep coming back. I’ve been attending for about ten years now. It’s only an hour or an hour and a half out of your day.”

Al-Anon helps family members heal. It helps family members reconnect with the love for their ill family member.

If the Al-Anon meeting is held at a church...

Al-Anon meetings include people of different religious affiliations, as well as individuals without any spiritual beliefs.

An Al-Anon meeting held in a church is not affiliated with that church. Al-Anon is a spiritual program, but it is not religious and is not affiliated with any church or religion, just as it is not affiliated with any other private or public organization. Many Al-Anon groups meet at libraries, hospitals, or other facilities.

Al-Anon groups focus *exclusively* on issues related to helping the friends and families of problem drinkers. The location of the meeting place is irrelevant to the content and discussion at the meeting. Groups are simply renting rooms to hold their meetings.

How to find an Al-Anon or Alateen meeting

Call 1-888-4AL-ANON (1-888-425-2666) or visit al-anon.org for meeting information. Al-Anon may also be listed in your local telephone directory.

On-line meetings and telephone meetings sometimes supplement face-to-face Al-Anon meetings. They are also helpful for the homebound and for those who live in rural areas, as well as for travelers who can participate in a meeting from anywhere in the world. To find lists of these meetings, visit al-anon.org, or send an e-mail to wso@al-anon.org.

No appointments are necessary

Anyone concerned about someone else's drinking is welcome to walk in and attend any meeting. Reservations or referrals are not required.

There are no dues or fees

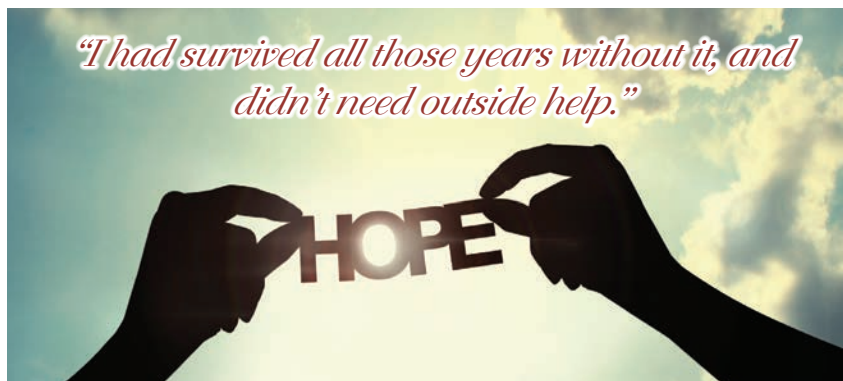
Members make voluntary contributions because each group is self-supporting and declines outside contributions. Most groups pass a basket at each meeting to help cover routine costs, such as renting the meeting room, supporting Al-Anon services, and buying literature.

I remember feeling hopeful

Anonymous

I grew up in an abusive, alcoholic home, but didn't know I was affected by alcoholism for a long time. My wife grew up with alcoholism too, and was attending Al-Anon when we married. I thought I didn't need Al-Anon. I had survived all those years without it, and didn't need outside help.

Then, my teenage daughter started using alcohol and drugs. She was put in jail for assaulting her brother with a knife. I was angry with her and with God for bringing alcoholism and chaos back in my life. Finally, I decided to go to an Al-Anon meeting.



As I sat in that meeting, I felt I had a sign around my neck that said, "Help." I don't remember what I heard. I remember feeling hopeful. I remember one woman there who had grown up in an abusive, alcoholic family and who seemed very happy. I wanted what she had. It wasn't long before I recognized that I came to Al-Anon not to help my daughter, but to help *me*.

I came back to that meeting every week, and also started attending a men's meeting. My daughter is doing much better now. I still have the scars from growing up with the family disease of alcoholism, so I plan to keep coming back.

What visitors to the Al-Anon Family Groups official Facebook page have to say:

A very special ‘Thank you.’

I went to my first Al-Anon meeting last night. I was nervous and unsure of what to expect. I heard firsthand from people who are dealing with the same problems. Their experiences and their emotions were just like mine. I cried. I don’t cry in front people. I honestly did not think I would feel a connection, but I did—immediately. Thank you for this program. I know I only went once, but I feel hope for the very first time.

I thought alcoholism was something that *one* person suffered from. Al-Anon helped me realize it is a disease that affects all those around the alcoholic.

In Al-Anon, I learned that my spouse’s drinking was not my fault. I started focusing on myself, rather than being drawn into the drama that comes with alcoholism.



Find Al-Anon Family Groups on Facebook by searching for Al-Anon WSO (English), Los Grupos de Familia Al-Anon OSM (Spanish), and Les Groupes Familiaux Al-Anon BSM (French).

English



Spanish



French



Alateen WSO



When I walked into the rooms of Al-Anon, I was a level-four emergency. I was desperate for help. My husband had relapsed after four years of sobriety, and I was afraid he was going to die. I felt completely alone, with no one to turn to for help.

It didn't take long for me to start feeling better. Within a few months in Al-Anon, I could see a lot of progress in my relationships and in my attitude towards life. I am unrecognizable from the woman who walked in the door.

Melissa M., Kentucky



Why families of alcoholics need Al-Anon

C. Scott McMillin, B.A., CAC, and Clinical Trainer
Santa Fe, New Mexico

“Why should I go to meetings if I’m not the one with the problem?” is a big question for most family members. After all, if your spouse has a heart attack, you don’t attend cardiac rehab. Maybe you do some reading or take a class, but that’s it. You don’t want to commit to more than that, do you?

If you’re involved with an alcoholic, the reality is you *do* have the problem. You didn’t cause it, and you can’t control it, and you can’t change the alcoholic’s behavior—but you definitely feel the effects of drinking. And you’ll feel the effects of recovery, too.

*“As family members, you are affected.
Your choice is whether that effect
will be positive or negative.”*

You may think that everything will be resolved if the alcoholic goes to treatment and follows it up with Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. It sounds like a simple process. But it is not an easy one, and there are plenty of bumps along the way. As family members, you are affected. Your choice is whether that effect will be positive or negative.

If your alcoholic comes home from treatment or an A.A. meeting to find you in the grip of anxiety over whether he’ll drink again, that’s a negative for both of you. If, on the other hand, you’ve learned to manage those feelings and get your support from others because you are attending Al-Anon, you’re much better off. And so is the alcoholic in your life.

In Al-Anon, you’ll make friends with people who share your experience and are willing to listen. You will be miles ahead of most family members, who still have no place where they can safely vent their problems and hear how others use the Al-Anon program to find solutions.

In other words, when family members have established a program of recovery, it makes things easier not just on us and on the alcoholic but, frankly, on everybody else involved. This is why family members need to attend Al-Anon.





My mom saved my life. My mom saved my life because she had the guts to save her own.

“I didn’t remember my mom ever having anyone over or really having any friends.”

I grew up in a home where the disease of alcoholism was rampant. My parents were very sick. I think a neighbor recognized the symptoms and suggested my mom go to Al-Anon. I don’t know how soon she went, but she did, and she went a lot.

Our home was a good example of a situation getting worse before it gets better. It was not a good situation, but my mom kept going to meetings. It made me very angry. I did not understand how she could leave us.

My mom knew that if she didn’t take care of herself, she wouldn’t be able to take care of anyone. I was a teenager and did not understand. Today, I know. Today, I understand.

At the same time, people from my mom’s meetings came over all the time. I didn’t like any of them, but she had friends. I didn’t remember my mom ever having anyone over or really having any friends. Alcoholism is very isolating.

My mom took me to Alateen meetings. I have no idea why I listened to her, but I did and went to the meetings.

My mom saved me because she saved herself by getting the help she needed from Al-Anon. I miss my mother every single day. She gave me the greatest gift in the world, because with all the odds against her, she brought recovery into our home.

Getting better faster

Virginia Fowkes Clark, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist
Stow, Ohio

People come to see me because they are unhappy in their lives and relationships, not usually because there is a problem of alcoholism in their family. After a thorough history, it becomes clear to me the impact the family disease of alcoholism has on many of my clients.

Many grew up with an alcoholic parent and thought they left that behind, yet it leaves them sometimes impaired in their relationships and in their work. Others married an alcoholic but did not see how that was contributing to their dysfunctional and unhappy marriage. Some marry and divorce an alcoholic, again thinking they got rid of the problem, but find their relationships continue to be affected. Some are depressed, others are anxious. Often, control issues are present.

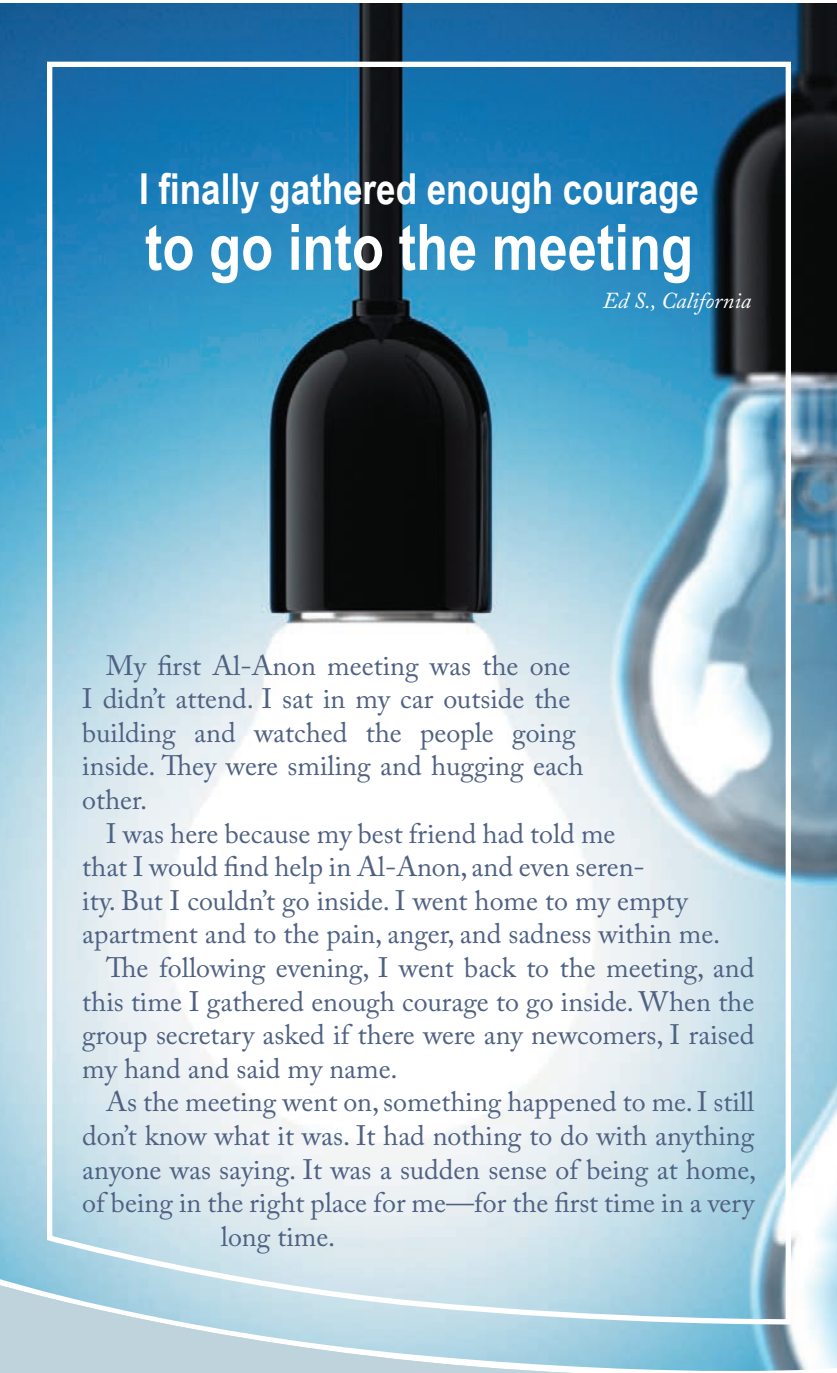
“The people who come to therapy and go to Al-Anon, if they need to, just get better faster.”

On every first visit, whether an adult or a child, I get a family history of mental illness and alcohol and drug problems. If someone is living with an active alcoholic, and they are partially aware of how much this is a problem, I refer them to Al-Anon right away. If someone grew up with alcoholism, I may wait a few sessions, until tying the alcoholism into their present problems makes sense.

Over the years, I have tried telling people various things, but lately I tell my clients what I observe: the people who come to therapy *and* go to Al-Anon, if they need to, just get better faster. In fact, more than one client has been in therapy previously or on medication, but when they add going to Al-Anon, it makes a tremendous difference. After suggesting they go to Al-Anon, I give them a copy of the local Al-Anon meeting schedule and a copy of *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism*.

Being persistent, if they do not go initially, I keep asking them to go. One woman, who did eventually go to Al-Anon, told me later that she went just to get me to stop asking her. It changed her life, her children's lives, and she remains a member of Al-Anon to this day.

In the 2015 *Al-Anon Membership Survey*, Al-Anon members reported that professional treatment, counseling, and therapy had the greatest effect on their lives after attending Al-Anon meetings, compared to before.



I finally gathered enough courage to go into the meeting

Ed S., California

My first Al-Anon meeting was the one I didn't attend. I sat in my car outside the building and watched the people going inside. They were smiling and hugging each other.

I was here because my best friend had told me that I would find help in Al-Anon, and even serenity. But I couldn't go inside. I went home to my empty apartment and to the pain, anger, and sadness within me.

The following evening, I went back to the meeting, and this time I gathered enough courage to go inside. When the group secretary asked if there were any newcomers, I raised my hand and said my name.

As the meeting went on, something happened to me. I still don't know what it was. It had nothing to do with anything anyone was saying. It was a sudden sense of being at home, of being in the right place for me—for the first time in a very long time.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism was the title of Al-Anon's second book, published in 1965. This magazine (like that book) includes articles by Al-Anon members and treatment professionals who share their personal perspective on how Al-Anon Family Groups can help people troubled by someone else's drinking.

Al-Anon cooperates with therapists, counselors, and other professionals, but does not affiliate with or endorse any organization or professional. Articles written by Al-Anon members do not speak for Al-Anon as a whole, but reflect only their personal experience with Al-Anon Family Groups.

In keeping with Al-Anon's tradition of anonymity, members do not use their full names. No one whose picture appears in this publication is a member of Al-Anon or Alateen.

Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism 2017. All rights reserved.
Excerpts from this publication may be reproduced only
with the written permission of the publisher.

©2016, Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.
1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454
(757) 563-1600; fax (757) 563-1656; wso@al-anon.org

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters (Canada) Inc.
275 Slater Street, Suite 900, Ottawa, ON K1P 5H9
(613) 723-8484; wso@al-anon.ca

**What can *you* do,
when someone close to you
drinks too much?**

**You might be surprised
at what you can learn
in an Al-Anon meeting.**

For meeting information call

1-888-4AL-ANON

(1-888-425-2666)

or visit

al-anon.org

Al-Anon may also be listed
in your local telephone directory.



Al-Anon Family Groups

Strength and hope for friends and families of problem drinkers