



From denial to acceptance—a mother’s struggle with adult daughter’s drinking

Plenty of alarms had been going off in regard to my adult daughter’s drinking—but for years, I consistently hit the snooze button and denied her disease. After all, I’d been a therapist at a local women’s treatment center for 11 years; I knew a lot about addiction and alcoholism. I helped my clients work Step One to get them started in the program. But nothing could have prepared me for my own daughter’s alcoholic behavior and my reaction to it.

I realize now that I spent years in “full enabling mode” trying to love her, or finance her, out of her destructive patterns. I reminded her to monitor her drinking, gave all kinds of advice, opinions, and judgments—in my desperate attempts to control her drinking. I wanted to give her a treatment plan as I had for so many clients. However, she was not a client and I was attempting to run her life for her. After all, she wasn’t doing a very good job of it.

Fear drove me. My mind obsessed about what could happen to her when she was drunk. What if she lost her job? What if she became homeless? The list of fears was endless; I couldn’t stop myself. I was as out of control as she

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A dog, a porcupine, and a much needed lesson

On a recent hunting outing, my dog Banjo ran into a porcupine. There were more than 200 quills in her; she could hardly walk. The quills were in her front and rear shoulders. She was trying to get them out herself, but every movement drove the quills deeper and caused her more pain.

I had to hold her down and pull the quills out—agonizingly, one by one. It was painful; she did not like it, but she was powerless over the quills. She needed someone else to remove them in order to be able to get back to our truck.

This experience reminded me of my recovery journey. Sometimes, through no fault of my own, I get into a painful situation, and as much as I may try, I cannot release the pain. It is only when I surrender to a Power greater than myself that I can be freed of the pain.

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Way & Pace is produced by and for the members of the 23rd Al-Anon District, which serves Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties. It is distributed on the third Saturday of every other month to coincide with the District meeting. Your stories and Al-Anon related announcements are gratefully accepted.

Please submit via email: Petra (Editor) at district23wayandpace@gmail.com

Articles published at discretion of editors. Articles may be edited to fit the space.

NOTE: This is a local newsletter, not Al-Anon conference approved literature. We invite all members to submit material for publication. The opinions within do not necessarily reflect those of Al-Anon or District 23.

You don’t have to drink to suffer from alcoholism. There is help for you in Al-Anon and Alateen.

To find a meeting or information about Al-anon go to: ncwsa.org/d23

Al-anon Answering Service
(831) 462-1818

LIVE AND LET LIVE	LET GO AND LET GOD
FIRST THINGS FIRST	
BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD	HALT
KEEP IT SIMPLE	EASY DOES IT
KEEP COMING BACK	
LISTEN AND LEARN	GOD GRANT ME THE SERENITY
JUST FOR TODAY	
ONE DAY AT A TIME	LET IT BEGIN WITH ME

From denial to acceptance ... continued

was, just in a different way. But all my helpfulness didn't work and just served to distance her from me.

Finally, my daughter checked herself into the very treatment center where I had worked for so many years. Three days later, I was sitting with her at the Emergency Room where she'd been taken by ambulance due to having detox seizures. That's the day I stopped hitting the snooze button and began working my own Step One.

My program in Al-Anon is about changing myself and accepting that I am powerless to change others. I can love my daughter, but I do not have the right or responsibility to interfere with her life and her choices. I realize now that by enabling her over the years, I had prevented her from experiencing the consequences of her drinking and from learning what she needed to learn.

Now, I practice getting out of her way and focusing on myself. Today, I choose to manage my own life and I'm restored to sanity by my relationship with my Higher Power, working the Steps with a Sponsor, and attending meetings.

By Becky R., Missouri, The Forum, October 2011

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A dog, a porcupine, ... continued

The release is neither immediate, nor painless in itself. However, I find relief by surrendering my will and allowing God, as I understand Him, into my life. Sometimes, the relief comes from an unexpected direction, but I always see that the solution that came was better than what I could have devised myself.

Although Banjo was probably not grateful to run into the porcupine, this pain-filled experience reinforced a lesson that I need to always remember.

By Tim B., Michigan, The Forum, March 2011

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Service

Service is an opportunity to practice relating to others in a new way and put love into action. Every contribution has value for the group and enables us to grow as individuals. Through service we learn that by giving, we always receive.

How can I serve my group or district?

- ◆ Set up or put away chairs
- ◆ Make coffee
- ◆ Welcome newcomers
- ◆ Sponsor a member
- ◆ Chair a meeting
- ◆ Attend a business meeting
- ◆ Organize a committee
- ◆ Take a group or district leadership position, such as secretary, treasurer, and representative



AL-ANON NEWS

Alanon from your Desktop:

World Service Office: www.al-anon.alateen.org/

Northern California Area: www.ncwsa.org/

District 23's own webpage: www.ncwsa.org/d23

Online Meetings: www.ola-is.org/

and so many more – if you google Alanon, you'll find lots of us.

Next District 23 Speaker Meeting

Friday, April 20, 2012

5:30 Potluck Dinner, 6:30–7:45 Speaker Meeting with

AA, Al-Anon, and Alateen Speakers

Quaker Meeting House, 225 Rooney St., Santa Cruz



May/June topic:

What do you do to keep Serenity in you life?

Share your experience strength and hope or any Al-anon related news to: Petra (Editor) at district23wayandpace@gmail.com