

My first Al-Anon meeting: I didn't think I was in the right place

By Steve L., Virginia

When I went to my first Al-Anon meeting, I didn't think I was really in the right place because the alcoholic in my life didn't really drink that much anymore. She had managed to get into prescription painkillers. Only a few weeks before, she had overdosed and had been placed on life support. As she was taken to the hospital, I fell to my knees and looked blankly at the sky. I had no feelings left, no God to pray to, and no prayer to pray.

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At my first meeting, I explained my situation and asked if I was in the right place. Everyone in the room told me in unison that I was in the right place. One of the members even went on to share her story

and what brought her to Al-Anon. I couldn't believe what I was hearing. Had she been watching my life unfold?

I was completely taken by surprise that anyone could understand what it was like to live a day in my life. I was also surprised to feel the burden I had been carrying lift from my shoulders. I didn't have to hide behind a façade I created to impress others. I no longer had to hide the pain of living with a person completely consumed by this disease. I took home literature and returned the following week. I listened, I read, and I shared how I was feeling, and became willing to take their suggestions.

I began attending other meetings, where I found the same acceptance that I had in my first meeting, which had become my home group. I found a Sponsor and began, slowly at first, working the Steps. I was introduced to the God of my understanding and began to build a spiri-

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