

My Burdens Weighed Me Down Until I Found Al-Anon

My therapist suggested that I attend Al-Anon. The keyword is “suggested.” Believe me, I did not want to sit around a table with a bunch of strangers, but something told me to and gave me the strength and courage to do it.

It was as if I were carrying this huge steamer trunk full to the rim. I dragged this baggage everywhere I went. It was so heavy and weighed me down, as well as everyone I met. I didn’t want anyone to help me carry it. Eventually, friends, family members, and co-workers simply didn’t want to be around me. I continued to drag my baggage along until I was physically, emotionally and spiritually exhausted. I remember thinking how tired I felt and that I couldn’t do it anymore.

So, I dragged this trunk full of stuff into my car, drove to the meeting location and parked. I just sat there, waiting until the coast was clear because I didn’t want anyone to see what I had with me. I got this baggage out of the car, dragged it along on the pavement and pulled it up the steps, clunk-clunk-clunk! I slid it to the door, turned and finally looked in the room. I thought, “Oh, my gosh. What do I say, what do I do, what if they don’t like me...?”

The members of the group looked up at me and then noticed what I was carrying. Someone said, “Oh my. I used to have one just like that, except mine was blue.” I felt relief. Everyone came toward me and seemed to know just how to be supportive. I finally accepted the kindness of others and just let them help me.

Since then, I have been able to go through that baggage, throw away what I don’t need and downsize. I have worked very hard to reduce my baggage, and now it fits nicely into a backpack. The weight of it continues to get lighter, and someday I hope to be able to fit all of my stuff into a small coin purse.

Carrying my load is so much easier now. I have freedom, energy, serenity, and hope—“One Day at a Time.” And I can even ask for help.

By Tina F., Wisconsin

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