

I Became Willing To Surrender

I didn't realize how deeply I was affected by alcoholism until I went to Al-Anon. When I was living in it, around it and next to it, I simply became a part of it and I became an expert at my own role. My role? Let's fix it before anyone finds out! The trouble was, nothing remained fixed. My frustration and resentment were covered up with denial and determination, accented with my need to control.

One of the first things I learned in Al-Anon was that I was powerless, and, if anything, I was controlled by the alcoholic. After months of struggling with the First Step, I finally accepted how unmanageable my life had become. When I finally admitted I was powerless and my life had become unmanageable, what followed was a sense of freedom. I no longer felt responsible for the alcoholic.

It was only then that I became aware of not only how stubborn I was, but how strong-willed I had become. Me, surrender? No way was I giving up, because that meant I had failed. I would rather die trying!

I can laugh about that now, because my journey became an endless battle of letting go and taking it back. When I finally did surrender, not only to my powerlessness, but to the Al-Anon program and my Higher Power, life became much easier.

The freedom that followed gave me the ability to finally let go of what I was not responsible for and move forward to a life of discovering who *I* was. No longer does my past dictate who I am, but I allow it to be a part of who I am becoming.

Today, I owe everything I am or hope to be to the God of my understanding. He works through Al-Anon and all those He puts in my life. I am slowly giving the alcoholics in my life their dignity and the right to live as they choose. I'm learning to respect their feelings, their rights and their decisions along with my own. I believe today that God has a plan for each of us, and no one has the right to interfere—least of all *me!*

By Anne F., Ontario
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