

## **Members Share: Why Do I Need To Be Here?**

Walking into my first Al-Anon meeting I was mad, but I thought by attending Al-Anon meetings I would get the tools to fix the alcoholics in my life. Instead, I was given the tools to fix the only person I could change - me.

I have not had a sip of alcohol in my life, so my burning question was "Why do I need to heal from someone else's drinking problem?" I walked into my very first Al-Anon meeting at age 40, scared, broken, and confused. I had reached the point of no return and was willing to do anything to make the emotional pain stop.

I felt so much love and acceptance from day one that I had to keep coming back. Al-Anon was the first place I was accepted without conditions. I felt love for the first time in my life and the people there loved me until I learned to love myself. The people in the room brought comfort when they shared their stories. I felt human because parts of other people's stories were pieces of my story. I no longer felt like a freak; there were finally people in the world like me who had felt the same way I did.

With the daily readings of Al-Anon literature, the Serenity Prayer, reading the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions in meetings, and the overall formality of each meeting, there is a unity that cultivates acceptance. I discovered in Al-Anon I have a right to my own feelings and that I can be a whole, healthy person - mind, body and soul. Al-Anon has given me the tools I need to succeed in this life.