

Monday Night How It Works AFG Open Meeting

Date: January 9, 2023 - 7-8pm CST - In person only

Topic: Suggestions for recognizing and breaking denial

Al-Anon Speaker: Mary Y

From Survival to Recovery Chapter 2 - Pgs 65-71

We who grew up with alcoholism may have lived in world of denial for so long that distinguishing normal stress from the effects of the disease can seem quite impossible. Denial is largely an unconscious process in which knowledge of the impact of what is really going on is gradually suppressed until consciousness of it is lost entirely. Denial and confusion become intertwined, and family denial increases the confusion. Recovery can begin when we recognize that someone else's drinking has affected us.

Looking at Did you grow up with a Problem Drinker leaflet, might help you see if someone else's drinking affected you.

Repeating old behaviors while expecting new results is one form of insanity we learn to stop in Al-Anon. Before a behavior can be stopped, however, it must be recognized. This requires breaking denial that we have rigged around those unhappy years to keep our secrets hidden from ourselves. Denial is broken when we quit hoping for a better past, accept the reality of that past, and set about creating a different present.

Grieving our losses is painful and sad, but we find comfort in the fellowship. Understanding alcoholism as a disease allows us to take it out of the realm of blame and shame, freeing us to see our own mistakes. By working the Twelve Steps it opens us up to love instead of enable. Breaking denial is worth the price.

- 1. Denial - (Don't even notice I am lying). What is a lie I told myself?**
- 2. What do I do today if I find myself just telling myself a lie?**
- 3. How does fear play into my denial?**
- 4. What have I changed in my relationships, to break my denial?**
- 5. How do I enable others? What can I do to change myself?**

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