

Coming out of my shell -

By Dee H., South Carolina

One beautiful morning, while sitting on my back porch drinking coffee and reading One Day at a Time (B-6), I noticed a snail had poked its tiny head up through a floorboard and was looking all around.

The night before, a friend had asked if creatures had ever come up through the boards, and I had responded, "Never" We all know about saying "never". I was thinking my Higher Power has a sense of humor and such amazing timing.

As I sat watching the snail look all around, I was marveling at one of God's tiniest creatures, an animal that generally lives in dark places, and how on this day it was giving me quite a show. As it stretched its neck further, ever checking for approaching danger, it eventually dragged its shell through the crack. It proceeded to move, very slowly, across the porch floor - antennae out, moving back and forth like radar, long neck stretched out, and a cumbersome shell rocking awkwardly back and forth as it moved.

That got me to thinking about how I came into Al-Anon-from a very dark place. I stuck my head into the rooms, antennae out checking for safety, and dragging my heavy protective shell that I had developed as a child growing up in an alcoholic home. Slowly, I started to stretch my neck as I learned to work the Steps, call my trusted Sponsor, and use the other tools of recovery that Al-Anon offers.

When I placed my focus on me, working the Al-Anon program, I began to shed my awkward protective shell and discovered the unique talents that God had given me. Today, if a situation feels threatening to me, I can put on my shell or use one of my many Al-Anon tools. Unlike my little snail friend, I have choices about when and where I carry my shell. Even though the snail is an interesting and unique creature, I am grateful that God and Al-Anon made me who I am today; I don't have to live my life like a snail anymore.

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