



### Not My Dream

Living with an alcoholic was not in my dreams when I thought of getting married and living “happily ever after.” But that is where I found myself after a few years of marriage—in the middle of alcoholism. **First I thought there was something wrong with me.** If he loved me, he would stay home. I thought I could say something that would make him understand what he was doing to his family and his life. When words didn’t work I used tears and threats of leaving if he didn’t change. All I could think about was “where was he, who was he with, how much money would he spend, would he kill someone while driving home, would he kill himself, what kind of mood would he be in when he came home?”

Every time, he said, “I promise I won’t drink again.” Or, “when we move to our next home or the next state it will all be different.” I would believe him with my whole heart and looked forward with anticipation to our move, only to be devastated when he would be drunk again.

I played hide-and-seek; he would hide in a new bar and I would seek him out. I would call the bars looking for him. I would go to the bars looking for him. Crazy things I would do without taking a drink.

My hurt turned to anger and I started taking my anger out on him. I was both physically and verbally abusive. A white rage would come over me and I wanted to hurt him as much as I felt he was hurting me. I could not believe where alcoholism took us both: into the depths of despair with no hope of anything ever being different.

I sought help. What I found was that alcoholism is a disease, a family disease. We were all affected by it. I learned that I did not cause the alcoholism, I can not control it and I can not cure it!

What I had to realize is that I couldn’t change him. The only person I could change was myself. I wanted to live a better life. I have learned to live a life of peace and serenity. I have learned to take care of myself both mentally, physically, and spiritually.

My family has been affected by the disease of alcoholism and we are now all seeking help to live a better life, one that we can all be proud of. We are now a family in recovery.

- Julie

### I Miss Her

My younger sister and I are two years apart, and were very close growing up. After high school

I moved, and we lived on opposite coasts but talked all the time and saw each other on holidays with the family. Then suddenly she stopped calling.

I would call and leave messages, and rarely get a call back. I knew she drank and smoked weed, but at the time had no idea she had started messing with dope.

I called her job, only to find out she'd been fired months ago. My parents went to her apartment to find her gone, unopened mail filling the mailbox. Now we were really scared. We all felt so powerless. When the money ran out my sister showed up at my parent's house and was sent to rehab. But when she got out, she started to use again. Like before, she disappeared. I felt **worried, sick, confused, angry**. I couldn't concentrate at work. One day I yelled at my girlfriend for no reason. It was then that I knew I needed some help.

I got into a recovery program and met other people who understood what I was going through, the feelings I was having. My parents and I now realize that it's not our fault. My sister will find her way into recovery in her own time, not mine.

- *Chris*

([From Hope, Help & Healing: Personal Stories of Family Recovery](#))