**Al-Anon Family Groups Welcome Loved Ones of Alcoholics to Local Al-Anon** **Meetings During April Alcohol Awareness Month**

*Relatives and friends of problem drinkers become aware of the family disease of alcoholism in a variety of ways. Some people come to Al-Anon because something important is missing from their lives and a loved one’s problem drinking leads them to start asking questions.*

To mark the 29th Annual April Alcohol Awareness Month, [Al-Anon Family Groups](http://www.al-anon.org/) welcome relatives and friends of problem drinkers to local meetings through the “[First Steps to Al-Anon Recovery](http://al-anon.alateen.org/Podcasts/FirstSteps/)” podcasts. “People become aware of the alcoholism in their families in a variety of different ways,” Al-Anon Marketing Information Analyst Pamela Walters said. “Some people come to Al-Anon because something important is missing from their lives and a loved one’s problem drinking leads them to start asking questions.”

Because anonymity is an important principle of the Al-Anon program, visitors and members at Al-Anon meetings introduce themselves by first names only. Kimberly is the mother of three children who do not know their grandparents as the same people Kimberly grew up with. “They were amazing people,” Kimberly said. “We camped, fished, and vacationed together. My sisters and I did everything together. I thought we had a perfect family.”

Kimberly said, “My father always had a beer in his hand, but that was just the norm. Once in a while he would have too many, and yell and break stuff. Now I know that no child should ever have to go through that. After my sisters and I got older, my mother decided to take up drinking. It started out just once in a while and it has slowly progressed to her being drunk every night.”

Kimberly said, “My dad has also gotten worse. He got laid off from a good job after being there for more than 18 years. Now he is drunk every day. I just wish there was something I could do for my parents. I miss them.” Kimberly found the Al-Anon podcast, “[How do you deal with unacceptable behavior](http://al-anonfamilygroups.org/Podcasts/FirstSteps/how-do-you-deal-with-unacceptable-behavior),” and shared her story as a podcast comment.

Al-Anon Family Groups are for families and friends who have been affected by a loved one’s drinking. Nearly 16,000 local groups meet throughout the U.S., Canada, Bermuda, and Puerto Rico every week. Al-Anon Family Groups meet in more than 130 countries, and Al-Anon literature is available in more than 40 languages. Al-Anon Family Groups have been offering strength and support to families and friends of problem drinkers since 1951. Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. acts as the clearinghouse worldwide for inquiries from those who need help or want information about Al-Anon Family Groups and Alateen, its program for teenage members.

For more information about Al-Anon Family Groups, go to [al-anon.org](http://www.al-anon.org/) and read a copy of Al-Anon’s annual public outreach magazine “[Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism 2015](http://www.al-anon.org/al-anon-faces-alcoholism-magazine).” Find a local meeting by calling toll-free: 1-888-4AL-ANON.