

## Unconditional Love?

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First questions that came to mind when I first walked into the rooms of Al-Anon. How do I fix her? What more can I do? How do I stop her drinking? How can she love alcohol more than me or anyone else for that matter? My first meeting is a blur, but I walked out feeling better than I did when I walked in. Why?... I pondered. Today I know one of the reasons is this thing called unconditional love. You told me, "You might not like all of us, but you'll come to love us just as we already love you". You didn't know me, and you loved me? A foreign concept to me. I didn't have to pay dues, be initiated, or give a solemn oath for you to accept me just as I am and love me with no conditions. MINDBLOWING! That's why I felt better when I walked out than I did when I walked in. Your unconditional love met me at the door in your greeting. You each introduced yourself to me and if I was the most important person in the room. You told me that I wasn't here for the alcoholic, but because of the disease of alcoholism and its effects on those around it. You really went out on a limb and said "In Al-Anon you can find contentment, and even happiness whether the alcoholic is still drinking or not!". You shared openly your struggles, your experiences, your failures and successes. And most importantly you laughed about it as if somehow everyone had tried the same crazy things I did and found out it didn't work and now could laugh at yourselves. You shared what did work. And I can tell you, I wanted what you had and was willing to whatever it took to get it.

Years later, when I began my Amias journey with the Alateens, one of my first experiences was a convention, where the teens had a tradition of leaving the Friday night speaker meeting and running back to their hospitality suite as quickly as they could, because they knew the door would lock at 9:30 pm. They were rushing to something called an “Unconditional Love Workshop”. I was fortunate enough to get in that door before 9:30. The reason they had to lock the door was because the room was filled with Alateens and Sponsors and there was no room to spare. Then some instructions were explained and a complete silence fell over the room. I won't tell you what happened after that, because for everyone it's different. But I can tell you it changed my life forever. We've had the luxury of the past few conventions to be able to open this experience up to the whole convention and will be open again this year. Let this opportunity add another page to your recovery story.

See you at the convention,  
Thank you Al-Anon Family!

See you at the convention,  
Convention Chair 2023  
Jon Groves