

## Angie's Marriage Column ~ August 17, 2011

What can you do to help the alcoholic (or other addict) come to the realization they have a problem?

**Ask Angie:** I read the following from SearchWarp.com (Living with an Alcoholic Spouse: A Healthy Detachment) and what I would like to know is how on earth are you suppose to emotionally detach from an alcoholic spouse? Even if I was deaf-dumb & blind, I would still feel the overwhelming dread that surrounds me when I am anywhere near my husband when he has been drinking. I would love to be able to separate temporarily from my alcoholic husband for my own sanity's sake, but have no idea how this would be possible since I have no money of my own, no job & not much job skills and no confidence anymore in whatever functioning abilities I did have. And I have prayed my heart out for help – with no results. I have tried Al-Anon and after going to my minimum 6 meetings, I quit going and was surprised and hurt that after not returning to any meetings for months, that no one even bothered to call my cell phone number (which they had) to see whether I was alive or dead. Does Jesus care whether I live or die?

**Marriage Guidance:** For some people it is more difficult to detach. From your email I can see that you are allowing the actions of others to control you deeply within yourself, which in turn affects how you feel. I'm referring to the fact that you said no one at Al-anon bothered to call you. Did you stop to think that all of the people who are going to Al-anon have the same type of problem as yourself—they are married to an alcoholic? There is a lot of suffering in marriages today because people aren't managing their marriage God's way!

Do not take it personal. They are not calling you because they feel ashamed about their situation or because they are waiting for someone to call them too. You say that you have prayed your heart out wanting results, but remember "how we are to pray", and then we must be patient and wait on God. God IS IN CONTROL if you allow Him to be number one in your life. Give your suffering to God through prayer and also pray for your husband.

**The reason you are having such a difficult time detaching from your alcoholic husband is because you are overly sensitive to the reactions and behaviors of the addiction.** And I can also see from your email that you are also sensitive to the reactions and behaviors of the people around you. This is not necessarily a bad thing; you worry too much about what other people think; some people are just more sensitive to how people react to them. It can become a bad thing however, when it forbids you from "letting it go" and "detaching from the behavior of others, such as your alcoholic husband.

You are allowing the fact that no one called you from Al-anon to control your emotions and how you react. GIVE IT TO GOD! We suggest instead of reaching out to find peace and comfort through the behaviors of others, find your peace and comfort through Jesus Christ. Read the bible more, and let THE WORD control how you feel and how you react, because quite frankly,

nothing else matters in this life but the loving principles and wisdom that God has outlined for His people to live by. *Nothing else matters.*

*You can't change one hair on your husband, nor can you control how others are going to react to you, but you can control how you feel by allowing God to be number one in your life.* By allowing God to be in control of your life you become free from the negativities of other people and how they behave or react towards you, because you will then realize nothing else matters but your life with God.

### **Detach from the negative behaviors and reactions of others around you!**

[You need to heal yourself by learning to detach from the negative behaviors of others!](#) And understand that what other people do or how other people behave does not have to control how you react or how you feel, because you can give it to God! Do not take it personal that no one called you from AL-anon; they too are hurting and suffering in their life and marriage. **What you need to do is call on Jesus and ask Him into your life and make Him number one in your life!**

**This all may seem silly to you, but even if you don't feel like it right now, do it anyway.**

*Do you realize that you are making your husband's alcoholic behavior number one in your life by letting it become a part of your being?* This is what is depressing you and consuming you daily and it will not go away until YOU start taking care of YOU! You have to take your husband off the pedestal and put Jesus Christ on that pedestal instead.

People say to us, "How come do you say that loved ones married to the alcoholic are just as sick as the alcoholic"? *We say this because it is the truth.* If loved ones have not learned to detach emotionally and be free from the grips of the alcoholics behaviors they have also succumbed to the addiction—they are drowning with the alcoholic, and ironically they keep the alcoholic drinking. This is a fact of life in almost any area where tough love must be administered.

Detaching is not easy! But once you start doing the motions and living the applications outlined in our [Detach eBook](#), it becomes a way of life for you and suddenly you will begin to find some sense of freedom from the addiction within your emotional and spiritual self. Most loved ones of alcoholics are so caught up and obsessed with the emotions and behaviors of the alcoholic that they [enable them to continue drinking!](#)

I have been blessed to hear from some wives that [through learning to detach](#) they have found freedom within themselves to forgive and love their alcoholic husbands and they have gained a spirituality and closeness with God they never had before. And through their wives healing husbands have also found healing and are working on sobriety! This works when loved ones of alcoholics TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES and stop focusing all the attention on the alcoholic.

I will reiterate one more time, loved ones of alcoholics who have not learned to emotionally detach from the alcoholic will be just as sick emotionally and spiritually as the alcoholic. They may not be as sick physically because they are not the ones boozing it up every single day, but

emotionally they need healing just like the alcoholic. This is why we wrote the book [“How Do I Detach from an Alcoholic Spouse”](#)! We have been there and done that. I was the alcoholic and my husband Frank was sick with me, until he learned to detach. Thank goodness Frank rescued himself from the addiction, which in turn had a direct influence on my getting sober.

Right now your husband loves all the attention you are giving him through your emotions. Your emotional self is showing your husband that he does not have a drinking problem. Why with all of the attention he is receiving from you, he ought to keep drinking, after all, through your emotions it looks like you are the one with the problem. Do you see what I’m saying here?

Here is how it works. When we fuss and argue, or when we constantly allow the alcoholic to control how we feel and how we behave, we are putting them first in our life. But God should be FIRST in your life because without God intervening in our life through His Spirit we cannot and will not ever be able to not allow the behaviors of the alcoholic to not bother us or depress us, or control us; because without God we are only mortal people with mortal flesh with mortal thinking bodies. Without God (Christ’s Spirit within us) we are nothing!

TAKE CARE OF YOU--Stop focusing all of your attention on the alcoholic. I cannot underestimate how important this is if you want to keep your marriage together and if you want to see change happening, at least within your inner self. You are in control by depending on God for your needs.

What can the loved one of an addict do to help the addict come to the realization of their problem, without the addict falling head first in the mud and maybe destroying more lives in the process? *It is not anything you say or do to the alcoholic directly, but it is what you do for yourself!* [Read this article](#) and then read the eBook [How to Detach from an Alcoholic Spouse!](#) This eBook will give you the encouragement you need to free yourself from the addiction and the behaviors of the alcoholic you love.

By the way, all people are beautiful, productive people to God. It does not matter what your husband says about you, or what anyone else says about you. God does not create anyone without potential within themselves. Success is not seen through your own eyes or through the eyes of others, but through what God has freely given you. It’s up to you what you do with your life, but you have much to offer your husband through Jesus Christ. You can heal yourself, and through your own healing, influence your husband in more ways than you think.

Unless your husband is physically abusing you, we suggest you allow the Spirit of Christ that dwells within you to be your guide in ***all things***, keep praying for your husband’s healing, then you can learn to detach by reading our materials, and through your talents and worth in God’s eyes, your husband will realize that he needs to do something about his drinking. This is what real success is all about.

Please email the [ministry](#) if you need more encouragement in this area. God Bless!

In Christ,  
Frank and Angie

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