

God is in Control; I'm Not

1st Step – Lesson 1

One feature of the insanity that we're recovering from is the need to be in control. We try to control our feelings with drugs; we try to control other people by threatening or manipulating or force; we try to control situations and organizations by taking over. How have you seen this urge to control show up in your life?

Look at what the Second Tradition of Alcoholics Anonymous says to people (like us) who feel they have to take over and be in control:

Tradition 2: For our Group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our Group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

Part of recovery is learning to be a servant, and quit trying to take over God's job for him.

But what do you do when it looks like the situation is out of control, that nobody (including God) is doing anything to keep a disaster from happening, and only you can keep everything from falling apart?

Look at a situation in the Bible where it seemed like Jesus was letting a life-and-death situation get completely out of control:

John 11:1-6, 17—Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair. So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick."

When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it." Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days... On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.

If you read to the end, you find out that Jesus knew exactly what he was doing. Lazarus was raised from the dead and his family and community got a powerful experience of God's love and presence. But it took real trust in Jesus to believe he knew what he was doing when it looked like he was doing nothing.

1. How can you tell when you're becoming a crazy controlling person?
2. What happens when you think and live as if it's all up to you to keep disaster from happening?
3. Have you seen times when a total disaster turned out to be a good thing?
4. How has God helped you to trust that his love and wisdom are in charge, and that he knows exactly what he's doing?
5. How can you tell when you're taking charge of situation in a healthy way, a way that trusts that God is actually in charge?