

# What makes a sharing a 'daily reader sharing'?

By Tom C., Associate Director—Literature

When I first became involved in Al-Anon service, I received some wonderful advice: "Don't ever ask anyone to do something that you wouldn't be willing to do yourself." With that in mind, when the Literature Committee began requesting sharings for the new daily reader in development, I began writing a few sharings to submit for consideration.

I started out by jotting down ideas whenever they came to mind. I thought it would be easy enough to expand on them, but I found the writing to be quite challenging. The sharings required more thought and concentration than those I submitted for *The Forum*. I've always known that the writings in the daily readers were different from *Forum* stories—but in what ways? For me, the answer was purpose, focus, and length.

## PURPOSE

According to *The Forum's* Statement of Purpose, it is to serve as an opportunity for members to "share challenges, insights, and progress along their path of self-discovery and spiritual growth

much in the way that they contribute when attending Al-Anon or Alateen meetings." The purpose of our daily readers is to provide thought-provoking, inspirational readings that lead to a deeper understanding of Al-Anon principles. The insight in these reflections needs to be significant enough to be considered all day long.

## FOCUS

In general, sharings in *The Forum* focus on members' personal stories—sometimes on a particular topic, as we do at discussion meetings, and sometimes a condensed life story, like at speaker meetings. *The Forum* writing guideline suggests we "relate a personal experience based on a program principle." For a daily reader, though, the focus is on sharing an insight that the member found helpful, not on telling one's story. While it reveals personal details, they are included to illustrate Al-Anon ideas and share how the member put them into practice. For this particular daily reader, we hope to include a wide variety of sharings that represent the many faces of Al-Anon today.

## LENGTH

Stories in *The Forum* are typically 350 to 750 words long, and sometimes longer, giving members enough room to tell a complete story. Daily reader entries are usually 150 to 300 words in length, so they are concise enough to fit on one page and compelling enough to linger in our thoughts throughout the day.

Once I realized the purpose, focus, and length of the project, the ideas I'd written developed easily into full pages. Putting my thoughts

on paper helped clarify them. Submitting them for consideration became another way for me to "Let Go and Let God." Many more sharings are still needed if this new daily reader is to fully reflect our fellowship as it is today. Please consider sharing—the benefits in personal growth can be surprising.

*Note: Please see the enclosed writing guideline for the NEW DAILY READER (working title) in this issue of The Forum.*

## Statement of Purpose

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