

Be Right or be Happy

February 5

I grew up in a tumultuous home where alcohol abuse elicited yelling, pleading, and nasty threats of retaliation from one parent to the other. We children tried to hide or ignore the fighting but could never get far enough away.

As we grew older, Mom became more controlling, even stifling in her effort to hold on to a sense of normalcy. One dirty dish in the sink would trigger a barrage of name-calling and tears.

After lots of encouragement Mom went to an Al-Anon meeting. Feeling a victim, she listened as a member spoke, "My sponsor asked me do I want to be right, or do I want to be happy? It is impossible to be both at the same time." With tears in her eyes, the member told of how she had decided to be happy. She described how she slowly took back her self-esteem and power by putting her attention where it had belonged all along—on herself.

After hearing that, when our dad came home drunk yet again, Mom didn't argue, whine, or try to convince him of anything. She changed her perspective and let go of his behaviors. Then the miracle happened! Mom detached with love from Dad's actions. Over time, in the space created through mom's detachment, *Dad* recognized that he had a problem. As they took part in their separate programs and worked The Steps, their lives together improved. Both discovered they needed to be happy more than they needed to be right.

TODAY'S MEDITATION

Dear God, as I practice minding my own business, I see how having to be right has little to do with my being happy, which is what I want most of all.

*"Happiness is a risk. If you're not a little scared, then you're not doing it right."—
Sarah Addison Allen*