

The Eye Opener

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Your Experience, Strength and Hope Via the Written Word

GRATITUDE

I used to live my life in fear, finding my only escape in alcohol. How grateful I was, glass in hand, feeling alcohol's freedom.

I don't escape from fear by alcohol today; instead, I'm now grateful for having access to a higher power and for the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. I try my best to work the steps daily; I stumble sometimes but it's the progress I'm making that covers my dark fears with a little yellow.

I knew I was an alcoholic and my life was unmanageable but it wasn't until I truly surrendered and turned my life and will over to my higher power that I found new freedom. My belief in my higher power, working the 12 steps, being a member of AA, and having a sponsor has helped me create a beautiful new beginning. I am finding out who I am, what a happy soul feels like, and that it's ok to cry or be angry and hurt. I humbly ask for guidance and strength throughout each day and I receive it.

I find it very important for my recovery and am actually enjoying

sharing my fears, joys, sorrows, and nice gossip with family and friends who I interact with and confide in. I am so very grateful to have them in my life.

I have made amends to people I have hurt and I try to do the next right thing; when wrong I promptly admit it. This can be difficult at times but I keep making progress, and that is good enough for me.

As a result of the 12 steps, today I share my experience, strength, and hope with anyone who's willing to listen; I also help with service work and I am a friend.

Kindness is a key, doing the next right thing is freeing, and having access to a power greater than you is Awesome...find it.

~ *A friend*

Faith In Action Group

KEEP COMING BACK!

I loved what alcohol did for me – goodbye fear, self-consciousness, and worry about what people thought of me! I thought it was the answer to all my problems, and I never intended to give up that “sense of

ease and comfort which comes at once by taking a few drinks” (from “The Doctor's Opinion”), or, in my case, a lot more than a few. Of course what alcohol did for me was soon blotted out by what alcohol did to me.

When I finally got to AA, the only thing I did right was to just keep coming to meetings. I smoked grass every day, did whatever drugs I could get, held on to unhealthy relationships – and added a few more. Even after finally “putting the plug in the jug,” I continued the grass and drugs for eight more months, until I asked a woman whose sobriety I admired to sponsor me. She would only agree to be my sponsor if I put everything down, and I was given the willingness by my Higher Power to finally get clean. I changed my sobriety date and started working the Steps.

I knew I was in the right place from my first meeting. These people knew how I felt; they understood; I was not alone. Still, I didn't really feel a part of AA until I joined a group and got active. I was not comfortable with people, and forget about making conversation, so helping to set up

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meetings, cleaning coffeepots and ashtrays, and being a greeter helped me feel like I belonged. Many times these commitments kept me coming to meetings when I thought I was too tired or too busy. Greeting was especially great at helping me overcome shyness. It was my job to be “the hostess with the mostest” – something definitely against my nature -- but I loved it! I’ve learned how to talk (and listen) to people in the rooms. God was doing for me what I could not do for myself.

I owe my life to this program. I was a self-destructive blackout drinker. My drinking history is full of suicide attempts, overnights in jail, and stays on the psych ward. I wished I was dead. Through the 12 Steps, AA has given me enough sanity, peace of mind, and whatever ease and comfort I require to live without a drink or a drug through life’s inevitable ups and downs. I know that as long as I stay sober, I will be OK no matter what.

Thank God for AA!

~*Joanne M.*
Faith In Action Group

W H O ? M E ?

I was attractive, intelligent, educated. I had married well, had children who were healthy and handsome. This large house I lived in was mine. How

could I be an alcoholic? These thoughts permeated the fogginess of my mind as I heard my doctor say, “I think you are an alcoholic and you should go to a meeting today.”

I was shocked and relieved by this announcement at the same time. Shocked because never had I contemplated this idea although I knew I drank often and wherever I could. Relieved because I did know, in a foggy way, there was something wrong. I had become depressed and pessimistic. I was present for my family in body only.....a robot doing daily chores. My love and compassion for them was swallowed up by an all-consuming need for alcohol, which demanded a full-time focus on myself. None of the self-help groups I had joined changed my feeling of being unworthy and wanting to exit this world in which I played no real part.

I was desperate and tired of feeling utterly useless. So after much fear and trepidation, I went to my first meeting feeling very ashamed and very afraid of what lay ahead. To my surprise, members shared their feelings and stories, which were like mine. They claimed to be free of the obsession to drink and were able to lead happy, useful lives. I soon learned that all the wonderful characteristics I had

attributed to myself were only the result of an over-blown ego and a crazy mind that prevented me from seeing the truth of my situation.

Coming out of this meeting, I did feel hope that maybe change could occur. Now came the hard part: getting a sponsor, working the steps, going to meetings, praying to my Higher Power, and doing service work. These were the requirements if I wanted to not drink and live a life “second to none.”

I began this journey by first going to meetings then getting a sponsor and working the steps with her. The other suggestions were realized very slowly over many years. Even more slowly, I gave myself over to AA and my Higher Power.

Today after 29 years, I am living mainly a happy, joyous life free of the need to squander away the gains I have made with alcohol.

~*Anonymous*
Faith In Action Group

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