

# Outside The Bottle

District 16 Newsletter  
NOVEMBER 2022





# Not That Bad

Beth V.



Hey peeps! Today I am so grateful to be a recovering alcoholic and a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. These past nine years of continuous sobriety have been better, by leaps and bounds, than my 43 years of alcoholic drinking. To be completely honest (and it's been suggested that I be fearlessly honest with myself, you, and my Higher Power to stay sober) I do sometimes forget how bad off I was. When this happens, I sit at a First Step table, listen, and share with a newcomer, or am asked to tell my story. That's when I remember I wasn't "that bad", until I was "that bad."

You see, at the end of my drinking career:

- \*My liver enzymes weren't "that bad" (as a nurse I had certainly seen worse).
- \*I was only a "little bit" bloated and my brain was only "mildly foggy".
- \*My husband of over 30 years was still hanging in there (even though I had cheated on him, lied constantly, and thought I was doing a fairly good job of hiding my bottles and hangovers from him).
- \*Our two sons didn't outright refuse to spend time with me (although they never initiated contact).
- \*I still had my job as a nurse (even though I showed up hungover way too often, drank half Baileys/half coffee on my way to work, often called in "sick" with migraines, stole medical supplies "no one would miss", but never did drugs – thank you God).
- \*I hadn't driven (too) drunk since my crazy teens and twenties.
- \*I didn't fall into the bushes or trip over my drunken feet EVERY time I walked the dog late at night (good old Rodney was such a devoted dog).
- \*I could always manage to get the red wine out of the carpet, off the walls and furniture so no one noticed (then I got smart and switched to white wine and gin).
- \*I made up lots of excuses to avoid family and social functions (I needed that alone time to de-stress and maybe reward myself with "a little sip or two..." )
- \*I never stood up a friend because I had NONE.
- \*I should have gotten awards for best actress because I played such a convincing liar.
- \*I certainly believed my fibs, stories, and lies and figured everyone else did too.
- \*I fired God from my life when I was 13 years old and had started drinking my dad's Southern Comfort.
- \*I remember sobbing about how scared, lonely, and different from everyone I felt, but I was raised to be self-reliant, strong, and not bother anyone. I knew God certainly would not approve of me drinking, doing drugs, and sleeping with boys, and He could not possibly fix my problems. Rather than asking for help from anyone, especially God, I continued to struggle and remedy my woes with booze, boys, and isolation. Forty-three more years passed, some good and many miserable. I continued to believe that "I had it all: a good marriage, a good job, a house, family, etc. I was in charge of my life, but dammit, I was someday going to figure out how to cut down on my drinking".

Ultimately, I could no longer live the lie my entire life had become, because I could not figure out how to manage my drinking. I had finally gotten "that bad". I was so scared, exhausted, and filled with guilt and shame. I didn't want to wake up in the morning ever again. I could no longer pull off my act of "I've got everything under control". For me to admit I needed help, that I could not do this on my own...THAT WAS MY BOTTOM.

I walked into Sobriety First at 7:00 a.m. on a Monday morning with an enormous chip of EGO on my shoulder. I was going to impress everyone with how ready I was to get sober. My grandma had been in A.A. since March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1955, and "I knew a thing or two – don't you know!" However, the second I raised my hand and said, "My name is Beth, and I am an alcoholic", my façade started to crack. The God I had fired so long ago knows I prefer instant gratification, and it wasn't long until the miracle started to happen. My tears started to flow, I told my husband I was an alcoholic and was going to begin attending meetings. I asked a woman to sponsor me, I sat with ladies, and I started to work the 12 Steps. I was willing to let the real me come out and to let all of you come in. I learned how to ask for help.

Today, I have everything I need and want. I really love the days I can wear the world like a loose garment, but I can also appreciate when life throws me curve balls – knowing I have a Higher Power, my peeps, a sponsor, the 12 Steps, an A.A. toolbox, etc. I work to be honest, open, and willing, and I am certainly no longer alone. Thanks for letting me share!

## GRATITUDE MEETING

NOVEMBER 23<sup>RD</sup> AT 7:30 P.M.

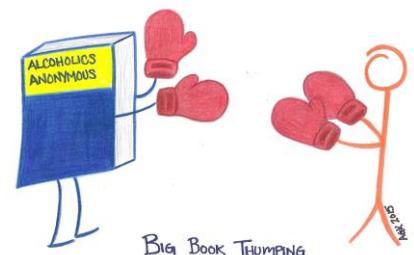
**\*\*DOORS OPEN AT 6:30\*\***

**Royal Oak Farmer's Market**

**216 E. Eleven Mile Road, Royal Oak 48067**

**Please send contributions to:**

**A.A. of Greater Detroit, 380 Hilton Rd, Ferndale, MI 48220**



# A Walking Miracle

Jake K.



My name is Jake and I'm an alcoholic. I grew up in Berkley MI and I had a pretty good childhood. Nothing in my childhood led me down the path I decided to go down. I started using drugs and alcohol at an early age, about 13 years old, and I continued this pattern until I was 17 years old.

It was then that I became a blackout drinker on the weekends even though I never really liked drinking; I was really just doing it because all my friends drank, and it was the cool thing to do. Because I didn't really like drinking, I was always looking for drugs to abuse and my problems really took off when I found opiates.

I remember my first-time taking pills. It felt like I found the best thing on earth! I could work harder, I had more confidence than I ever had in my life, I could talk to anyone, and all my fears were gone. After about a year of taking opiates, I was up to taking 60 Vicodin a day. When my tolerance got that high, I moved on to sniffing heroin and eventually using it intravenously. At this point all I cared about was getting high. It controlled everything I did and all the decisions I made. I did not care about life anymore. I was just chasing that next high.

All of this led to me flatlining three times, almost being killed by a drug dealer too many times to count, and every bad thing you can imagine could happen when leading that kind of lifestyle. This also led me to the psych wards, hospitals, and jails multiple times from ages 19-36. During that time, I also went to rehab 22 times; I went so much it became a comfortable place for me because everyone there was just like me. However, the last time I was there I didn't have that comfortable feeling anymore. This wasn't the person I wanted to be. I made the decision to leave after 11 days and went to an AA meeting as soon as I got home. I took suggestions for the first time and got a sponsor that same day. With the help of that sponsor, I began to dive into the program headfirst, became very involved in the group, and began to work the steps.

I've been sober for a year now. In the beginning it was very tough, I had so many problems that I had been numbing and running from and I no longer had my "solution". But I took it one day at a time, and with the help of the steps and the fellowship, my life slowly began to get better. My family eventually started to trust me again. With the help of people at the meetings, the old person I was slowly started to fade away.

That brings me to where I'm at now. I still go to one, sometimes two meetings a day. I have a sponsee and I also speak at a treatment center once a month giving lead discussions to the still suffering alcoholic. If someone in the program asks me to do something I do not say no because this program has saved my life and continues too every day.

**SAVE THE DATE!!**

**MARCH ROUNDUP 2023**

**March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>**

**Motor City Hotel**

**2901 Grand River Ave, Detroit, MI 48201**

**SAVE THE DATE!!**

**Michigan Mock Conference**

**March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**400 South Main Street**

**Mount Pleasant, MI 48858**

## STEPS, TRADITIONS & CONCEPTS

**Step Eleven:** Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

**Tradition Eleven:** Our Public Relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we must always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.

**Concept Eleven:** The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **AREA 33 ASSEMBLY – SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup>**

12:00 to 3:00 p.m. with GSR Orientation & Service Manual Study at 11:00 a.m.  
New Hope Banquet Hall, 24222 W. Nine Mile in Southfield / Lunch will be provided!

### **69<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MICHIGAN STATE CONVENTION**

**Hosted by Area 33 on December 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>**

Auburn Hills Marriott / 3600 Centerpoint Parkway / Pontiac / 48341

**Registration Fee: \$25.00 / \$30.00 after 12/1**

**Saturday Night Banquet: \$70.00 & Hotel Rooms: \$99.00**

**REGISTER AND VOLUNTEER AT: AA-SEMI.ORG**

### **Back To Basics – A.A. Beginner's Meeting**

Tuesdays 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. – November 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> and Step Guide on the 29<sup>th</sup>  
St. David's Episcopal Church: 16200 W. 12 Mile Road, Southfield

**District 16 meets at 7:00 p.m. on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of every month at:**

**1<sup>st</sup> United Methodist Church of Madison Heights**

**246 E. 11 Mile Road, Madison Heights, MI 48071**

We are self-supporting through our own contributions. The District, representing the overall conscience of 77 groups, is greatly appreciative for any and all donations. May we all be united together in spreading the message across this geographic area. If groups would like to donate funds to District 16, please mail a check or money order - *Payable to:* **District 16 of Area 33 AA, PO Box 725362, Berkley, MI 48072**

**Outside the Bottle** is the newsletter of District 16. The newsletter contains announcements, meeting changes, events, news & information around the district, and stories about sobriety and recovery.

**Any AA member is invited to submit material to the newsletter. Please send questions/comments/contributions to: [district16news@gmail.com](mailto:district16news@gmail.com)**



Thank you to all newsletter contributors and to the many people that distribute the newsletter throughout our district. We are truly grateful for your service!

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**"Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny."**

-Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 164