

# Outside The Bottle

District 16 Newsletter

JANUARY 2023



# Running from Responsibility

Debbie B.



Hi, my name is Debbie, and I am an alcoholic. Today, I say that with humility, gratitude, and pride. I am recovering from our common disease of addiction. I am an active participant in life. It has not always been that way. This is what it used to be like.

I am the oldest child of three girls. I was born into a family that, like many of us, was very dysfunctional. My Mom and Dad divorced when I was 4. One of my first memories was watching my father pack his stuff and leave. I remember my mom cried for a long time. She also drank a lot. With that came tons of neglect and abuse. Then she met my stepfather, and the drinking and abuse only escalated. I won't go into all those details, but I do recall attempting to run away from home in the 3rd grade. I lied, I stole, and I cheated as a young child. I did this for attention, as bad attention was better than NO attention. When my stepdad left for good, I was forced to take care of my sisters, as my mom got deeper into her disease. By the age of 11, I was cooking dinners, helping with homework, doing all the household chores. I swore I'd never be like my mother; I would *never* drink! This continued to be my belief system, until I picked up my first drink at the age of 13. I no longer cared about anything! I FELT FREE. No more worries. I started rebelling against my mom and all the responsibilities. I skipped school, I got a boyfriend of legal drinking age, and I stayed out late. That relationship also came with physical abuse. I blacked out at high school football games and vomited at my senior prom. I thought alcohol gave me the attention and the freedom I desired. What I didn't know is that I was already an alcoholic. I couldn't stop once I started, and my life was becoming unmanageable.

I graduated. I married a wonderful man. I had a home and two lovely daughters. We had it good; great actually! But once again, I found myself struggling with responsibilities and returned to alcohol. I don't remember much after my divorce. I was homeless in Downtown Detroit. When the Red Wings had their celebration parade on Woodward, I was collecting cans and bottles to survive. I was able to pull it together enough to have my 3rd child in 2001. His father was also an alcoholic/addict. Apparently, I'm drawn to that type, and he was physically and emotionally abusive. I drank, I drugged, I was suicidal. I stayed that way for 20 years...hopeless! I knew no other way. I had become an empty vessel, afraid to live, hoping to die.

Until a July day in 2017. The details of which I consider to be my miracle. I admitted to my grown children that I was an alcoholic and addict, and that I needed and wanted help. I checked myself into rehab and started attending A.A. I did everything that was suggested. I got a sponsor and worked the 12 steps with the eagerness of a dying person! I attended multiple meetings every day. I attended sober activities. I got involved in the Fellowship. I made my amends. I sponsored other women and shared my message of hope! I hosted multiple workshops to share the message. I gave open talks. I've gotten involved in general service and got a service sponsor as well. That's what happened!

Today, I live a full life. I have a wonderful family who loves and supports me. This includes my A.A. family. I have a career that I love. I am involved in A.A. service. So many things to be grateful for! I no longer run from responsibility...and, I AM FREE! One day at a time!

## New Meeting!

**Happy, Joyous & Free**  
**Christ Church Cranbrook**

470 Church Road, Bloomfield Hills

**Tuesdays & Saturdays – 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.**  
**Open Talks – Last Saturday of the Month**

## ●●MEETING UPDATE●●

**Clawson Women's Way**  
**MONDAY EVENINGS AT 7:00 P.M.**  
**Guardian Angels Church**  
**581 14 Mile Road, Clawson**

(no longer on Wednesdays at Heritage Church of Christ)

# The Easy Path

Jeff C.



“Long is the way and hard, that out of Hell leads up to light.” – John Milton, *Paradise Lost*. I have always despised the long, hard road. Whenever I could, this alcoholic took shortcuts or the easier path. As a result, rarely did I experience fulfillment or truly feel the warmth of the light.

As they say, I was an alcoholic long before I picked up my first drink. I loved the thrill of lying and scheming for as long as I can remember. I did not grow up around alcoholism. I had everything I needed, but not close to everything that I wanted. At fifteen, I began filling that emptiness with drugs and alcohol. That felt adventurous, dangerous, and exciting. I lived for the rollercoaster until I was in my 30s. Along the way, I checked off most of the boxes for a typical adult. I received a professional degree, got married, had friends, and established a career. By doing this, I convinced myself my drinking and drugging were normal. Then, I couldn't stop. I was at 7/11 at 7 a.m. buying booze. I was hiding bottles around the house. I thought I was doomed to live this way for the rest of my life.

When I checked into Maplegrove in July of 2017, a nurse told me not to be “too smart for this.” At that moment, I admitted to myself that I did not know anything about life, intimacy, or sobriety. It was humility based on desperation. Immediately, I started attending A.A. meetings, got a sponsor, took suggestions, and began working a program. What I discovered is that everything good in my life, especially sobriety, is the result of hard work. Changing everything is long and slow, but life got better and continues to get better.

For example, part of this story is that my wife and I have been unable to have children. Over a 13-year period, we lost four children to miscarriages and lived through an immense amount of sorrow. Prior to sobriety, I used the pain as an excuse to drink. Early in 2022, despite the hurt, we decided to engage in the adoption process. Then, in December, my wife and I received a call that there was a baby girl waiting for us at the hospital. There was no preparation. We did not have car seat, crib, diapers, etc. The fellowship stepped up and provided all the things we needed. After we walked out of the hospital with our daughter, the first person she met was my sponsor. I believe we went through this 13-year journey for that day. It was an agonizing process, but the joy that we are experiencing is the result of working that long, hard path. Sometimes, I still want to take the easy path. A.A. constantly teaches me that I cannot afford to take the softer way. A.A. is the source that helped lead me into the light and experience true blessings. My name is Jeff, and I am a grateful recovering alcoholic.

## March Roundup 2023 Meeting Schedule



Sunday's at 10:00 a.m. on Zoom  
Meeting ID: 742 8494 9684 / Password: MRU

JANUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>  
FEBRUARY 19<sup>TH</sup>  
MARCH 12<sup>TH</sup>

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!**

## Michigan Mock Conference

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

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
400 South Main Street  
Mount Pleasant, MI 48858



**PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETS:**  
**Saturday Mornings at 9:00 a.m. on Zoom**  
**Meeting ID: 517 414 7662**

**January 14<sup>th</sup>**  
**February 18<sup>th</sup>**  
**March 11<sup>th</sup>**

# STEPS, TRADITIONS & CONCEPTS

**Step One:** We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.

**Tradition One:** Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.

**Concept One:** Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **AREA 33 ASSEMBLY – SUNDAY, JANUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>**

12:00 to 3:00 p.m. with GSR Orientation & Service Manual Study at 11:00 a.m.  
VFW Hall, 24222 W. Nine Mile in Southfield / Lunch will be provided at 11:30!



### **MARCH ROUNDUP 2023 – March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>**

Motor City Hotel / 2901 Grand River Avenue / Detroit / 48201 / 313-237-7711

**Registration Fee: \$25.00 / \$30.00 after 2/15**

**Saturday Night Banquet: \$75.00 & Hotel Rooms: \$153.00 after 2/15**

**REGISTER & VOLUNTEER AT: AA-SEMI.ORG/MRU2023**

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

**SPONSORED BY THE SOUTHFIELD GROUP**

**Tuesdays 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. – January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup>**

**St. David's Episcopal Church: 16200 W. 12 Mile Road, Southfield**

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

**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)**