

Outside the Bottle

District 16 Newsletter
APRIL 2023



Jane's Addiction



I come from a family where alcoholism runs heavy. I avoided the party scene in college, thinking that way I would never get hooked. Somewhere in my mid-twenties, I started drinking casually but I tried to control my drinking (only 2 drinks, beer only, not during the week) so again, it would not get out of control... until I lost control.

Thinking back now, it's crazy that I avoided drinking for so long. In my mid-twenties I was under a tremendous amount of stress and my life demanded constant perfectionism (or at least I held myself to that standard). My friends at this point in my life were frequent drinkers and bargoers yet still extremely successful and talented individuals. I remember one of my birthdays, we all went to brunch, and I let myself cut loose, having more drinks than I would typically allow myself and that escape at that time felt great!! From that brunch on, I started having a drink or two, a few nights a week. It was like my cupcake at the end of a hard day's work, and I felt I deserved this in life. I pretty much did everything else according to how I thought you should live life (frequent gym goer, long hours at work/studying, eating healthy, etc.). As time went on, my 1-2 drinks per day increased, especially as life continued to challenge me and there were so many uncertainties. I could not wait every evening to numb out the feeling of not thinking/not caring about it. I remember talking with people, asking them "is it normal to drink everyday"? Coming from a family of alcoholics, frequency of drinking was still in the front of my mind. The answer I received, typically depended on the person and their drinking style [to the reader: the answer is no, it's not normal to drink every day, especially if you're drinking alone 😊]. At the time, I didn't think too much of it, because despite my inability to manage the chaos in my head and now my drinking habit, I was doing very well at life on paper.

As time continued, my tolerance went up, and the amount of booze needed daily to numb out had significantly increased. While I can't say I ever got up and started my day drinking, I constantly counted the hours down until that first drink. The mental obsession is one like none other!! At this point, I was still in complete denial of being alcoholic; I would tell myself that I go to the gym, I have a job, and a life... alcoholics don't have these things!!! I was so afraid to put this label on myself mostly due to the stigma and the way society portrays alcoholism. However, I slowly felt these things also slipping from my life. My friends didn't want to hang out with someone who drank as much as I did, made a fool of themselves as much as I did. I was underperforming at work; I lost my need to be perfect and was finding myself doing the bare minimum daily, mostly due to hangovers. I had tried to stop drinking, many days, I would tell myself, I'm not drinking today... only to be blacked out later that night.

By the grace of God, I finally made it A.A.! While this has not been an easy journey, I am grateful for the sober time I have. I feel like I have my life back after many years of drinking. The obsession for a drink is finally gone, the mental clarity and not feeling hungover on a daily basis is something I would never trade again. I am so grateful for my sobriety but also grateful that this program has taught me how to handle situations I used to drink over. Sometimes I tell my friends they should attend A.A. just to get the basic principles on how to live life. While cliché, it is truly, one day at a time.

20th Anniversary Celebration!

◆◆Sobriety First◆◆

Church of Christ – April 21st

115 S. Campbell Road, Royal Oak

Doors Open at 6:00 a.m./Breakfast at 6:30 a.m.

Speakers at 7:00 a.m. / Willy M. & Anita B.

Grapevine Writing Workshop!



SATURDAY, MAY 20TH - 10 AM TO 1 PM

1st United Methodist Church

246 E. 11 Mile, Madison Heights

Hosted By: District 16 and the Area 33

Grapevine Committee

I Cannot Do This Alone

Phil M.



I called my wife, telling her that I was stopping by a friend's house on my way home. The guilty thought of not getting home to my wife and two small children was replaced with the feeling of entitlement. I work hard and put in fifty or more hours in a week, driving a truck. I should be allowed to nourish my soul with a few cold brews and hang out with a friend. I have earned that. We finished off the beer so, of course, we needed to hit the bar for a few more. I had plenty of time. It would be fine. As it turned out, it was anything but fine. The last thing I remember, I was falling backward from the bar stool till I hit the floor. Twice!

The next morning, I awoke to the sound of knocking on my car window. It was a police officer. She said, "Wendy's would like to use their drive thru, sir." She was an Angel of Mercy for not arresting me. I was totally smashed! The relief of not getting arrested did not last for long. It was daylight and I thought, I remembered telling my wife, I would be home last night. Not again, why didn't I just stop drinking and go home?!

Painfully hungover while feeling shame and regret, my disturbed thoughts were swirling in my head. I was a hopeless drunk, never knowing when I took a drink how much it would affect me or what might happen when I did. I was confused, guilty and afraid. Why didn't I make it home? I couldn't think of any more lies. I looked up and said, "God I can't do this anymore, I need help!" I finally had to surrender to the obsession that was destroying my life and hurting the family I loved. I was depressed and empty.

I called a family member that had been involved with Alcoholics Anonymous. I saw him turn his life around and I knew he would help me. He picked me up that night and I attended my first A.A. meeting. The sound of people laughing struck me as odd. A room full of troubled drinkers, why so happy? I felt like everyone was staring at me like I was a weak outsider. After the preliminaries we continued with a table discussion. When I shared my story of woes, I cried. I was spiritually depleted. The thought of never being able to drink again really upset me until I heard the rest of the folks share. At that moment I knew there was hope and I found a place to get the help I asked God for. The group assured me "You never have to drink again." If I just did not take the first drink.

I asked the table leader if he would sponsor me. He agreed and we started Step Work the next day. That was April 15th of 1994. I have been a member of AA ever since. I went to meetings continually and got very involved. My sponsor guided me through the twelve steps of the program. I will always remember the great feeling of realizing I made it through an entire day never once thinking about alcohol. The obsession was lifted. I restored my relationship with my wife and family. My life has become an amazing journey of recovery with countless friends. I involve myself with as much A.A. activity as possible. I now sponsor men and help them complete the twelve steps of our program. I found a new way of living. I do not shut the door on my past. I use my experience, strength and hope as a way of helping the new person in need of help. There is a solution! I found it within the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous!

March Roundup 2024 Planning Committee



Saturday, April 8th

10:00 a.m. on Zoom

Meeting ID: 848 6288 6959

Password: 33

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

70th Indiana State Convention &

East Central Regional Conference

June 23rd – 25th, 2023

CENTURY CENTER

120 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

South Bend, IN 46601



Register: area22indiana.org - events

Registration Fee: \$40 / Banquet: \$40

Saturday Ice Cream Social: \$5

STEPS, TRADITIONS & CONCEPTS

Step Four: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Tradition Four: Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.

Concept Four: At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

CHECK OUT THE UPCOMING EVENTS!!

AREA 33 ASSEMBLY – SUNDAY, MAY 21ST

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!

Area 33 Pre-Conference – Sunday, April 2nd

11:00 am to 4:00 pm - Registration Form: aa-semi.org
VFW Hall, 24222 W. Nine Mile in Southfield / Lunch Provided!
Join us and be a Delegate for a day!

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

SPONSORED BY THE SOUTHFIELD GROUP

Tuesdays 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. – April 4th, 11th, 18th & 25th
St. David's Episcopal Church: 16200 W. 12 Mile Road, Southfield

70TH ANNUAL MICHIGAN STATE CONVENTION

Save the Date: August 11th – 13th, 2023

Pre-register at: aa-michigan-2023.square.site

District 16 meets at 7:00 p.m. on the 4th Thursday of every month at:
1st United Methodist Church of Madison Heights - 246 E. 11 Mile Road, Madison Heights, MI 48071
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



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