

JANUARY

OUTSIDE THE

2025

BOTTLE

**A Journey of Recovery through AA & Martial Arts-- Paul S.'s Story
A Second Chance at Understanding the 2nd Step-- Kathy M.'s Story**

District 16 Newsletter

PAUL S.

A JOURNEY OF RECOVERY THROUGH AA & MARTIAL ARTS



My name is Paul S., and I am an alcoholic. I've been sober since February 24, 2018. Growing up in Warren, Michigan, I've been through some of life's toughest ups and downs. My journey has been one of discipline, resilience, and profound transformation. When I became entangled in alcoholism, my world took a dark turn. Determined to reclaim my life, I joined Alcoholics Anonymous and committed to the demanding yet rewarding pathway to recovery.

At my lowest point, I found myself completely lost and isolated from family and friends, with every bridge I'd once relied on burned down. Alcoholism had stolen nearly everything—my health, my career, and the trust of those who once believed in me. Days and nights blurred together, consumed by a constant craving that took over my life. That February, I looked in the mirror and barely recognized the person staring back—a hollow version of who I once was. That moment of clarity, seeing how far I'd fallen, sparked a powerful shift within me. That day, I took my first courageous step toward recovery, driven by a deep desire to rebuild my life from the ground up. With support, I slowly began to rediscover myself, proving that even from the lowest of lows, a way forward is always possible.

The 12 Steps have been nothing short of life-changing for me. Each step opened a door to self-reflection, growth, and healing that I never thought possible. In admitting my powerlessness over alcohol, I began to let go of the constant need for control and perfection, allowing a newfound humility and honesty to emerge. Through the process of making amends, I was able to rebuild relationships and find a sense of peace with my past that I had always chased but never achieved. The support of my sponsor and the fellowship showed me I wasn't alone, and their strength became my own in moments of doubt. Most importantly, the steps taught me the power of service, showing me that helping others is just as vital to my recovery as healing myself. Embracing the 12 Steps

didn't just help me find sobriety—it transformed me from the inside out, giving me purpose, strength, and a path forward.

I began Tae Kwon Do in early recovery, facing daily physical and mental challenges that tested my determination. My body struggled to meet the physical demands, and my mind fought self-doubt and old habits. Each session was a tough fight, battling complex techniques and the urge to quit when exhaustion set in. Becoming a black belt took intense focus, but Tae Kwon Do's structure helped me redirect my energy from old habits. With every challenge, I found strength not only in practicing movements but in pushing through each hurdle on my path to recovery.

Today I work as a co-responder with the Oakland County Sheriff's Office, I'm able to support the community in a powerful way. Working with deputies, I respond to crises by offering compassion and resources to those dealing with mental health and substance use disorder. Our goal is to step in before situations escalate, often preventing the need for arrest and promoting safer resolutions. This work lets me use my own story to offer empathy and hope to others.

As a member of Alcoholics Anonymous and a committed martial artist, my mission is to strengthen my practice, build resilience, and support others on the same journey. I strive to grow in Tae Kwon Do, embracing its discipline and focus while using my story to inspire others. My ultimate vision is to build a community where recovery and martial arts unite, offering strength and healing. The principles of AA changed my life, and I am forever grateful.

KATHY M

A SECOND CHANCE AT UNDERSTANDING THE SECOND STEP



I was over 6 years sober when I found myself in the company of co-workers drinking a wine spritzer at the Banyan Tree Bar in Fort Lauderdale. It really should not have been such a shock to me, but it was. I had moved to Florida from Michigan just over a year before, and not regularly attending AA meetings (In my mind, they didn't do AA meetings right, as they were not the same as meetings in Michigan).

The drink was not premeditated. In fact, I had ordered a Seltzer with a twist of lime (so my co-workers couldn't tell I was not having a good stiff drink with them). I got a wine spritzer instead. I knew it was alcohol when the waiter served it. I could smell it. A co-worker said, "Oh look Kathy is going to have a drink." And so, because of my overwhelming need for approval, I drank the drink. There was no defense.

The next three days, I laid on my couch: bewildered, depressed and afraid. I called in sick the following Monday; I would not leave the house for fear of drinking. Oddly, my hands shook, just like they did before I entered the AA program the first time. Every cell in my body

wanted to continue drinking. The literature is correct when it states that alcohol is cunning, baffling and powerful. On the third day, I went to a meeting and told on myself. A year or so back on the AA beam while still mourning my loss of sobriety and after sharing yet another testimony of pity at the meeting, Carl, an elder statesman in my group said, "You need to ask God to take away your alcoholic thinking". I heard him, it hurt, at the same time I prayed. I suddenly realized I needed to Come to Believe for myself and myself alone.

Carl's words helped me to understand that my obsessive, self-centered alcoholic thinking was the source of my insanity. I realized that while I managed to abstain from alcohol the first time around, I was still "over-reacting" to the disappointments in my life, still living with old patterns of behavior, still angry, still afraid and still very much the center of the universe. I was STARK RAVING SOBER!

Today, there is a fine line between sanity and insanity in my reactions to everyday life. All dependent on my spiritual condition. Yet, I have a Higher Power today, that will help me get back to emotional soundness of mind, should my thoughts and / or reactions stray.

Please Join Us Every Tuesday Night at 6:00 PM

"Came To Believe"

AA Closed Meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous

NEW LOCATION

Starting Tuesday January 7th, 2025

We will be at Berkley First Church

2820 - 12 Mile Road, Berkley Michigan

North side of 12 mile between Coolidge and Greenfield.

(Right next to the Berkley Post Office
Parking on the street and in the old Rite Aid parking lot available
Enter Church through side street door. Meeting is downstairs)

We are Moving

"Came To Believe"

AA Meeting

Tuesday 6pm

NEW LOCATION

Michigan Mock Conference

Working Together; Increasing Trust

Sponsored by the three Michigan Areas: 32, 33, and 34

Saturday, March 22, 2025

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM* / -

First United Methodist Church

400 South Main Street, Mount Pleasant, MI 48858

2025 Michigan State Convention Committee Planning Meeting Schedule

The planning committee warmly invites you to be a part of Area 33 service as we host the Michigan State Convention being held at the Pontiac Auburn Hills Marriott on August 8 - 10, 2025

Where: Madison Heights High School
915 E Eleven Mile Rd, Madison Heights, MI 48071
When: 10:00 AM right before Area 33 Assembly each month. (We follow the same schedule)

Schedule	2024 Dates
June 23rd	July 21st
July 21st	August 18
August 18	September 21st **
September 21st **	October 13th
October 13th	November 17th
November 17th	December 8th
December 8th	

2025 Dates

January 19th
February 16th
March 9th
April 6th
May 4th
June 8th

**This meeting will be held on a Saturday @ 8:30 AM virtually

TAKE THE STEPS...TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE

DESIGN FOR LIVING

A 14-WEEK ONLINE STEP TAKING GROUP

Design for Living generates the possibility of divine transformation for peace, joy, love, freedom, and accountability in recovery.

Created in 2012 for the Sobriety First Group of Royal Oak, Michigan, this biannual offering is for anyone who desires a deeper experience of the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. Today, Design for Living is offered online for participants who have days to multiple years of sobriety, and join from all over the world.

The only requirement is a desire to stop drinking.



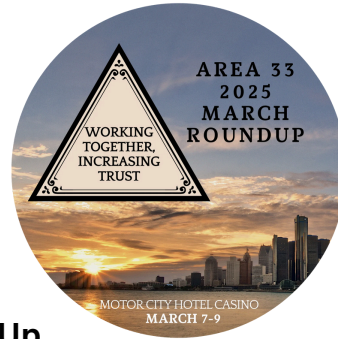
Next Session
 February 20-May 22, 2025
Thursdays
 6:30-8:00PM (ET)

Sign Up Now!
Registration Open
 January 9 - January 30

Scan or visit our website to register



Contact: Mary Beth K. (248) 336-0795
 Find more information: <https://designforlivingroyalok.webnode.page>



March Round Up

March 7-9
10-11:30 am
Register at:

<https://aa-semi.org/mru2025/>



March Round Up Planning Committee Meetings

December 8
10-11:30 am

Michigan High School Tech Room

For more information:
Area33MRUchair@aa-semi.org

AREA 33 ASSEMBLY
JANUARY 19

Madison High School, 915 E. Eleven Mile Rd.,
 Madison Heights
 New GSR Orientation @ 11:00 &
 Presentations by Archives and Wed with General
 Sharing @ 12:00
 Come join us!

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 contribute to District 16, please mail a check or money order:
 Payable to: District 16 of Area 33 A.A.,
 PO Box: 725362, Berkley, MI 48072

Editor: Anita B.

AA of Greater Detroit:
 248-541-6565

AA of Oakland County:
 248-332-3521

AA of Detroit Wayne County:
 313-831-5550

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 A.A. member is invited to submit material to the newsletter.

Please send questions/comments/contributions to:
district16news@gmail.com

It must never be forgotten that the purpose of Alcoholics Anonymous is to sober up alcoholics. There is no religious or spiritual requirement for membership. No demands are made on anyone. An experience is offered which members may accept or reject. That is up to them."

--Bill W.