

**SOBRIETY,
I DID IT MY WAY**

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MY STORY

I am an alcoholic. I worked for a Fortune 100 company, currently drive for a ride share service, and have been sober for over three years. My road to recovery was not easy, but it was also not as hard as many of you are experiencing now. I was a social drinker for many years and only binged once in awhile. This is quite normal if you do a search, there are many drinkers that will drink heavy on special occasions.

Eventually, those special occasions turned into daily social drinking after work and a continuation of drinking in front of the TV at home. I never drank on the job and usually tried to quit drinking at around 10:00 PM at

the latest. Towards the end I drank until I was drunk and finally passed out only to wake up when my alarm went off to go to work. Then, situations occurred that caused some mental and physical anguish and I found myself leaning on my old friend the bottle for support with increased frequency. My doctor suggested I go on antidepressants and all they did was cause me to become suicidal.

So, I stopped and attempted to control my drinking which eventually began to spin out of control. I was mean to almost everyone and woke up sick every morning. Withdrawals are very dangerous and can be fatal, please seek medical attention if you have the shakes, nausea, or anything similar to a hangover on a daily basis. My doctor suggested I go to rehab and I balked at the suggestion.

Then, made an attempt at the self prescribed tapering method which only worked for about a week. Finally, I saw my counselor at work and voluntarily entered an inpatient

substance abuse program for 28 days. I lasted two days and checked myself out and went home, I did not agree with the AA push and religious aspect of the recovery program. After arguments with multiple friends and family members I fell asleep. I woke up in the morning walked to the store and bought a liter of vodka. Came back home and almost overdosed and killed myself completely by accident.

My uncle and a friend picked me up and took me to their house. My aunt and uncle picked me up that evening and told me I must go back to rehab, reluctantly I did. Prior to going back to rehab, we went to the Emergency Room where they wrote me off even though I had a blood alcohol level of over .30.

Then, I entered the halls of inpatient rehab once more with a determined mind to follow the process and then stay sober thereafter. After 5 days of detox and another 23 days going to meetings, socializing, and creating a

plan I went back into the real world. Back to my house, car, and work and everything else full of anxiety but not willing to drink. I was and am one of the lucky ones, I had loving friends and family standing by me during my darkest hour an hour where my life was truly in the balance.

This book is intended for those who want to go their own route and not attend meetings with AA or another organized group. Now, I am not saying don't go to AA or Life Ring or any other meeting if that is what works for you.

However, it is something that I personally do not believe in and it was not going to work for me. Mainly because I am not flamboyant about being an alcoholic and I also do not believe pushing a higher power should be the way to go. Programs tend to push a higher power, when I believe that I am my higher power and the only thing standing between me and that first drink of alcohol.

They also serve as a constant reminder that you are an alcoholic or an addict and I believe this could be detrimental in many ways. This type of reminder can bring about bouts of anxiety, depression, and suicidal tendencies because either you enjoyed your poison and are considering going back or the events leading up to seeking recovery are somewhat embarrassing and scary to think about.

For me, being reminded that I am an alcoholic tells me that I am a failure to myself and my family, etc.

So, the goal here is to accept you had a problem, acknowledge that you needed help, and move the hell on with your life. Hopefully, if you've had a problem and needed help you received the medical attention that you needed or are using this book as a guide to eventually seek help and join the ranks of many happy and successful sober individuals.

Finally, I will never say don't attend a meeting, what I am trying to say is do what works best for you and I hope that this will give you ideas.

INTRODUCTION

At the very beginning, I did not accept rehab because of the god aspect of it and the push around the AA program and 12 steps. But, as I look deeper within myself I realize that the steps I have taken are not too dissimilar from those same steps taken using the 12 step program. The major difference is that my path is to accept you had an issue, put it in the past and move on with your life. There is no reason to sit and continue to dwell on having an addiction. Discussed in this writing is how to cope with anxiety, depression and most importantly triggers.

ACCEPT, ACKNOWLEDGE, MOVE ON

A A is a program that doesn't work for many people including myself. Although, I understand why people need AA and other programs like it. They need contact with others who understand their situation and a rigid regimen to stay sober. I'm not saying that AA is bad, all I am saying is each individual is unique in their fight against addiction. Some need custom made programs or combinations thereof to be successful.

Accept

First and foremost, you have to accept the fact that you are an alcoholic. Doesn't this sound like step one of the 12 steps, well it is the first step. You must accept the fact that you are an alcoholic and admit that it had power over you. This goes with anything, admit that you are at fault and you will begin to feel better and start the recovery process.

Acknowledge

Almost the same as the first step to my thoughts of dealing with recovery. Acknowledge the fact that you were powerless against alcohol. You took the step to receive help whether it be quitting cold turkey, a sober living program, or a rehabilitation program. Whatever your path, be sure that it works for you. My thought, do whatever it takes to get and stay sober whatever the cost might be, within reason of

course. Don't go out and hurt someone else because you believe they were the cause of your addiction. In the end, the addiction was the fault of our bodies chemistry, a disease. It took over, acknowledge this fact and the next thing is to move on.

Move on

I notice that when I go to AA meetings all it does is make me depressed and anxious especially at speaker meetings. The speaker shares their battle with the disease and relives it every time they tell the story. This also makes me want to relive my story and puts me in a compromising situation to relapse. I do not want to continue to think about what I did the days leading up to entering my rehabilitation program. As many of you may or may not know, I went to a 28 day program and have one year, one month, and four days sober at the time of this authoring.

At some point you have to move on with your life without alcohol. Get away from things that trigger you and away from people that will influence you to drink. These people may be "normies," functional alcoholics, or full blown alcoholics in denial. Whatever they are, they are probably not good for your future in recovery. Know your trigger and avoid them or know how to face them head on.

When I feel triggered

I do various things when I feel triggered to drink. Simply taking the dog for a walk or playing with the cat could be what gets you through this time moment. There are going to be many of them and knowing how to face them is the key. I have both cats and dogs and find myself giving them attention to help me through. I also go for a drive down a windy road to clear my head. What the heck right, I haven't had a drink I can drive as far as I want. If people around you are drinking and it is

triggering you, get out as soon as possible. I take a sober friend, in this case my girlfriend to a party with me as my safety net. When I get tempted, I tell her its time to go and we leave.

Service

The program talks about service and giving back. There are many more types of service to do then just within the AA program. Volunteer at your local animal shelter, Veterans home/hospital, library, etc. Take an elder family member to an appointment or something. Do anything and everything that will keep you sober and in a recovery state of mind.

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