

KNL FALL 2022 | IN MEMORY OF CURTIS O.



In Memory of Curtis O.

There have been a lot of friends lost to alcohol since I got sober. There is one man I got to meet that remained sober and had a part in my own sobriety, his name is Curtis O. He passed away peacefully August 12, 2022. He was an Adult Peer Support Specialist and he spent the last 23 years carrying the message and helping others just like myself. I had the honor of hearing Curtis speak at a mini lead roundup on July 2, 2022 little did I know at the time it would be the last time. Even through his sickness it was never about him. He continued sharing his story, working, and sponsoring his boys the best he could all while remaining sober. Bill W. left a long legacy to us to keep carrying the message just as Curtis and so many men and women before us did. May we remember each of those we have lost and pray for those still sick and suffering that they may find the solution as we carry it out each day.

Linda B a Grateful Alcoholic

KNL FALL 2022 | GOD IS MY PILOT TODAY



I was 26 years old with 2 little boys and newly married when I was first introduced to AA. Now here I am 41 years old recently divorced and starting over with a grown son with a family of his own. A 16 year son and an 8 year old daughter that I haven't seen in 2 years. I'd be lying if I said I didn't regret not getting it then but it took what it took to get me where I'm at today and I accept it.

I have drank around a fifth a day since I was 22 – 23 years old a long with many other forms of alcohol but it always began and ended with alcohol.

I'm no stranger to death, I lost my sister in 2007, my mom in 2012, but when my person, my ride or die suddenly died in 2016, I went crazy. I lost my mind I got so mad at God and went off the deep end and was no longer able to be a functional alcoholic and CPS got involved. They took my kids and 2 days later I was on a plane headed to rehab again. I stayed sober 4 years that time but never got my kids back. I completed my CPS case, worked the steps 4 times, sponsored girls, did service work and went to church every Sunday. On the outside everything seemed good but I was trying to bargain with God, I still do sometimes. Today when I catch myself I try to catch, check, and change it quickly. During that 4 years I never admitted my anger. Although I worked the steps a lot, I never applied the third step. I didn't want to turn everything over to God. I wanted him to fix certain areas but I wanted to hold on to some things and still try and be in control because I was still so angry at him.

Then Covid happened and I hit the F – – K it button. All those not yet's happened. I had never been homeless or couch hopped, never did meth or heroin, never used a needle. That is how my 2 year relapse started, putting a needle in my arm. I spent 2 years trying to die. I got even madder at God when my heart didn't blow up or when I woke up next to my friend dead and I was alive.

Then on April 5th I saw my daughter for the first time in 2 years and she was not okay without me. See my disease/the devil and people had been telling me for years that my children were better off without me. Well that the world was better off without me and I believed them. After seeing my daughter on April 5th, I knew that was a lie and she needed me. So on April 6th I checked myself into rehab for the 7th time. BTW, 7 is my lucky number all my kids, then my grandbaby are all 7 years apart and my sobriety date is 4-7-22.

On April 16th while in rehab I was in a bad wreck. 8 girls were ejected out of the van. One had to be cut-out by the jaws of life and I stepped out of the van with minor injuries. When I stepped out of that van I heard God say to me "I'm not gonna let you die until you do what I need you to do so stop trying." I looked over to one of the other vehicles involved and they pulled a newborn baby out and he was laughing and right at that moment all of that deep seeded anger I had been carrying was lifted. I now have almost 6 months sober and through AA and God I have made it through a wreck, kidney stones, a surgery and the death of one of my best friends, sober. I have gotten more back in this 6 months than I got in those 4 years I had last time. I don't just mean material things either.



I have peace of mind and happiness and most importantly I have hope. See I know moving forward without a doubt that if I keep doing God's will and doing what AA has taught me that my children are coming back into my life. Its not if but when. God is more powerful than any person or judge and He is in the center of AA. God is my pilot today not my co-pilot.

Amanda K.

KNL FALL 2022 | ALWAYS LEARNING



Throughout my entire life everyone else seemed to have it all together. Everyone around me seemed to have a cadence about them that was gentle, joyful, or even if it wasn't gentle and joyful all the time, I perceived everyone as having a plan for living that I was never privy to. On top of that, they seemed like they had family, colleagues, partners, friends, and people to do that planned living with. It seemed a little unfair to me. I always felt like an outsider; the one who looked at everyone else with judgment, mentally putting them down for whatever they were doing.

As a young child I recall being aware of how to read a room, what the appropriate and inappropriate responses were. As Dale C. would say, I knew how to win friends and influence people from watching my communities growing up; and getting ahead based on those behaviors. My life was a performance since the time I can remember.

My first addiction was food since it was in our home and readily available. In the 4th grade, I started stealing cigarettes from my grandmother. Then I was offered pot in the 6th grade, and then alcohol. Tequila was my first memory of that feeling of a stinging relief. I had a shot, and I didn't like the taste, but after several, I liked that I took no responsibility for anything that happened.

After I graduated college, I decided to travel around the United States. I took three jobs the summer before I left to pay for the trip. My dad gave me a gas card as my graduation present. I drove around the US for 6 months by myself- meeting friends, or looking up alumni that had graduated from my college. These people were complete strangers to me, but they would give me a place to stay.

I had heard of people traveling around Europe, but I recall wanting to have the connection with Americans the rest of my life. Whomever I met moving forward, I wanted to know about their town. I figured if I went around the US then I would be elite in the essence of having the exposure. However; the primary reason for that trip was because I knew I wanted to live by the ocean, so I wanted to explore all of my options.

The trip showed me things I would reference and use for connections in conversations for the rest of my life. I got to meet new people, talk about what was and what would be, and I was always on the move. When I returned from my trip, I drove into my parent's neighborhood listening to The Eagles, "Let someone love you before it's too late." And I remember thinking that I couldn't, I didn't know how to love myself.

Being home again, I felt stuck. I went to a Christmas party and there was going to be a ton of drinking there with old grade school and high school friends. The adult acting began. I

dressed up, played the part, answered the cocktail party questions politely. My performance game began for real this time.

I only had three good years of drinking after that, and they were hard ones. I landed in jail for a few charges, I started a job and left a job, connected with family and built barriers with family members as I continued climbing for success. I did what I thought I was expected to do, without really giving it much thought. I was trying to survive and look good while doing it.

I ended up climbing the community leadership ladder, I asked for time off for a professional development program that I thought would help me grow my sales. This program led me to grow in honesty about my goals, life visions, and spiritual work. It was an unknown intervention, and now I know that this was God doing for me what I could not do for myself.

The healing came, year after year, one day at a time not having a drink and doing the next right thing. The AA program is there for me every single time I opt to work it. My best friends in the entire world are in the rooms, and the dearest relationships that I have outside of the rooms are only because of recovery.

I learned the truth of the matter about my upbringing: the people around me were loving and joyful, gentle, good, and healthy people. They actually liked the community of friends and family and colleagues that they shared in life. I was the issue from the get go: being judgmental, selfish, and self seeking because I wanted to play God and tell them all how I thought things needed to be done.

I learned in my 10th year of sobriety that I had done every partner that I had ever been with a disservice by being with them in a place I never wanted to live. I was dishonest by ever telling anyone that I was available. It didn't matter if it was my employee, or my boyfriend, friends, or family, anywhere I was while living in Louisville, I was mostly thinking about when, if, or how I could get out. I had to go through a series of sponsors, the 12 steps, and receive outside help. I kept looking for a geographic cure to heal me. It was the type of drinker I was: if I was on the north side of the street in a bar, then I wanted to be drinking on the south side of the street. Wherever I was, I wanted to be somewhere else, and it was a deep hurt.

In my 11th year of sobriety, I took a leap of faith and finally moved to the ocean. I am sitting in a new season of recovery all these years later. I left a familiar career path that I had been working on for the past 14 years and moved to the coastal town where I've always wanted to be. I walk my dog on the beach in the morning, sometimes speechless because of the beauty and the privilege of getting to try again, with God in control this time.

However; I still experience some uncomfortable moments as I learn how to receive this much joy and peace with my higher power in charge, and constantly providing for me in every area of my life. I struggle with receiving the good life AA gave me. I still want to jump in and manage; just in case He forgets to do it perfectly. I forget that He will take care of everything if I just show up and do the work.

Sobriety after 12 years for me meant doing what I did at the beginning, all over again.

When I moved to the ocean, I had to, or better yet, got to surrender again into a community of strangers, yet an immediate family. I had to look for the similarities and not the differences if I wanted to be a part of the group and stay sober. I had to ask for help, I had to be of service, I had to share the pains, I had to be willing to be willing, and I had to keep putting pen to paper working the 12 steps.

I've just finished my 5th step with my new sponsor. I looked out to the water from her living room while I saw that my part in the 4th column was yet again revealing that I am controlling, fearful, and dishonest. Not because I try to be those ways, but because it takes a lot to un-program my alcoholic makeup to live the opposite.

Moving forward, I will be asking for the willingness in steps 6 and 7 for God to remove those and help me live in the opposites, faithfully gentle, trusting, and open minded with a core root of living a life of honesty- one in which I am personally responsible for.

I look forward to learning more about who my higher power made me to be, and I am excited to create a life that I am not performing for, but one I am responsible for creating with him from a place of power and love, not pity or victim. Alcoholics Anonymous works if you work it, so work it.

Abbey M.

KNL FALL 2022 | THE PSYCHIC CHANGE

I wasn't in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous long before I heard members of the program speaking of something that is referred to in the Big Book as a "psychic change". I have heard many stories of this psychic change in the 15 months that I have been sober. Some speak of the change happening quickly, while for others the change can happen slower and be more subtle during their time in the program. Regardless of the rate at which this change manifests in each individual members' life there is no denying that, when looking back to who you were in the madness, who you are now is someone completely different.

For me, this psychic change has been slow and steady. Many times the people in this program that I surround myself with— my home group, members of a women's group that I attend regularly and my sponsor—notice the changes in me before I notice them in myself. That is just one of the reasons why the fellowship of this program is such an important part of my recovery. Before I discovered AA, the chaotic way in which I lived my life was equal parts exhausting and heartbreaking. When I came into the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous at the age of 28, I had nothing left in me to contribute to my life or anyone else's life, including my six year old daughter. I was filled with guilt, shame, fear,



resentment and selfishness.

Today, as an alcoholic in recovery, I believe I have experienced a psychic change. It wasn't the burning bush or the white light moment that some experience. For me it was coming to realize that today when I find myself having a problem with a person, place or thing I first need to look at myself. Am I irritable, restless or discontent? Am I afraid? Am I resentful? Am I seeing things how *they are* or am I seeing things as *I am*? If I am praying, speaking to my sponsor, going to meetings, taking inventory, and turning my will and my life over to the care of God daily believe that I will continue to not find it necessary to take another drink.

Turning my will and my life over to the God of my understanding is not something that comes naturally to me, though I pray one day it will. However, through daily practice and effective sponsorship I believe that most days I am able to let God run the show. Many days I have to remind myself I should be doing God's will, not mine.

Turning my will over and in turn letting go of control is not an easy task. When I was 4 months sober I lost custody of my 6 year old daughter as a consequence of my drinking. I can't put into words what that kind of pain feels like; a pain caused as a direct result of *my*

actions. It turns out that pain had a silver lining; it allowed me to feel the type of despair required to surrender my life to this program and then later to my higher power. Alcoholics Anonymous has given me tools and principles to help guide me along this road of recovery. Today the most humble thing I can do is have the courage to ask God for help. Today I can be ok with just planning the action, not the result. I trust and believe that my Higher Power has a plan for my life today. I trust and believe that He has a plan for my daughter's life as well. I remind myself daily that the only thing he needs from me is to make sure I am ready when it is His time to bring my little girl home. For that I am very grateful.

Jessie B