

MY STORY...

I am in long-term recovery. My last drink or drug was on February 26, 1990. The *promises* have been coming through in my life for some time- as a direct result of complete abstinence, 12 step work with a sponsor, meetings, my Higher Power, and a lot of personal change. The biggest gift (and sometimes the hardest to believe) is that I no longer have an obsession to drink, or get high. I can go anywhere in the world.

In early sobriety, I could not be around alcohol or drugs. I was terrified of the prospect of being tempted; I feared the possibility of relapse. I tried to avoid all locations that served alcohol. I did not allow it in my home, and I was a bit extreme.

While every morning, I am conscience that I am an addict/alcoholic; I know that I must trust in my higher power and remain vigilant. But thanks to SAMHSA and their Recovery Month, I often reflect a little bit more this time of year. I remember how far I have come.

Prior to coming into recovery, I survived. I existed. I never LIVED. Since, surrendering to my disease and trusting in a "higher power," I live.

I no longer wake up in strange places with strange people. I no longer wake up with bruises or broken bones that I did not remember how they got there. I no longer hide in my apartment behind closed draperies worrying about every footstep entering the building. I no longer distrust everyone, or screw you over before you can screw me over.

In recovery, I can have long-term relationships. I have been married for over 20 years; I have had three beautiful sons. I have graduated from college Suma Cum Laude with a 3.978 GPA. I have lived in the same home for over 10 years-without moving, I have had the same phone number for just as long. I have made true friends. I no longer worry if the cops will pull me over and bust me for holding. I no longer worry that I will be stopped in a random sobriety check-point. I no longer crawl on my hands and knees searching for that sliver of rock that I "Know" is there. The freedom that I enjoy today is unparalleled. I cannot say enough about recovery! I am a productive member of society and for that I am extremely grateful.