

Straight Talk

A publication of Fairview Riverside AA
U of M Medical Center

Meeting
Listings
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March -
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<http://www.aafairviewriverside.org/>

So I guess...

I'm an alcoholic. I took one of those online questionnaires; 12 out of 20 (apparently three indicates a problem). Hell, I figure taking the test indicates a problem! Reading other stories online, the only thing unique about my story is that I started drinking pretty late; after getting divorced.

I rarely have one drink, often drink to excess, and when I wake up, I usually have a panic attack. Bad things happen: smashed my car, sleep with inappropriate men, woke up with a black eye, woke up not remembering the end of the night. I am always overwhelmed with guilt and shame.

Sometimes, the next day, I'll just stop in my office and have to practice breathing...

What if someone finds out what I've done?

So I guess...
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NEVER
GIVE
UP



My journey of self discovery and recovery began May 18th, 2010, one month short of my 47th birthday. After 30 years of functional alcohol abuse I found myself 189 pounds at 5'7", insulin resistant with out of control Psoriatic Arthritis. I looked absolutely terrible and I felt near death.

**It takes time to recover.
It's not easy, but it is so
incredibly worth it.
Sobriety changes you
and it changes your
relationships...
all for the better.**

I had spent several months beforehand trying to moderate my drinking; I failed miserably. I was completely panicked and felt defeated. I didn't know I was powerless over booze. In fact, I still have a hard time believing I'm an alcoholic - even though I know the signs have been there since I was a 13-year-old girl.

Both of my parents are addicts; how could I not have known?

Never Give Up,
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Every day, hopeless, helpless alcoholics walk into AA meetings, grab onto hope, and begin a renewal of their spirit.

From "A Candle of Hope"
AA Grapevine

"I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MY OWN SOBRIETY"

IS A.A. FOR YOU?

Only you can decide whether you want to give AA a try -
whether you think it can help you.

We who are in AA came because we finally gave up trying to control our drinking. We still hated to admit that we could never drink safely. Then we heard from other AA members that we were sick. (We thought so for years!) We found out that many people suffered from the same feelings of guilt and loneliness and hopelessness that we did. We found out that we had these feelings because we had the disease of alcoholism.

We decided to try and face up to what alcohol had done to us. Here are some of the questions we tried to answer honestly. If we answered YES to four or more questions, we were in deep trouble with our drinking. See how you do. Remember, there is no disgrace in facing up to the fact that you have a problem.

Answer YES or NO to the following questions.

- 1 - Have you ever decided to stop drinking for a week or so, but only lasted for a couple of days?
- 2 - Do you wish people would mind their own business about your drinking - stop telling you what to do?
- 3 - Have you ever switched from one kind of drink to another in the hope that this would keep you from getting drunk?
- 4 - Have you had to have an eye-opener upon awakening during the past year?
- 5 - Do you envy people who can drink without getting into trouble?
- 6 - Have you had problems connected with drinking during the past year?
- 7 - Has your drinking caused trouble at home?
- 8 - Do you ever try to get "extra" drinks at a party because you do not get enough?
- 9 - Do you tell yourself you can stop drinking any time you want to, even though you keep getting drunk when you don't mean to?
- 10 - Have you missed days of work or school because of drinking?
- 11 - Do you have "blackouts"?
- 12 - Have you ever felt that your life would be better if you did not drink?

Did you answer YES four or more times? If so, you are probably in trouble with alcohol. Why do we say this? Because thousands of people in AA have said so for many years. They found out the truth about themselves - the hard way. But again, only you can decide whether you think AA is for you. Try to keep an open mind on the subject. If the answer is YES, we will be glad to show you how we stopped drinking ourselves. Just call. AA does not promise to solve your life's problems. But we can show you how we are learning to live without drinking "one day at a time." We stay away from that "first drink." If there is no first one, there cannot be a tenth one. And when we got rid of alcohol, we found that life became much more manageable.

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience,
strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem
and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking.
There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions.
AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution;
does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes.
Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

From AA Grapevine

WHISKEY IN THE MORNING

There's a fellow standing at the bar, his tremors have gone away
And he's drinking to stop his shaking and because his woman left today
And he's feeling a bit better, he'll be okay until the dawn
Then he'll have his whiskey, in the morning, hard and strong

When you depend on someone, like whiskey in the morning
That someone is going to leave you every time
Everybody has their limits, when they find there is nothing in it
It's a shame can need that whiskey in the morning

She soothed him when he was hurt, held him up when he was weak
Stood up for him, when he was wrong, and wasn't there to speak
He needs that sweet woman, like the flowers need the rain
Like he needs his whiskey in the morning time again

His daddy never praised him, for the good boy he had been
He only criticized him, when he was wrong, shame on him
He needs to feel worthy, of the victories he wins
To feel human when he loses, to feel that he belongs again

When you depend on someone, like whiskey in the morning
That someone is going to leave you every time
Everybody has their limits, when they find there is nothing in it
It's a shame can need that whiskey in the morning

Every time I play this song, it reeks of self-pity and oppressive sadness. How could anyone ever feel sorry for somebody like this. Sometimes I find it hard to believe, that someone was me! I remember a period of time, when I could not socialize very well at all. Some would say "hi" to me in the bar, then quickly move on. I would be left with the company of my Wild Turkey and beer back.

It amazed me, how lonely, a crowded bar could be!

But there is a positive side to this. I don't have to go back there again. The self pity, the shame, the anger and resentment, are a thing of the past. I embrace gratitude, honesty and positive thinking. These I strive to keep for most in my mind. However, I will not let myself forget what brought me to ruin. I see the past and I learn. I see the present and my life with the program and I learn even more. The future? That belongs to... a Higher Power.

Gratitude and blessings to you all.

By Rick G. H. of Fairview Riverside AA

What Can You Do?

If you have been a member of AA for a while, or even if you are still very new, you may have noticed that there is more to keeping the meeting going than simply attending the meeting. I recall when I was still pretty new to AA and attending the Sunday General Meeting. At the time, it worked very well for me, since I really did not want to go to an AA meeting anyway. Sit for an hour, get a little card signed to show the court that I had been to an AA meeting, and that was it. But one Sunday night as I was heading to the meeting in the cafeteria (this was back when it was in the building known then as the Rehab Center and the hospital was still called Saint Mary's) I noticed a sign on one of the bulletin boards in the hall. It read:

***AA at Saint Mary's
is made up of lots of willing
people.
5% are willing to do the work,
the other 95% are willing to let
them.***

The name of the hospital has changed, but I believe the percentages are still about the same. As important as it is for an alcoholic to attend AA, there is so much more that is possible. You could... be a sponsor, help with the Sunday General Meeting, help with Wing Meetings, be an AA trustee, help with Gopher State Roundup, write something for Straight Talk, take a meeting to a jail, help set up as needed before a meeting, clean up after the meeting, or maybe you have some special skill that could benefit AA. My experience with doing things like this has been that it gives me a greater connection to AA and makes my sobriety even stronger.



So I guess... continued from page 1

What if I have an STD? What if I've given someone an STD? What if I'm pregnant? What if embarrassing pictures I texted get posted on the internet? How can I possibly survive the humiliation. I hate myself. I want to die rather than face the consequences.

So, I don't drink. Sometimes it lasts a day. Sometimes several. Hell, I made it over 7 months once. But usually, if I'm lucky, it lasts until Friday or Saturday night. I live alone. I don't have many friends in the town where I live. I haven't had a real relationship since I got divorced nearly 15 years ago. I'm lonely. And I fill the void by drinking wine.

I wouldn't mind drinking socially... except that I have a tendency not to stop. Then I say stupid things. Do stupider things. A little public drunken behavior never hurt anyone, right? Just a little bruise to the ego for my lack of self-control. But social drinking leads to alone drinking which leads to a few hours of numbness and days of regret.

My mother once told me to just practice moderation. Really, Mom? I never f---ing thought of that! Moderation! Of course! (slap to the forehead). Dad isn't much help either. He admits that he "occasionally drinks too much." Hmmm? Is that why he always travels with at least a gallon of vodka and is usually three sheets to the wind by 6:00 pm?

And my friends? Well, let's face it. They don't want me to be an alcoholic. They want me to drink like them. It makes them uncomfortable when I stop drinking.

So there you go. My very run of the mill story.
I drink.
I feel bad.
I stop (maybe).
I drink again.

Only problem is the cycle seems to be getting worse. Or just in getting older, I've grown pathetically tired of it.

I wonder if I'll drink tonight?

By Kelly
From Alcoholism-and-drug-addiction-help

Have a question
about what happens to
the dollar you contribute at
your AA meeting?

The AA trustees
have the answer.

The trustees meet
on the second Sunday of
each month in
the Brennan Center
(East Building)
at 6:30pm.



Join us for a
Speaker Meeting

Brennan Center
East Building
Sunday @ 7:15pm

AA
Sunday
Night



I Am An Alcoholic That Desperately Wants To Stop!

I will be 31 in two months and I've realized I have torn my life to shreds. I am a divorced mom of two. I am a binge drinker and if it wasn't for my amazing ex-husband and his wife my two beautiful little boys would live in turmoil. My last extreme (life changing) binge was Jan. 25th 2012. I woke up in the county jail sliding down the wall dressed in orange. As I come to, I realize a brief image of me and my just paid off \$32,000.00 truck wrapping around another vehicle. It must have happened right after the bar closed down at two. The time was 5 something A.M. and I have in huge blocks, 471 written on the inside of my forearm. I immediately panicked because I didn't know my charges. I did not know if I killed a family of five. I finally get man handled to the prison inmate hotel check in... blah, blah, blah, and almost fainted. I asked her to spare me the time; just tell me if I've killed anyone!! She looked at me, rolled her eyes and continued to chat about her nails with the lady next to her. I begged once again and she finally looked me up. I found out that the guy I hit wasn't hurt at all. Did my 12 hours and on my way home riding with my father I get a text from the man I hit and he said he hopes I'm okay! I feel lucky, blessed and swore off the hard stuff forever!

Why can't I stop?!? If not for me, then my kids!!

I'm really bad right now, worst I've been in a while and I'm scared to death. I just want to die!!

By iluvalnmal - From The Experience Project



Have you written something?

Would you like to have it published in Straight Talk?

Leave a copy in the AA squad #1 box in room F537 of the West building (5th floor). Address it to Straight Talk.

Never Give Up, continued from page 1

It still blows me away the blind eye I turned on my own ridiculous behavior. It brings tears to my eyes to realize how far I have come. Thank God!

With some "how-to" help from the Internet, I decided to come clean with my general practitioner about my alcohol addiction. He prescribed Antabuse, which my husband gladly administered every morning before work. I had no idea what I was up against when I quit. I seriously thought I was in the driver's seat... when all the signs said otherwise. It's amazing what we tell ourselves. I've since learned so much about addictive behavior and retraining the brain. I would never have guessed the hold alcohol had on my life.

I started going to meetings and absolutely hated them. Many of the people in attendance were not there of their own free will; they'd been court-ordered. That made a difference to me, so I found an addiction counselor. I realize now that going to counseling is helpful, but save your money if you're not ready to do the work that's required to heal.

So needless to say, I was sober from alcohol, but still exhibited dry drunk behaviors that only a drunk can understand. My husband and many of my friends just looked at me like I had a third eye, but were very happy I had quit drinking.

I had lost 30 pounds the first year I quit, my complexion cleared and I felt hopeful. I did not go to meetings, but I had several people to talk to outside of group support and a strong spiritual connection. I will say that I am not a religious person, but I have a relationship with God. Thru my own beliefs I've been able to find the courage and strength to find sobriety.

Everyone has their own path to sobriety and there is no right way. It takes time to recover. It's not easy, but it is so incredibly worth it. Sobriety changes you and it changes your relationships... all for the better.

I feel complete and so happy to share the success I have found through sheer unwillingness to give up on myself.

I am worth it.

My kids are worth it

And the man I adore is worth every damn miserable minute of it.

I know sobriety is worth the work.

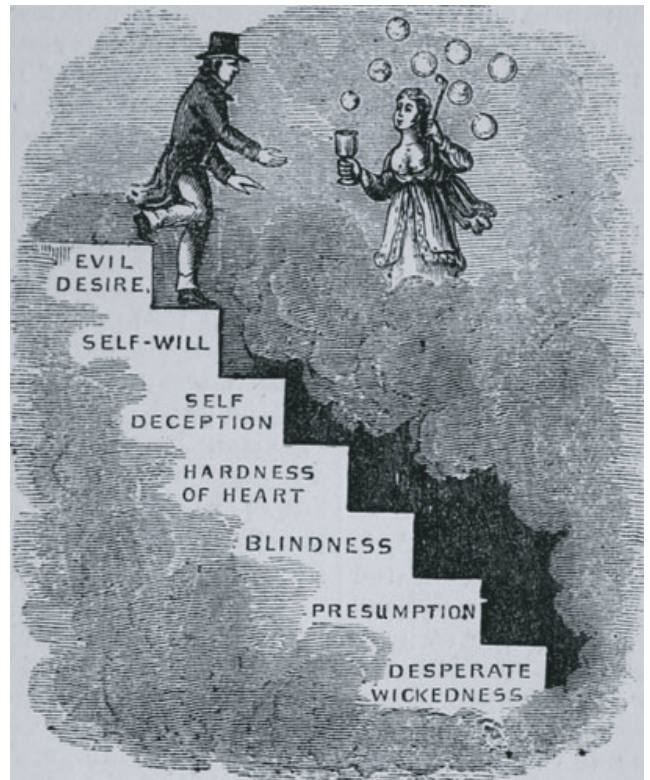
Never give up.

By Tina B. - From Sobriety.org

From Recent Email



This time I swear! I'm never drinking again!!



“!”
Alcoholism isn't a spectator sport. Eventually the whole family gets to play
-- Joyce Rebeta-Burditt

U of M Medical Center Fairview Meeting Listings

Day	Group	Time	Location
ACA ACOA			
Monday	10	8:00pm	North Building - Ground Level NG22
Tuesday	4	9:00pm	North Building - Ground Level NG22
Al-Anon			
Monday	36	7:00pm	North Building - Ground Level NG23
Tuesday	33	7:00pm	Bethany Lutheran Church Franklin Avenue @ 25th Avenue
Sunday	AA General Meeting	7:15pm	East Building - Brennan Center
CA			
Wednesday		8:30pm	West Building - 5th Floor Lecture Hall
GA			
Sunday		7:00pm	East Building - MB114 (Dining Room F) (Tunnel Level)
NA			
Friday		8:00pm	East Building - Brennan Center
OA			
Monday		4:45pm	East Building - MB114 (Dining Room F) (Tunnel Level)
WA (Workaholics Anonymous)			
Wednesday		11:30am	East Building - Dining Room E

*Is your group not listed? Is your group listed incorrectly?
Please leave a note with any changes in the AA group one mailbox.

Mailboxes are located in the West Building - Room F537.

AA Meeting Listings U of M Medical Center Fairview

Day	Group/Squad	Time	Location
Monday	3	5:30pm	East Building - Dining Room E
	43	7:00pm	North Building - Ground Level NG48
	63	8:00pm	North Building - Ground Level NG23
Tuesday	57/36	1:00pm	West Building - Fifth Floor F571
	62	7:00pm	Bethany Lutheran Church Franklin Avenue @ 25th Avenue
	9	8:00pm	North Building - Ground Level NG42
Wednesday	32	5:30pm	East Building - MB114 (Dining Room F) (Tunnel Level)
	20	7:00pm	West Building - Fifth Floor F541
	71(signing meeting)	7:30pm	North Building - Ground Level NG23 (American Sign Language Only)
	51	8:15pm	North Building - Ground Level NG42 (Big Book Meeting)
Friday	46	7:00pm	East Building - MB114 (Dining Room F) (Tunnel Level)
	70	8:30pm	North Building - Ground Level NG42
Saturday	1	8:00pm	East Building - Brennan Center
Sunday	47	5:30pm	East Building - MB114 (Dining Room F) (Tunnel Level)
	General Meeting	7:15pm	East Building - Brennan Center
	2	8:30pm	East Building - Brennan Center
Trustees	2nd Sunday each month	6:30pm	East Building - Brennan Center

People who don't go to meetings aren't there to see what happens to people who don't go to meetings.

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