

Hi. My name is Laurie and I'm an alcoholic. Today I have 18 months and 25 days of sobriety*. All of the glory of my sobriety goes to the Lord. Without Him delivering me from my obsession, my addiction, I don't believe I would be alive today. (*May 3, 2013 is my sobriety date.)

I started drinking and using drugs in my 30's. I was able to quit using drugs/alcohol in 1993. I only thought I had a drug problem but I quit drinking then as well. I was sober and clean for 4 years. Only by the Grace of God and Narcotics Anonymous (NA) was I able to succeed. Then I thought I could be 'normal' again. I couldn't. That was my disease raising its ugly head. I began drinking at first just beers. Then champagne. Then I found my best friend, whiskey. I never returned to my drug use.

I drank every day. Not at work but at home. I had to. I couldn't sleep, have fun, shop, cook, drive or love without it. By the time I left the work force in 2011 I was drinking about 2 pints a day, or more; never less. I prayed and tried to convince myself every day to not drink tomorrow. It wasn't working. I told my family and friends I had a problem. They brushed it off. They'd say "Oh you're fine", or I'd get "stop being so weak." I couldn't understand how they couldn't see my pain. I begged for God's Mercy to relieve my obsession. He was working on me; I just couldn't feel it yet.

So I continued drinking. I woke up every single morning physically ill wanting to vomit. I shook until that first drink or two started hitting me. I kept drinking all day, even though I would vomit throughout the day it didn't stop me. I knew I was killing myself and finally I think I didn't care. In 2012 Dr. Amy Thomas counseled me and prayed with me in her office. I cried that someone would care that much. A seed of hope was planted in me where there was none. It still took me almost another year despite her warnings and prognosis of liver failure if I didn't quit, to take that final step towards recovery.

One morning I finally had the courage to beg my husband to see me not as weak but as an addict who could not quit and who was killing herself. He finally heard me, and with relief encouraged me to find a treatment center that day. By the time he got home from work I had all the info we needed to get me started. I went to a Treatment Center where I still didn't feel God's presence, but where He did answer my prayers anyway.

Today I am alive. I'm healthy. I choose to work again. My marriage is so much better and stronger. I feel the presence of the Lord in my life every day! I'm not perfect and don't always work the program of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) as I should, but I have gone to meetings and I cannot and will not be complacent in thinking I can ever be 'normal' again.

I'm now living life on life's terms. It isn't always easy but I did it and so can you! Reach out to your doctor or to anyone who will truly listen. Keep doing it until they hear you. Research different treatment centers. A good treatment center truly wants to help and if you need financial assistance they have it. Just ask.

I thank God for my health and my sobriety and for the opportunity to share my story with you. Be good to yourself and may God continue to Bless you. **Never ever give up. You are worth saving. God loves you. I'm proof that He does not abandon us in our time of need.**

This is now my daily prayer. Serenity Prayer: *"Lord. Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change. The courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Amen."*
Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971)