Maybe This Time

By Steve R.

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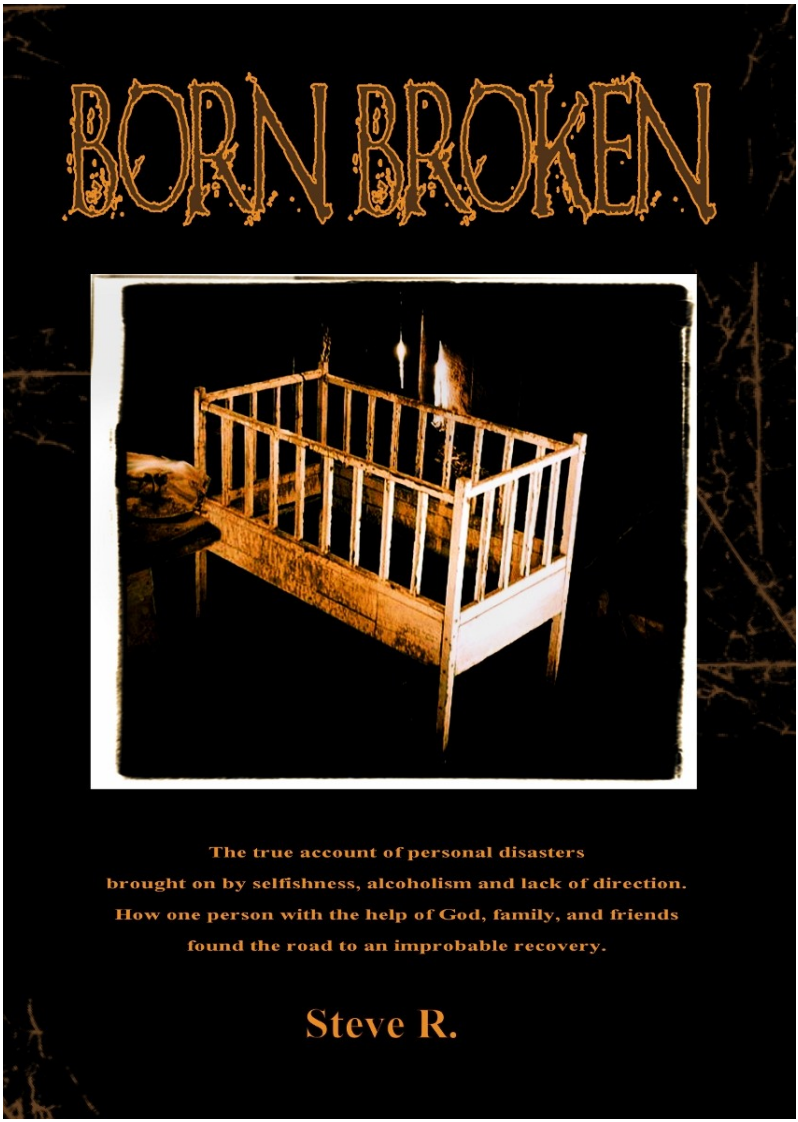
Maybe this time,

maybe this time you will get sober,

maybe this time you will stay sober?

Maybe This Time

Maybe This Time



A true story about pain and heartache brought on by alcoholism, and the ugly scars left behind in its wake.

Maybe This Time

Steve R.

Maybe this time

maybe this time *you will get sober,*

maybe this time you will stay sober?

Maybe This Time

Dedicated

To all families

of those who suffer

from alcohol/drug addiction.

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Author's note

Some of the names and identifying details of the characters in this book have been changed to protect individual privacy and anonymity.

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Addiction

Abandoned inside uncertainty,
upon a world which can't see.
Lies truth hidden from multitudes,
screaming to be free.

Grappling to be somebody,
shackled to the ground.
Urgently searching everywhere,
for that secret that can't be found.

Concealed inside obsessions,
compulsions just to be.
Locked tight inside secrecy,
a code just for me.

Drifting alongside mountains,
a path toward destiny.
Can I find which I look for,
freedom of serenity

Come help me look,
two is better than one.
I need your support,
Creator of the sun.

Only you replace desire,
the monkey that I can't lose.
A dependence that controls me,
birthed from drugs and booze.

No longer can I do this,
fight a fight I will never win.
Needing strength powerful than me,
to be able to live again.

Reaching out my arms,
lifting my head toward the sky.
Instruct me what to do,
to tell this demon goodbye.

No longer alone,
hiding under a skeletal tree.
Roving toward euphoria,
please come and help me.

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Acknowledgements

Dempsee, *when I asked for assistance from you concerning your doctor prescribe pharmaceutical experience, you not only came through for me. You were able to enlighten a dark world that many don't even realize exists. Your honest sharing will help others to come out from the darkness that binds them; some may even find that freedom that has eluded them for way to long like you have.*

Douglas, *heartfelt thanks for your early contribution to this book, you were able to give me new insights into what I wanted to share. Your brilliance and professionalism in this subject matter opened up my creative mind and showed me a different way to share and tell this story. I will forever be indebted to you for your early help and support.*

Dempsee and Douglas, *by assisting me with this book you opened the window for many others to see, I can't say thank you enough.*

Definitions—Rhyme Zone internet

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Prologue

The world of addiction is a darkened abyss, waiting patiently to devour those still lost inside its insidious gates. As we listen to those cries of anguish and torment inside our troubled minds, our spirits stay troubled. Without a powerful merciful intervention, who knows what future those still lost inside must face?

Maybe this time's story can reveal how God can grasp a desperate trembling hand and lead them out of the dark abyss that holds them captive, one day and one step at a time. If he did this wonderful miracle for me, He surely will do it for others.

This book will use a variety of simple analogies to illustrate personal experiences, experiences that helped me gain my own sobriety. They are just whispers of a true reality of where I came from, shadows left behind after escaping the darkness. The complex moments of uncertainty and clarity that marked my path to recovery, reflections that I care to share with those who desire to learn.

I pray that this story will impart a message of hope and courage to those still suffering from this sad disease. I hope that it mirrors the horrors of millions of like people, and shows how I was able to learn the truths that I can now share and write about candidly.

I was to discover in that wondrous journey that I partook in that insights weren't any more than rearrangement of facts. Sometimes

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in life things happen for a reason, though that reason may not be apparent at first. With time though the facts of the complex puzzle pieces when assembled make complete sense. Once one understands how to assemble the puzzle, how to decipher what one has done. That vibrant brilliant light somehow seems to illuminate a path into a new dimension.

My hope is that my readers will experience a greater understanding of God's Mercy and Grace, and their own capabilities. It doesn't matter where you came from in life—where you are headed though is of the utmost importance. Inside this book you may come to recognize similarities to your own life, similarities that many alcoholics/addicts have endured over the years.

I have gained freedom from the obstacles that held me captive for most of my life, now I want to share those secrets that I learned over forty years. To share with you how I was able to leave behind problems that had previously shackled me, but now I am free from. Agree with me or disagree with me after you have read this book, we should all pray that those who seek help may find God's Grace.

Once, maybe even twice in a person's life, an opportunity can appear that can brush against that person's soul. It can alter what they were destined to become. It can make an impression on broken hearts and tortured souls. These will be the evidence, the footprints that God will leave behind. I am one of those blessed individuals who have emerged *Within God's Grace*, to share His Merciful and Gracious message.

(This is a small booklet for such a huge problem.)

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Chapter 1:---Hangovers

This book ***MAYBE THIS TIME*** was written for you, yes you the one who is reading it right now. Don't say it wasn't or it's for somebody else, because it is not, it is for you. I wrote this book hoping to change just one person's life; maybe you are that one person I have been looking for? You have nothing to lose and if you are reading this book, there is a high probability that you might need some help. So ask yourself this simple little question. Could this You be You or maybe even somebody You know? What the hell, you have nothing to lose anyways so give it a try.

So ask yourself are you like Steve the drunk who lives a defeated life like millions of other drunks. Swearing off alcohol a gazillion different times a day, only to find himself again back in that hopeless state of mind. Wondering and praying to himself everyday was there a way to make this madness stop, was there a way to stop this sad sick compulsion? If you aren't Steve the drunk maybe you are Douglas the drug addict, or is it even possible that you could be Dempsee the cute little girl hooked on Doctor prescribed opioids? You might be that person who identifies with all three of these people, a compulsive obsessive

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personality who will take anything to escape the sickened twisted awkward reality of life.

There are statistics about how many people are addicted to one form of addictive drugs or another; we also know that there is no way to really get a true number. Never the less we guess it would be in the millions, many many millions of people to say the least. Most of these people will die a lonely miserable pathetic death; they will die not knowing that there was a way out for them. A way that they were never able to find for one reason or another, yet I don't believe they were destined to die in their misery. There is a way out for them and this book will reveal that way, if that person is willing to give it a chance.

I am going to share that secret passage I discovered over forty years ago, a path that lead me out of the darkness. It was a way that allowed me to change my life from complete failure, into one of complete success. It allowed me to put the sixteen year drug and alcohol abuse away for good, while giving me new directions to follow in my new life.

An underserved gift so freely given to me, and now I want to share this gift with anyone who is willing to listen. Maybe just maybe I can reach one soul, maybe I can reach you?

So with that said I am not going to ask you to join Alcoholics Anonymous, nor will I ask you to join Narcotics Anonymous. I don't want you to become a member of your neighborhood church, or even align yourself with one of your family religions. Don't sign up for an extended stay at your local Alcoholic Therapist Half-Way House. Forget about the thirty, sixty, or even ninety day

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rehabilitation clinics down by the ocean, there is another way and I am going to share it with you. I don't want you to do anything you don't want to do; you will make your own decisions about your own life, in your own time, in your own way.

If you or someone who loves you is reading this book there may be a way that will help you, an insight to help you with what has kept you in bondage for years and some of you decades. You might be asking yourself what is in it for me the author of this book, there is absolutely nothing I will get out of this book for me. This book you will be able to download for free, if you want a hard copy you will have to pay minimal fee. My fee will be if this book helps one person to escape the bondage of addiction, then I will be way over paid. With advancements in technology there is a good chance we can reach many people who suffer, people who will be willing to listen to what I have to say. After you have read this book and if you like what you read, share it with your friends.

All I ask is that you read this book with an open mind and be willing to make a few changes in your life if you think it could be beneficial to you. Also if it works for you that you carry this message to others like I have carried it to you. Remember, if you don't like what you read here you can throw this book into the garbage can if you don't agree with it (or delete it, it was free to begin with.) ***Maybe This Time*** will be written very bluntly and open, my intention is not to offend anybody. But if you are reading this book kitten gloves is not what you need, honesty is what you need. I am going to give you all the honesty that I can, hoping and praying to make an impact on you.

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So the question is real simple, are you like Steve the Construction Worker who awoke on many mornings for many years just like this:

Confusion awoken me as I laid cold stone still, bewildered to where I was while this insidious uneasiness of paralyzing fear engulfed all that I had become on this cold isolated moment in time. While the searing ricocheting pain bounced from one side of my head to the other, I thought for a moment that someone was beating my head with a sledge hammer. Back and forth back and forth because the pain wouldn't go away, never again Never Again I promised one more time to never drink again. Wondering what in the fucking world had happened to me, could this outlandish painful nightmare even be real that I was experiencing? I knew as I laid there shuttering that it was real, it was an experience I had suffered many miserable times before.

Not being able to remember the activities of the night before, nor where I had been. To be honest not even caring, I only wanted the pain and nausea to go away.

As I laid there trying to pry open my eyes that for some reason had been glued together, I couldn't budge them no matter what I did. Blinded to the world that lay in front of me, I was being held captive inside a quagmire of my own making. This imprisoned dungeon with no exits was not allowing me to escape; I was being trapped against my own will. What have I done this time? What the fuck have I created as shame overwhelmed me like a darkened blanket of humiliation? If only I could die somehow I thought to myself, if only I could bring this miserable fucking life I live to some kind of end.

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No, like so many other times before this was my life; this was the future that I chose years before to pursue. A future that held no ending, an anguished self-induced destiny that would be riddled with heart wrenching torments and misery. I knew that I would journey forever more through this maze, a web that would tack its own delusional course in its own time in its own way. A sickened destiny that I willingly contributed to, yet a calling that would over time rob me of everything that I was or hoped to be.

The swirling movement of the bed one way then the other forced my arms to reach out for balance, stabilizing me from falling out of bed. The movements became more severe with each moment that passed, while nauseas overcame me. Sensing that a sickness was about to come, dreading what it meant. Gripping both sides of the bed with all the force I could muster, I couldn't make the rocking go away. I couldn't make what I created the night before go away while drifting in and out of wakefulness.

Feeling it down inside the innards of my stomach as I tried to raise my head, I needed to get up and to the bathroom as quick as possible as nature was about to visit. Rocking back and forth I rolled out of bed onto my knees, and then started crawling toward the filthy toilet. Would I make it I wondered, only God could know the answer to that question? The rubbing of the abrasive rug upon my exposed skin burnt and left its ugly mark on my body, yet determination drove me toward the inevitable which was soon to appear.

Lifting my face up over the filthy toilet bowl I no longer could control the pent up eruption that soon was flowing, knotting inside my intestines knots while the dry heaves overtook me. How long

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can this misery last, there can't be anything left inside me to throw up I thought. Then the dreaded shame over took me like a burglar in the night, and visited me this horrible self-demoralizing morning. I was to sick and weak to even care when the shit leaked out of my ass and down my leg, so I just knelt there and allowed nature to take its course. I had brought myself to this place of shame and disgust, yet I had no idea how to stop or change it.

Lowering my head further down into the bowl of shame I allowed the tears to flow from my eyes, wanting them to somehow wash away the evilness and vile crude that was imprisoned inside of me.

With all the might inside of me I could muster my trembling hands gripped the sides of the filthy bowl, determined to force myself to stand again. Knowing any second that my legs could buckle underneath me, I didn't allow it to undermine me. I needed to stand for no other reason than my own self-respect, somehow to make myself whole again. Bracing the wall to my left I stood there motionless while my legs quibbled back and forth, just a few more minutes I thought and I would be okay. Not wanting or capable of hurrying I allowed the whirling motion inside of me to settle down; I needed to somehow right this sunken ship.

Then all of a sudden I saw this horrific nightmarish creature staring back at me from inside my mirror, a gaunt pathetic skeletal reflection of a dead human being. A person that I had once known but now had evolved into a total disgrace to all that I ever hoped to be. The gaunt sunken eerie eyes no longer affected me, or the pale skin that seemed to wrap it ugliness around my whole being. The wretchedness of what I was witnessing kept me glued to the insidious image plastered across my mirror; I couldn't pull my

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eyes away no matter how hard I tried. Never again never again I screamed to myself, I just wanted to forget what I brought and created for myself and my family.

Even with my shuttering eyes fully opened this morning I knew there wasn't anybody home inside, I knew at that moment in time I had evolved into an empty shell of a man. My erratic heartbeat felt like it was going to rip open my chest or blow a hole deep inside my body, as my body stood and shook. Yet distinctly I knew I was morally, mentally, and spiritually dead. I had finally become what I detested the most in my pathetic isolated world; I had become a replica of what my father had become.

If I could just get a tomato beer to drink, a cold beer would help me to feel better. Anything to make this misery go away, yet I was found wanting and desolate in my own demise in my own home.

In that miserable convoluted moment of time I found myself, I swore no matter what happened I would never ever take another drink. A promise I had made a million billion times before to myself and to my family, a promise I knew I probably would never be able to keep.

Soon after my wife was to return home, a home that I ran her and my children out of the night before. When we met in the hallway I couldn't lift my head to look her in the eyes, the shame that had riddled my body wouldn't allow me that simple task. But the words she spoke had a ringing lasting ramification, a resounding gutter torture sound that ripped my heart from one side to the other. Words that no matter how long I live will never be able to

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be washed away, because they are words she utters to me every time I get drunk. Do you know what you did last night Steve? I always had the same answer, no, no I don't. I don't because most of my drunks end in a Blackout, a state of forgetfulness and loss of memory.

But as I stood there in shame, I knew one thing and I knew it more than anything else. Before the sun set that night I would be drunk again, matter of fact I would be drunk as soon as I could manipulate a way to go get drunk. The drive and obsession drove me toward destruction, a daily routine that dictated my treacherous out of control behavior.

Or maybe you are Douglas the small business owner who is a drug addict struggling to keep his life in order, and his landscape business going. A person who awakens every morning to the same ugly morning but a different nightmare than me? An individual who has created an addiction that now controls his whole life, not only his life but his family's life also. From the time he awakes in the early morning until he falls off to sleep in the evening, his whole purpose is to feed that monkey that he can't shake. Just another sad statistic that life somehow etched its ugliness across his decaying life, leaving a deep ugly invisible scar that soap will never ever be able to wash away.

Douglas the guy as a young boy smoked weed with his friends in the neighborhood, just so they wouldn't make fun of him and he could be cool. It wasn't long before he was drinking cold beers with his buddies at the Friday night football games and snorting coke. The same individual who woke one day to find out drug addiction had come and took control of his life, a control that he

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never intended of relinquishing. Yet there he found himself like so many other before him, chasing that euphoria dream that never is going to happen. It is a sickening disgusting revelation to come to terms with your own reality; you have somehow become what you swore would never happen. A drug addict addicted to heroin and cocaine.

You knew it way before you even admitted to it, like when you were stealing money out of your mom's purse when she was sleeping. Or some of your dad's tools could be found at the local Pawn Shop, the tools that he couldn't remember where he left them. Yes there were many indications in those early years, signs that you really no longer wanted to admit to. Creating that shame and guilt that overwhelmed you, but the cravings drove you to forget what you didn't care to remember.

The sneaking out in the middle of the night to go commit a burglary or rob someone wasn't that bad; well it wasn't as bad as your Flue like symptoms you were experiencing. Or those muscle aches and cramps you couldn't make go away while you were craving your favorite drug. None of it bothered you anymore; it might have bothered you at one time but not anymore.

You were already to the point of no return, so it made you question all the things you were experiencing. Were all the people staring at you, or were you just paranoid? Was the sweating you seemed to go through every day normal, or was it just from those Flu like symptoms? Nobody could feel this bad you thought, as the diarrhea kicked in and you starting vomiting where you couldn't stop.

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The only thing to stop the abdominal cramps was another fix another hit, so the reoccurring revolving Merry-Go-Round would spin continuously day after day year after year. The more that it spun the more you needed a fix, the more you needed a fix the more it spun. Let me off let me off this fucking thing you screamed into the empty voids, but there was no one there to hear your noise. There was no one to stop the spinning.

You weren't sure when the depressions showed up; they just came like uninvited guests into your miserable life. Guests that you would have never invited home, yet they were there every day to haunt you to remind you of what you created and what you were.

Maybe that is why you desired to die more and more each day, even the drugs couldn't make this misery go away. You would go to bed praying to somehow die during the night, yet find out in the morning that your prayer wasn't answered. A sickening rage would engulf you, the one thing you wanted more than anything wasn't even possible. If only you could get the nerve to do it yourself, but inside you were a coward and you knew it. Suicide wasn't an option, even though you prayed it could be.

You now lived to feed your pathetic neighborhood dealer and he lived his slimy life to supply drugs to you. The sun glasses you wore each day couldn't hide the tearing, the agitation, or even all the anxieties you felt daily, they only created a crippling shade of illusions between you and the real world that you tried with all your soul to hide from.

You had become what you swore so many years before you would never let happen to you, you became the Heroin addict, the

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Cocaine addict, an addict addicted to all kinds of illegal drugs. A person locked up inside of his own self-made prison, a prison with no doors out. Knowing distinctly that you had been sentenced to a life of misery and shame, a life that no matter what you did you wouldn't be able to escape from.

Maybe friend you are not Douglas or Steve but you are somebody completely different, you are Dempsee where one day fate completely changed her life. Back when that innocent doctor gave her her first prescription of pain medication, a medication that would slowly alter her life. Innocent enough supplements to help her get through a rough patch she was experiencing because of a car accident, something to kill off the continuous pain until her injuries were healed.

A time that she felt different because of an accident she experienced as a young girl, a time when life left its ugly darkened mark upon her life. A saddened gloomy time when destiny would alter the world she would spend the rest of her life in, altering it in such a horrible way she could never fathom it in her wildest imagination.

She never dreamt in her wildest imagination that one day her biggest thought would be to take these magical wonder pills as soon as she awoke, to get them inside her body ASAP. She couldn't even have dreamt that the little prescription from the doctor not so long ago would lead to this quagmire, yet here she found herself another day just like all the other days before with the same dilemma the same nightmare.

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How could this possibly be she wondered as she patiently waited for the effects of the medication to take over, medication that she couldn't live with or she couldn't live without. As she lounged around the house and the edge slowly started dissipating, her twisted mind was already anticipating her next legal dosage. Like so many other times it was usually way sooner than the doctor prescribed recommendations. She discovered like many others like her most times by the time she was feeling the full effect of the pills, she was already anticipating the next round of dosage.

She spent her day wondering to herself if and when she was going to run out, so like an meticulous accountant she would count every pill left in the prescription bottle one pill at a time after she took her first dosage. But with each counting of inventory the horrific anxiety only grew worse, she already knew she would be sick until she had that new prescription in her hands. It had become a revolving rotating Merry-Go-Round that she couldn't find a way off, a darkened prison of her own making.

Then as fate would have it she would get her new prescription, it was a huge relief to just be able to hold it in her hands. She knew from past experiences even if it was only for a few moments that her world would be okay, then that horrible Merry-Go-Round would start spinning again.

When she woke each day she already knew what she would face, her time was etched through misery and shame. It was always the same embarrassment, humiliation, and self-loathing she created for herself, a darkness she didn't even know existed. She dreaded all her waking hours' even while intoxicated under the medications; she couldn't escape the sickening emotions that reality brought to

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her. There never was nor would there ever be enough opiates that could dull those sickening feelings, it was a truth that she couldn't hide from no matter what she did.

Sleep became her sweet sister of death, a safe depressed isolated haven only for the injured. A special place she discovered for herself to hide in, a place where nobody could hurt her or get to her. Sleep became a second love for her, a love that was beyond even the magical wonder pills. She wished and prayed every time she went to sleep that she would never wake again, yet destiny was not done playing it horrible hoax upon her.

The combination of everything left a residual of fear that was so horrible you couldn't even describe it, paralyzing her with every decision in her life she had to make. Fear of going to sleep, of not waking up, staying on the pills, or getting off of the pills, fear of success and fear of failure. The pills even created a humongous fear that became afraid of the fear, but she couldn't tell which fear was devouring her miserable isolated life.

Yes you might find that you are Dempsee strung out on Doctor prescribed Opiates, or you might even be that boy or girl who find themselves addicted to all the substances above.

Not as unthinkable or unlikely as you might think. In this day and age people who use substances to escape the awkward realities of life don't care what they have to take, whatever is available or whatever is the cheapest. Many of us find ourselves taking anything that will alter the way we think because of our compulsive obsessive personalities. We take whatever we can get whenever we can get it. Our hangovers are nothing more than

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(Hangover---Something that has survived from the past) reminders of the pathetic world we have created for ourselves.

In the old days people loved to distinguish themselves from one group or the other, like somehow it justified what they had become. The miserable drunk always felt they were above the rest of the abusers. Even though they all chased the same demons every day, when you are hooked it doesn't matter what you are hooked on.

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Chapter 2:---Identifying

If you find yourself reading this book and discovered you identify with one or all three of these characters Steve, Douglas, or Dempsee ***(Identifying---Consider to be equal or the same),*** there is a high probability that some decisions may be needed to be made in your life. This is a precarious place in life most humans care not to find themselves, yet as life sometimes does we still find ourselves where we don't want to be.

You might even consider the truth that I am about to share with you, information that I've ascertained over a period of forty years of sobriety. That may or may not assist you. Materials gathered along a journey that I wouldn't wish upon my worst enemy, yet information that allowed me to change a broken life into one of triumph.

To suggest that a person is an alcoholic or drug addict just because they had some bad experiences like I described above would not only be a lie, but it would be very misleading to those reading this book. Many people in life drink alcohol and experience hangovers; some indulge themselves into drug use and at times find

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themselves in uncomfortable situations. Yet with real alcoholics and addicts these times become a way of life. These hangovers and compulsive urges are reoccurring revolving symptoms of deeper problems, more serious than just a little discomfort. If we are experiencing them on a weekly daily basis they are signs, indications that maybe we have went beyond the line of no return. Our obsessions have taken us to this dark place, a place of isolated gruesome misery.

Thirty-nine years ago I found myself inside this exact quagmire, strapped to an endlessly reoccurring revolving merry-go-round with no way off. I am hoping by sharing with you my own experiences I can somehow convince you there is a way out. A way out no matter which one of those three you might be, no matter how bad of shape you are in.

You may even be wondering if this is just another addiction book about Alcoholics Anonymous, or a spiritual book to help you save your soul. Well, no it isn't even though I do believe strongly in the great thing that the program of Alcoholics Anonymous and Religious Organization accomplish. This is a book that I hope will somehow convince you that there is a way for you to change your life. Even if now you say you don't want to, or that you are okay with the way you live.

I do understand the protest, the hesitation. Heck I did the hesitation and protesting a long time ago myself, it isn't as unusual as you might think. Hell nobody wants to quit drinking or taking drugs who uses them, why in Gods world would they want to give up stuff that makes them feel so great every day until it doesn't work anymore?

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We only become ready to quit once our lives are so miserable we can't stand it any longer, and then grudgingly we become receptive to some kind of change. I am hoping if you are reading this book that your life is a complete wreck, that you are one of those individuals who might consider what I am about to tell you.

Having nothing to lose in life gives me some freedoms, so with that said I am going to be as brunt with this book as I possibly can. Some of you might find yourself offended, but all of you will know I am telling you the truth. The beauty of it is you won't have to go on the Dr. Phil show nor attend a unwanted Alcoholics Anonymous meeting. Heck you won't have to lay bare your soul to your family physician all your short comings, or even confess your wrongs to your family. Your decisions one way or another when you get through reading this book will enlighten a darkness that has held you captive for a very long time. You will not have to do anything that you don't want to do.

I am not going to take my time and fill this book up with statistic that you probably wouldn't believe anyways, nor do you care about. Usually authors use information like that to fill up space and make it sound like they know something that they may or may not know. Here is a truth that is real to anybody who lives on this planet, alcoholism and drug addiction is at a pandemic level in our society. Millions of kids and adults are dying yearly because of their addictions. Family members and even the government don't know what to do to stop it, they have no idea where to even start.

Hell we are at a point where almost every human knows somebody or someone who is addicted to alcohol or drugs, most of us know someone who has died from these horrible addictions. No longer

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can we just act like we don't know what is going on around us, we can't hide underneath the blanket and pretend it is not affecting us.

These addictions are costing our society not millions of dollars, but they are costing us billions of dollars in lost revenues. Let's be honest again, the majority of people who are addicted could care less about what these costs are. They have one objective when they get up in the morning, which is to get loaded or drunk anyway that they can.

The biggest lost to society is the damage that they do to themselves, never being able to reach their true potential of what they were to become. Most people who use or abuse any kind of substance are highly resourceful and intelligent people, which is a known fact. Only God could know what some of these people could have or should have become, don't become one of these negative statistic.

The pain that they inflict upon family members is excruciating to say the least; I am not going to say they don't care because they do care very much. The abusers will leave the impression that their stupid actions don't bother them, but in all honesty it bothers them very much. The fix or the drink becomes very easily their top priority, if their family gets in the way of getting that, oh well. But in reality what they want more than anything in the world is to be clean or sober, they would give anything they have to accomplish that simple thing. Don't ever let them think it doesn't matter to them, because it matter very much to them.

The lost productivity from employment, the thievery, the cost of incarceration, medical expenses, the list could go on forever and

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ever. Huge amounts of money are spent because of the abuses, that's not even counting the actual cost of the booze or drugs. Add it all up and most people wouldn't believe the total cost of substance abuse.

The biggest cost is the pain they leave behind upon society, a pain that can never be erased or washed away. Ugly marks left upon family members and society as a whole, indentations of ugliness to always remind us that they were there. Reflections of another time, a time when life wasn't as ugly as it might be now.

That is why I have decided to write this book that will be so different on this subject matter, different than most books you would read. Yet it will be a book that will shadow the life of an Alcoholic or Drug Addict, a book that will give them a way out. That is if they chose to take that way out.

So ask yourself and be honest with yourself for once in your life, which one of those characters are you? Are you all three, or maybe just the drunk, or the drug addict, or the doctor prescribed one society thinks is okay. Chances are you are one of them if you are reading this book, or you are a family member of an abuser if you have this book in your hands.

It is very important that we know who we are and where we are going, otherwise how will we know how to get there or where we are going? Many times in life we like to think we are something that we aren't, we like to think we are better than we really are. All that does is bring hurt emotions or a confused state of mind. Emotions and a mind that will entice us to over use alcohol or

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drugs, anything to make the uncomfortableness or awkwardness go away.

There is a reason we get addicted to substances, there is a reason we stay addicted to them. So the identifying who we are is only a beginning to the road of freedom we all seek, a map that has been carved out with our tortured souls.

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Chapter 3:---Victims

It is a known fact that addictive people of all stripes have many characteristics that are similar to one another, one of which most feel they are victims of life. They feel if life had only been a little bit different for them, they are so sure things would have worked out better or different for them. Thinking they could be like this person or that person if they were just born into a specific family, never realizing that those perfect families have their own problems also.

They could have fixed many problems if they only had the money or only the opportunities, no you couldn't nor would you. Your difficulties don't arise from the fact that you lacked money or opportunities; they arose because you are an alcoholic or an addict. It has nothing to do with your station in life, or your material wealth. Victimization is only a state of mind ***(Victim---A person who is tricked or swindled,)*** you are responsible for your own state of mind no matter if someone tricked you or not. Hell you tricked yourself thinking you found some magic cure for your awkwardness, a cure that would fix all that ails you.

I am sick and tired of hearing that same fucking excuse if only, you are who you are and where you are by all your prior decisions.

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Nobody and I mean nobody dictated how you would become, you made that decision yourself. Grow up for once in your life and quit blaming others with your lame excuses. We are not looking for excuses here people, we are looking for a way for you to change that broken life you live in.

Living forever in a perpetually of if only, if only this if only that, is not only exhausting it will wear on you. After years of this type of mentality, it will eventually become imbedded deep down inside your brain. Thinking like this gives you the abuser the everlasting excuse to stay loaded or drunk, other words the exact excuse that you are looking for. This type of person refuses to grow-up and take responsibility for their own actions. Usually a normal person will expose symptoms of this kind of behavior in their formative years, people like us expose during our whole life.

This kind of immaturity which has stifled so many abusers over time will become detrimental to you in your hopes of rehabilitation. Many of you people are living in grownup bodies, yet inside of you lives a person that is very immature and childish. It becomes very difficult to get a grown man or woman to function as an adult, when in all reality they are only really children inside.

It is one of the main reasons family members have such difficulty understanding their substance abusers, because they see you as grown up adults. Yet in reality most of the time you act like little children, children that you would see on a school yard. You have heard it just like I have heard it a million times, why don't you grow up and act your age. To the abuser they are acting their age, they just haven't accepted the fact that they have a mentality of a twelve year old child. The good news is that this can change and

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reverse itself; the person over time can eventually mature to their normal age.

All the alcoholics and drug addicts I have talked with over time say the same thing, that when they started taking drugs or drinking time just stopped for them. I know it is true for the simple fact that is exactly what happened to me, I started drinking around thirteen years of age and everything stopped. My maturity level didn't proceed again until I stopped abusing myself with drugs and booze at twenty-nine years of age. It was one of my biggest desires and grandest dreams, for my mind to catch up one day with my body.

Not sure when it happened but I do remember saying to myself one day, I think my mind and body are finally the same age. If I am not mistaken I think it was around twenty years of sobriety when this happened and yes I was getting better all along those twenty years.

If you think this state of mind is not powerful or deceiving you are kidding yourself, this reality I refused to accept or to understand until I aged into my middle thirties. Looking back it is funnier than hell, but living with and through it was and is horrifying. It answers so many questions for me now that I am older; yes adult things and responsibilities scared the hell out of me. Why wouldn't they after all I was only thirteen years old in a thirty year old body.

You have seen these kinds of people in junior high and high school, oh I forgot to bring my homework to school. I had everything done and my little sister tore it up, I didn't have enough

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time to redo it. On test days at school they are always sick, always coming up with a new lame excuse.

As they grew older you would think surely their attitude and mentality would have changed, no it didn't change it only got worse. They usually turn out to be the worse employees, yet they are the best employee. They work very hard until they aren't capable of working hard; they live inside a world of counter dictions. They have an excuse for everything that happens to them in their lives, it is never their fault. It is never their fault when they miss work, they always have an excuse. They will get indignant when you don't accept their excuses, or bullshit.

It is their way of deflection from the trouble that they find themselves in, a childish excuse for an adult situation.

I will quit drinking after this weekend when my booze runs out, just one more beer and I am done with this shit. I only have enough drugs for three days, I will not be buying anymore after this stuff is all gone. The addictive person is always projecting to another time, but in reality they are monitoring how much money of alcohol they have left. The greatest fear of any alcoholic or drug addict is that they will run out before they want to, always desiring to at least get through that night without running out.

If you think your stash might not last through the night, then it was time to scale back or reduce your intake. It is amazing that they can't pay a simple telephone bill, but I guarantee you they will figure out how to make that booze or drugs last through the night.

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You can bet one thing over everything else that the alcoholic will always have, they will always have somebody that will cater to their addiction with them. It isn't that they want to use or abuse these people; it is because they are very immature and childish. Like a baby needs its mother, addictive people need their mothers also. So they are liable to make anybody into their mothers who will cater to them, they will become very dependent on those that are around them.

Early in my sobriety I discovered I was a habitual victim, a state of mind I am not proud to admit to. As time went by and I worked toward sobriety I was able to mature, this maturity allowed me to start taking responsibility for my own actions. Responsibility and self-respect are great goals to achieve, goals that are obtainable for people like us.

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Chapter 4:---Awkward

Who hasn't felt awkward in their lives at one time or another, exactly everybody has. It is really an embarrassing experience to say the least, a time most would love to just forget about if they could. ***Awkward---"Not at ease socially, unsure and constrained in manner",*** well without a doubt that is me.

I think as far back as I can remember, I have always felt that awkwardness in my life. When I moved into my teenage years, it seemed to just escalate to a different level. Looking in retrospect when I was thirteen years old I thought something was wrong with me, I was positive nobody could feel or think at unease like I did.

I was to learn later much later when I grew older that the way a thirteen year old feels is normal, hell they all feel weird at that age. It is part of the normal age process we all go through; my problem was I was going to disrupt my process.

What I didn't know then that I know now that what I experienced during my first night of drinking is normal, even most of the incidences like throwing up, dry heaves, acting stupid, and even the black-out are normal occurrences for a teenage drinker.

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Yet when that big bang theory launched my life into a new atmosphere that glorious night, it did more than those few laughable moments. It did something for me that I wasn't capable of doing no matter what I tried. It took away the awkwardness and replaced it with normalcy for the first time in my life, it allowed me to experience something that I thought was impossible.

It was almost like I was beside myself; I couldn't believe what I was experiencing. Kind of like for a few moments anyways I was all grown up, I had understanding of all these world problems. Inside where I lived I felt at ease with myself, how was that even possible I wondered to myself?

Magical this stuff was, absolutely fucking magically. I might have got sick and threw up all over the park that dark night, I already knew distinctly that alcohol and I would be together again, ASAP.

Just like any other night of drinking, there always is the moment of truth. Well my moment of truth came in the morning, I woke up feeling like shit but my desire to experience another moment like the night before was still inside my head.

As I waited for my older brother to wake up and my friend to come over, I realized that the awkwardness that I thought I rid myself of the night before had returned. It not only returned but it brought a feeling of guilt with it. If I could only escape these icky feelings again, go to that place where I felt normal again.

It would be a few more weeks before we would be able to secure more alcohol for ourselves, a moment we impatiently waited for.

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What I didn't know then but I know now is heart breaking, that first night of drinking alcohol would change my life forever. It would unleash demons inside of me, demons in such a way I wouldn't be able to fathom them no matter how hard I tried.

That awkwardness I felt the night before I took my first drink was now frozen in a time lock. A time lock that would stay locked until I was able to quit drinking some sixteen years later. I was locked inside a prison I created with my own behavior, a prison that allowed no way out except by the abstaining from alcohol.

Bad enough to be stuck in awkwardness with no way out, but without alcohol I had no way to combat it. So I did what I did best when I was confronted with difficult situations in my life, I learned how to run from them. People, places, and things where I didn't feel comfortable, I just escaped them to keep them from holding me back, The alcohol lit a fuse that wouldn't be able to be put out, a fuse that would chart its own course over time.

Put me anywhere I didn't feel comfortable, it wouldn't take long and I would make up some stupid excuse to leave. After summer was over and I went back to school, I found if I didn't feel comfortable there I just cut class. Another negative behavior in my life was being honed in, and to be honest with you I didn't give a shit. I was not about to let this awkwardness disrupt my life, even though it was dictating a life that I wasn't capable of understanding.

As I grew older the awkwardness grew more descriptive, and I found myself running faster from it or drinking more alcohol to make it disappear. The only problem with those high skilled

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techniques of mine, the more alcohol I drank the worse the awkwardness became. So I did the only think any normal intelligent person would do, I just drank more and more and more and more. That technique to say the least did not work for me, it only made things worse.

Then the stupid fucking Merry-Go-Round was created, a circus ride that I created myself that wouldn't let me off. I was a prisoner upon this circular never stopping Circus Ride, the only way off was the abstaining from the alcohol. These are realities that I would not learn until way after I quit alcohol and drugs for good.

These realities of awkwardness, cutting school, or just plain running from life aren't what caused my alcoholism. No they were just distorted symptoms I discovered along the way on my journey to recovery, symptoms that were magnified by the booze and drugs I took on a daily basis.

The more I drank the less it would take away the awkwardness, the less it would take away the awkwardness the more I drank to overcome that deficiency. The more I drank the worse the deficiency would become, the worse the deficiency became the more I needed to drink. I was stuck on a course that only grew worse each day I lived, a course with no way off.

As I understand now, I didn't drink for the booze. I drank for the awkwardness that was out of control inside of my life, a sick sad feeling that I couldn't control no matter what I did. I was on that circus ride that I never could figure out, but now I completely understand.

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Chapter 5:---Trapped

One of the greatest controversies about alcoholism and addiction, is there really a difference between these people and normal people? For me it is a resounding hell yes, a yes without any doubt. Some might even say that this is no more than being a victim, that this is no more than a simple excuse. I am going to be honest with you about this subject; I fought this same question myself for many years. I had a hard time excepting the fact that alcohol controlled me, and I didn't control it.

First thing I didn't like the ideas that I was weaker or somehow different than my fellow man. I just couldn't accept that simple fact. But over time life had a way of proving me wrong, like everything else I had to learn it all the hard way.

Think about this, I have nothing to gain or to lose by making such a statement like this. I have over forty years of sobriety and have lived a very successful life. I fought the demons like hell not to be different than the other men, it broke my heart and I had a hell of a time accepting that simple truth. The alcoholic is definitely hard wired differently than the average person, and I suspect that the

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drug addict is no different. I knew at thirteen years of age that alcohol and I would have a long intimate love affair, a love affair that over time would almost completely destroy my life

What I didn't know then but I do know now was that my awkward emotions where normal thirteen year olds emotions, I felt strange in them and thought something was wrong with me. The first night I got drunk it released those very immature emotions, bringing in a fake euphoria that convinced me that finally I was normal. A fake euphoria that I just knew I had to experience over and over and over again. It also froze in time that thirteen year old awkward emotionally disrupted boy, keeping me from maturing like a normal person until the day I finally quit drinking.

These trues are just realities that I learned over time, over sober time. I imagine it is the same reality for the drug addict, stuck in their immaturity. There is a reason our behavior is so childish most time, this is probably why.

Even without realizing it then I was trapped in a snare, a snare I wasn't capable of escaping from. (***Trapped---Forced to turn and face attackers***.)

The part that is funny that first night of drinking I didn't even like the taste of it, I had a black out and became horribly sick. To make it even worse if that was possible, I threw up all over the park. Yet alcohol was able to do for me what I wasn't able to do for myself that night. It instantly became my equalizer in life, even with the negative experiences it gave me a freedom I didn't know. I lived until that time inside a dark scary awkward society, a place I

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shuttered in if I had to expose myself. Alcohol was my doorway out from that awkwardness.

Drinking alcohol that night allowed me to come out of the darkness to come out of the awkwardness, a new freedom that I never knew before. Just turning thirteen was a very isolated type feeling, I was very uncomfortable in who I was. Being a teenager and sober was a very awkward scary situation for me, alcohol allowed me to periodically escape from that environment. It was a place where I didn't understand the language, a place where monsters lived that were after me. I was trapped inside this horrible scary lonely place, and alcohol became the only key for me to escape it. It became my panacea for everything in life, it became my first love.

When I was under the influence of marijuana it gave me similar feelings and emotions, a feeling of being right with the world around me. It is sad that I had to be loaded or drunk to get these kinds of feelings, to be able to escape the awkwardness in my life. It was a world that I would live in for many miserable years, until the time came that I couldn't take it anymore. Yes I was stuck on that endless revolving Merry-Go-Round, an insidious horrific ride with no way off. To say I was trapped inside this world of darkness would not be an over exaggeration; it was a cold hard reality.

It no longer mattered how I ended up like this, the truth was for whatever reason my life evolved into this total wreck. The train was going full blast and the Conductor wasn't going to stop it, there was no way off for me.

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If you are reading this book there is a high probability you are also trapped, you are trapped mentally and physically. The good news for you friend is that there is a way out for you. The way out I discovered I am going to share with you, you will make the decision if you want to accept it or not. This won't be a decision made by your mother or father, none of your family members will make this decision for you. Nope not this time friend, it will be made only by you. Here is one thing I can guarantee you, no matter which way you decide to go. You will always know for the rest of your life, there was a way out. Get busy living, or get busy dying.

Just remember one thing, being trapped doesn't mean having an excuse to continue your life style. What it means is now you might have information about your erratic behavior that you didn't have before. So now we know that inside of us there is something missing, a chromosome or some DNA thingy or maybe just some kind of fucking blood cells we don't know about. The truth is something is missing inside of us addicted people; we are different than the average person. So now we know we are playing in a card game without a full deck, the odds are stacked against us. Yet we are in a game we can win, that is if we want to win?

Once I started drinking or smoking weed the compulsion and obsession would take over, it not only took over with me but it completely controlled me. One was never enough and two was always two to many. I think a lot of that was because I was so immature that I was always trying to escape the awkwardness that I felt, awkwardness that no matter what I did I couldn't make go away.

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As I grew older the trappings became more defined, they became clear to myself and those around me by my behavior. I only associated with those kinds of people that enjoyed life like I did, drunks and drug addicts. I created an environment of my own choosing by my own behavior, a place where a person like me could function.

I created a reputation that I thought was so great, but looking back now I think I was the joke. I was the one that they made fun of, the one who became the big joke. Yet I created this image that I thought I had to protect, an image of a drunk and a drug addict.

This image would fuel me into a darkness that I wouldn't wish upon my worst enemy, a place that there was no escape from. A miserable place where darkness was its light and monsters and evil creatures lived, a hidden corner in the forbidden abyss of the demon world. The more I drank the worse it became, the worse it became the more I drank. There was no way off of that revolving empty isolated Roller Coaster Merry-Go-Round ride that I was on, the nightmare only grew worse with the passing of each day or with each drink I took. Yeah, I was trapped like the crippled fox confined inside the hunters snare.

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Chapter 6:---There is no cure

When you think of a magical cure for something, you think of Witch Doctors and Medicine Men isolated deep inside the heart of Africa. A place where magic and bewitching spells are discovered everywhere, where voodoo medicine is practiced daily. A kind of hidden place taken out of time where tribesmen live, where they use their magic to fix those who are sick.

Maybe inside a renowned doctor's office where he takes all of his medicines and knowledge and mixes them together, creating a special concoction for miracles. But a cure is no more than ***(Cure---A medicine or therapy that cures disease or relieves pain,)*** but we will find with alcoholism and drug addiction there is no such thing.

If only life was so easy and we had the ability to make all the monsters go away, if we could just make Johnny or little Suzy normal again. Wouldn't our world be so grand, so much easier to cope with? Every family and every family member of a substance abuse person dreams to have that ability, to be able to make those changes to bring back their children to a normal life. Dreams that only a child could possibly dream, because grownups know life doesn't work that way.

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To be able to wipe away the tears and misery that years of abuse can bring, to say I won't have to deal with this nightmare anymore. It's a dream from people out of an environment of pain dream, whose life has been beaten down. If only if only there was a cure, if only we could fix him or her. Dream on Dreamer, there is no cure for neither alcoholism nor drug addiction.

As a young boy growing up in an alcoholic environment that was always my dream, it would be a dream that I would never be able to experience. Even though it never kept me from wishing and praying for that miracle to come, it was an illusion that I would chase for most of my life.

In the 1960's there were experiments and tryouts being introduced to the hospitals and rehabilitation clinics throughout the country, hoping for a way to beat alcoholism. I know of this because my mom would share with me whenever I showed concern for my father. I always asked the same questions, how come mom how come they can't just give dad a shot to fix him? Those were normal questions from a naïve scared little boy, a boy that only wanted a normal father like the other kids on the block had.

On one of my father's trips to the Veterans Hospital she told me that this time they would be using Electric Shock treatments on him, they thought that maybe it could help him. It was a scary idea to even imagine how that would work then, after all I was only a young boy. Even though I was so afraid of what might happen, possibly this could be the answer we were looking for. No that magic cure didn't work for our family, but it did leave deep dark scars inside a young boy's soul. Horrible scars that I still carry to this day.

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Leaving me in a state of doubt and confusion why couldn't it work, why couldn't it make my father better and our life whole again? It was only an experience of crushed dreams and tortured souls, a hardened reality of how life really was.

Then a little time later it was the newest discovery that had come around, it was called Antabuse. This is what everybody in the alcohol field had been waiting for, a magical miracle inventive cure for alcoholism. If the alcoholic drank alcohol while taking this Antabuse, they would get sicker than hell. It was a cure that was supposed to encourage the alcoholic not to drink, an incentive to live their lives a different way.

It would take something more ingenious than Antabuse to stop a real alcoholic, Antabuse was designed to affect the drunk physically and make them sick. It was the mental and physical cravings that no concoctions could fix, a desire burnt deep down inside of a person. Besides an alcoholic would just not take the drug, it wasn't that hard to figure that one out.

Like all the other cures it would only have a chance of helping if the alcoholic was receptive to its use, I have never known an alcoholic who wanted to quit unless death was knocking at their door. Even at that time they still were defiant to any suggestions. I suspect that you are also defiant to some degree, that is normal so don't worry about it.

When I was a young boy my Grandmother would call us up, she would go on a rant about tying our father up. She was totally convinced that if we kids tied our father up he wouldn't be able to go out and drink. We laughed about that story for many years, but

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to that old woman it was a reality that she believes heartily in. An old wise tale she probably heard as a young girl, a tale that never worked. Just tie him up and he won't be able to go out and get drunk, it is so sad but it is so true.

If I thought tying people up would help keep them sober, I would be out tomorrow buying truckloads of rope. Then I would tie everybody up that used alcohol or drugs, problems would be solved. No it is a little bit more complicated than that, this is an insidious horrific disease. God even as I write here today I get goosebumps thinking about the challenges that everybody faces, knowing that not all will except what I share in these pages.

A true alcoholic will go to any extreme to get the booze or drugs that they need, remember they really don't want to quit taking the drugs or the booze. Most time they are only trying to make a family member or an employer happy, these substances are who these people are.

I am sure it was the same dream that my own family dreamt about me, to make the carnage go away. To be able to live the normal life, the life that they figure all the other people experienced except them. If only we could get dad to quit drinking, to get dad to come home after work.

I am sure my family felt my drinking was because of them, hell they had nothing to do with why I drank. But in time they would play a huge role in how I was able to stop drinking.

There are no cure people and I'm so sorry to have to report that to you, the best that we might be able to do is arrest the alcoholism or

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drug addiction. When I say arrest the problem I mean for the abuser to stay absent from the drug, be it alcohol or whatever drug. With intense help from others who know what they are doing, it makes it possible for some to have a continued existence of sobriety in life. A great example is somebody like me with thirty-nine years of continuous sobriety. I am a walking miracle, an example that sobering up is possible.

I feel if I continue doing what I have done for the past thirty-nine years, there is no reason why I shouldn't be able to continue to stay sober. I pray and hope until the day I die. I do not romance the idea of one day returning to that lonely dark miserable insidious world that I came out of; there is nothing left behind that I want.

I completely understand that I am only trapped when I am under the influence of alcohol or drugs; I avoid them both at all cost. What a cheap price to pay to be able to live the life that I now live today. The cure becomes the absence from the chemicals, which is what allows the body and mind to heal again.

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Chapter 7:---What to do

Now we get to the meat of this book, is it possible for a full blown alcoholic/drug addict to quit drinking or taking drugs? For me it is a very simple answer, the answer is a resounding hell yes. If Steve can stop drinking and smoking weed for over forty years, hell anybody can. If you want anything bad enough, anything is possible. Okay, almost anything. Maybe we should just say anything in reason, and sobriety is something that is definitely in reason. All we have to do is **(Do---Carry out or perform an action,)** be willing to make some changes in our lives.

I was a very immature young man when I started this journey; a journey that I thought wasn't possible. But a journey that I was soon to learn wasn't only possible, but a destination that I would succeed and be successful at. If I can do it, yeah you can do it also. Get all that stupid shit out of your head, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, but bullshit. If a down trodden drunk like me can make it for forty years, then there is no reason why you can't make it for at least one day. Then if you get that one day in, then you just do it for another one day. Shit it doesn't take long and all those one day at a time will add up fast.

Before we get started we need to take a look at some true realities, realities that you may or may not want to consider in your life. Most drunks or Drug Addicts biggest complaint is that they don't want to go to Alcoholics Anonymous, nor do they want to go to church. I think to people like us these places have nightmarish connotations of judging, a place where everybody is self-righteous.

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Let's get honest before we go any further, 99.99% of the people on the planet are self-righteous judgmental type people. It is human nature, but for some reason we stuck this label on all these church people and AA people. So we have solved that problem, these people are no different than we are. We all have our own flaws, some more so than others.

Have you ever wondered why you are in the position that you are in? It is not by accident that you ended up reading this book. If you are like me you had to work your ass off to get here, it is not by accident that I am writing this book. With that said I am sure it isn't by accident that you are reading it. So we are even, we both have many flaws. Let's don't cheat ourselves out of a reward, just because somebody else has a few flaws.

Every addicted person thinks all the people at church and AA are hypocrites, hell I have no idea how in the hell they came up with that crazy shit idea but they did. The hypocrite is them and they are too immature to admit that simple truth. Alcoholic Anonymous and churches are just like so many other organizations; they are places that were cheated to help people in need. Neither of these organizations costs money to attend, nor do they force people to become members. So whatever you believe, get that shit out of your head.

If you think there is some kind of purity inside a stinking pathetic dope den or dark unfortunate tavern down deep in the slums of skid-row, then you really need to do some deep deep self-searching. We have good people and not perfect people everywhere, we will find whichever one we want to find. Have you ever noticed when you are looking to find that piece of shit

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person, they seem to come from nowhere. We find whatever we are looking for in life, start looking for the good people. You will be surprised but those kinds of people are all over the place.

A drunk or addict doesn't mind destroying their own lives or their families because of the substances they want, yet their inflated ego's will keep them out of an AA meeting. Hell it will keep them out of churches, and churches only want people to come who need help. Maybe some rethinking might be in order, or at least ask yourself if you really want to get clean and sober. Nobody is begging anybody to clean up their lives, if you love your misery so much stay down inside of the shit. If you want something different like maybe a way to change your life, well then keep reading.

It has always amazed me how abusers for one reason or the other think people are trying to force them to get clean, to get sober. How in the hell do they come up with these crazy ideas, only God could know? Truth is told most people could give a shit if a person cleans up their lives or not, they just look at people like us as stupid idiots. Besides, you will never get sobriety because somebody else wants it for you, you will only get it if you want it for yourself. Don't ever ever ever forget that.

The truth of the matter is we are so childish we will make up every excuse in the world not to do what we should be doing, there is a reason we have trouble with life. Because of the guilt we are continuously trying to destroy those things in our lives, it is our way of punishing ourselves for the harm we have caused our families.

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So these helpful organizations have undertones to their names that people who drink and take drugs hate, they all know even if they won't admit it they are places of help. People who use like to think everybody is just like they are, it is hard for them to accept others don't live like they do.

Hell I can remember when I thought if you had anything of value, you either had to steal it or somebody gave it to you. Never in my twisted mind did I think people actually worked to acquire this stuff. They had to steal it. When you have a distorted mind like I do, this is how you think.

Believe it or not most of your buddies you drank with or took drugs with, you know which ones I am talking about. The people who hold you high-up in their lives, who pray for only good to come your way. They don't want you to get clean or sober, if you do you will become a mirror that they will be forced to look at every single time they see you. Most of them will do everything in their power to keep you loaded or drunk like they are, birds of a feather flock together. There is a lot of truth to those words. Some but very few will encourage you to change your life, especially if they are in the same grips of destruction that you find yourself in.

Friend you will have to make a major decision if you really want to change your life; it will either be them that care nothing about you. Or it will be about your family and you, a family that would give their life for you. Sometimes by making the right decisions, it will give you the strength needed to go forward. A strength to make right decisions in your life, giving you power to overcome those demons that have held you back most of your life.

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It has been my experience of forty years of sobriety that there is one main way to get sober and stay sober, and that experience I gained by experiencing it and watching others experience it. I have seen thousands of people come in and out of Alcoholics Anonymous over the years; it is amazing how many get to stay. But everybody doesn't catch the golden ring, only those people that reach out for it get to catch it. Make sure you are one of those people who reach out to grab that Golden Ring, which will be your decision to make.

The only ones and I do mean the only ones to make it were the ones who somehow were able to connect with a power that was more powerful than they were. This isn't bullshit that I am trying to sell to you, because if there was a different way I would tell you. This really is a cold hard cold fact. The task that lies in front of you if you decide to take this suggestion will be the hardest thing you will ever do in your life. But also it will be the easiest, yet you will not be able to accomplish it without some powerful help. I think I might be able to help you find that help.

I want you to open your mind up and think about what I am going to share with you, you are about to ask for a miracle to happen in your life. It will be a miracle of biblical portion that you aren't capable of understanding; if you are granted it it will change your life forever. A true miracle to be given to you, it will be an underserved miracle. That is right friend; this miracle will take you where drugs and alcohol couldn't. This miracle will allow you to experience things that you only dreamt about; it will give you gifts beyond your comprehension. It will give you your life back, your self-respect back, now what is that miracle worth? This

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miracle will take you from that awkward stage to one of comfort and serenity.

This miracle I am talking about won't make you go to church; it doesn't care if you go to any Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. You won't even have to go to Drug Rehabilitation clinics. This is going to be something that you can do while lying in your bed at night all by yourself. Before you say no I want you to know that is exactly how I found that power that was greater than I over forty years ago, a power that is still helping me to stay sober this day. By the way, I have enjoyed the hell out of my sobriety all these forty years.

Here are some more realities that I want you to think about before you come to any conclusions, as a little kid your mom or dad probably taught you how to pray. As I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep, if I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take. Or they might have taught you the Lord's Prayer to say. Hell they might not have taught you any prayers at all, and that is okay also.

Maybe you went to church as a young person or you might even still be going to church at this time, maybe you are questioning if God is real or if He is even working in your life. These thoughts and these doubts are very common for a lot of people, they are not a reason to beat yourself up over.

I remember as a young boy my mother preaching to me about how great God was, I would look at her and laugh. I told her if God was so damn great, why were we living this miserable life that we live. You would have thought that would have been enough for

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her to quit preaching, well she never gave up on me. She knew she believed in God, she also knew that somehow or someplace he would reveal Himself to me.

Even in the last days of my drinking I would cuss God out when I was driving home from the bars, it was very obvious to me then that it had to be his fault. Hell I was blaming him for every miserable thing in my life, yet I didn't even believe He existed. It had to be God's fault; otherwise I would have to take blame for my failures. I couldn't admit no matter how hard I tried that I was the one, I was the one who brought this disgrace upon myself and my family. I still get a big chuckle out of that truth every time I think about it.

So here is the question, a question that even a drunken drunk or beat down drug addict can understand and answer. Is God even real, and if He is can He or will He even help you? If you are like I was you are going to say no and hell no. It is normal for you to answer that way; there is nothing in your life to make you think any different. It is impossible to believe in something you have never experienced, why would you think any other way. Just remember though, keep an open mind.

To me those same answers would be as simple as night and day now, yes He is and Hell yes He will. I can answer the way I did for the simple reason I have experience Him, experienced Him when I didn't even think it was possible. Not only will He help you turn your life around friend, it is almost impossible to make those changes without His help. You are asking for a miracle to happen, you know it and I know it.

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Get rid of your stupid superman mentality bullshit, which is only for grade school children. Adults understand the true complexities and difficulties of life; they understand the need we all have to survive in life. They understand we will do whatever we need to do to survive, and I mean whatever. It is time now to grow up, and take the responsibility for your own life. Don't say you don't want to because that is a lie, you might be afraid and that is okay. But you still want to.

I can see some of you if you have got this far reading thinking to yourself, is this guy Steve a complete idiot. No he is not an idiot, he is a person that wants to somehow reach out and make a difference in your life. He wants to share with you what he has learned over forty years. Maybe just maybe somehow help you to change your life. To get off the booze and get off the drugs, wouldn't you want that also?

Here is some thoughts that I want you to think about, if God is real what would he be like? Did God make everything? If He did or didn't, then who in the hell made all these things? Did you make them? Did someone you know make them? In all honesty you have no idea what or who created all the things we enjoy or see with our eyes. The truth of the matter is we just take everything for granted, as long as we have been here it has been here. It is just the way it is, simple as that.

Here is one thing I think we all can agree on, there definitely is a Power Higher than any of us that created what we enjoy here. This Power seems to be able to make things happen that we know no man can make happen. If this Power that is higher than you can help, by all means I want you to grab ahold of it with all your

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might. It is imperative that you get some kind of help, a help that is able to take you to the world of soberness.

If we are being honest with ourselves, we don't know what God looks like. Hell we don't even know if he goes by the name of God, that is just a story that was passed on down through the years to all of us. Well what does God look like, well no man really knows because no man has ever seen Him. We do see pictures all over the place of Him, a white guy with long gray beard and hair? But the bible tells us He was Jewish decent, then how in the hell could He be white? Nobody really knows and neither do you, so don't beat yourself up over it.

What is important right now is simple, you need a power that is able to take you from your world of misery and deliver you to a sane world. You can name him or call her any name you want if that will help you, me personally I call mine God. So for the sake of this book I will continue to call Him God. But I want you to know for you, any power that is Higher than you is a great place to start.

So would God or your Higher Power even care about you a drunken loser drug addict, if not why wouldn't He? I don't want you thinking about those prayers your mom taught you or you learned in Sunday school, use your brain because you have a beautiful brain.

Here are the main things you need to think about, if God or your Higher Power is really true and created all that we see. Then That Power completely understands everything you have ever experienced in your life, and why you have experienced it the way

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you did. He doesn't hold condemnation over you, because he understands and He created you. And if he completely understands, why in the world wouldn't he want to forgive you and help you out? These are question you need to ask not me, but you need to ask Him.

Forget that big drawn out prayer that you memorized over the years, a prayer that you probably questioned a million times and now have forgotten anyways. Real simple friend just ask God to ***HELP YOU, PLEASE GOD HELP ME*** from deep down in the inner core of your being. Scream out from deep down inside of yourself and mean it when you ask Him, then get ready to change your life. Tell your Higher Power that your life is a total wreck and you need help, and you don't have the power but you know He does. If He can make the mountains and set the sun in the sky, you know That Power can help you with this addiction problem. Whatever you do don't you dare tell me you are not capable of saying ***HELP ME Higher Power, HELP ME GOD.***? It is time to grow up and take responsibility for your own miserable life for once, this would be one hell of a beginning.

It is probably the most powerful prayer known to mankind, yet a prayer that is unknown to so many. Believe it or not many spiritual people don't or won't use that wonderful prayer, hell you will have the edge over many of them. Help me God, scream it if you have to. Scream it with everything deep down inside of you, allow your spirit to touch His spirit.

I think sometimes man doesn't want to change; sometimes man likes the darkness he lives in. ***Help Me, Help Me, Help Me, Help Me God***; I can't make this change in my life without your help. It

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is too damn hard without Your help; I need You to help me. Is that so difficult?

Will it be easy when you start to make the transition from one life to another, hell no it won't be easy. You can't live down in the gutter for fifteen or thirty years and expect thing to be simple overnight, but it will be possible and you will be able to accomplish it. Just remember the two magic words, ***HELP Me***. That is the greatest prayer ever prayed a prayer that many many people have used and continue to use every day.

If you get your ass in trouble as you recover, just remember, ***Help Me Help Me, Help Me, Help Me.*** You will be amazed my friend how much help He will help you with. Angelic Miracles will come from all over the place, just to assist you in your time of needs. He who starts the house is capable of finishing the house.

Be ready for the change to come and expect that miracle, and yes there will be a change to come. Will you have to do thing differently? Hell yes, you can't live like you lived before and expect your life to be different. If you think you can you are blowing smoke up your own ass. Besides, not drinking is going to give you something you want more than anything in the world; it is going to give you back your ***Self-Respect***. It is going to give you your family back, if you haven't already destroyed that blessing.

When God starts helping you and it feels a little uncomfortable a little awkward, don't run off like a little kid crying it is too difficult. This is your life you are fighting for friend, well then fight for it. If this was easy then everybody would be able to do it, you have what it takes to make it.

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Chapter 8:---You will need help

This is one of those moments in time that you will have to make a decision that will have a major impact on your life, a decision that only you can make. This will be the second major decision that you have ever made in your life, first one being when you asked a Higher Power to Help You. Now you will need other people to help ***(Help---The activity of contributing to the fulfillment of a need or furtherance of an effort or purpose)*** you, you will not be able to make this journey on your own.

Now it is time to use your head for something besides a hat rack, okay I had to throw that in. That comment is a dead giveaway to how really older than dirt I am. Anyway let's get back to the story, you will need help my friend. Unless you are capable of leaping tall buildings with a single bound, or run faster than a speeding bullet you will need help. I don't care who you think you are, this thing called sobriety you can't do by yourself. Yes it will take many people to accomplish what you would desire to accomplish, and it will take more than three weeks.

Admitting that you need help doesn't mean you are a weak person, shit that is grade school mentality to even think that way. It actually means you are a pretty smart strong person, it means you have figured out how to accomplish some difficult adult things. It means that you want to be successful in your life, and that you are willing to do whatever you have to to accomplish it.

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Here is a truth that most normal people don't like admitting, alcoholics and drug addicts are very intelligent people. They don't want to admit it because they find it intimidating. The problem with people like us we don't appear to be intelligent when people see us do the thing that we do. Nevertheless our intelligence is at a high level, a very high level. With that fact stated here is another fact, intelligence is not enough by itself to keep you sober or clean. It will take other sources, resources that you are not probably familiar with.

Here is an example, an example that I think will clearly slow what I am trying to say. Not too long ago my wife was diagnosed with cancer, kind of like when we diagnosed ourselves with alcoholism or drug addiction. Anyway with that said, she had surgery a short time later and the doctor said the cancer was removed. The doctor was excited to inform us that he felt that they were able to get all the cancer; we were beside ourselves to say the least with the great news.

In our minds we were thinking how great is this, we won't have to deal with this cancer shit anymore. Well that didn't last long before we were informed that there would be other things we needed to do, like Radiation and Chemotherapy. You have to be kidding me I thought to myself, I thought you said you got it all doctor? "We did get it all," he said, "the Radiation and Chemotherapy are just insurances to make sure it doesn't return."

So this nice doctor goes on to completely explain to us how this cancer thing works, and I guarantee it wasn't like we thought it worked. He explained kind of like I am doing with you now. He said they would be doing Radiation just to make sure they got all

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the cancer, sometimes it is so small you just can't see all of it with the naked eye. So thirty treatments of radiation should accomplish exactly what we want it to accomplish. So naturally we do as the doctor suggests, why in the world would I argue with a cancer doctor. No matter how damn smart I thought I was, my wife's life was on the line.

That's why when he said we will need even more treatment I didn't even think about arguing with him; yes we will need to go on chemotherapy for five to ten years. Get the hell out of here I am now thinking, shit I thought we got everything?

Nope the doctor went on to explain to me and my wife that cancer was no joke, if for some reason this shit comes back it will be twice as hard to get rid of. Now here is the catcher for you, he told my wife that it would be her decision to make if she wanted radiation or even chemotherapy. Well hell who in this world would ever tell that doctor no? Who in the world would think they would be lucky enough to not use the radiation and chemotherapy? So I am asking you, do you feel lucky? Hell your life is on the line here, you make that decision.

If you feel lucky throw this book into the garbage can and get busy living your life, there would be no need to continue to read. If you don't feel so lucky like I didn't feel lucky either, let's finish the rest of this story. Just remember friend, nobody is going to make you do anything that you don't want to do.

Just like for cancer they have specialists to help the sick patients, well if you are an addictive person there is special help for you also. Can a person make it through this tangle web that we have

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weaved; I imagine they can if they get lucky. But the odds are stacked against them; why not increase your odds? Why not get some help?

Let's take a look at some of the help groups that are out there, many people will try ***Rehabilitation Clinics*** if they have the resources. These will vary from low end to high end, depending on how fat your wallet is. Is one facility any better than another facility? I doubt that very much, the only difference is the person who goes to the high-end support thinks they are getting something special.

Most of these places are thirty or sixty day stays, part of their program is to integrate their patients into Alcoholic Anonymous. They know for the person to be successful they will need long term support, a support that they aren't able to give. And to be honest if they had long term support most people wouldn't be able to afford it.

You could even consider using a ***Local Psychologist***, if you have enough money. This is a place that you might want to attend three or four times a week, as you can guess it would quickly get very expensive. Nevertheless, this is one of many options afforded to you.

A Psychologist would take the time and analyze why you do what you do the way that you do it, then map out a plan for you how to deal with those issues. Many recovering alcoholics and drug addicts find it necessary to seek out this professional help. There is no shame in going to this level of recovery, only the recovery is what becomes important.

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Many Psychologists in your local area specializes in addiction type treatments, an area of help if you think it will help.

Everybody knows somebody that goes to ***Church***, family member or friend or even a neighbor. Everybody also knows that these people are more than willing to help out a stranger; it is their mission in life to teach what they know about God. If you reach out to these people I am sure they will not hesitate to reach back. A lot of people find redemption in their lives through the churches and religions; I think I read where there are over 2,000 different religions in the world.

If you care to go this way at least you have lots of options to choose from, a friend of mine who was a heroin addict found his sobriety this way. Now of days a lot of churches have set up drug and alcohol programs inside of them, I think they are called ***Teen Challenge***. Not sure but have heard they are pretty successful.

Myself I chose to go the route of ***Alcoholics Anonymous*** for the help I needed, it was a program that was and is very beneficial to me. A therapeutic program designed not only to help me, but over time teach me to understand better the battle that I fight. One of the beauties of this program they are available worldwide, if you need them they are there. AA as they are called worldwide is a free organization; only a small contribution is suggested at each meeting. Many recovering people that I have met in AA during their early recovery are short on funds, so this program is a great start for any recovering person.

Through the program of Alcoholics Anonymous I was able to get my feet grounded to the ground, and then I sought out going to

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church with my family. I am a strong believer in using any resource that is available to all of us, when it is necessary.

The beauty of it is that there are many options available to you, and that you and you alone will be the one making that decision what you do with your life. For the first time in many years probably for most of you, your life will be headed in a positive direction because you made that decision for that to happen. As you are finding out no one is superman, everybody needs help at one time or another in their lives.

No man or woman is an island into themselves……***Author unknown***

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Chapter 9:---Steps

After realizing awkwardness is a state of mind you are not comfortable in, maybe you need a way to combat that awkwardness when you experience it? It is time now to make another grownup decision in your life. You would love to run just like you did in school and cut class, no longer though are those options available to you. This time you are going to do the adult thing, you are going to start fixing those things in your life that are broken.

If you decided to go the Alcoholics Anonymous way or the Teen Challenge these steps will be taught to you, if not I will give you a glimpse into how they can help you. Either way they will be here for your use, to use as you chose to use them. Remember one thing, no matter what happens with your recovery you and you alone will make the final decisions of what you do.

The question becomes how do you do that, how do you fix twenty, thirty, or maybe even forty or more years that are shattered? I would imagine if you asked a thousand people you would get a thousand different opinions on how to do that. Since this is my book you are going to get my opinion, for whatever it is worth.

Since everything in this book is based off what I have personally experienced, this new opinion will not be any different. I learned or should I say ascertained over thirty-nine years that by following the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, that I would be able to find a balance in my life that was forbidden before. It in turn gave me a way to deal with the day to day difficulties that popped up in

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my life, those things that before rendered me useless. If ever there was a panacea in my life this definitely was it.

So like I have said from the beginning of this book, everything that has anything to do with your life you and you alone will make every decision. Think about it friend, no longer anyone to blame for the outcome of your life, except yourself.

If you are interested I want you to put the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous to work in your life. I want you to have that edge in succeeding, to be able to take an advantage of your own situation. Think about it, you are going to make the odds in your favor instead of being against you. Make no mistake about this my friend; this monster that we are and will be fighting is no joke. This demon will ravage everything about you and your family, it respects ***NO ONE***. But you can and will win.

If you haven't got one yet go get the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous as soon as you can, this book could make the difference between if you live or die. Plus it can be a help studying these steps as we go over them. It can be bought for the price of a cube of beer, and it won't give you a hangover.

Just like everything else in life there is always a first, always a beginning. With this new journey that you are about to embark on has a beginning also. It is called the first step of a twelve steps program, the beginning of you taking back your life.

Let's take a look at all these twelve steps, you will find that they really aren't that difficult to deal with. Matter of fact what you are actually asking them to do for you, they are pretty simple. Keep in mind friend, if at any time you don't like what you are experiencing. You can do what you have done all of your life, throw it to the side and just take off. Nobody is going to judge

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you, hell nobody is really going to even care. It is your life nobody else's, you get to do with it what you want.

For what it is worth, these step were created by people who read the bible. They used ideas from verses that they had read, then just kind of rewrote them a little bit. So if you are a bible reader I am sure you will see them in your readings.

Step one:---"We admitted that we were powerless over alcohol, that our lives had become unmanageable." Now I want you to think about this for a moment, really think hard. If you do you will realize you did this the night you asked God to ***Help You***, you have already done this. As you can see the mountains didn't collapse around you or the oceans over flood by your actions, but what did happen was a new beginning. It will be a magical beginning of changing your behavior of going down the road one way then another better way.

You are learning the importance of admitting your own powerlessness, and how unmanageable your life really is. As long as you hold on to the belief that you can somehow control your addictions, you will never be free of them. You need to understand that you can never—for as long as you live—use alcohol or drugs again, and this is the first step toward that understanding. It will mean more than just agreeing with the text in front of you. You have spent your whole life thinking you possessed some control, thinking you could manage your problems —you will need to abandon that belief completely.

This will constitute the foundation on which your new life will rise; no longer will you walk alone. Before you can fix a broken life, first one must admit that it has become unmanageable.

Step two---"We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." You realize and you realized this a long time ago, you have no ability to make changes in your life. Hell if you could do that you would have done that years ago,

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instead you chose to do that long slow miserable decline that you chose. Besides most of the stuff you believed in turned out to be false, even though you protected that falsehood with all your life. Throughout your life, the ideas you believed most strongly ended up being completely false. That you could drink successfully, that money would solve your problems, or running, or hiding, or blaming—all of it was complete bullshit. You lacked the skills to bring any meaningful change to your life. It will become so obvious to you that your actions have been those of an insane person. You kept repeating the same mistakes over and over, hoping for a different outcome.

God will teach you that insights are only a mere rearrangement of facts, how to look around the world and see things you weren't capable of before. He will show you a different way to live once you believe He can restore you to life.

We are who we are, what we are, and where we are because of our prior decisions. Well it is time to take note of that truth. It is time to recognize that your decisions have led you to this place in your life. It is time to decide who you will serve and trust with the rest of your life. This is a decision just like the other decisions you have made, chose wisely because it will have long term effects on your life.

You should be happy and proud of yourself knowing that your family and you now stand a chance at a different life. This is all because you chose awhile back to take back your life and take control. You have made a simple decision to believe now, a decision that before you weren't willing to make. Your decision required an action, an action that you made on your own.

Step three---"We made a Decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him." Your understanding of God at this time is very limited, but know this when you asked God or your Higher Power a short time back to

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Help You, you really were just making a decision to turn your life over to Either Ones care. Your job now is to continue to place your faith in that Power, and to continue to learn what you can about that Power and Its Will.

What is important at this stage is for you to continue to advance, to create a separation between now and the last time you drank or took any drugs. Remember this race you run now will take time, it took you a lifetime to get here. This journey will not be accomplished in three week, three months, or even three years. It will take the rest of your life, but it will be worth it. Like I said earlier, I have thirty-nine years and I am still growing. And a little secret here, I am loving every moment of it.

Step four:---"We made a searching and fearless Moral Inventory of ourselves." The inventory you're about to do isn't about anyone but you. You shouldn't seek out the harms and wrongs you think other people have done to you. You should look for things that are broken in yourself—jealousies, hate, fear, pride, slothfulness, insecurities, ego, and rage. You will be creating a list of the traits that had caused so much damage in your life, and that that list will teach you to understand the complexity of your life and addictions. Before anything inside of you can be fixed, you will first need to understand what is broken.

It isn't important at this time to understand what is broken outwardly in your life—as in *symptoms*. You need to know what is broken internally—the *syndromes*. Alcoholism and drugs has damaged your soul, and that realization is very important for your recovery.

Take a piece of paper and divide it into three sections, just like the Big Book suggests in chapter five. Label the sections with the words "*resentments*," "*causes*," and "*effects my*."

The only requirement at this time is to be honest, not cash register honesty but deep down in your soul honesty. You can't turn to

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excuses or gimmickry to manipulate this list, look for the truth, and only the truth, if you want to be set free.

Ask yourself do you *want to live, or do you want to die*? If you want to live then begin listing all the resentments that you have been harboring. Remember all the people, places, and things you hated just like the book says. If you are like me and I pray that you aren't, I hated everyone and everything. I hated when there really was no reason to hate, yet I still did. Hell I discovered at the end that I hated myself the most. Take the responsibility for your own life, and it will feel damn good exposing those resentments.

Look for the causes why you hate each individual, place, and thing. Keep it simple as the book suggests. *Look for specific reasons why you hate*. You probably will realize how petty and immature you allowed your life to become. How most of your problems were self-inflicted—it was just immaturity that was slowly killing you.

Under the section ***"effects my."*** You will realize how all those resentments really affected you. This is where the ***"syndromes"*** of your illness lie, the explanation for your destructive out of control behavior.

I am sure you will notice the frequency of the words, and how they reflect about you: ***"pride (lack of self-esteem), hate (inability to control anger), jealousy (insecurity), and rage (misdirected anger.)"*** These admissions will be difficult, but they also will be necessary

I believe the more you do and the more honest you become you will find yourself drawing closer to God with each stroke of your pen, with each admission of fault. You will know just like I knew by the time you are done with step four, that in your hands you are holding something very special.

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When you made that decision a short time ago in step three to turn your life over to the care of God as you understood Him, well friend this is the beginning of how you do that.

Step five---"We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs." Like all the other steps step five is an important step. Some people think it is the most important of the twelve steps, but in all honesty it is only one out of twelve very important steps. You will discover like I and millions of others that step five will solidify your insights you gained while doing step four, the admitting of your wrongs to another human is the adhesive that bounds you with another.

This task you will find once you get started won't be that difficult, you will reveal secrets that you have held most of your life. Not because you have to, no because you want to. When I did this step I felt like a darkness was being lifted off of me, I discover a new freedom was coming to me. Also the person I shared with it seemed benefitted from this as much as I did, we both enjoyed sharing our difficulties in life with each other. So remember, everything isn't always just about you or just for you. Many things that we do in life even if we don't realize it can benefit other people.

Challenge your fears and open your life like you would an open book, allow Gods spirit to work inside of your life. You have nothing to hide at this point in your life; you will get out of this what you put into it. You probably also will discover I am sure just like I did, a comradery will be formed between you and the person you decide to share with.

Just because you have reached this point in your search for freedom, whatever you do now don't and I mean don't weaken in your resolve to finish this task. Many before you have got lazy, tired, weary, and afraid, you name it they got it, and they just gave up. Friend remember the prize that you are fighting for, it is a

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Grand Prize. You do whatever you have to do to achieve that prize.

Step Six--- "We were entirely ready to have God remove these defects of character." Are you ready to have God remove those things that you discovered in step four and five from you? Are you ready to give up that Rage, Hate, Jealousy, Pride, Fear, and all those other defects?

You don't have to be a rocket scientist here to understand how all this is going to happen, nope all you have to do is be ready. So the question is real simple, are you ready? Sure you do, you want God to do for you what you couldn't do for yourself. Hell who in the world that had half a brain wouldn't. Shit we might be Alcoholics and Drug Addicts, that doesn't mean we are stupid.

Just a little Faith and Willingness is all that is required from you or anybody for that matter. If you have that and why wouldn't you? Check it off as done. By this time in my sobriety I realized that God had been the only person to make a difference in my life, I was more than ready to trust him completely with my life.

Step Seven:---"We humbly asked Him to remove our Short Comings." Okay this is where it got a little confusing for me, humbly ask? Hell you have to be kidding me, I am an Alcoholic. There is nothing humble about me, laying in the gutter and I didn't feel humble. Yet with that reality observed, I knew that a little more than that was being required from me. So in the most humble way that you know how, just ask God to remove those shackles that have bounded you all of your life. Make sure you put in there to do that if He wants to do that. Ask Him to set you free just like He intended you to be in the first place. Ask him to help you overcome those things that you are addicted to; ***Ask Him*** just like you asked Him when you said that simple prayer of ***Help Me.***

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Like any other fight in life you will always feel the sting of the battle, this battle will be no different than any other battle. Allow God to advance you forward, to take you to that place that you have only dreamt of. Expect those miracles to come. By the way, if you haven't taken any medications since you started this journey, you are already experiencing one of the greatest miracles of your life.

Your objective should be everyday not to drink or take and drugs. These steps are an enhancement to your recovery; they will benefit you in many ways. But not drinking or taking drugs is a Must, a Must at all costs.

Step eight:--- "We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all." Not too difficult, just another list like in step four. It will take honesty and some difficult admissions, but you should be ready by this point.

The guilt of confronting people you have harmed can be overwhelming, it doesn't mean it is impossible to accomplish. Basically what you are going to do is make right those things that you made wrong from times past.

Just remember you are not going to do this right now, hell you might have already corrected some of these thing. You are just making a list and don't lose sight of that simple truth. Whatever you do don't forget the most important person to put on that list, that person is you. You hurt yourself more so than you did anybody else, so put that name at the top of your list.

You get that list done think about it and pray about it, this is just another step out of twelve steps. You are a warrior now if you have got this far, the rest will become easier for you.

Step Nine:--- "We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others." Okay this step is kind of spelt out real simple, fix the hurt that you

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have caused in these people's lives. Concentrate especially to those peoples name that you already have on your list, which will be a good place to start.

Don't beat yourself up over this; God will help you get this task done. If He has got you this far so far, what in the world would make you think he has or will give up on you now?

"Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." I had heard these words in every A.A. meeting I had ever attended. Those words always stuck in my mind. We would be forgiven as we forgave others, I thought. God would forgive my shortcomings as I became responsible, and as I forgave others theirs. I had resented so many people, places, and things because I felt they had harmed me, but now it was time for me to forgive others, and to ask for forgiveness myself. It is time to become an adult and take responsibility for your own life.

Take your list and seek out each individual on that list, don't forget you are on that list also. Apologize to each and every one, as you do you will notice that the Fear, Guilt, Pride, and all the other broken emotions will start to subside. This step will not make you perfect by no stretch of the imagination, but it will be another good start in making your life better.

Step Ten:-- "We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it." Okay this is a real simple step to take, even a ding dong like me got this one right off the bat. Just like it says, continue to do what I have done in the previous nine steps. Just don't quit or give up the gains I have made.

Most humans continue to have difficulties in their lives, all step ten is is a way to fix those problems when they pop up in our lives. We are creating a way to deal with everything in our lives forever, something that we didn't have before. If we don't live this way, we will return to that world that we came out of. I don't know about you, I always feel lucky but not that lucky.

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You now will have a way to handle the difficulties that come your way now, a technique to deal with those things that had baffled and confused you in the previous incarnation of your life. You will learn in time to use these steps for anything and everything when your life doesn't seem to be working. Learn that they have the power to change the way you perceive your world. Your life will become clearer if you take a personal inventory daily, and when you are wrong just admit to it.

Step Eleven:--- "We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out." This step here is kind of like what part you don't understand idiot. If you got this far, then I don't even need to tell you how you got there. God is working in your life, do everything you can through prayer and meditation to even make it better. Who in the hell wouldn't want it better?

Come on now, God has shown you a different way to live now. Stay in prayer and stay in meditation so you can keep what was so freely given to you, then watch the blessings from heaven come in your life, and if they don't come at least you will be able to deal with that also.

Here is a little prayer I learned early in my sobriety, a prayer that helped me get through a lot of difficult times. I am sure if you find your back against the wall, and take time to repeat these beautiful words. I am sure they will help you like they helped me: **God, Grant me the serenity to except the things that I cannot change, the courage to change the things that I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Thy will, not mine, be done.**

A friend of mine Bob shared with me his own insights about prayer. He said Steve prayer isn't a time for us to talk with God—it is a time for God to talk with us. Praying isn't a time for telling God what he can do for you—it is a time for God to tell us what

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we can do for Him. I slowly learned that there is a way to live a normal life, even for a recovering alcoholic. I learned that there is a solution for life's problems, provided I was willing to submit to God's will to achieve them.

Step Twelve:--- "Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to Others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs." One drunk talking with another drunk, it is the corner stone of Alcoholics Anonymous. You will realize in time that fear, rage, hate and jealousy—in their various and extreme modes have prevented you from acting in a normal way nearly all of your life. All the excuses you have made in your life, all the blame you leveled against others, all the running away from problems—these were just symptoms of the thing that ailed you. It should be more complicated than that, but here is the truth. Emotional roadblocks had created your behavior and prevented you from changing it. These are the true "syndromes" of your alcoholism. Realizing these truths you now stand a chance at a real and lasting recovery.

As for the twelfth step: Try in everything you ever do to help others, this isn't just about helping alcoholics and drug addicts. This is about helping any human being who needs help. As you give so will you receive.

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Chapter 10:---Now defy the odds

Okay you finally got to this point in your life, what in the hell do you do now? Let's take a look at some other realities, realities most don't want to look at. Hell most people don't even like to admit that they are even real, but trust me they are very real.

Inside of Alcoholics Anonymous they state there is a 50% success rate, if you follow certain guidelines. It has been my experience that the true rate isn't even close to that high, yet the book was written in the early days of its conception. But there is a rate of success. I am living proof that it is possible, not only possible to achieve but to have a lasting sobriety. I don't care who you are or where you come from, if I can make it for forty years so can you. Almost forty years.

I want you to think about this, if only one person could gain sobriety why not let it be you? Yes if only one gets it, then become selfish and become that one person. This addiction is a very serious matter; many if not most will succumb to their addiction. But there are those who will succeed, we see it every day in our program. You just have to make up your mind you are going to be one of those that makes it, then be ready to do whatever it takes to make it.

Be that person that the family talks about, I didn't think he could make it and the son of gun proved all of us wrong. I know look at him now, he use to not work and now we can't stop him. He is

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always on the road helping other down trodden people; damn he is almost like a saint. Yes, that could be you that they are talking about if you want it to be.

There are no more excuses in life for you, unless you make the decision you are going to be the idiot who stays drunk and loaded forever. Are you going to be the stupid person who gave up his whole family for this shit? Think about that one, you are willing to give up your whole family just to get loaded or drunk. Doesn't make much sense does it? Defy all the odds ***(Defy---Resist or confront with resistance,)*** so like I did and prove every one of them wrong.

When I worked inside the prison for twenty years, yes the maximum security prison I learned a lot of things inside there. The housing units were filled with young men who were in there for alcohol/ drug related offenses, most of them doing life sentences. Don't be stupid friend; grab the golden ring that is being offered to you.

Defy the odds my friends like I did over forty years ago, be that family member that the whole family brags about every day. When they are talking about you this time, let them be talking about the good positive things you are doing in a positive way.

If you or anyone in your family is suffering from the devastating disease of alcoholism, why not make the decision to break the cycle? Why not become the one to beat alcoholism and win? This is part of my story of battling the unrelenting, devious opponent of alcoholism for almost seventy years, and of my unlikely life in all its ugliness and beauty. Through it all though, I learned to trust in Jesus and I learned to trust in God.

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"Who we are never changes. Who we become forever changes."
Author Unknown

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Epilogue

In January of 2018, my beautiful wife and I will celebrate 48 + 1 years of marriage. The one year is the illegal year that we lived together before we married, "We call that our best year ever." My loving wife Jody is still doing what she does best: being the mainstay of our family and keeping an eye on all of her brood. Her selfless giving over the years is what made my sobriety possible. Without her support, I would have never achieved my sobriety. Her gracious love of humanity, combined with a charismatic personality, makes everybody she meets or knows adore her.

On November 25, 2017, I celebrated my thirty-ninth year of continuous sobriety—over 13,700 days, one day at a time, one step at a time drug and alcohol free. It is the underserved gift from God I received that cold winter night so long ago, and this story is my other gift back to Him. Without God in my life, none of this would have even been possible.

Maybe This Time is a continuation of my other book ***Born Broken***, a memoir I penned in 2013 to motivate others that struggle with addiction. A Desperate, Hopeless, and Helpless disease that destroys so many unsuspecting families, it is a destroyer of humankind. ***Maybe This Time*** is just my way of making a difference, a way to somehow pay back for the gift given to me.

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Numbers to call for HELP!

Alcoholics Anonymous
1-800 870-3795
www.alcoholics-anonymous.org

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters

1-800-356-9996
www.al.anon.alateen.org

Narcotics Anonymous
1-818- 773-9999
www.na.org

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
1-888-333-2377
www.afsp.org

National Foundation for Depressive Illness
1-800-239-1265
www.depression.org

Suicide and Crisis Hotline

1-800-784-2433

http://suicidehotlines.com/national.html

National Association for Children of Alcoholics

1-888-554-2327

http://www.nacoa.org/

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Serenity Prayer

God grant me the serenity to
except the things I cannot change,
courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

"Thy Will not mine be done"

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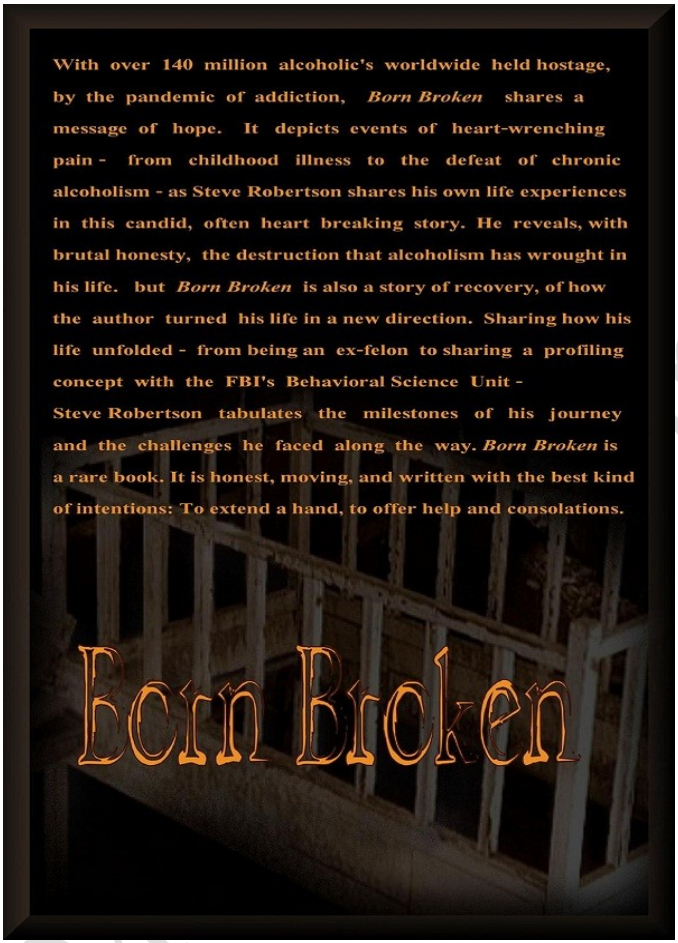
About the Author

Steve possess unique insights concerning this subject matter that set him apart from other authors. His vast personal knowledge and understanding about alcoholism qualify him to pen this story. His experiences have been gained the hard way, living them day after

day. He is a by-product of alcoholism in his childhood surroundings, and regretfully, he generated the same dreadful settings for his own family to suffer through.

By overcoming and conquering incredible difficulties, he has been able to transform a life of defeat into one of success. His enthusiasm about sharing his story, depicting the destruction he witnessed alcohol unleash in his family, is what motivated him to bring this booklet ***Maybe This Time*** to life.

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Born Broken is an emotional heart wrenching story about Alcoholism, a must read for those searching for answers about alcoholism.

MAYBE THIS TIME'

Maybe this time you will get sober,

Maybe this time you will stay sober?

Maybe This Time