



IN THE TRENCHES THE PARTY'S OVER. NOW WHAT?

It's no secret that I struggled with an addiction to cocaine and alcohol for many years — sixteen of them, to be exact. A quick Google search of my name uncovers that though, so this isn't breaking news. I was always very openly strung out and continued to be open throughout the process of cleaning up, nearly 5 years ago at this point. By the time my active using had come to a close, I had wrecked my life many times over, hurt everyone around me, and squandered professional opportunities the likes of which I will never see again. It has been a long road to put things back to how they are today, and there are still times where that messy person appears, ready as ever to destroy all over again.

It seems you can take the drugs away from the insecure screw-up, but the feelings which led to the drugs in the first place remain. Sometimes they are small and manageable, other times they are too large to hold. Even now, all these years later, not a day goes by where I do not think about giving up. It usually happens when I get my feelings hurt or if I feel overwhelmed by the extreme realness of the universe, which tends to hit me in unexpected waves at the most inopportune times. In these moments I would love nothing more than to ease my aching shame with a drink or hide myself from you, the world, in some kind of thick, white, transformative smoke. There are times where I would literally give everything just to feel nothing.

The trouble with me feeling nothing is that it comes at great cost. I know how that story ends. I lose my work, then my friends and family, then my belongings, then my life. Boom. It's over. Logan Lynn, dead at 32. No more love, no more music, no more words. I tell myself this story constantly so I don't forget what every day I'm alive really means. However hard things may get from time to time, they aren't anywhere near as hard as they will be if I get wasted. If I forget this I'm a goner.

My truth, unclouded by chemicals, is that I want to live. I want to be happy and healthy and loved just like everyone else. In fact, I deserve to be happy, healthy and loved just like everybody else. I am gifted in ways which are lost completely when I am drunk, and I do not like the kind of man I am when I am high on cocaine. In fact, no one does. He is mean and ugly. I actually have to give a shit about others in order to have others give a shit about me, and I have to give a shit about myself in order to give a shit about others.

Sometimes people ask me what my plan is for staying clean moving forward and honestly, there has never been much of a plan; there still isn't. I try really hard to stay in touch with the scared part inside me that knows if I end up going places I have no business being and start hanging around with people I have no business hanging around, sooner or later something bad is going to happen. I'm not involved in any kind of organized sober group and the principles of 12 step programs, while helpful for some addicts, simply don't work for me. I found success through a combination of harm reduction methods initially, lots of cognitive behavioral therapy, and rigorous honesty throughout (and about) the process...but there are never any guarantees with this stuff.

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I can blow it all in an instant if I don't keep myself in check. There will never be a day that I am suddenly able to party moderately. It's just not going to happen. I do believe that there will come a day where the ever-present itch in my brain goes away, though. The times where I want to throw it all away are fewer and farther between these days, which is a relief. Eventually, my guess is that they will go away all together. I hope so, at least. Life is good now for the first time since I was a very young boy. I have more joy than sorrow, more excitement than disappointment, and I am living a life I never thought was possible before. It's challenging to keep my head above water sometimes, but it's always worth the effort.

If you are struggling with addiction there are tons of different ways to get healthy and stay that way. My advice is to find what works for you and then stick to it..but please do it soon. The world misses the *real* you. ■

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