

5-31-06

Dr. Grosjean;

I found myself drunk AGAIN, one relapse after another for the past 3 months. I had had 8 1/2 yrs of sobriety, but loosing a job was the beginning of my depression, which turned into more anxiety and then isolation. 2 friends took me to Harbor because I reached a point where I was seriously considering suicide.

At Harbor, I physically detoxed with medication, food and lots of sleep, but as I began to feel better, I needed more. I was active in AA, and planned on going back to my program, however I needed to understand my depression & anxiety. I wanted to better understand why after 8 1/2 yrs of wonderful sobriety, I blew it when I bought my first bottle of vodka.

After being interviewed by Sunnyside, I was enthusiastic about the program and decided to go.

Sunnyside put structure back into my life. Starting with an early breakfast, then moving into exercise, followed by groups that provided me with a lot of coping skills. There were all levels of people, and I got to know just about everyone, but most important, through them, I got to know

myself better. All 7 days were filled with groups & activities, and I attended every single one.

I found myself applying the coping skills immediately, and realized how simple it can be to avoid confrontation or an argument. stress/anger management broke down patterns & triggers, and while I benefited to write down my own experiences, I learned a lot hearing from others. Doing the writing exercises as suggested, was one thing, but then sharing with the group and getting <sup>feedback</sup> was priceless. In "Leisure Management" I discovered I had stopped doing things that brought me pleasure & made me happy, realizing that part of the balance in my life included having fun. It was then I found I was respecting other people, but wasn't showing the same respect to myself. I used to have balance, work, yoga, AA, healthy social life & ~~work~~ museums, Sunnyside helped me get back on track <sup>of</sup> being aware, making better choices & planning my time, ~~and~~ including fun things.

Above all the staff has been kind & understanding as well as flexible to help me with my personal needs.

I'll miss everyone. Kim's enthusiasm and genuine care is priceless. Paula's upbeat attitude. Tim's dedication & diplomacy. Narih & Sylvia's kindness with grace. (and thank goodness Sylvia donated clothes that were the right size for me)!

I leave today with more knowledge & inner strength. AA will always play a strong role in my life, but I plan attending emotional support groups and one on one therapy as suggested.

Thank you Sunny side. I'm eager to live again.

Peace

a