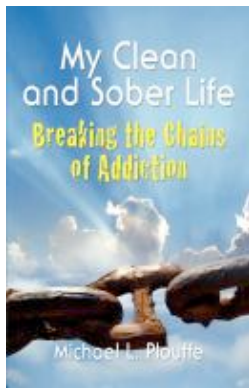




# My Clean and Sober Life

## Breaking the Chains of Addiction

Michael L. Plouffe



*The true story of one man's journey, from 37 years of drug and alcohol addiction, to the recovery program he uses to regain control of his life. Michael takes you through his program and introduces you to a new and positive way to live that is filled with gratitude, serenity and love. A must read for anyone suffering from chemical dependency and wanting a new way of life, clean and sober.*

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First Edition

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## **Introduction**

Addiction affects millions of North Americans every single day. Not only does the alcoholic/addict suffer but the innocent close to them experience the pain and ill effects of it as well. Parents, spouses, children, friends and employers of the alcoholic/addict know all too well the negativity associated with addiction. The lies, lost jobs, debt, abuse and neglect all become part of the innocent victim's life as well as the user's life.

Drugs and alcohol start out as our best friend. In the beginning they do for us exactly what they are supposed to do—help us cope with our problems. But that method of self-medication is short lived. The more we use the more drugs and alcohol we need in order to suppress our feelings and help us cope with our old issues, along with the new ones. The next thing we know, we have just added addiction to our growing resume of problems. Drugs and alcohol have now become our worst enemy and our worst nightmare.

*Michael L. Plouffe*

By no means am I suggesting that I am an expert on addiction or that the program I write about is the only way to recover. What I write about works for me, and if it can change my life in a positive way then it may be able to change yours too.

In the early stages of recovery we all need to follow the same path. Meetings and counselling are crucial to any long term recovery program. Because many of us suffer from some type of emotional trauma—usually from childhood—it becomes necessary to eliminate these negative feelings. I found counselling to be an effective strategy in working through these issues.

Successful recovery from drug and alcohol addiction is all about change. I mean positive, thought provoking, life altering change. Changing the way we think, act, react and even our jobs—that is if you are employed in a bar or brewery—if need be. This personal change does require a strong effort on our part but becomes extremely rewarding for us and those that are involved in our lives.

*My Clean & Sober Life*

Having an open mind is mandatory. Being willing to try new things gives us an advantage in defeating our addiction. We may not be responsible for falling off the horse but we are responsible for getting back on. Our addiction is our responsibility. We have to do whatever possible to fix what is broken.

I battled with addiction for thirty-seven years. In all my previous, short term attempts at recovery—one hundred and five days was my maximum—I always wanted to do it my way. After all, I know what's best for me, right? Wrong! I thought I knew but not only was I being dishonest with myself I desperately wanted to make it as easy as possible. I had never taken away my reason for using; therefore, my need to use always remained inside me. I suppressed my emotional pain with drugs and alcohol. My hurt was real and every day reminded me of that. I had major issues that needed to be addressed, but I was always too afraid to re-enter back into the world that I had worked so hard to cover up with self-medication. I lived a horrible, painful life of zero self-esteem. My self-worth was non-existent. I honestly believed that I deserved

*Michael L. Plouffe*

to suffer for the rest of eternity—and suffer I did. I never allowed myself to feel any good emotions, and if any came close, I would slam the door right in its face.

There's a big difference between getting sober and staying sober. W. C. Fields once said, "It's easy to quit drinking. I've done it a thousand times." How true is that? I can totally relate to that quote. Staying quit is the tricky part, but it is not impossible.

I'll be honest. Recovery isn't easy, plain and simple. Abstinence is 51% of recovery and positive change is 49%, which equals 100% for a successful, happy recovery. It requires a strong will, patience, and tolerance in order to work on the negative issues from the past and to change negative attitudes into positive ones. But trust me, recovery is possible for everyone and, in the end, it is all worth it. It is important to keep our recovery program simple. Over complicating it adds unwanted stress. Recovery should be taken seriously but it should also be fun. But remember, Keep It Simple!

The reason I wrote this book is not to sell a million copies, although I wouldn't complain if I did. Rather, it is to share my



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program of recovery with those still suffering. If I'm able to help just one person change his or her life, then all of this will have been worth it.

This book is mainly about the program I currently use to change all my negative thinking and behaviours into positive ones. The negative self-talk, the constant complaining, belittling others and judging people were all part of a world I used to call home. I now live in a new world—a world full of self-worth, gratitude, spirituality, positive thinking and happiness. I have a good reason to live and to enjoy the blessings that I am offered every day of my grateful, wonderful life.

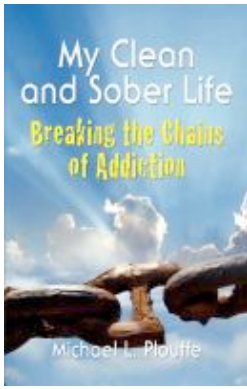
If there is a chapter that you feel would benefit your life in a positive way then by all means apply it to your program. These chapters are based on my success and are designed to motivate those wanting change. You never know: you may find all or some of this helpful. The only thing I know for sure is it works for me.

The first part of this book is my story. I don't go into to great detail about every aspect of my life; however, I do emphasize

*Michael L. Plouffe*

how I was raised and how addiction spiraled out of control, leaving me a broken mess of a man.

The second part of the book is the recovery program I apply to my life, every day, in order to achieve and maintain the peaceful, sober and happy life I now live and deserve.



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