

Gary Carter

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At the end of 2002 I moved out of step 13 and into my own apartment. I figure as long as I stay away from alcohol...stay focused... take it one day at a time, I'll be okay. You see, I'm tired of bad things happening to me. I know that if I decide to drink I'm deciding I want to have a bad life or no life and I know that I don't want to do that. I think about drinking but I don't have no desire.

I'm 47 now and it's taken me a long time to figure it all out. I was a young alcoholic... maybe at the age of 17 fully blown. I managed to hold down a job most of the time. For 10 years I worked in nursing but lost it all when I couldn't control my drinking. I made a few attempts at getting sober but I always went back to the bottle. Then in 1995 I again made a fresh start. I got a job as a mailroom clerk. The company I worked for printed checks. I was there until 1999 and had worked my way up to a pressman.

But somewhere along the line I lost my way. 2 years into my new life I started drinking again. It caught up with me the next year. I started missing days at work. I wasn't drinking on the job but I was drinking too much at night to make it in. By 1999 my boss said he had to let me go.

I went to detox and they showed me a list of programs I could try to get into. I picked step 13 because someone said it was a good one. For the first 3 months at step I lived in the dorm and did a lot of day labor. Then I got a full-time job at Colorado Saddlery. My job is to detail saddles. In August it'll be 3 years and I'm just so glad to be working.

I just take it one day at a time. I believe in God and I pray each day. I try to take my time and do what I need to do, not what I want to do. I'm just trying to build a life without alcohol and drugs. It's not hard it's just staying focused. I think about drinking sometimes and then I think if the consequences... the bad parts of it so that kind of keeps me away.

As I said earlier, I moved out of step 13 a few months ago. It was hard getting an apartment. I have some bad credit. I tried to take care of it while at step 13. It came from not paying my bills while I was drinking. By the time I left step 13 I had cleared up a lot of it. I'd paid off my IRS bill. I'd paid off a couple of more bills. My credit wasn't great but it was getting better.

Finally, I did get an apartment. I live by myself because I like being by myself. I still talk to some of the guys at step. I still visit. I've been through a lot of

programs in my 30 years of drinking but step 13 is the best.
It's worked out for me and it really is one of the
best.

Down the road I'd like to continue
working and maybe try to get into night school. I might go
back into the medical field. I really liked working in nursing. So someday
I'd like to become an LPN.

But for now I'm just trying to get used to being on
my own again. Everything is going good.... not actually
good... but okay. It's a lot better than what it
was, what it could be.