



## **SAMUEL SPROW**

### **RECOVERING ADDICT AND ENTREPRENEUR**

Sam was born in 1977. His mother was caught up in addiction, but she did the best she could every day. He, his two older sisters, and their younger brother had a pretty tough childhood. He ended up in his first rehab when he was 18 and continued drug and alcohol addiction for another 10 years. Even after he got sober, he battled anxiety and depression for many years.

He has looked for relief from that in many different religions – Buddhism, Taoism, Daoism etc. He read books like the Bhagavad-Gita, the Koran, the Bible, and about different types of meditation. Over the years, he tried chanting, fasting, mantras, and many other things that he hoped would help him to overcome the issues that has struggled with.

Everything he learned led him to write this essay; it is a compilation of what has helped him the most.

Since becoming sober, he has purchased four homes as sober transitional houses, with the goal of helping people to transition from homelessness, rehabs, and halfway houses back into society. This is not a government-funded program. This is just something that he does for God's children. He also owns multiple small home-improvement companies.

He is currently in a relationship of 6 1/2 years and is engaged to be married. This will be his first and last marriage. He has never had any children but feels that God has given him every opportunity to take care of and help many of God's children.

He's not yet where he wants to be but he's a long way from where he once was. Every morning he wakes up, thanks God for his first breath, and thanks God for everything that he can possibly think of in his life. He then asks God to please show him what he can do to help others today. Specifically, he asks God's guidance for where he should go, what he should do, and whom he should help. He asks God to make it obvious so that he doesn't miss it. Lastly, he thanks God for allowing him to be a channel of Love. He believes that the best thing anyone can do in this world is every day to try to leave it a little bit better than the way they found it.

# **A Servant or a Slave?**

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We all have this internal voice. For as long as we can remember, it has told us to be good boys and girls, to not do bad things, and to grow up to be helpful members of society, like policemen, firemen, and doctors. But then life happens and many of us start to rebel.

Once, when I was really young, I wanted something in a convenience store but I didn't have any money. When I thought about taking it, I remember some inaudible voice telling me not to. I took it anyway, but I knew deep down that it was wrong.

Years later, there were some clothes that I wanted, but again, I had no money. The same silent yet clear voice was there, telling me the correct path to follow. But did I listen? What do you think?

Then alcohol came into the picture. I knew that I shouldn't drink to excess, but I did anyway. Next, drugs showed up. I knew how destructive they are, but like a broken record, I kept ignoring that inner voice. No matter how bad anything made me feel, I kept rebelling. Every time the internal pilot advised me to turn in one direction, I would turn in the other, causing a decade-long downward spiral of addiction and homelessness.

How dark it was before the dawn, when fortunately, enough became enough, and I was somehow steered to my first AA meeting, where

I learned a lot about this inner voice, which had not just been trying to guide me, but to love me. Our new relationship started out very small without me even realizing it. I remember tossing a small piece of paper toward a garbage can, missing, and continuing to walk down the street. That loving internal guide was back, telling me, "Come on Sam, you need to pick that up," but of course that ornery part of me kept right on walking. Pretty soon, my stomach became so uncomfortable that I found myself turning around to pick it up.

When I did, I felt a weird sense of relief. Another day, I went to use a public bathroom and noticed that there was urine all over the seat. I proceeded to relieve myself but, with my new perspective, I was now baffled by the actions of some of humanity. How could someone do this and just walk away? All of a sudden, I was guided to clean the seat. At first, I rejected the idea. Disgusting, right? But once again, I surrendered and wiped off the seat so it was clean for the next person. Immediately I felt an indescribable sense of relief and strangely, I could finally breathe again. We all have many opportunities to rebel or be guided every day.

Today, I can see that I had been living in the bondage of self for most of my life, blaming my poor decisions on this loving guide I now know is God. Thank God.