



ASAP GRADUATION PAPER

I remember when I first heard Gina ask "what are the three sayings on the coin?" I thought that was so random and such a weird thing to say. But after I heard the sayings and what the coin was it really got me thinking. The sayings on the coin apply to me in a lot of different ways.

Things don't change; Things don't change- I think to me this shows where I was when I first started ASAP. I was convinced that I was fine and that I didn't need to change. Once I accepted the fact that I really needed help, I became open to the idea of change. Just by becoming open to the idea of change -things changed for me. I also think that the realization of my addiction led to the increase in my internal motivation.

Where you are, is where you are- to me this is like a little reminder to live in the present. I am where I am, not where I was (when I was using). Everything that happened, has already happened, I can't really live unless I let it go. Not forget it happened just grow from it. I'm at a place in my life where a lot of things will be going on and I can easily get too stressed about the future. Where I am, is where I am. Its always changing I just need to notice when it is and make sure to not get stuck in the past or future. Everyday is a new day; take it one day at a time.

Who's driving your bus- of the three sayings on the coin; this saying has applied to me the most during my time at ASAP. It was always a way to see who or what is in control of my life/bus. I think this is the part that's changed the most. Meth was when I first got to ASAP, cravings came next, then my parents and family, cravings again, then my friends, more cravings, and finally I was driving my own bus; I remember when I first heard that in staffing, it really meant a lot to me.

My three highest-risk situations were hard for me to identify, until I did the relapse prevention packet. So, in no particular order, they are: Negative feelings, cravings temptations or desires, and recovery plan or treatment problems.

Negative feelings because, if I'm feeling depressed I want to use to cope. I get all down on myself like there is nothing else in life. Whenever I used it took all that away, I didn't have a care in the world. I was happy, it was a falsified happiness but I was still happy.

A craving, temptations or desires, my drug of choice is meth, so the cravings I get are so intense sometimes it really drives me crazy. That craving could get so strong I would find a reason, or excuse to use. If I didn't handle it right I might do something I would regret. Recovery plan problems because if I feel like I don't have a direction in my life, then I would see no problem in using, that way of thinking would lead to a craving and that may lead to a relapse .

Some signs my parents, friends, and myself should look for when I'm in relapse mode are: increased cravings, dramatic mood swings, isolating myself, keeping secrets, lying with out reason, risky behavior, change in appetite. When ever I start to act like a person I'm not. When I am not behaving like my self.

The main technique I used to cover up my drug use was lies. Lying, a lot I don't think I told my parents the truth once the whole time I was using. Id say I have work when I didn't, id say I have to go home with a friend to do I project, if I was to spun out to go home id call and say I have to work later. Because I didn't have much of an appetite I would always say I ate something before I came home. To keep from getting to dehydrated I would drink Vitamin C packets in the morning. Visine when my eyes looked all yellow and red. I would chew a lot of gum so my breath wasn't noticeable.

I have noticed a lot of changes in myself since becoming clean. Physically I look different, my eyes are more "alive", I've gotten my weight back up, and I'm less jittery and anxious. Mentally and emotionally I have changed a lot. I have learned so much about myself, I have become more honest with my family, and my self, I have changed the way I think about things, the way I approach a situation and the way I handle it. I become more optimistic and happy, I am not only more the person I was before I was using, I am more the person I was before I was depressed. Before ASAP I looked at all of this a curse now its more of a blessing, I have grown in so many ways and I know it won't always be easy but now I have the tools and skills I'll need to handle it.

At first I thought the whole idea of family night was weird, it was my drug problem so why were they coming? Since then I have really seen the benefits, our communication is one thousand times better than it was before- and not just me and my parents, my sisters to. Everyone is happier and in a better mood, there are still fights but they are handled in a more effective manner. I have been able to rebuild trust with my parents in a much faster time than I expected and I've also learned things about my parents and sisters that I didn't know. My parents and sisters are starting to respect me again as well.

Staying clean is worth everything to me. I have grown such an incredible amount and I really know what I'm capable of handling. When I used, I let so many people down, I cannot believe I hurt them over and over again like it was nothing. For me to bring that disappointment back into my life would be such a disaster, it would ruin everything I have worked toward. I could never do that to my family, it

happened once. To do it again would be awful, they don't deserve it. Without drugs I have learned a lot about myself and if I continue with my sobriety I have no doubt that I will learn more. My internal motivation has grown immensely and I really know my own worth. Using brought me a temporary falsified happiness; I thought that was the best I could get. Now I'm more aware of who I really am, what I have the ability to do, what I can become. This "new happiness" is real and won't wear off and leave me feeling miserable. But above all staying clean is worth it to me because I'm doing it for me.