A Piece of My Life
Revised selection – original text by Erica Baulk, Alexandria
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To Open Your Mind, 2005 Edition

Pre-reading

Questions:
• What might this story be about?

Definitions:
• Sober – abstaining from alcohol use
• Accept – to believe as truth, or to agree to something
• Fortunate – having a good result; lucky

Reading

Today is my 25th birthday. I’m sitting at a desk at Minn-West College in Granite Falls, MN. The reason I’m in Granite Falls is because of Project Turnabout. I’m a recovering drug addict and alcoholic.

I came to Project Turnabout for treatment on September 23, 2004. This is my fourth treatment center. It is here that I believe I’ve finally found the tools I need to remain sober. I now know that I’m the one who needs to do the work to be successful in my sobriety.

My life, along with the lives of family and friends who love and care about me, has been filled with a lot of pain and hurt. I never thought I was a drug addict or alcoholic. In fact, my intentions were to be a law student, and to make something of my life. However, as a result of my 7-year use of drugs and alcohol, I’ve spent time in jail and treatment centers, and have suffered two overdoses.

Addiction is a disease that often puts people in jail, treatment centers, or cemeteries. I’m fortunate to have come to Project Turnabout. I’ve accepted my disease and have learned how to manage it. I have to thank my family, case workers, counselors, and peers. They have helped me save my life. Without them, I don’t know where I’d be right now.

I’m very grateful to have been given another chance at life. I aspire to be someone who can help and teach other addicts the same lessons that I have learned. I want to share my story in order to help others.

Level 5.5
Understanding

1. Where did the author receive the help she needed?

2. How have drugs and alcohol affected her?

3. What does the word intention mean?

4. What, or who, is an addict?

5. When did the author start using drugs and alcohol?

6. How do you think she is feeling about her life right now? Why?

7. What does she view as key in her sobriety?

8. What does the word aspire mean?

Writing

Option A: Write about how drug or alcohol addiction has affected your life, or the life of someone you know.

Option B: Summarize the author’s story.