While I Would Not Wish This Upon Anyone …

I would not wish addiction upon anyone. Yet I am conflicted about one aspect of my recovery, one that I do wish to share. I would hope that others could experience deep surrender of self. I realize it sounds like a contradiction, but it was the fulcrum about which my life pivoted.

I wish I could claim to have done it on purpose, so that I could give clear instructions for how to do it. However, there was no altruism in my actions, I was motivated purely by the desire to survive. Therein lies the rub. Most people cannot or will not relinquish control voluntarily. A life-threatening event often precipitates a true surrender. This was certainly the case for me - I felt that if I did not stop drinking that I would die. I knew I had exhausted every iota of willpower and self-discipline that I had. All my efforts amounted to a sand castle before the tide. In the final week my addiction laughed in my face. For the previous two days I had been drinking against my conscious will. I remember like it was yesterday thinking ‘I don’t want to be doing this’ as I watched my arm raise the glass.

Saturday morning around seven o’clock something snapped. I knew I was cornered and had nothing left to throw at the beast. I recall sensing a void, and momentarily experienced its blackness. Oblivion. My next thought was ‘I don’t know what to do. I need help.’ This gesture of willingness unlocked the door to my accidental surrender.

The sensation of being surrounded by love and light overcame me. I felt the addiction leave. ‘I don’t have to drink’ crossed my mind. I looked at my hands – my body felt different. I looked up at my wife and said “I think I need to quit drinking.” This was my first admission to anyone that there was a problem. The boat anchor around my neck fell to the ground, its chains cut by the same uplifting force that filled the void vacated by my ego.

This is the experience I wish for anyone that suffers. Minus the soul-crushing meat grinder of addiction. Some people seem to be able to muster the urgency necessary to get there on their own, at least so I have read. On the other hand, if you find yourself bulldozed by life, at least you know there is another path available. One that leads into the rooms. We will save a seat.