



Feeling understood in recovery

When he was a few months into his addiction wellness, Kai Morrison realized how good he had started feeling.

"I could feel myself just coming a little bit more alive. The day I came in here (to Face It TOGETHER), I was an engine running on very low oil, and now it's like now I'm firing on all eight cylinders," he said. "I've started to feel not only a sense of accomplishment, but a sense that I can face things better."

Morrison also noticed he's more patient with his family, handles day-to-day work issues efficiently and is in an overall better place mentally and physically.

"I feel great," he said. "I feel like no matter what going to come at me, I'm not running away from it."

In the last two years, Morrison has moved

locations and more than doubled business at his motorcycle shop. He doesn't believe either milestone would've been possible if he hadn't sought help for his addiction.

"It's really helped me with my self-worth," he said.

'Life of the party'

During the first several years of his business, Morrison didn't mind the drinking culture.

"We had pretty good national exposure. We've had some phenomenal opportunities with TV shows and other showcases," he said. "When we set up (at shows), you could come and drink with the guys. It was almost like I'm expected to be this guy, the life of the party."

“I realized this guy has been there, he has done it. He’s not just schooled in how to help me with my problems or anything... I don’t see degrees on these walls.”

At his shop in Sioux Falls, Morrison used to drink to get through the day. Although he didn’t drink at home, he had beer during the workday to relax and make it through the challenges of being self-employed. He said that resulted in a lot of inconsistency, especially for his family.

“My wife didn’t really know what she was ever going to get,” he said. “At the end of the day, was I going to come home and be in a great mood? Was I going to come home and be cranky? So now, I think more than anything, there’s consistency for her and my children.”

An eye-opener came one day at work while Morrison was doing some wiring. He hadn’t had alcohol for a few days, and his hands wouldn’t stop shaking.

“That’s when I realized that I was having a withdrawal. And that scared the crap out of me” he said.

That experience made Morrison realize he had an alcohol addiction, even though he didn’t fit the “typical alcoholic” stereotype. Those physical symptoms made him think about getting help.

“I was completely sick of it,” he said. “My way wasn’t working anymore.”

‘This guy understands’

Though Morrison had seen a counselor before, he didn’t feel understood when it came to his drinking.

“I was thinking, ‘You don’t really have the experience, you don’t understand,’”

he said. “You can’t just tell me to go home, take the beer out of my fridge and throw it away, because it will sit garbage for an hour and I’ll go get it and I’ll drink it. It’s not that easy.”

After coming to Face It TOGETHER and meeting his coach, Morrison said he looked forward to giving him a chance.

“I realized this guy has been there, he has done it. He’s not just schooled in how to help me with my problems or anything... I don’t see degrees on these walls,” he said.

Understanding how similar parts of his coach’s experience were to his own kept him engaged and interested in coming back, Morrison said.

“Knowing that and understanding that this guy has been there, this guy understands rock bottom. He understands that addiction is always trying to pull you back in,” he said. “And when he’s telling me a story about something he’s been through, I’m like, ‘I know exactly what you’ve been through. I’ve been there, what you just said.’”

Today, Morrison stays busy with his family and business. He still meets with his coach about once a month.

“Sometimes it’s just like I’m going to meet my friend for a cup of coffee. It’s not like counseling... I’ll hear people say, ‘I need a counseling session,’” he said. “Whereas I just want to go and see my friend again.”