

My name is Erik and I'm an alcoholic! My sobriety date is January 1, 1994. I've been with Southwest Airlines for sixteen years and my entire time spent here has been while in sobriety. I've been a Flight Attendant almost four years, and I'm very grateful for my transition to Inflight: the best move I've made in a long time. But getting sober was an absolute must. I only drank for a total of ten years, but I can assure you it was the longest ten years of my life.

I started drinking when I was thirteen and I went into treatment at the age of twenty-three. *"Wow! That's young!" some would say, but there really isn't any particular age requirement for wanting, or needing, to get sober. I totally sobered up at the age of twenty-four. I loved to party, and I did a lot of it. I didn't get in trouble every time I drank but every time I got in trouble I had been drinking. Countless days waking up with hangovers, blackouts, and not knowing how I got home are just a few things that went along with my drinking. My drinking led to ending up in jail several times, DUI's, quitting school, leaving home...even homelessness, etc. During my last bout before treatment, I was contemplating suicide as a very good option, but for the grace of God I made it into treatment.*

To expedite my story, twenty-four years later I was able to achieve all of my childhood dreams. *I became a firefighter, I've been cast in some blockbuster movies, and I've even modeled.... who would've thought! Most importantly, becoming a Flight Attendant and being placed in a position to be of service for a Co-Heart that may be struggling with this disease has been very uplifting.*

Giving up alcohol was the best thing I have ever done. I have great guys around to help keep me grounded and I can help them stay grounded. *I've found a wonderful team with FADAP, all of whom sacrifice time and energy to help out our peers. If you're reading this and being convicted, we will answer your call and assist in any way we can. The only thing you have to do is be courageous enough to call us. Or, if you're anything like me, when the pain outweighs the pleasure, hopefully you'll look for a solution. Again, my name is Erik and I'm an alcoholic.*

