

BRAD SEEVERS RACING



I'm Brad Seavers, motorcycle racer turned auto racer. We all have a story to tell. I am sharing mine in hopes that it will give you, or someone close to you, the courage and strength to move forward and find the better path that's out there waiting for you!

The first emotion I recall as a young child (3-4 years old) is that of fear. I remember watching my parents fight and my father going into a drunken rage...something that would become all too familiar throughout my life.

By the age 12, I had lived in fear almost every day of my life and believed this was just normal childhood. The fighting, drunken rages and fear continued into my teenage years. I began to realize that this was not the way it was supposed to be. I watched other kids growing up around me with smiles on their faces and participating in sports, going to games, dances, family events and living with no fear. Most of them loved doing things with their father. I experienced a few of those joyful days, but most often, those joyful days turned violent. Through it all, my father had the best of intentions.

By the age of 16, I fell into a state of anger and tried to cope through the use of drugs and alcohol. This became an everyday event. It may be hard to understand this next statement, but the drug and alcohol abuse made my state of anger feel good in peaceful kind of way. It was easier to live in anger then it was to live in fear. My alcohol and drug use continued into my late teenage years.

Between the ages of 18 and 20, I failed many times in my attempt to better myself. A career in the navy fell short and I was relieved of my duties in a very short time. My violent ways (fighting and rages of anger) were occurring almost everyday. The more I failed, the deeper I would fall. I felt alone in my struggles and unsure if I would ever find a way out.

On March 11th 1991, I came home completely wasted and angry. My mother, with tears in her eyes and a broken heart, apologized. She told me she wasn't disappointed in me. She was sad for the things I had to deal with throughout my childhood. She was sad to see me falling into the same way of life that had destroyed us from the inside out. She cried and blamed herself for letting this happen to me. She said, "You have grown up to be the very thing you have feared most in your life."

That night, March 11th 1991, was the biggest night of my life. I decided I was not going to let my mother take the blame for my life or ever make her feel that this was her fault.

I checked myself into drug and alcohol rehab. It was there I found the tools and program that would change my life forever.

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After two years of sobriety, I still carried an anger within me for the way my father was. I feared him throughout my childhood and adolescent years. By the third year, I started to understand my father and the disease of alcoholism. My father grew up with an alcoholic mother and fell victim to the disease himself. My sobriety led me to a feeling of compassion where my father was concerned. This was a feeling I had not experienced since I was a young child.

I started to love my father and stopped blaming him. Alcoholism is a disease like cancer. You wouldn't stop loving someone because their cancer made your childhood less than desirable, would you? Even though, to this day, the disease continues to have a strong hold on my father, I have let go of all the anger I felt towards him. I am still very angry at the disease, for not only stealing my childhood but for robbing my father of a good life. I hope someday he can find the strength to live his life without the dependence of alcohol.

How did racing help me?

My first year sober, I couldn't seem to stay focused on the task at hand...staying sober. With a love for motorcycles, I soon found myself purchasing a 1989 Suzuki RM 125. Shortly after, I signed up for a Motorcycle Ice Oval Race. That first race left me with two things: a first place finish and an addiction I didn't have to overcome! I had no idea that racing would fill so many voids. Family, racing buddies and that raw feeling of adrenaline was something I could not step away from. Oval dirt track and ice racing became my family and my life.

I raced motorcycles from 1991 to 2007, and retired with nothing but respect and a love for the sport that I thought would last forever. It was a very big part of my sobriety.

On September 20th 2007 I was racing at a track that I raced at for ten years - Marshfield Super Speedway - a ½ mile asphalt track. It was a fast place to race and the fans absolutely loved the thunder bikes and the steel shoes throwing sparks for 100 feet. Who wouldn't love riding wheelies and dicing it up inches away from many fast racers? Crazy fun!

That same day would be the end of my racing career. I was out for practice awaiting the last race of the season. After warming up the tires, I started to put the power to the track. The bike felt incredibly fast. With every lap, I drove it in a little further each time. Entering turn one, I threw it in extremely deep and the bike felt great...but then disaster struck. At 86 miles an hour, nearing turn two, the frontend washed out on me. I was thrown from the bike and slammed to the asphalt. Like a rocket, I slid head first into a cement wall that shattered my neck, broke my back and cracked my shoulder blade. The bike slid into me breaking my hip between the wall and the 225-pound machine. I couldn't move but was completely aware of

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what had just happened. No feeling. No movement. I told the track workers that my neck was broke.

After arriving at the hospital, doctors confirmed the possibility of never walking again. Those were very hard words to hear. After 48 hours and a few surgeries, I was moving my feet. I was blessed to be able to live through this, and even more blessed that I was able to walk. My doctor said I was millimeters away from severing my spinal cord. I thank God everyday for giving me another chance to live my dream. Life is certainly not guaranteed.

It was a real struggle not racing over the next few years. Since 2003, I have worked for the Polaris Race Department. Having this job eased some of the pain of not racing myself, but there was no cure for the void I was feeling.

I worked hard over the next five years trying to overcome the huge part of my life that was missing. I did a lot of different things. Some of these included water skiing, working all the time and starting a small business. There was something still missing, and I knew exactly what it was. I also knew I no longer had what it took to be fast on a race bike.

One fall night, 2013, I was getting ready to fly out to an off-road race in Reno, NV. I was helping RJ Anderson and his team that following week. Since my flight left early and my parents lived close to the airport, I was staying at their house that evening. With nothing to do for a few hours, I took a ride down to the local dirt track. A few of my friends let me spin a couple laps in their race cars. I bet you can finish the story from here!

I fell in love again! I was addicted again. I felt something I never thought I would feel again. It was like a fire in my veins.

Within thirty days, I purchased a dirt-modified car and went to my first race. It was the greatest thing ever...the smell of race fuel, the adrenaline and the competition. Every bit of it was breathtaking!

The winter drug on and April 2014 couldn't come fast enough. I found myself racing three to four times per week. I finished the season with almost 60 races under my belt. I fell short a few points for the National Rookie of the Year Award, but ended up second. Considering I had never raced a car before, this accomplishment was extremely gratifying.

My first feature win was one of the most emotional experiences I have had in a very long time. I never thought I would feel this kind of victory ever again after my accident. The crowd

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yelling, waving and whistling sent chills up and down my spine. Holding that checkered flag was like a dream come true.

I was able to get in another 60 races in 2015, and was happy with my progress. Every year of experience offers you another year of knowledge.

Today, it is very obvious to me I am where I need to be in my life. In addition to that, I know exactly why I need to be here!

Being clean and sober doesn't make me perfect, but it makes me who I need to be.

Thank you for taking the time to read my story.

It is my hope that anyone battling addiction can find the strength to let go and realize that there is a life waiting for you to live it! May you find the courage to open your eyes and heart and live the dream every single day!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bradley P. Seavers".

Brad Seavers #80

Living the Dream Everyday!