

MEET LEON HUTCHENS

Sober since October 5, 2006, Leon Hutchens is committed to being happy, joyous and free in addition to staying sober. And, he loves the opportunity to pass that along to others.

Struggling with addiction since his teens, drugs and alcohol had Leon in their grip for 30 years. He finally got tired of being homeless, going in and out of jail, and conning and stealing to fuel his addiction. "I was ready for a change, after my last incarceration," he explains. "I didn't want to go back to the park and do what I'd always done – it's not a beautiful life."

Leon found the support he needed by moving into an Action Alliance residence and working the AA program. After 18 months, he was even asked to be an Action Alliance house manager. "I didn't want to do it, but my AA sponsor told me to!" he says. "It ended up being a real blessing."

After moving into his Action Alliance house, Leon also was hired at a Fullerton-based company that manufactures aluminum awnings. Initially hired to do custodial work, he has been promoted numerous times. He's currently second in command at the company, where he focuses on sales. "I am so grateful for my job, and that the owner took a chance on me," he notes.

Leon (with God's help) has also restored his family relationships and closest friendships during the recovery process. "My family had disowned me – I didn't see a friendly face for about 12 years," explains Leon. "I initially mended fences with my sister, who I had stolen money from. I paid back all of the money I owed her, and talked to her right before she passed away from a massive heart attack. I attended her funeral even though other family members didn't want me there, which opened the door to restoring the rest of my family relationships. I'm also close to my daughter and eight year old granddaughter, who has never seen me loaded."

Leon continues to be very involved with AA. "I sponsor way too many guys – I always have! The first guy I sponsored is now 16 years sober, and I just had a sponsee reach the one-year mark," he notes. Hobbies include golfing and riding his Harley with the Posse, which is involved with a variety of charities.

A long-time friend of AAF Founder George Folk, Leon joined the AAF board in 2024. "I'm entering a new stage of my life and thought participating on the board would be a good fit for me," he says. "I'm much more stable than I've ever been before in my life – I'm responsible with my money and my priorities. I'm not the guy that walked out of prison 17 years ago."