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'Faith that everything's going to be OK...'

aren't 100 percent connected or affected by the disease, acknowledge and see the importance of reaching out, is phenomenal," Jon said of the budding nonprofit.

The belief is supportive mentorship grounded in career counseling will open up more hopeful paths for addicts. In fact, today Jon helps others through the steps toward recovery.

"I think I am a horrible sponsor," he concedes. "(Progress) happens in spite of me. It happens because I show up. It happens because somebody taught me and because the universe steps in."

Paying it Forward

Jon admits he cannot ultimately *promise* his mother that he will never slip into his old habits.

"I've had relationships with people who have relapsed; I see it all the time," he said, shrugging his shoulders and throwing his hands up as if to demonstrate that words cannot describe the lifelong struggle

of addiction.

"I can't promise you that doesn't happen. All I can do is say that my intention today is that's not what I plan on doing," Jon said. "As the days add together and life continues to happen, I continue to have more faith that everything's going to be OK, and everything is OK."

Today, Jon has years of sobriety under his belt and a personal conviction to pay it forward, yet he does not think much about what his legacy will be.

Rather he embraces little opportunities to do something meaningful, such as treating a patient with dignity or buying a hamburger for a man on the street.

"It's the least I can do today," Jon said. "I don't know the impact I'll have on somebody's life, but I know we all do."

Editor's note: Jon's last name has been withheld to respect his privacy.

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