

I once was lost but now I'm found ~ Marie's Story

Written by YWCA Transition Housing Recovery Program graduate



A few years ago I was an IV meth user, among other things. I had already lost my home, my husband and a successful family business. I had no hope and my spirit was gone. One day amidst the chaos and desperation that had quickly become my life I uttered the most simple and heartfelt prayer; "God, please make it stop." Sometimes God and I have different ideas about how to go about things, however thus far my attempts to change and control my life had failed.

God's plan was a much more drastic measure involving the loss of my physical freedom. My chains of addiction were removed and replaced with the very real chains of shackles and cuffs. In that moment walking to face the judge behind my ex-husband I was indeed freed. When the physical chains were removed I had nowhere to turn. Everything I owned had been looted by my "friends" in the drug world. I come from a good family who loved me enough that they could no longer watch me die slowly. They had painfully decided to love me but to no longer help and enable me.

During treatment I discovered the YWCA Transitional Housing Recovery Program (THRP). The hard fact was there were no

other facilities of its kind anywhere near my two children whom I missed with an aching deep in my soul. God knew I could not stay clean without at least a glimmer of hope in that area. I was accepted in the program and moved to a cozy little bedroom all my own with a wonderful view of the river. I was broken, but I was home. I arrived with a duffel bag of clothes and a bible to my name. All of my immediate needs were met upon arrival including scheduled visits with my children. I decided to surrender my will and follow the suggestions of those that God and the judge had put before me.

I participated in every program offered at the Y. I was taught budgeting and planning by a professional banker. I took parenting classes from a CASA worker and was educated by the volunteers of Matthew 25 on the dangers of disease spread by needles. We had a weekly relapse prevention education group. The staff set me up with services necessary to get glasses, receive health care, clothing and transportation among other things.

They treated me with dignity and respect that began to break

down the walls of self-loathing I had constructed around myself. I began attending 12 step meetings and Celebrate Recovery through Restore Ministries. There I found the support system I needed to assure the efforts I made would affect permanent change. I remained in the program for 14 months and slowly my spirit was renewed and awakened. I was able to begin rebuilding every area of my life.

I have since remarried my husband and regained custody of my children. A few years ago I didn't even have the privilege of freedom. Nobody needed me for much of anything, I was broken and damaged. Not long after I left the program, I heard a statistic that broke my heart and lit a fire in my soul. It said that only .07% of meth addicts recover. I am now a 38 year old college sophomore going for a social work degree. I hope to touch lives that have been torn apart by the disease of addiction. God placed a dream in my heart to get well, get an education and share with others how I did it.

Each and every "hassle" in my life is a privilege. My life was empty and meaningless and now I am everything to a few people that need me. Sometimes I wonder if I can handle my blessings. Then I remember that God started this work in me and He will be faithful to complete it. He will never give me more than I can handle although I think He thinks too highly of me sometimes. None of this would have been possible without the THRP program and the YWCA helping me to let go of what I was, so that I could become what I might be.