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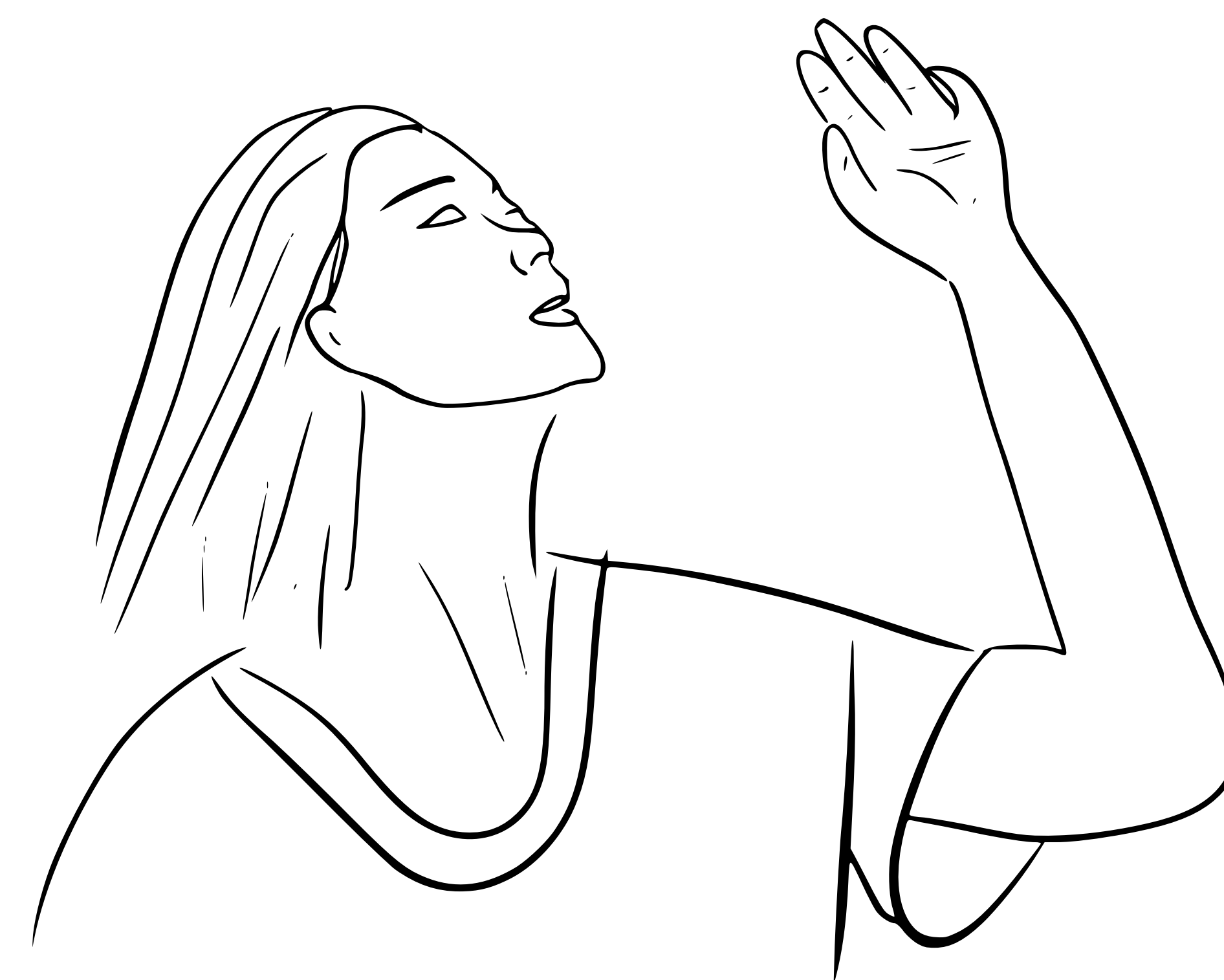
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I SEE  
YOU

RECOVERY STORIES



Designed on Canva.com

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**May. 1st, 2022**

### **Together We Recover**

All I need to do today is to put one foot in front of the other. I can only walk this walk a step at a time.

Each time I take a step, I will trust that the next will follow, along with the next, and the next and the next.

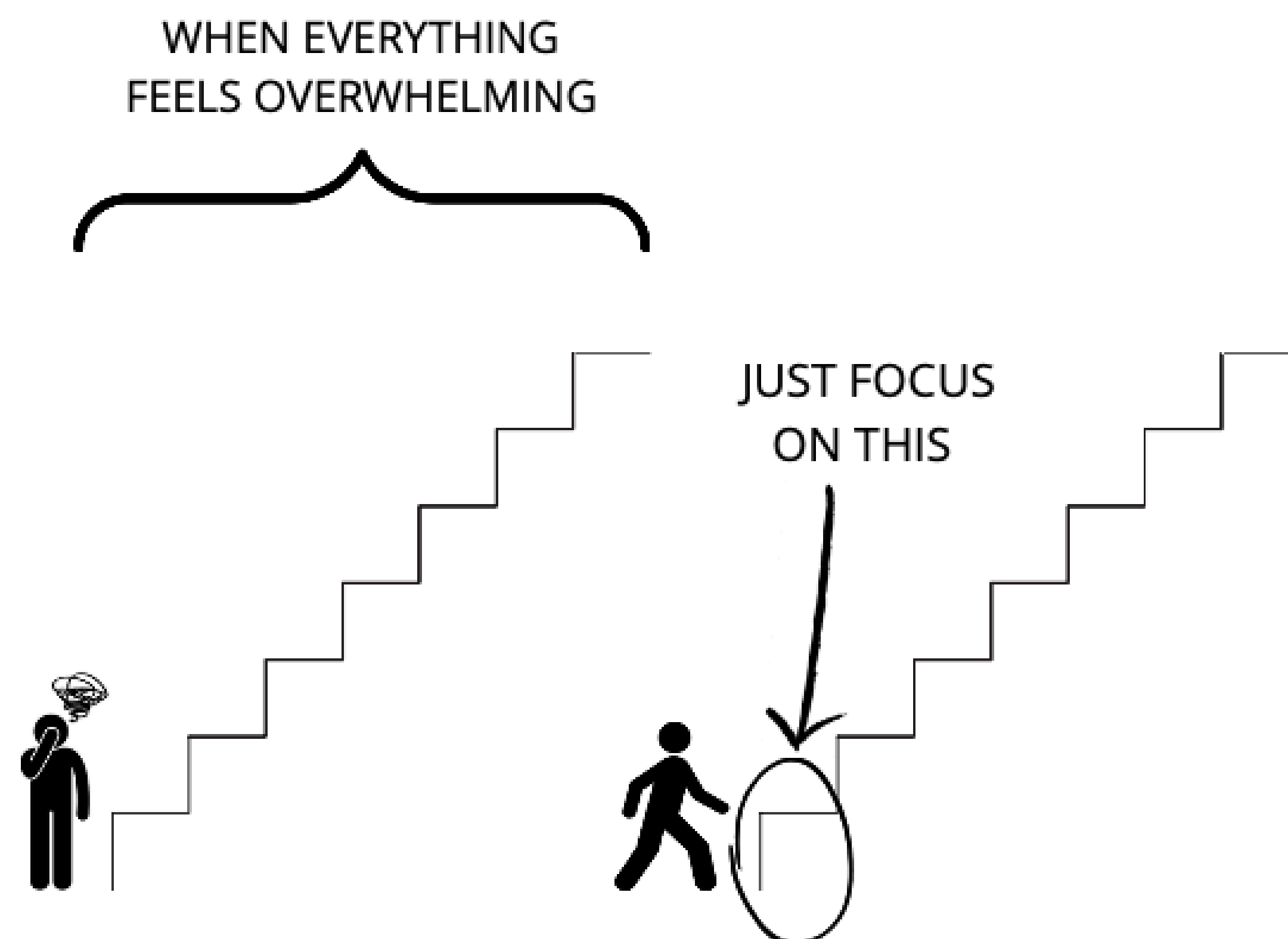
What I know today is that no matter what does or does not come my way, I will wake up each morning to one more day of my spiritual journey, nothing more, nothing less. I will keep putting one foot in front of the other.

Occasional leaps of faith and periods of unusual progress will no doubt happen as will slips and back slides.

But no matter what comes along, I have the gift of recovery in my life, a gift that I can rely on, a gift that means that I never have to struggle alone again.

...together we walk a path of recovery one step at a time.

—Tian Dayton, Ph.D.



“Recovery will probably feel like you’re getting worse. You’ll be anxious, sweating, crying. Because what happens now? What happens when you let go of what’s been the centre of your life for so long? How do normal people do this? Is this normal? Is it too much? Is it too little? You have probably heard this before; but it gets worse before it gets better. Recovery will feel like you’re dying a million times, and every inch of you will scream at you to stop, to go back, to stop fighting. But don’t give in. Life is waiting for you - outside your comfort zone. And it will get better. It will get easier. You won’t always have to worry about what happens next time, next week, next month. It will get easier. I promise you. If you keep fighting, it will get easier. Don’t give up now.”

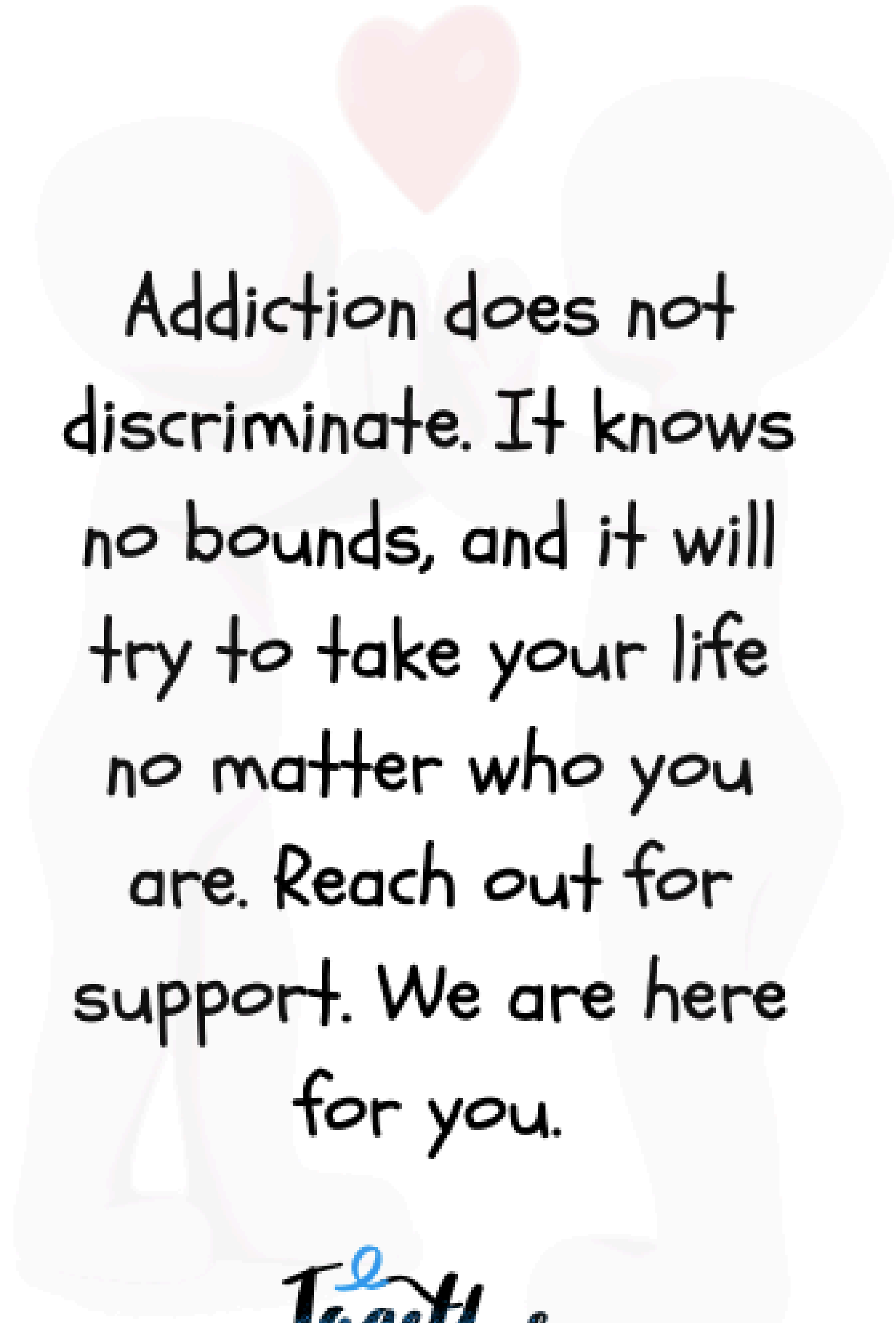
-Anonymous

# 72-HOUR HOLD

The summer of 2020 was a difficult one. I became a part of a statistic for those who have fallen victim to the COVID-19 mental illness breakdown. I suffer from anxiety and depression. Of course being isolated inside my 800 square foot apartment did not help. I was caged. I was caged in a marriage, in my mind, and now physically. I don't know exactly what caused the mental breakdown, but I was dealing with planning a wedding, finishing up my bachelor's degree, and looking for a new job. There was a LOT on my plate - things that I thought were the biggest and best milestones in my life. Boy, was I wrong.

So, I began to cope with binge drinking. I did not drink every day, but when I did, I did not have an off switch. It would start with me just dancing and singing in the kitchen while cleaning. Then, after a few months, I would spend my days sitting on the couch just getting wasted all day. By the time night came, I was not me. I was mentally gone - I would try to jump out the windows, off the balcony, pick a fight with my fiancé at the time, and whatever else I could get myself into. Remind you, I was not in a happy marriage. He was my high school sweetheart and the only person I had ever been with - so, I lied to myself for so long that we grew apart.

Flash forward to July - I tried to hurt myself the week that I was originally supposed to get married. I was taken to Bellin hospital to be assessed. Later that night, I was brought to Willow Creek Behavioral Health, and I stayed there for the next week.



Addiction does not discriminate. It knows no bounds, and it will try to take your life no matter who you are. Reach out for support. We are here for you.

*Together  
We Can!*



## ONLINE RESOURCES

### Social Media

Facebook Recovery Groups

Wisconsin Voices for Recovery

Fighting Addiction We Do Recover

Recovery with Life

Revolutionary Recovery

Oneida TAP (Tribal Action Plan)

Recovery TikTok

Twitter and Instagram Recovery Hashtags

### Websites

[justthinktwice.gov](http://justthinktwice.gov)

[yourchoiceprevention.org](http://yourchoiceprevention.org)

[yourlifeyourvoice.org](http://yourlifeyourvoice.org)

[wipatch.org](http://wipatch.org)

[mhawisconsin.org](http://mhawisconsin.org)

[addictionresource.net](http://addictionresource.net)

[wisconsinvoicesforrecovery.org](http://wisconsinvoicesforrecovery.org)

[samhsa.gov](http://samhsa.gov)

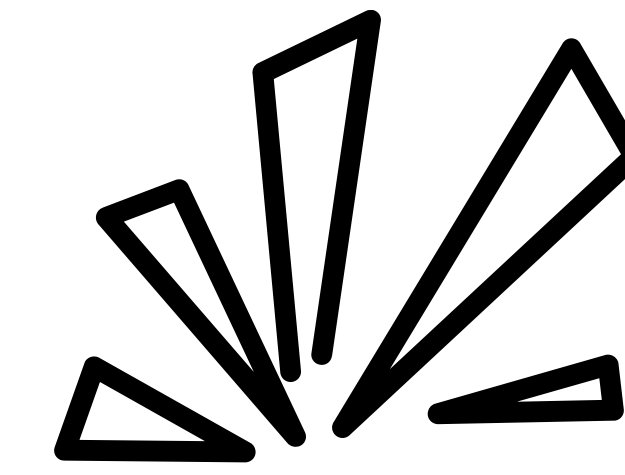
[nami.org](http://nami.org)

### Hotlines

Never Use Alone 800-484-3731

988 Suicide & Crisis

211 Wisconsin for Resources



During that time, my great aunt died. So many of the things that had led to me getting treatment were overshadowed and blamed on my aunt's death. I used it as a scapegoat for mine and my significant other's relationship problems. I felt that after 8 years with him, I owed it to him to marry him and start a life with him after school. However, I was sorely mistaken. I forgot to include my own wants into the equation which led me into a downward spiral of continuous depression and despair. Now, months later, I am seeking a divorce, and I feel so much more free.

I am not claiming that my relationship with my soon to be ex-husband is the source of all of my depression and issues. He certainly didn't help, but I can now see all of those red flags that I tried so hard not to. Putting myself and my wants first has been the hardest thing I have done in my life so far. I have spent so much time feeling as if I was the world's biggest jerk for breaking it off and learning to say no. I'm slowly learning to live by my own expectations instead of everyone else's. Also, I am in the constant process of teaching myself to not care what others think of me - it drains my energy and is none of my concern.

**"I am living for me, period."**

## FINDING SOMETHING TO LIVE FOR

I have a very rough childhood (poverty, abandonment, substance abuse in my family, mental health issues).. I went through more treatments than I can even count (I think 12?).. While some helped, there was always something missing.. My last incarceration I was released to the ARC house in Fond du Lac, and this was a changing point in my life. I think a huge factor was I had my daughter and wanted to be a good mother. What helped me was being a part of Darjune, HOWE parenting education, confiding in my probation officer, and support from people in recovery. While I wasn't someone who was too involved in NA.. I was a part of Ex-po, JOSHUA, volunteered with the ACLU, and my schooling was helpful as well! I think it was just the desire to want something different out of my life and I was willing to do whatever it took! Some coping skills I'd advise is to find what works for them. Sometimes it will be different things for different people. Some may be NA, some may be MAT, some may be family, some may be school, some may be a job... **find something you care about to keep you moving forward.**

I think it's being able to know what you want to achieve in life, and work towards that instead of tearing yourself down with using substances. If there is enough desire to want something different, change will happen. Go to school, find your passion, get a career you love... I started at a cafe, and I am now able to obtain a social work position and do what I love!

## ADD YOUR OWN INSPIRATION.



## QUOTES OF WISDOM

"What's the point of doing the hard work of recovery if it isn't going to make you feel better."

"In my journey, I am learning to trust the process no matter how much I hate it."

"Now that I am in recovery, I can do things, apply for things, and earn things that I never could before."

Add your own quote:

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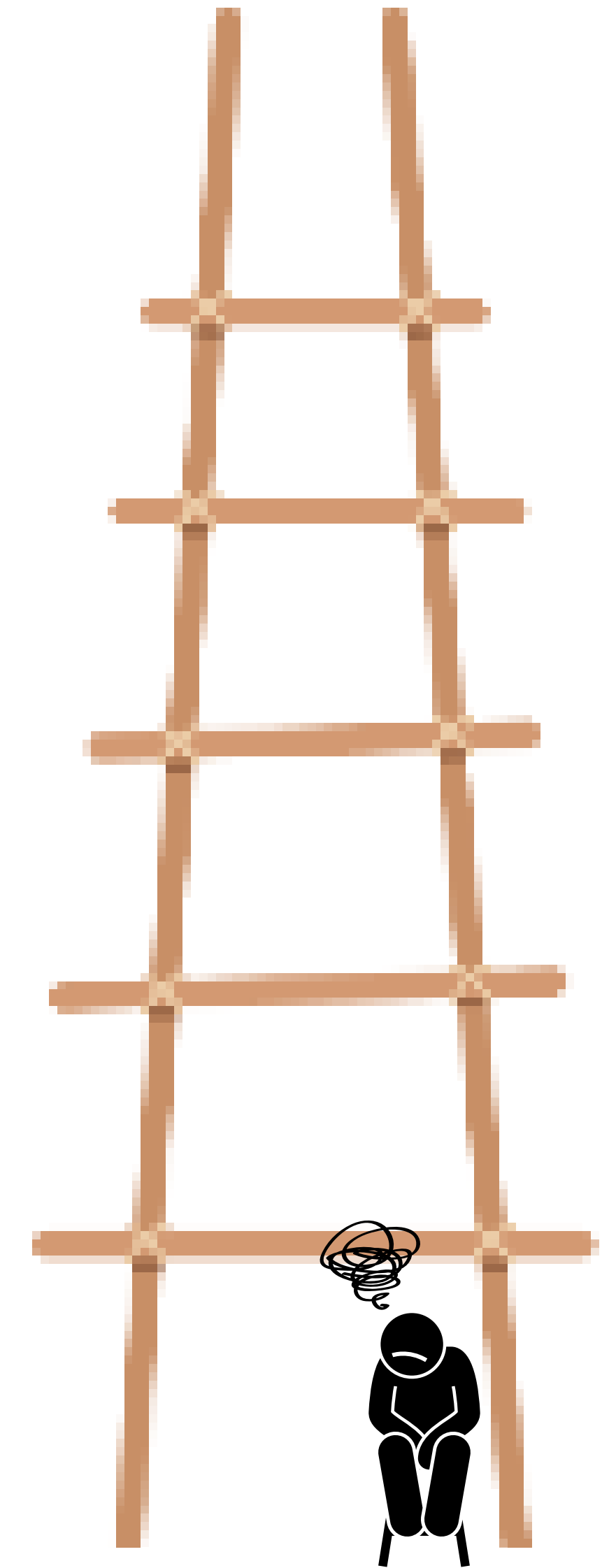
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## The importance of smaller steps



Also, give yourself credit for the small steps.. Getting a job, paying off a bill, going for a walk.. **I think there are these expectations when someone gets clean to change the world, but if you're overlooking the small things there will be frustration and a feeling of defeat.**

Also, enjoy the journey.. gratitude lists and prayers helped me, but this may be different for everyone. I think that is such an important piece - no one will have the same recovery journey, but everyone is capable of success.

## **I KNEW I COULDN'T DO IT ALONE**

I grew up in a big family, but one that did not make me feel like I belonged. With the entirety of my family using one substance or another, I fell victim to it at only the age of 8.

### **"I wanted to fit in."**

This is my first time being sober, here, in this drug court program. Now, being 33, this is my first 6 months being sober since I was 8 years old. I've had a rough go of it being in and out of rehab since I was 24. I didn't follow the treatment plan, and I had a falling out with my girlfriend at the time. Our relationship was toxic since we would break up and get back together all of the time. I would relapse each time I got with her. I felt that I lost the power of choice just being born in the family that I was.

I didn't realize how much my parents' substance abuse affected me until I got older. At 10 years old, I stole fireworks and burnt down an entire field. At 12 years old, I got alcohol poisoning from doing shots. I used sports and music to tune out reality. My problem has always been sobriety...I didn't want it. I wanted to escape and use drugs and alcohol as my solution. I couldn't seem to mask my feelings, or deal with life on life's terms.

## **WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF BEING SOBER?**

My family can rest knowing  
I am safe

Peace of mind

***Gratitude for being able to help  
others***

*My story*

Not having to lie to myself or loved ones

*Not being a slave to  
anything anymore*



## WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF BEING SOBER?

Not being dope sick

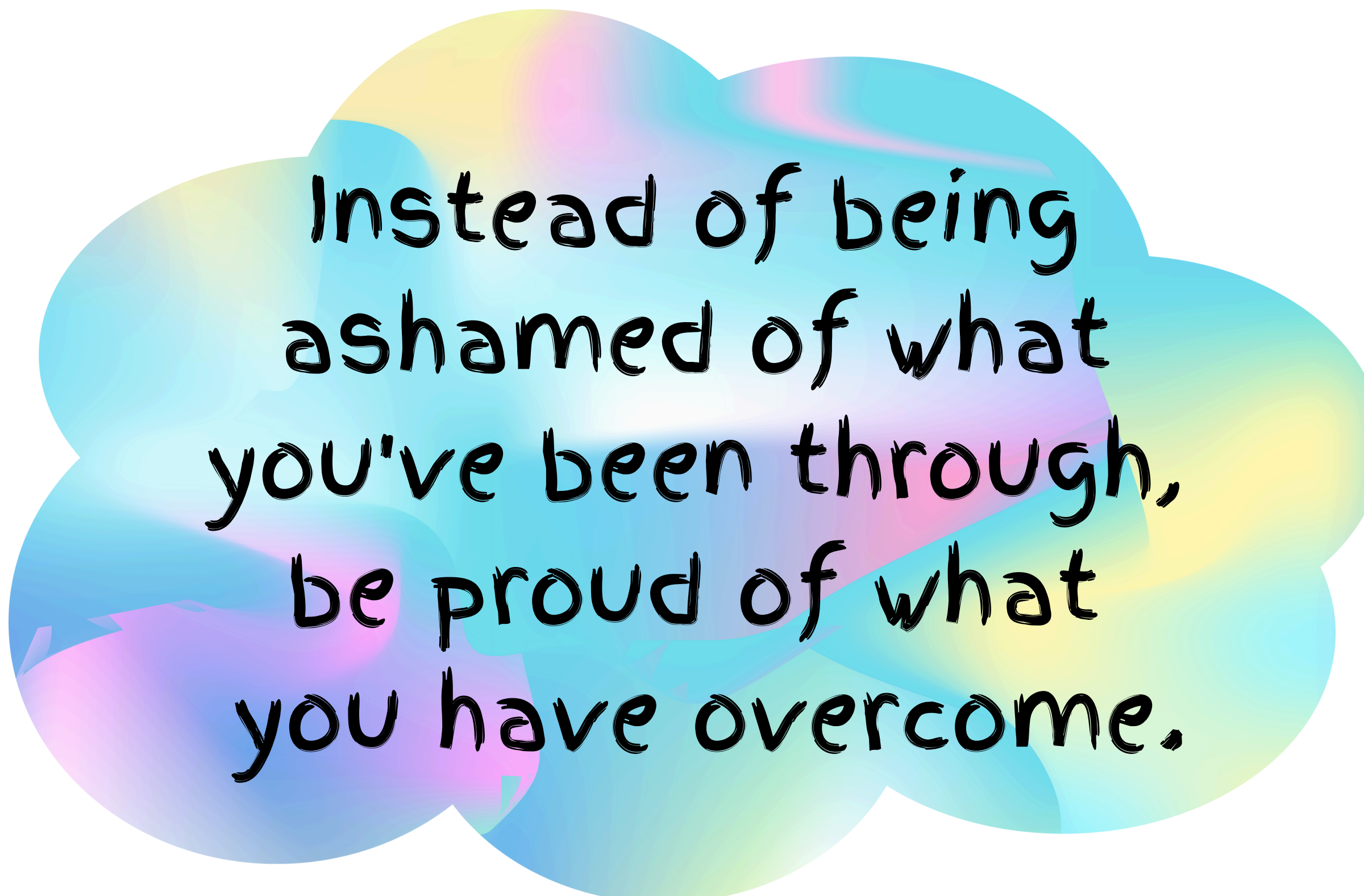
Staying clean and looking at how  
far I got

FREEDOM

Being closer to God

Waking up without worrying

My family wants to talk  
to me



Instead of being  
ashamed of what  
you've been through,  
be proud of what  
you have overcome.

"I didn't want to die, but I didn't want to live either."  
God is my reason for becoming sober. I pray, meditate, and  
have cleaned up my past. This has given me clarity.

**"I am present, and I think about the now."**

Once I finally committed and let people help me, I saw a better  
way of living. I took inventory of my life-taking the advice my  
sponsor gave me, following AA's 12-step program, and most  
importantly, listening to God.

My advice is to keep your circle small and keep busy in service  
work and community involvement...something outside of just  
yourself. It brings a whole new purpose to your life.



# YOU ARE MORE THAN WORTH IT

Let's see where to begin? I grew up in a very strict Roman Catholic Navy household. The Roman Catholic is my mother, and the Navy Chief was my father. This created some interesting family dynamics. I was the second youngest of six. My two oldest brothers were from our mother's first marriage. I never felt comfortable to call them half brothers, but yet that's the situation. So, already from the get-go, there was a sense of stigma. My father is also Native American, and so I look nothing like our half brothers. My sister is the only female sibling in the family which also resulted in some sibling rivalry and jealousy between her and an older brother more close in age. I suppose that's normal, but I was the lost child and also expected to be the golden child or the perfect child which created **undue pressures to be successful.**

There were some traumatic experiences due to my parents failing marriage, and I was the oldest sibling at home at the time feeling like the outcast in our little tribe. Also my mother suffered from postpartum depression due to a miscarriage which only further eroded my parents marriage and our family life at home. At times, my older brothers would taunt our mother somewhat playfully, but sadly she could be very neurotic and obsessive compulsive. I remained silent all the while repressing the pain and fear. I have learned since this has contributed to periodic major depressive disorder as well as subsequent alcoholism and drug addiction.

# WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF BEING SOBER?

*Being able to maintain a relationship*

The people and the relationships we make

The ability to learn how to manage yourself

Being able to think and process for my mental health

# WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF BEING SOBER?

Being present in the  
moment

*Being alive*

My family is proud of me,  
and they know I'm safe

Meeting new people

***Having a clear head, being  
motivated, being ambitious***

I'd say the abuse began in middle school with alcohol and some marijuana but later progressed after college. Once I became a working professional, I became a high profile alcoholic and a closeted drunk and began experimenting with hard drugs such as heroin and opioids. Later, I was homeless and became very dependent on meth and also was involved in trading sexual favors with anonymous men. Today, I have successfully completed intensive inpatient and outpatient treatment as well as sober living. I am a recovery coach for the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin.

I would have to say the best advice I could offer would be to **believe in yourself and to know that you are worth it** because in the end you will not have anyone else to prove yourself to or to try to earn their approval by lowering your value. Remember that you are not worthless and always always remember that you are more than worth it.

I matter

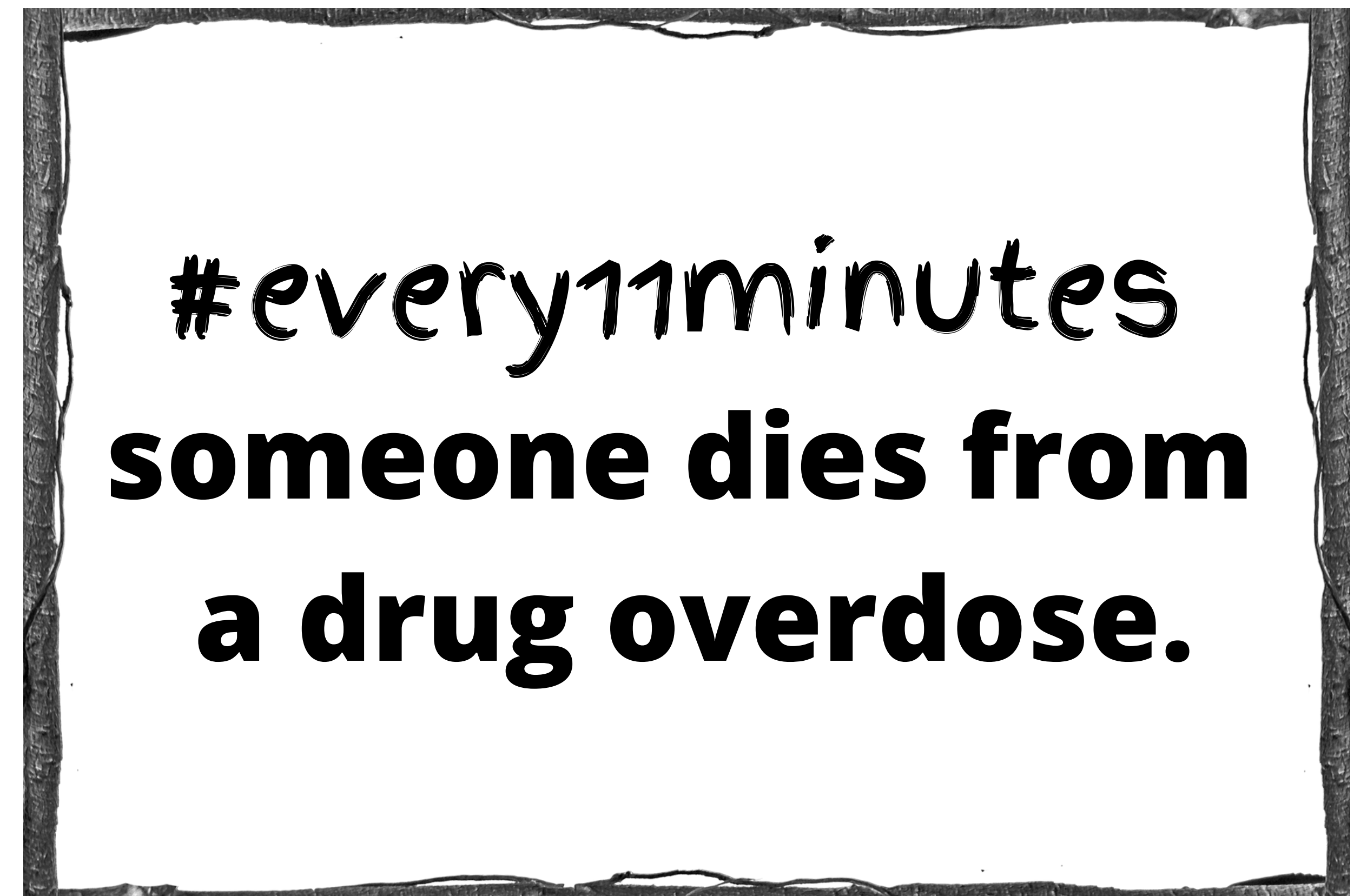


# NOT GOING TO TAKE IT FOR GRANTED

My real name is Steven. I had a good childhood with my mom. My dad has been absent since I was 6 months old. I had a stepdad that stood in when he wasn't in jail or on drugs. When I was 13, I started smoking, and by 14 I was smoking weed. I followed my dad's footsteps quickly, and by 16 I was doing coke and crack. I used it every way possible including intravenous.

By 18, I found Percocets. I used just about anything in the opiate family. I then found heroin and fentanyl. I used it till I was 34 with periods of sobriety. I went to 3 different rehabs, and it didn't help me cause I wasn't ready. I WAS STUBBORN AND ADDICTED and homeless for so long. During my time using fentanyl and heroin, I overdosed too many times to count, and I must have revived 10 friends or more some multiple times. I've also watched too many die right in front of me. On October 5th, 2021, I had heart failure. I needed four heart valves repaired and a hole patched. It was a VERY RISKY surgery, and 3 surgeons turned me away because I was a drug addict.

*nothing  
but  
gratitude!*



This past week I was on vacation. I went to the beach and a concert. I would have drank in the past the whole time, but I didn't even care this time.

**"I can still enjoy things I love without drinking."**

Don't get me wrong .. it still scares me to think I can never drink for the rest of my life. I still think about drinking, but now I think about the consequences... They are not worth the few hours of "fun." Please don't ever give up... I didn't. I knew if I kept doing what I was doing that I would eventually be dead. So, I choose life, and you can too. It helps to look at the pictures at your worst and then look at pictures during your progress. To those of you who have helped me on my journey, thanks again. Support from others makes all the difference. I chose life.



# ONE YEAR SOBER

This month, July, I am one year sober! I've shared my story before, but I am basically a binge drinker. The last time I drank was a year ago. I went to a hotel for almost a week because I didn't want to be at home because my husband was around. Once I get that first sip of alcohol.. I can't stop. I will drink for days and not eat then be so weak I would end up in the hospital. I was always afraid of stopping because I didn't want to go through withdrawal symptoms. After 5 days at a hotel my heart was racing so fast that I called an ambulance. I still brought alcohol to the hospital in a Coca Cola bottle. It was crazy I was still sipping in it there.

I had been to hospital several times in the past, but somehow this time I was just so sick and tired of being sick and tired. I almost lost my job, family, hubby, and my life! Why did I want to keep doing this just for a few hours of fun? Because for me.. it always ended up bad—calling off work, fighting with my hubby, not remembering things and just feeling horrible.

For those of you struggling with day one or two, keep going. You can do it! I've been there! I never thought I could do this. But, if you just believe in yourself and take it one day at a time .. you can succeed like me.

Dr. Gideon Cohen gave me a chance to survive, and for the grace of God, I made it. My nana and papa took me to church when I was sober at 28 years old, and I wanted to get baptized and am I ever glad I did. I always had trouble believing in God, but I know it was him that helped me get through all the struggles. It made me strong enough to survive the life that was killing me slowly.

**I'm not going to take it for granted.** I am exactly 306 days sober. I'm still getting used to living a normal life, but I wouldn't give it up for nothing!!!!!! I have my 12-year-old son in my life and my massive family to back me up. God has kept me here for a reason and I'm going to find it by helping the struggling addicts out there.



**Dear sober me,**

**You may have permanently changed your lifestyle, but you are still you. You will still enjoy all the great, fun things in life. The difference is you will be fully functional during those fun times and have no regrets in the morning.**



## MADE IT ANOTHER 24 HOURS

Joe has lived a life that most only see in the movies. At one point, he was on the run from the police - fleeing from Texas and hiding in California for two years as a wanted fugitive. Joe got caught eventually and went to prison. Upon release, he relapsed and got caught again by his parole officer. He used hard drugs with his girlfriend for 4 years - experiencing homelessness, hospital stays, and jail time. She passed away in 2020 from an overdose.

From faking seizures and other illnesses to get pain meds, Joe has become an honest man today. Joe has replaced hard drugs with a healthy lifestyle and caffeine to keep him going. Today he advocates every single day for those who are still addicted. He fights urges every minute but keeps himself accountable by talking about his feelings.

Joe has learned "how to be humble, how to appreciate life, people's true colors" which he credits all to his experience being a drug addict. He uses humor and his story to keep going. He will never stop fighting for those suffering. His catchphrase is "made it another 24 hours sober."

**"You don't have to think about forever, just get through each day."**

## A DECISION TO CHANGE

The biggest part of my story starts with what I lost... June 19, 2015, I had to have my right arm amputated.

I had been shooting meth for about 5 years at that time. I'll never know whether I was given bad dope from possibly being used as a Guinea pig by a new dealer to see if he could get by with selling it or not. I didn't stay sober after losing my arm. But, March 3 of 2017, **"I made a decision to change. I was so broken and just tired."**

I now have over 5 years clean, and I have worked in a drug rehab and a court ordered residential treatment center since getting clean. I've gotten married to an amazing man and reunited with my children, and we even bought a house. All the glory goes to God. He pulled me out of the fire!





# JESSICA

I recently had a difficult realization that I did not know I was ready for...

I was at an IOP (intensive outpatient) meeting, and the guest speaker called me out. He walked up to me and said "I know you." I was caught off guard, and it rattled me. He said that I was at one of his properties. It was my last place of residence before entering drug court.

It was at that moment, as I looked at the stress across his face from seeing me, I saw how using can affect others, their property, and their lives. He told me that he was also in recovery, and having the police involved and having a huge mess left behind for him to clean impacted him heavily.

I listened to him and apologized. My actions did that, and I never want to be in that position again. Nor do I want to do that to anyone else. I couldn't do anything to fix it.

**"All I can do is not do it again."**

I will take this experience and build on it.

What a relapse makes me feel like

I'm not worth anything

I'm a low life

I'm a piece of shit

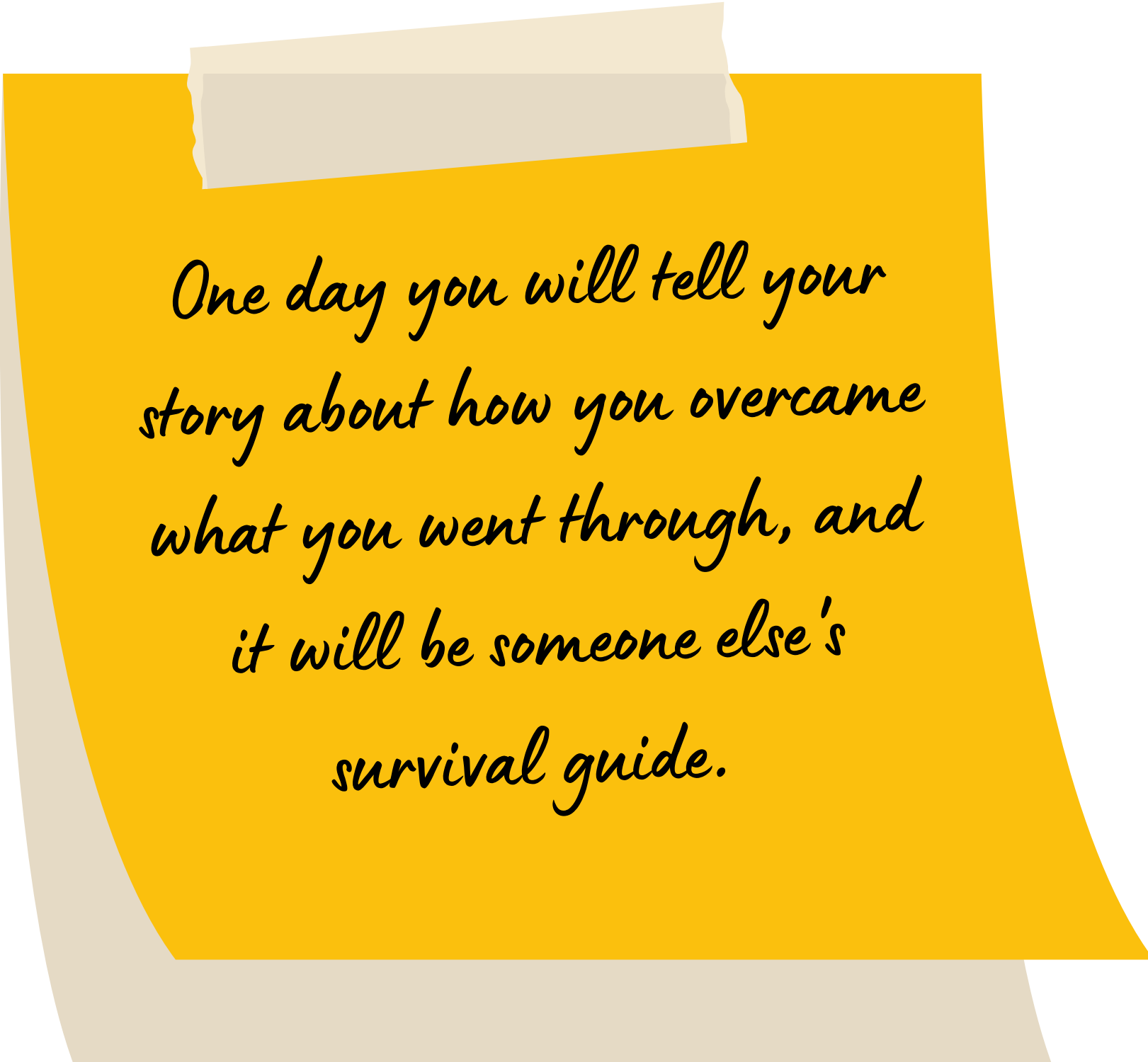
I'm exhausted

I'm depressed

I will always be a junkie

I need it now

I'm sick



*One day you will tell your story about how you overcame what you went through, and it will be someone else's survival guide.*

**Here is a challenge for  
anyone who thinks that  
addiction is a choice:**

Take away anything that you  
think about using or doing on  
a daily basis that you DON'T  
need.

**Put your phone down**

**Stay away from technology**

**Take sugar away**

**Cancel caffeine**

**No smoking**

## LAUREN

Last week was rough, I spent two weeks in jail. It was the worst and best, eye-opening experience I have ever had.

**"It helped me see how far I've come."**

I realized that I am not "like that" anymore. And, I am relieved. Once you see certain things, you can't unsee them. You have been there, done that. I have a completely different mindset, a new way of thinking. Even if I wanted to, I couldn't go back to the way I was. I am a new person. As I grow and learn from my mistakes, I now know that everything I have done was my choice and my own fault. I put those substances in my body which affected my life and others' lives.

**"I am surrounding myself with people I want to be like. To me, this is happiness. I worked hard to get this...."**

**...I know I deserve it."**

# LIZ

I grew up as a military brat. My parents were weekend warriors. Too many times there were big arguments and loud music when I was a kid. At 23 years old, my struggles began with alcohol. I had relationship issues with just about everyone in my life. I couldn't keep myself on the straight and narrow. So, I ended up being committed to a facility for help.

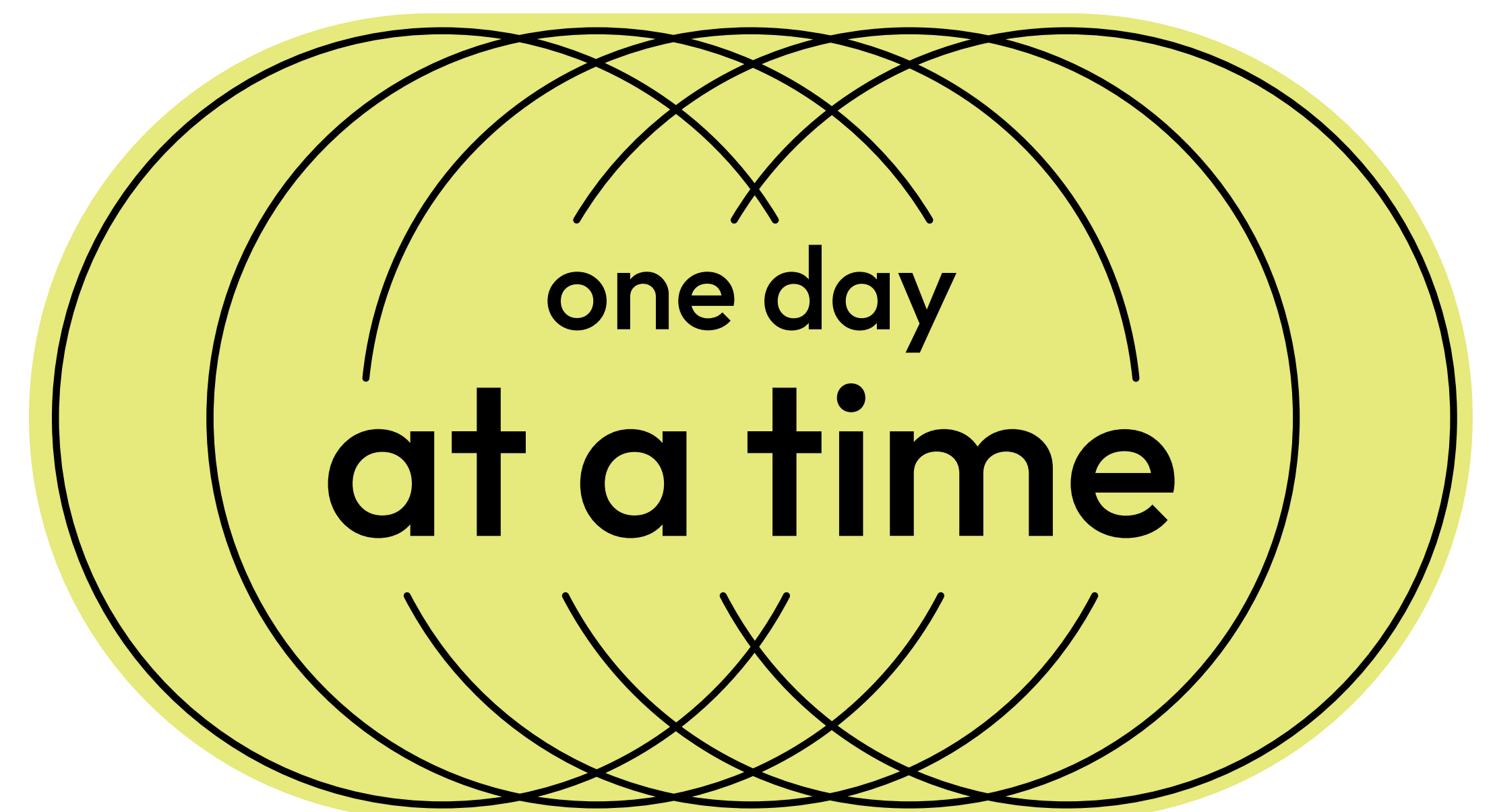
The treatment I received as well as a sponsor were crucial in my recovery. I think that I could've received help sooner if it weren't for such stigma surrounding addiction. I never wanted anyone to know or to have to admit that I needed help.

My biggest and best advice I can give someone is to **keep focused on what is ahead**. Trusting God.

Having a dual commitment to AA and God was vital for me to keep balanced. I've been sober since 9/15/2000. I quit drinking a week before my youngest's 16th birthday, and I never turned back. My family and I are so much better for it.

Every time you think about it or want to have it, that's how a drug addict feels. It is a constant struggle.

It is the reason why we believe in





## SARAH

A 16-year-long addict, two time felon, with years of suffering from homelessness.... Today Sarah is present as a mother, sister, friend, daughter, and she owns her own small business as an artist. She is "free from the grips of addiction." She is in the process of healing and growing into a better person each day.

"Five years ago I was in the Wisconsin prison system. Now I am slaying at life with my kids and my best friend."

With a degree in criminal justice, her own business, getting off probation after being in the system for over nine years, she has so much to live for. She always had something to live for, but now she sees the value in it every day. Sarah's advice is to notice the red flags in people and stay away from them.

## LISA

I think a lot of this crazy life started with being sexually abused. I also lost my dad at 10 years old to a drug overdose. My dad's parents were drug addicts and alcoholics. My mom's dad was an alcoholic, and my mom's mom died when I was 14 after a 30 plus year battle with cancer.

I have been given a rough start in life, and my parents were the source of so much pain. I couldn't even finish school, or focus entirely on any work or responsibilities. I have had issues with the law and so much more that I don't even want to get into detail.

The night my dad died, my dad's parents gave me Jack Daniel's saying it would help me feel better. That kept happening every time I saw them, and at 12 years old, I moved in with them. They started giving me coke, heroin, and pills. I live with mental illness, and I have never received formal treatment for anything.

I decided that this life was not for me, and I was going to take back what was stolen long ago. I was tired of being tired and sick.

**"Don't give up. If you fall, get up again."**

## KATIE

Starting from the beginning... I chose not to remember much of my childhood. It was traumatic and full of abuse and majorly damaging in so many ways. I made the decision to block it out.

My family ended up getting involved. They confronted me about getting help. All I wanted to do was hide.

My recovery began in November of 2021. I became clean, and within a month, the physical and mental changes were noticeable. I relapsed recently in March of 2022. I haven't been clean or even the slightest bit sober since. I know I'll get sober again and off of this meth. I need to see what's important in life again.

I haven't received conventional treatment. It was all done through will power. I think it could have been easier had I not had such a difficult time finding rides or having somewhere to go to get away from all the toxic people in my life.

I live for my best friend, my grandparents, and my sister. My advice is to **look around every now and again, take in everything you have to live for, even the smallest thing.** It could be absolutely anything. That's your reason to keep going.

## CASSIE

I grew up with married parents who were wonderful and gave me the love and attention every child needs and deserves. Before I was born, they actually met in treatment. I started drinking in my teens. I did the 20s partying - my friends grew up and grew responsible, and I did not. My drinking progressively got worse throughout my 30s.

I live with behavioral health issues and did not receive any treatment. Through family intervention, withdrawal and cravings, relationship issues, and isolation, I was saved. My sponsor is a huge support to me today too.

I did not get help sooner due to not being able to find the inspiring person I was looking for all this time... I found that **that person was me and always has been.** My advice is to only take one day, hour, minute, breath at a time. I'll worry about not drinking tomorrow when it's tomorrow.

**"I am worth a happy fulfilling life."**

Getting right with my higher power is EXACTLY what I needed and currently need to stay sober. And to be honest with myself and others.

# CORA

Starting out with a quick glimpse of my childhood... My mom left us when I was young for a long period of time. My dad raised us kids. When my mother came back into my life, I saw her get beat and use drugs during my visitation. I saw my dad drinking every day.

So I began smoking weed and drinking heavily around 16 years old, then I used adderall and other pills at 17.

I never wanted help because I never thought that I had a problem. But the isolation and interruption of my responsibilities had gotten to be such a burden on myself that I could barely function anymore.

Living with mental illness and having no treatment and seemingly no help has been daunting.

But I did it, and I am recovering every day.

My advice to someone who is in the same boat as me is that there is always a positive reason not to use, and there's no positive reason to use.

**"Every day alive is a new day to live!"**

I have had a lot of loss in my life too - a total of 5 miscarriages and one stillbirth. I didn't know how to deal with it. I dealt with this sober, and I can proudly say I just recently had to deal with one of those miscarriages sober, and I'm proud of myself because before I would go to my drugs and numb my pain.

I went to the wrong people and wrong places. I blamed everybody for my pain. On August 23rd, I OD'd because somebody put fentanyl in my cocaine. I was in a car accident a few months later and rolled hundreds of feet down a hill and had a seizure.

Each time I see those scars, it reminds me where I come from or what happened from that day. That was the last day I used. It made me realize, "hey God brought me this far for a reason. He wants to save my life." I stayed here on this earth, and I'm a living testimony that by the grace of God, I am alive.

I was a really bad cocaine and PCP addict. I was a drug dealer, a liar, and a manipulator. But, if I can change, anybody can do it. I can say that I have 8 months clean now. I'm proud of that. I have a sponsor where I live, at the home group. I am also building a network with the wonderful people here. I thought I wasn't a people person because I tried to shelter myself and stay away from people my whole life. I never could have seen myself where I am now. I couldn't trust anybody, couldn't even trust myself.

I have faith in each and every one of you guys. **Reach out to people and remember there's always hope and to trust your higher power.**



# JESSICA

Like almost every teenager, I started smoking marijuana in high school. I was in control of it, but little did I know that I had a problem with it in my early twenties. I experimented with cocaine once. It took a hold of my life. In my early twenties, my life started to go downhill, but I thought I had control over it like always. I was married to somebody for 12 years, and we would only use on weekends.

**"I put on a mask for everybody** and acted as if everything was okay, but nobody knew the real me so everything just started crumbling down as the drugs took a hold of me."

I decided to get a divorce when my ex-husband cheated on me. Once I got my divorce, my life became a party scene. Not only cocaine, but alcohol got involved in my life and PCP. I ended up getting into another relationship that was toxic and abusive due to the drugs. I didn't know how to get out of it either the relationship or the drugs. I thought about leaving the town that my family was living in at that time to just start over.

Sadly, I chose to be around the wrong people. I tried to stay "clean" by myself for a couple months - I devoted myself to working and thought that was going to work, but it didn't. 7 months went by, and I didn't use like they say when you relapse. I relapsed 10 times stronger so that was the story of my life.

# JESSICA

I just want to share that I spent a lot of time in self-isolation and using it in private, and let me tell you that is no way to live. Everything in my life was interrupted: school, work, responsibilities, relationships... I felt as if I had nothing. I was only 12 years old when I started using drugs and alcohol, which was when I would hang out with my older siblings.

After getting in trouble with the law, I was committed to a facility for help. There, I was left feeling hopeless and withdrawing for days. The staff kept reminding me that "it'll be okay, it's not forever." It felt like a slap to the face, but they were right in the end. I'm glad that part of my life is over.

**I think the biggest barrier was myself, and that I convinced myself that I "enjoyed" what I was doing.**

# JOSHUA

I have had it rough since childhood. I had cancer at a young age and was bullied for it. That led to me sitting alone, like a lot. I became a pro at just wanting to be numb. At the age of 16, I started using alcohol and cocaine. It progressed within a couple of years to liquor and heroin. By age 28, I was using heroin, meth, and alcohol. I finally got clean and sober on 3-11-19.

I was committed to a facility in Texas for help where my family was at the time. I now have a sponsor who has been very helpful in my recovery journey.

I think that I could have received help sooner if health insurance and my own mind weren't in the way.

My advice is to have a sponsor! All we have is

**One  
Day  
At  
A  
Time.**

**"My mess is my message."**

# Relapse



**is a part of Recovery**

*Recovery is  
whatever works  
for you.*



Oneida TAP sponsored the printing of this booklet. Learn more on their website or Facebook. See the contact information below.

Oneida's Tribal Action Plan (TAP) is a strategic plan to focus our Nation's resources to aid our relatives impacted by Substance Use Disorder with a holistic cultural understanding.

The Oneida Nation Tribal Action Plan's 5 goals are to create awareness, increase access to services, develop youth programming, develop a Wellness Court and to create safe spaces within our community.

[tap@oneidanation.org](mailto:tap@oneidanation.org)  
[oneida-nsn.gov](http://oneida-nsn.gov)

2640 West Point Rd, Green Bay, WI 54304

Find us on Facebook | Oneida Nation Tribal Action Plan

## **Quotes from Oneida TAP Recovery Interviews**

"The only thing we lack in life is faith. Everything else, both positive and negative, is in abundance! So, believe in miracles, believe in recovery, believe in your higher power, a loving God of your own understanding, and above all, BELIEVE IN YOURSELF!"

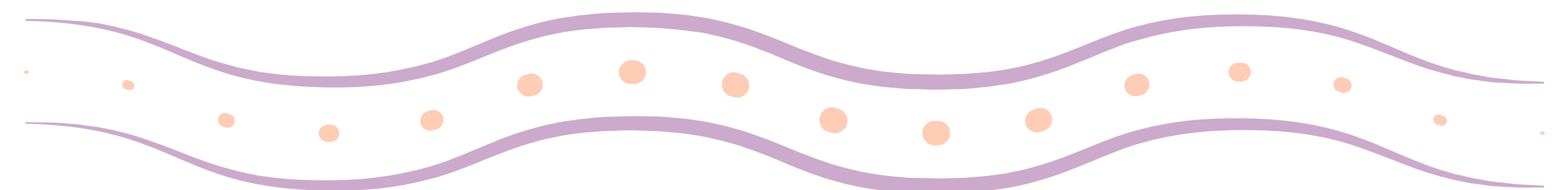
-Patrick D. "He Hollars"

Recovery Date: 4/20/2020

"Life in recovery is awesome, if you let it"

-Stephanie L. Skenandore.

Recovery Date: 10/28/1991



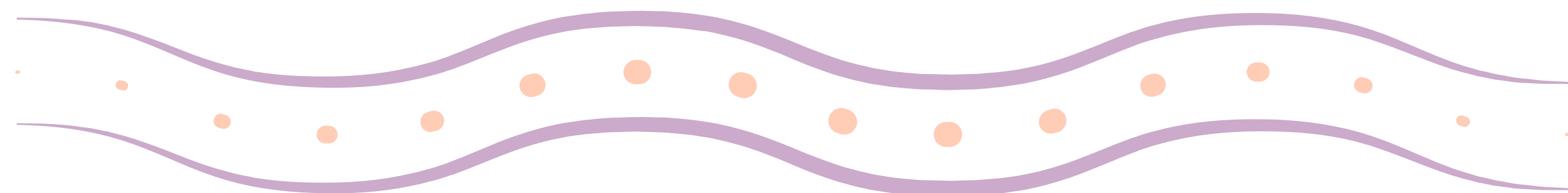


## **Quotes from Oneida TAP Recovery Interviews**

“Honesty is faith in self, life, and all things”  
-Claudia Skenandore

“Never judge another for their past. We all  
have one and as sure as you have a right to a  
different future, so do they”  
-David Schuyler

“4-29-21 is the day I got a new start at life. It  
literally was either life or death at that point  
because I couldn’t continue going down that  
path. Prayed for the strength to do either one  
and the man above chose the path for me”  
-Margo Skenandore



## **Dedication**

This booklet contains stories from those  
who have been affected by addiction and  
their journeys to recovery. It was made to  
inspire those who are on a similar path in  
life. The hope is that this will serve as part  
of your survival guide.

The gathering of stories and creation of  
this booklet took about a year to complete.

It was done by Caitlin Haynes, the  
AmeriCorps VISTA Member for JOSHUA.

Caitlin spent her two service years as a  
program assistant and a recovery coach  
working to give resources to those in need  
and raise awareness of the struggles of  
addiction as well as mental health.

The time and effort that went into this  
resource is dedicated to the lives lost to  
addiction.