

## A Testimonial

I will give you a brief history of my life and the type of person I was before coming into recovery.

I was born in Toronto and raised by two very loving parents and had a wonderful childhood that I shared with two sisters. My education was adequate and I excelled at athletics. When I reached my teenage years and started going to high school I started feeling less than, my selfworth waned. It is hard to explain why.

The reality of it all was that I just did not like the responsibility of living on life's terms. Escapism seemed more exciting. Drugs and alcohol made me feel better it changed everything. I had also met a wonderful girl when I was 15. We would eventually get married at 33 years old after much persuasion, manipulation, lies and deceit. Someone had to look after all the responsibility. As it turned out we have two great boys, who have been provided for mostly by my wife over the last several years. I have multitudes of love for her and the boys and it runs to my core. However the love for my addictions was first and foremost in my mind. My denial would stay with me until I was 43, I could not see the truth.

My story is not unique. I had lost everything and my last snippet self respect in October 2005. My wife and I had been separated 11 years earlier and my business was lost. Friends were gone and I was still running from reality. I had to face what was real head on or just die.

I called St. Joseph's detox and asked for help on October 24, 2005. They had a bed for me. I wasn't sure what to expect I thought it was to help me get off drugs. I didn't realize drugs were a solution to the bigger problem which was me. I needed help discovering me, the truth. After 8 days in detox, I was fortunate to be accepted at Ozanam House, an eleven bed pre-treatment facility. Thus began my exposure to and my journey with The Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

While at Ozanam, the staff helped me open my mind to a better solution, an integration to the 12 steps and the discovery of a higher power. They prepared me for treatment at Renascent which I entered on December 8, 2005. I worked hard and had a successful stay, I graduated from the 21 day program on December 29, 2005. I realized that God was with me, loved me and gave me the strength to continue to take guidance and direction for my life and decisions. I went back to Ozanam house for post treatment until a St. Vincent de Paul community home was available. I became a resident at the the VP Homes on February 1, 2006. After several months I became a staffrep in training and eventually staff rep. I completed my tenure as staff rep in February 2008 and was promoted to a shop home where I currently reside.

Current Resident of VP SHOP Homes

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul has given me the opportunity to not only cement my foundation in recovery but to also discover the man, the father, the friend and the child of God I was meant to be from conception. It is with great emotion that I tell of the hope that Frank, Patricia, Joe and Kim, Louise and the yearly visits to Marygrove with all my new and true friends have restored in me. I have registered a new business and am providing for my children both financially and emotionally. I have a good relationship with Sharon and my family. I am a member in good standing at my AA home group where I provide service to others. Thank you St. Vincent de Paul and to my higher power for showering me with love by putting you in my life.

With love and sincerity

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