

Kelli's Story

I was twelve when I first got drunk: me, a nice kid from Edina. Sick as a dog, I was. One would think I would never do *THAT* again ... but I did ... over and over and over. I loved it.

Fast forward ... I had a couple DWI's in the 80's; marriage, pregnancies, and divorce in the 90's. By the time I reached 35, I was a full-fledged cocaine addict ... but how could this happen to a nice kid from Edina?

I wanted cocaine more than I wanted to know the answer. I couldn't stop. The truth is, I didn't want, to stop. My body was now seriously affected by cocaine, but still ... I didn't want to stop. I began smoking crack cocaine. What joy! What pleasure! It controlled me. I couldn't get enough. "Please, God, make me want to stop!" My little girls are now being watched by child protection. Why can't I stop?!!! I am bright, I am energetic, a hard worker. I love my daughters, and I'm a kind person. I don't want to hurt anyone. Why can't I stop?!!

Oh, good. Now I'm in a new apartment. A new job. I think I am back on track. Help! I'm smoking it again. Why won't I stop?!!!! Thank God my parents helped out with my children. What pain I'm afflicting on everyone I love. Why won't I stop?!

I got into in-patient treatment ... ah ... finally ... I was sober. But I liked the feeling from crack a lot better than being sober. Sober, I'm haunted by guilt and shame. Where will I go? I am scared sober. I don't know how to be normal. I need support. I want to try again, but I'm so scared. "Please help me, God. Give me a chance." Will someone believe in me, though I don't believe in myself? I heard about Perspectives' Supportive Housing Program; there is a waiting list and they say I have to interview. Will they believe me when I tell them that I want to change my life? "Please, God, make them believe me."

The door swung open. I walked into my beautiful new apartment by now 97 days and ten hours sober. I looked around. I breathed it in. I was in a totally furnished apartment. Fifty-one other apartments were also filled with recovering women with their children. A safe, sober community -- a sisterhood; oh my God, please, please help me stay sober. I am with my children again. I so want to start over. "Thank you, Perspectives," I sighed deeply, "thank you, God" ... a haven.

A knock on the door, my case manager, her name is Lupe. We sat down, we made a plan. She was going to help but she said it would ultimately be up to me. She gave me a reassuring smile and told me I could do it. She believed in me ... but could I believe in myself? That night, at ten o'clock the knock at the door came again. It would be the same knock from program staff for the next 3½ years. "Are you okay? Do you need anything?"

I jumped into a twelve-step program and every other class and workshop group Perspectives offered. I was hungry for success. I made it to the celebration dinner, now six months sober. They handed me my medallion. I got another one twelve months later, then one for 18 months, then my fourth at 24 months, then 30. My God, I was 36 months sober! I felt solid ground beneath me. I felt so good about myself. My children had grown to feel safe again. Perspectives' Kids Connection Program worked miracles there. They helped my children laugh again. We're really a family. For the first time I know I am a good mom.

I think, now ... I know, I am ready to leave. But could I possibly fulfill my dream of buying a house? I had a good job and do you believe this, I was attending first time homeowner classes?!

It was February 17, 2007. I was sober for over 3½ years when I packed up the last box in my apartment. My long journey had come to an end. It was my time to leave. "Thank you, God," I prayed, with tears streaming down my face. "Thank you for bringing me to Perspectives for giving me my children back, for giving me my life back. Thank you, thank you, thank you," I sobbed.

Dear Reader,

Please take a two-minute look at the enclosed DVD, and learn where Kelli is today.

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