

WORDS OF GRATITUDE FROM STEVE

Dear Transition House,

It has been 5 years since I graduated the Transition House program and felt it was time to update all of you about my life today. First and foremost, I want to Thank You for the life I have today. If I had not had the opportunity to go through the Transition House program I am almost sure that I would not be here today writing this. The way my mind and life was going before I stayed the year with you all would have most likely led me to tragedy. But today, my life has changed 360 degrees to the positive.



A little bit about me and my past. By the time I was 11 years old I had experienced 2 major traumatic events that I believe started my journey into mental illness. When I was 12 years old I found substances would take away those thoughts and feelings and make me feel OK. Temporarily! Keep in mind that I was never diagnosed with mental illness until right before I came to Transition House. For 40 years I was experiencing depression, anxiety, PTSD, racing thoughts, low self-esteem, etc., and the only way I could make it through was by using substances.

As time went on I became dependent on substances to take care of everything. I could not handle any thoughts, feelings or emotions on my own. My low self-esteem would kick in and put me into modes of depression and anxiety. My memories of my childhood would trigger my PTSD symptoms. How did I take care of these feelings? Substances! This led me to 4 different suicide attempts and receiving 7 DUI's. In my last 10 years before coming to Transition House I could not hold a job for over 1 year before being fired for being under the influence. I had become a burden on people and society as a whole.



Then I went to the Transition House. They Saved and Changed my life! At Transition House they worked with me on my different mental health illnesses and gave me the tools to use to cope with my various symptoms. They showed they cared about me as individual and helped to raise my self-esteem. By living in the apartments I learned how to take care of myself and learned how to live with other people. I went from passive to assertive with people. The one on one and group counseling gave me insight into my mental illness and the tools I could use to help me cope. They also greatly supported the 12 step program I go to for my substance abuse.

Transition House has given me an opportunity to have a life today that I never dreamed I could ever have. What I do though is work each day on my recovery and use the tools that Transition House provided me. I also stay in close contact with Transition House and am now a member of their Advisory Council. Today I work at Griffin Memorial Hospital and provide Peer Recovery Support. I am able today to pass on to persons new in their recovery the tools that were provided to me by Transition House. Today I live on my own and enjoy life. Today I do not want to end my life because Transition House let me see how to look life in the eye and find the ways to a better life.



Lastly I would like to Thank everyone who has taken the time to read my abbreviated story. I am not the only one with a story like this. There are many who have graduated from Transition House and are now living better and purposeful lives. Transition House has been able to keep its doors open because of people who care enough to donate to a good cause. If you are one of those people who can donate, please do. I know it would be Greatly Appreciated by the clients who are now living at Transition House and many more to come in the future. Again, Thank You Transition House for Saving and Changing my life. You will never know how Grateful I am to have had the opportunity to have gone through your program.



Sincerely and with Warmest Wishes,
Steve Boyer
05/12/2014

Dear Bonnie,

This E-mail is long overdue to you. The reason I am sending it is to Thank You from the bottom of my heart for all of the hard work you do to keep the Transition House open and functioning. Your organization has literally saved and changed my life.

Before I came to the Transition House, I was an alcoholic in a very deep depression. I just wanted to pass out drunk and never wake up. Fortunately, my aunt took me to Norman Regional ER who in turn sent me to Griffin Hospital. I then went to the Norman Alcohol and Drug Treatment Center, where I stayed for 10 weeks before coming to the Transition House.

Bonnie, I started drinking and doing drugs at the age of 12. I grew up a very privileged child, never having to worry about money. So I could always buy drugs from friends and steal liquor from my parents bar. Looking back on my life now, I can see that I was a very sad and depressed child, using those items to momentarily escape reality.

In my Twenties, I started using hard alcohol on daily basis to suppress my feelings of loneliness, low self-esteem, and depression. I was never professionally diagnosed with depression, so the thought never occurred to me that maybe I had a mental illness. In my early Thirties, I even completed my college education receiving a Master Degree in Communication. All the while drinking and fighting a mental illness I did not know I had. Because of my mental illness, I have had such bouts of low self-esteem and depression that I have been terrified to try and obtain a career where I could utilize my degree.

Every job I have had was lost to drinking and depression. I have obtained 7 DUI's over the course of my life. I have tried to commit suicide 3 times due to severe bouts of depression. I just did not want to face the realities of life. I was so emotionally mixed up that I could not seem to grasp the concept that life is worth living.

And now for the positive side of my E-mail. Since coming to Transition House, your organization has tremendously helped me to start breaking out of my shell of depression, loneliness, low self-esteem and the fear of living life on life's terms. Living in the Transition House apartments is re-teaching me how to communicate with others, cleaning my living environment, cooking for myself, personal hygiene and so many other things. The daily group sessions are so helpful to me in better understanding my mental illness and supplying the tools necessary to combat the times when my depression wants to take over.

One on One sessions with Katie and Jeanene have been another life saving change for me. Because of their sincere efforts and dedication towards helping me better understand myself, my emotions and feelings, I am starting to live a more serene and peaceful life. By letting me participate in the June Bug Jam 08, no one will ever know how much that helped me in building my low self-esteem. It was because I attending the weekly Music Wellness program offered at the Transition House. I want to Thank You for that opportunity. I also would like it to be known how much Ilene, Jessica and Alesha have helped me by just always taking the time to talk with me whenever I need someone to talk to.

Because of Transition House's strong suggestion and urging of attending AA meetings to deal with my alcoholism, I now have almost 9 months of sobriety. I also realize that for myself, if I was not sober there is now possible way I could be focusing and learning about my mental illness. I attend meetings almost daily, have a wonderful sponsor, am closer to my Higher Power, and have acquired a whole new group of sober friends.

Bonnie, as I said previously, the Transition House has saved and changed my life. I cannot believe how positive my attitude and outlook on life is today. Because I see how your organization is working so hard to better peoples lives, I am currently gathering information on how to become a Recovery Support Specialist or a Case Manager. I would love to give to others what I have been given at Transition House. I will forever be grateful to have been given the opportunity to experience the Transition House program.

Once again, from the bottom of my Heart and Soul - Thank You! I would also be very grateful if you would pass on my Thank You to all of the Transition House supporters for giving me a new meaning to life.

Sincerely,

Steven Boyer