

Stories of Hope

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While every recovery story has its own unique narrative, there is usually a common thread; lasting recovery is seldom achieved on the first try. Getting sober and staying sober requires tenacity and a strong desire to overcome one's addiction.

Steve's story is no exception. A Danbury native, Steve's life took a major turn at the age of 10 when his folks split up. The second child in a family of three boys, he recalled, “We had the white picket fence, we were all doing pretty well in school. But after the divorce, my mom got involved with an alcoholic and it was all down hill from there.”

Things continued to deteriorate over the next couple of years; life was stressful and money was tight. Steve watched as his older brother took to the streets to escape the chaotic and unstable family environment. By the time he was 16, Steve was ready to follow in his brother's footsteps.

For a period of time, life was seemingly good until the disease of addiction began to take hold. His drug of choice – alcohol. “I had money and no responsibility, and I had time to drink. It was the worst thing for me – nobody could tell me anything.”

“I was never going to do heroin, I was too smart for that. But it sucks you in.”

Gradually he found his way to heroin. The downward spiral escalated as he crashed one car after another, had major run-ins with the law and eventually ended up with no money, no job and no skills.

“At 27 I was scared. I had been in and out of jail and rehab numerous times and was living on the streets of Danbury,” Steve admitted. Burnt out from his addiction, family and friends had abandoned him. Within a short period of time he overdosed twice on heroin, and to this day, is amazed that he survived.

Steve eventually landed at MCCA where he began his long road to recovery. “I went to detox 15 times. Fifteen times I tried and 15 times I failed.” After so many failed attempts to stay clean, he looked around at the people who were getting better and thought, “If they can do it, I can do it.” He recalled what a struggle every moment was in the beginning, “It really was minute by minute. But little by little, a moment at a time, I started to get better.”

Steve credits the strong support of his counselor at McDonough House for helping him believe he could beat his addiction. “My counselor helped me tremendously. I could relate to him, he knew every single feeling I was having and he had a solution to help me move beyond it.”

He took advantage of nearly every program MCCA offers – detox, inpatient treatment at McDonough House, Sunrise Terrace, intensive outpatient, relapse prevention and individual counseling. While Steve was at Sunrise Terrace – MCCA's supportive housing – he went back to St. John's University to finish his education. In three and half years, he earned his undergraduate degree and a Master of Science in Taxation. Today Steve is the owner of a successful painting and roofing company, with a young family of his own.

He is thankful to MCCA for leading him to sobriety.

“I felt ready but scared, and I gave back a lot. I spoke at rehab, I kept giving back. I didn’t want to leave MCCA because they had given me sobriety and for that I will always be grateful.”

