

Jency's Story

It was not too long ago that I was on the street selling dope. Even though I was selling drugs, I had always held a job and to that extent I felt respectable. I had gotten married and had a little girl. I was on top of the world. I had plenty of money, cars and things. I kept all I had in cash and in a safe under my bed. Nothing in my life was truly legitimate because I knew how to play the game. I would never put anything in my name; no bank account, checking account, no credit cards because that was part of my game. I was never a drug user or a drinker so I felt that I was untouchable. The game finally fell apart one day. On that day I came home and my wife had taken everything. She kicked me out on the street. It is too long a story to tell here but I lost it all. My whole life fell apart. She divorced me and left me with nothing. I could not believe it, there I was on the street with nothing. My whole world fell apart. It seemed I could not even keep the jobs I once had.

Out on the street with nothing to my name I went to the Salvation Army's Booth House. As I look back I was actually getting tired of that lifestyle of carrying pistols and guns. I was always looking over my shoulder, not knowing who might be there coming after me. My case manager at the Booth House told me I was a good person and that I could make it if I put my mind to it. I decided to get my life legitimate. I figured that I could not go wrong. The problem was by the time I came to that decision it was getting close to the time for me to be leaving the Booth House. I found that I was not ready to face the world. I had too many things I still had not addressed in my life. I was not prepared to make that move.

It was then that my case manager told me about the St. Vincent DePaul Center. The DePaul Center gave me a life line. I had two years to get my life together so that I would not find myself back in the same predicament. You need to know how easy it would have been to start selling drugs for easy money. It is as simple as making a phone call and I could have been back to the easy money. I however decided to start taking the steps to take care of my business and leave that old lifestyle behind. The DePaul Center let me know I could do anything I needed for myself. I found that if I worked at it I could do it. I need to tell you it was a lot of hard work but I got plenty of support from the Staff. I had to change the way I looked at many issues. I really was becoming legitimate. I had a lease, I got a phone. I began to pay off my hospital bills and other bills. I gained confidence. I could do something for myself. In the 18 months at DePaul Center, I began to see life in a new way. I did not have to scheme my way through life. I am no longer 16 and now know that scheming is not the path to a solid future.

Today I feel I am successful. I have been promoted in my job several times. I am very proud to say that I have two saving's accounts and a checking account. The one savings' I have for long term goals and I do not use that money at all. I also have had the fortune of buying stock in the company for which I work. If I buy stock they will match what I buy. The key to my success is that I learned to stop sabotaging myself. I learned to believe in myself. The DePaul Center taught me that lesson. The DePaul Center has helped me to become a better father. I am there now when I am needed. I can support my

child and support myself legitimately. I thank the DePaul Center for all it has done to help me become who I am today.

My goals for the future are to continue to work my jobs and in five years buy my own house.