

Dynamic, vibrant and motivated represents the strength of Miss Stella Jones



I have spent multiple years of going in and out of the county jail and struggling with my addiction to crack cocaine while trying to maintain my mental health illness. I just didn't know how to make good decisions and I kept returning back to that active addiction to crack. Each time it landed me homeless, non-medication compliant, and back in county jail with another charge, usually theft. I used to wonder what life was really like without the use of drugs. I just didn't know. Although I suffer from the disease of addiction along with a mental health illness, I know I can live a healthy life-style drug and criminal activity free. Yes, that is what I wanted. I just didn't know how to live that way. I never thought anyone cared enough for me to help show me the way until while severing out a sentence of 9 months and 16 days for theft, I took this group that was offered in our county jail.

While in the Franklin County jail, I signed up for this group called Pathways to Women's Healthy Living through Homeland Security & Justice Programs. This group turned my life around and I knew I would be able to live a more productive life which I could be proud of.

It was the teaching of self-esteem and personal touch from our facilitator that made the difference. Sargent Beaudry who is the CIT officer at the jail was instrumental in helping me when things got tough. She would check on me and make sure I was alright. I was able to ask question and get answers that I could understand. This made me feel like I was a contributing part of the process.

For me I think that it was the personal touch of the Pathways team that picked me up with a cup of coffee from White Castle and a big bright smile that made me know I was safe and this time it was going to be different. This time I can make it.

I attend my group sessions through Southeast and I knit and crochet as well as make jewelry to pass the time. I am hopeful that I will be able to sell these items and continue to invest in myself so that I can invest in others. I am writing a book called "Why You, Why Me, Why Anyone" by Stella Lynn. This is only a reality because of the assistance and help of Pathways and CIT officers and team members. Thank you for all that support and leadership in my life.

Today, I am hopeful for a brighter future and sharing my story with others. That if I can do it so can you, believe in yourself and ask for some help. Thank you to the Pathway team Jennifer Mancini, Shannon Beaudry, Ms. Caitlin, Ms. Dyana, and Ms. Patrice. And to Commissioner Brown and Michael Daniels for having the vision that has given me my life back.