

Last Chance at a New Life

My name is Shayne and I am an addict. I'm 37 years old and have been using alcohol, marijuana and crack cocaine for over 20 years.

The last 18 years of my life has been controlled and consumed by my substance abuse. I have held a steady job as a service truck operator for most of my adult life. For the last 7 years I've spent approximately equal amounts of time in many different jails, homeless and living on the streets of most major cities in British Columbia and Alberta. That is where my addiction had taken me. It all ended this time as I found myself hopeless, alone and feeling like a total failure in life on the streets of Edmonton. That is when I reached out once again for the help of a detox facility.

I was mentally, emotionally and spiritually broken. My body was gaunt and I was very sick. I was thirty pounds lighter than I am today. As soon as I was well enough physically at detox I went through a 21 day treatment facility again and saw a faint glimmer of hope. But I had been to four treatment centers in the past and had some doubts. That's when the one year treatment program through Our House Addiction Recovery Centre was suggested to me by a counselor. One year seemed overwhelming at first but I was willing to do anything this time.

When I arrived at Our House I was welcomed by everyone who saw me. I knew this was the place for me. My first three months in the House I began to see people caring about other people. Help and guidance was always there when I sought it out. I became relaxed, felt involved, and saw clients graduate monthly. This gave me a lot of hope. I began to believe I sincerely had a chance to make lasting changes in my life. I would have the time to practice living this new way of life.

Since I've been in Our House, over the past eleven months, I've gained a purpose in my life. I've amassed numerous true friends whom I connect with and they care about me. My family is in my life, and I have a relationship of honesty and trust with them. I have re-established a relationship with my last employer who fired me just over one year ago. He's awaiting my return to work. I volunteer in my community through my 12 step fellowship and, today, I enjoy the rewards of speaking at youth centre's and other treatment facilities. Today I have a full and rich life I enjoy, and the best part is that I believe it's truly only the beginning.

I am an addict and always will be but, because of applying myself and the program and safe environment, clients and staff at Our House, the love, joy and opportunities I have today are only the beginning. Today I am grateful.

Shayne