

VOICES OF RECOVERY



Donnie

1. Please describe your childhood:

I had a great childhood - I grew up in the city of Brockton MA. My parents had me when they were 18 years old and I give them credit, they did a great job raising me because we were growing up together. I never went without and had amazing, loving grandparents and family who were always around. But addiction was something I was introduced to at a very young age, birth basically!! I didn't know what addiction was in the moment because I was a baby but my family had there struggles with gambling and alcohol.

2. How and when did addiction/alcoholism begin manifesting; at what age?

I would say my addiction started manifesting my summer after graduation - I was 18 years old and I was offered to try a Percocet. I didn't know the effects that using opioids had. We were never taught that you would become sick with withdrawal and would NEED this pill or feel sick... and I didn't realize that pill also numbed my insecurities about my weight & about my sexuality. It also numbed my feelings and emotions of being hurt by someone I loved very much.

3. How did your addiction progress from there?

My addiction progressed gradually over the years after that first Percocet at 18! I only smoked weed and drank here and there before the opioid came into play.. I would say with each year after that first time I tried an opioid I dug deeper and deeper down into a hole and experimented with more drugs. The deeper I went into that hole, the even more hurt I endured, on top of that other stuff I was feeling inside before the opioids got introduced to me.

4. Can you describe your path towards recovery?

My path towards recovery wasn't easy this time around. Before my recent relapse I had almost 5 years clean under my belt. But bam, the pandemic hit and a week into the pandemic hitting, scared of the unknown, I lost my boyfriend to a drug overdose and bam two weeks later my dog, who was my best friend, died. Instead of saying to someone that I needed help, that my mental state wasn't good, I took a turn down a deep dark road. Homeless in Brockton I reached a dark place and was broken. I went into detox and then left and back in again. I went in and out of detox seven times in a two month span the eighth try stuck and I stayed!

5. What has helped you maintain your recovery?

The biggest thing that has helped me in my recovery is only surrounding myself with other sober friends and family. People who want to see you succeed in keeping your demons locked away. People who want nothing but for you to be happy healthy and sober. And also never hiding the fact that I am an addict and I am in recovery. Be proud of yourself because it's not easy!

6. What advice would you give to someone just beginning their steps towards recovery?

My advice to an addict that is just beginning the journey into a life of recovery would be... At this moment of just starting or just thinking about starting, you may feel like it will take forever to get your feet back on the ground, it may feel like it will take forever to have anything nice, it may feel like it will take forever to mend relationships and to have car or a job or even some money saved in the bank. But it will happen faster than you could ever imagine - as long as your putting that next foot in the right direction, being honest, humble but most of all sober each day that passes that you continue not to pick up you you will gain something good back. I just hit my one year and it feels like it happened in a blink of an eye!! Don't give up you got this!