

Addiction Services of Kentucky

Recovery is Possible if you
ASK for Help!

FACES OF SAP

2019



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
DIVISION OF ADDICTION SERVICES

Message from the Director

The Division of Addiction Services is excited to sponsor the Faces of (Substance Abuse Programs) SAP project. As the Director of the Division, I want our clients to be known for more than their disease and inmate number. I want people to see their successes not just their shortcomings. We reached out to our residential substance abuse treatment programs and asked our clients to submit artwork that represents their perspective of recovery and hope. Our mission is to join with the recovery community and help fight the stigma that often accompanies clients with substance use disorder; especially those within the criminal justice system. We want to use our unified voice to promote hope and healing because recovery is possible and change happens every day within the Kentucky Department of Corrections.



Director, Division of Addiction Services
Department of Corrections

Faces of SAP

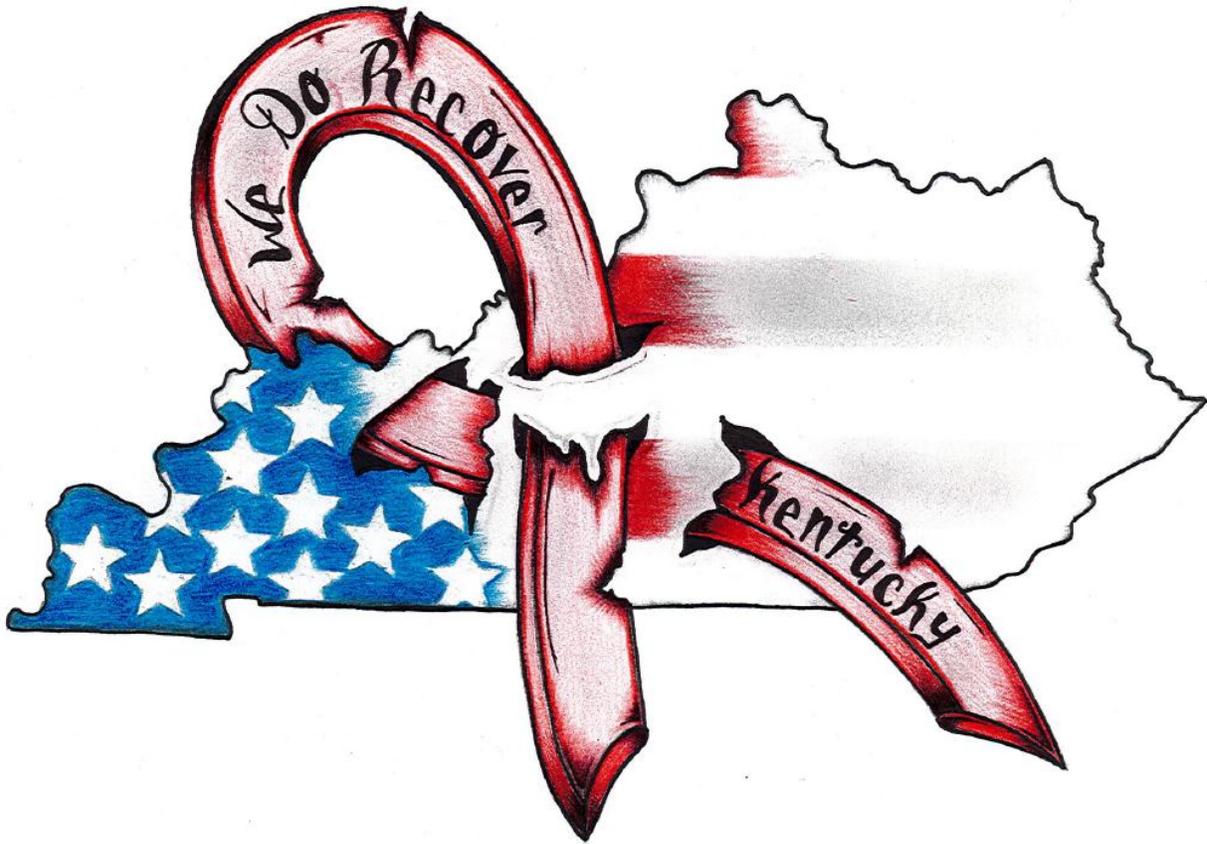
Inside rooms, reentry service centers, jails and prisons, Recovery is happening. Throughout the Department of Corrections thousands of people choose to take a different path, follow a new direction and enter treatment with the hope of starting a new life. Folks who have lost friends, family, and their freedom are finding hope for change.

To sit with our clients and hear their stories many of us realize that we all have more in common than not. We all are struggling to be the best parent, best brother, best sister, aunt, uncle, grandparent, child and friend that we can possibly be. The Faces of SAP, is a way for us to invite you in for a seat at our table. A chance for you to come in, sit down, listen to some stories and maybe share a few of your own. These are the Faces of SAP and we are proud to share a glimpse of what happens on the inside.

Sponsored by the Division of Addiction Services



We Do Recover



My drawing is of Kentucky with an American flag and a Recovery Ribbon going around and through it. The truth is Addiction is within us and all around us. I have struggled with this most of my life. Unlike many of my friends and family, I was fortunate enough to find a better way before it was too late. I realize that we are fighting an Epidemic and cannot do it alone. My hopes are that I can use my experience to deter others from choosing the path I walked down.

Drawn by: Brian M.
Shelby County Detention Center SAP

Personalities of Addiction



These pieces represent the different personalities and struggles of addiction. There will always be light behind darkness. They represent sorrow, hope, grief, fear, and recovery. They all have a duality about them of beauty and disaster. I used pencil and pen. They're the only things I currently have to work with, but I freehanded every piece in the collection. I have history as a musician and was a tattoo artist for a period of time.

Drawn by: Kaine H.
Grayson County Detention Center SAP

Eye of the Storm: A Short Story

Where is everyone?" I curiously wonder myself.

"Hello!" I shout desperately.

No answer, only my own voice echoing off the walls for company. I panic, my breath quickens. So many thoughts are jumbled in my mind. I try to catch one, only to have it slide through my fingers so quickly it is as if it was never there at all. It was there, was it not?

Deep breath in. Deep breath out. I am still breathing, I am still alive. I pause to take in my surroundings. It is not dark, yet I still cannot see. I blink my eyes, I rub them vigorously with my hands. I shake my head in an attempt to see clearly. Nothing clears this fog away. I am alone. This infuriates me. I hate being alone. I seem to be stuck in some sort of hole. My mind races.

"AAGHH!" I scream till my throat is dry.

"Don't tell me that." I spitefully say to no one in particular.

The realization hits me that I have officially lost my mind. At first I cry, then I sob. I find myself lying on the ground. Begging for death to call my number. I begin to count. I will do anything but cry. I will do anything but think. Anything to clog the stream of consciousness flowing from my head to my heart. Just one more thought, I know my heart will surely explode.

I will still be alive. Seconds, hours, years, days, weeks; the silence breaks.

"Hello?" I speak, my voice quivers. No answer, why am I surprised. How long has this silence engulfed me? Years, months, hours, days? The silence breaks again. I tell myself this time will be different, at the same time I daringly ask, but will it really?

Something shatters. I bend down and begin picking up the pieces of my heart. Something stirs again, this time I believe I will listen. OK, I tell myself one last time. I clear my throat while tucking the pieces of my heart in my pocket.

I inquiringly say, "Hello?" To my surprise there is a response.

"There you are." A voice that sounds as cheerful a dawn. Speaking as if I was never gone at all.

"Of course I am here, where else would I be?"

"What have you been waiting for?" The voice echoes through the room it pings off the pieces of heart that I have hastily thrown in my pocket. The sensation vibrates through my body. I gaze upward through the fog trying to locate source of this voice. I shake my head. I blink 15 times.

What I see cannot be real.

Never before in all my year, hours, days, seconds have I ever noticed a light. I am dumbfounded.

"You wonder about the light?" I hear.

"Yes" I respond so quietly a whisper would say I shouted.

As I rummage through my muddled mind eager to understand. I suddenly realize that I have never stopped counting one year since I have seen them, six months since I have cared. Two months since I have called, one day since I have remembered to forget. Has it only been one day, Twenty-four hours, 1,440 minutes. 86,400 seconds since I forgot to remember. I'm frantic, my head is covered by my hands. What is going on? Why is there light? Why is it dark? Why did I stop counting. "AAAGHH!"

"Why would you say that?"

I wail I fall to my knees, I look up towards this new distant light, I hear, "I say it because it is true, I say it because you have quit counting."

My thoughts begin to spiral down from my head to my heart as quickly as a category 5 tornado. Surely it will also suck my pain away. It does not, I am still alone, or am I?

"You have never been alone."

My head slowly turns towards the voice, towards the light.

"Why have I never heard you before?" I inquire.

"My path was blocked, you had to clear the way."

"But I have done nothing to clear the way. Where are you? Where did you come from?"

I am so confused, the storm is still raging inside of me.

"I am the light. I come from the eye of your storm. You began to clear the way by picking up the pieces of your heart."

"That makes no sense!" I exclaim. "I do not even know what to call you." Deep breath, I try to puzzle my thoughts together.

"Call me whatever you like. I have many names. Some call me brother, some call me a friend. Some call me a higher power. For now you can call me light, because I am the light in your darkness."

"Why are you here?"

"I'm here to help you remember."

"Remember what?"

"Your life."

"My life." I sneer. "What has life ever done for me? Look at me!" I challenge. "I am broken!" As I sling my arms in the air I reply, "No thanks."

"What if I told you life does not have to equal pain. What if I told you, you could live a life in the light. Would you accept my help?"

I have doubts. I carefully lay down and place my arms behind my head. I am exhausted. As I gaze upward towards the hazy light I respond, "Sure, why not?"

I drift asleep. When I awaken it is no longer to a nightmare. As I contemplate rising up sleep still clouds my mind. I begin to wonder more about this light. As I do his rings true. I remember something I remember two little girls with curly hair, with eyes of deep blue just like the ocean. I remember a toothless smile, a candy sweet sticky kiss. I remember a bed time story with goofy voices. I sob. The pieces of my heart clatter together in my pocket as I shake in devastation for all I have lost.

I cry out "Light! High power, make it stop! I do not want to count anymore but the pain is too great! Help me, I am powerless to make it stop."

I began to pull out the pieces of my heart examining them on the ground. So many pieces, where do I start? How did I get here? The light flips on. I hear "Your journey is what leads you to your destination, where your journey ends is up to you."

"Light" I mumble "Is that you?"

He responds mid-chuckle "Well who else is with you when you are all alone child? I will calm your storm, if you allow me I will place all the pieces of your heart back together. I will restore your sanity."

"Am I insane?" I ask.

"You cannot do this alone, turn your will and life over to me, together we will live."

The authority in his voice tells me the next question is most important of all.

"Will you place your life in my care?"

I am shaking all over, how do I trust something I cannot see. Something I do not feel. I close my eyes, I reach my hand towards the light to claim my future. My hand is met by the eye of my storm. The presence of light overtakes me. I feel him. I feel peace, my storm is placated. I feel strength, do I dare open my eyes. I hear something familiar, something that feels once lost. Someone grabs my hand, tugging it downward. My eyes fly open, when I look down I see two beautiful girls not so little any more. Their eyes are as deep blue as the ocean. The biggest one says "Mommy, there you are."

I smile in response I reply "Of course I am. Where else would I be?"

G.O.D.



This piece represents G.O.D. a God of your understanding, or Good Orderly Direction. She is a Goddess of AA. The dove represents friendship/fellowship. The sun represents life and hope that there will always be something you can look forward to. A new day. The cross is not only for religion but to show there always is a power greater than yourself.

Drawn by: Laurence S.
CTS Russell

Victory Bells

Stained glass windows light this Chapel Hall.
Casting beams of color that slowly rise and fall.
My life passing by, yet I sit in this chair.
Stuck in my addiction. Locked in this stare.
My brain needing washed with a wire brush.
A heavy heart in my chest, and a mouth that is hush.

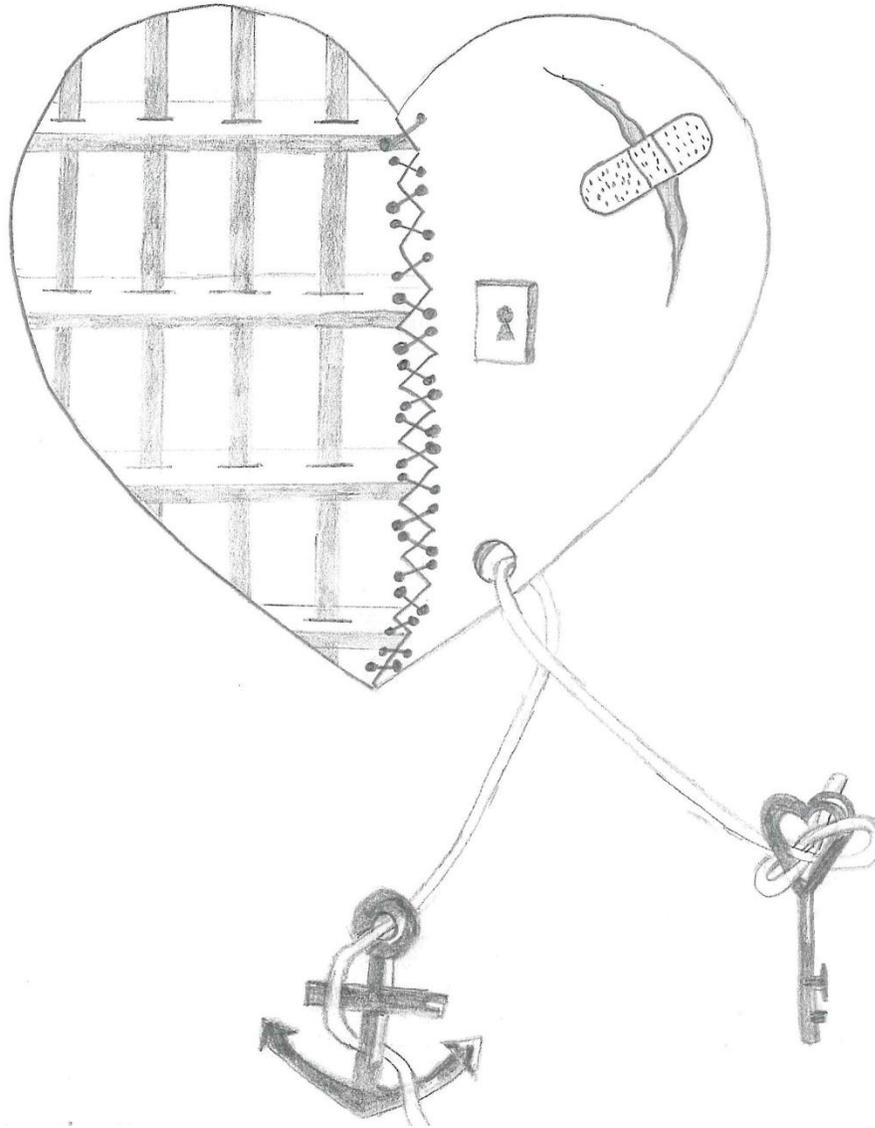
Snap out of it friend! Rise to your feet.
It's never too late. Do not admit defeat.
Do not go silently into that dark night.
Scream like a banshee! Put up a fight!
Nothing is stopping you but the man in the mirror.
But he can be victorious, if he loses his fear.

The battle was long, and the conflict endures.
With the disease of addiction there is no magic cures.
Keep practicing principles in order to grow.
We didn't get here overnight so progress is slow.
Do not be discouraged when you have a bad day.
Life isn't always rainbows. Just continue to pray.
With each day that passes my spirit gains strength.
When it comes to my sobriety I'll go to any length.
Those who came before me help show me how to live.
In order to keep what I have, I must continue to give.
Better days lie ahead. Soon the Victory Bells will chime.
As long as I keep living my life one day at a time.

I wrote this poem after learning of the talent competition. Poetry has never been something of importance in my life, until I discovered its therapeutic value during my incarceration. Poetry became a medium for me to express my feelings. Today poetry is a large part of my recovery.

Written by: Andrew H.
Dismas St. Ann's SAP

The Key to Forgiveness



The Key to Forgiveness - The key to forgiveness the heart is mine locked up and broken. My key is sobriety and the anchor is my children because they are what hold me down. The ribbon is shaped for the breast cancer awareness symbol for my grandmother who raised me and did her best. I have been an addict for twenty four years (three quarters of my life) and getting locked up is how I finally got the help I needed to be able to become sober and have a chance at life.

Drawn by: Heather H.
Henderson County Detention Center SAP

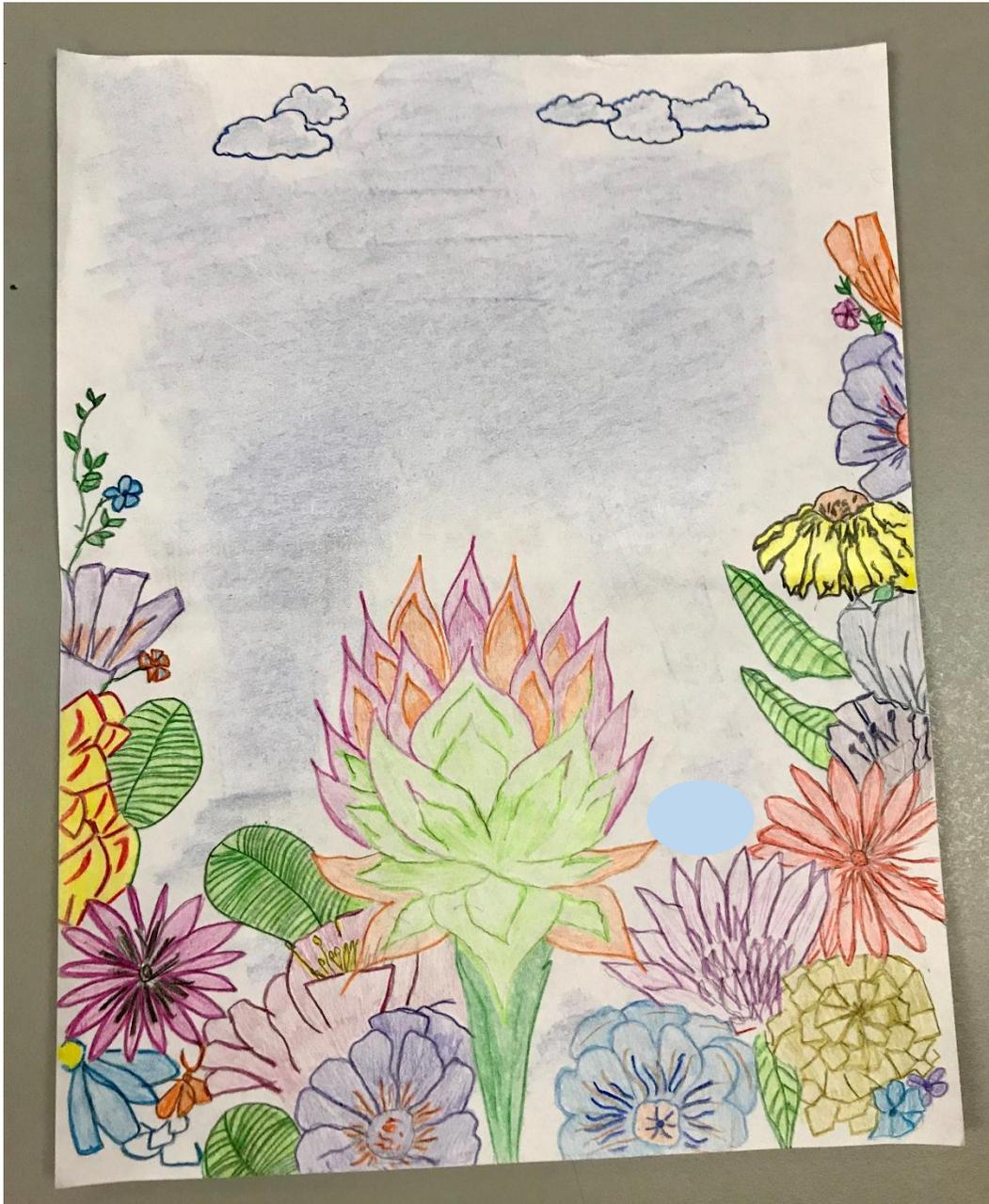
Love



This is a drawing that SAP inspired. The chain shows that I was held by addiction. The cards represent the hand that I was dealt and the dice represent the gambling I have done with my life. The knives represent how many times I've been stabbed in life and the flowers represent the love I have for myself and my son. The doves are the freedom to fly high to the sky and the diamond is me shining bright.

Drawn by: Cheyenne J.
KCIW SAP

Lotus



Lotus - I chose this piece because I love the lotus flower and what it represents. I've struggled with heroin addiction for 23 years and with continued incarceration. Finally after being back at KCIW with a new six year sentence I (like the lotus flower) have come out of the murky waters and have blossomed into something beautiful: A woman of grace and poise who can finally look herself in the mirror and start to have some self-esteem and respect. I hope that I can continue growing like the flowers in my art and know that I can keep growing inside and out in sobriety! Beauty like the lotus.

Drawn by: Kara H.
KCIW SAP

Brain Mange



Brain Mange - Abstract obstruction of thoughts, principles and idea's.

Drawn by: John M.
RCC SAP

Where'd You Go?

I got kids * But I don't get to see' em like I want to
Like ghosts * Most mistakes haunt you
Missed all their ball games and dance routines
I bet they all thinking that their dad is mean
They ain't seen me clean * Barely seen me free
Oldest one 22 * Other ones in they teens
My dreams include them * But they don't know it
I think they all love me * But they don't show it
I hope they forgive me * It's hard to forgive myself
Long enough * To even give my help
I wanna make a difference * I wanna let'em know
So they won't be like the hook * Saying "Where'd You Go?"

Where'd you go...I miss you so...Seems like it's been forever...Since you've been gone.
Where'd you go...I miss you so...Seems like it's been forever...Since you've been gone...Please come
back home

Home * It just ain't the same without mom in the crib
Or the drugs * And all the drama I hid
I remember waking up * Her trying to get me to eat
But I wouldn't * It was back to the streets
Threw away the cleats * Bats * And the baseball gloves
Started running in the streets with thugs
It was love at 1st * Then the worst came last
Shattered * Like a brick * When it hits the glass
My reflection's sad * In the mirror when I look at it
Went from smokin' weed * To a meth addict
And got bad at it * Can't believe the things I did
Mom I miss you * As though I'm still a kid

Where'd you go...I miss you so...Seems like it's been forever...Since you've been gone.
Where'd you go...I miss you so...Seems like it's been forever...Since you've been gone...Please come
back home

"Where'd You Go?" is a rap song; appropriate for recovery settings that covers what it was like, what happened, and what it's like now. It speaks of a man's heartaches and regrets, and expresses his desire to change, and to not only go home----but stay home.

Written by: Richard G.
RCC SAP

151%

I am a victim. Slowly beaten and bruised before my very eyes.
Robbed of everything I value. A true victim of my own demise.
Addiction stole my very identity. Causing heartache and destruction in my stead;
Clouding all the feelings in my heart, misguiding and twisting the morals and standards in my head.
No matter what it may take from me, it's never enough to fulfill the thirst,
I've given it my family, my health, and my freedom but wait it gets worse;
Above all it wants my life. To control every action or thought I may make;
Even when I think I'm the one in control, it shows my belief system is fake,
Another lie inside my head leading to another binge over some misconception;
Another time locked-down sober again looking for a new direction
Back into Step work and searching for the way back in the lives of the ones I love,
But the wounds have compounded over the years becoming too much, constant little pushes finally came to shove,
I've finally driven them away, tired of the lies and promises broken by another binge.
I don't know who "I" am inside so how can I be a husband, father, or true friend?
Searching and fearless moral inventory? That's kind of hard when I don't know "me".
Addictions always hiding the real man I want to be,
Instead I steal the most valuable gifts in life from those who want mine the most.
I steal time that I can never return, I steal happy memories, and I steal love from my unsuspecting hosts.
A heart full of guilt and remorse that no one can believe exists but me.
How could someone be sorry when they continue to cause the same misery?
No matter my intentions in the beginning, the ending seems always the same,
Another heart broken, another bad situation, another infraction, on the integrity of my name.
I try education, I try religion, I even try rehabilitation and therapy.
Everything works in the beginning, but before long, another relapse, another appearance of the old me.
I'm so tired of this roller coaster. Fed up with the lifestyle, the people, the prisons, seeing the tears rolling off the cheeks
of my kids;
Finally realizing it's not my fault I have a disease, but it's my responsibility to do the treatments so I can live.
So to this addiction I say I'm done, I'm through allowing you to hurt my family and giving you everything that's mine,
And I'm setting goals to prevent all your lies about "this one last time".
All my life you've pulled me into hell on a slow downward decent.
But for what I have left, I'm ascending to integrity 151%.

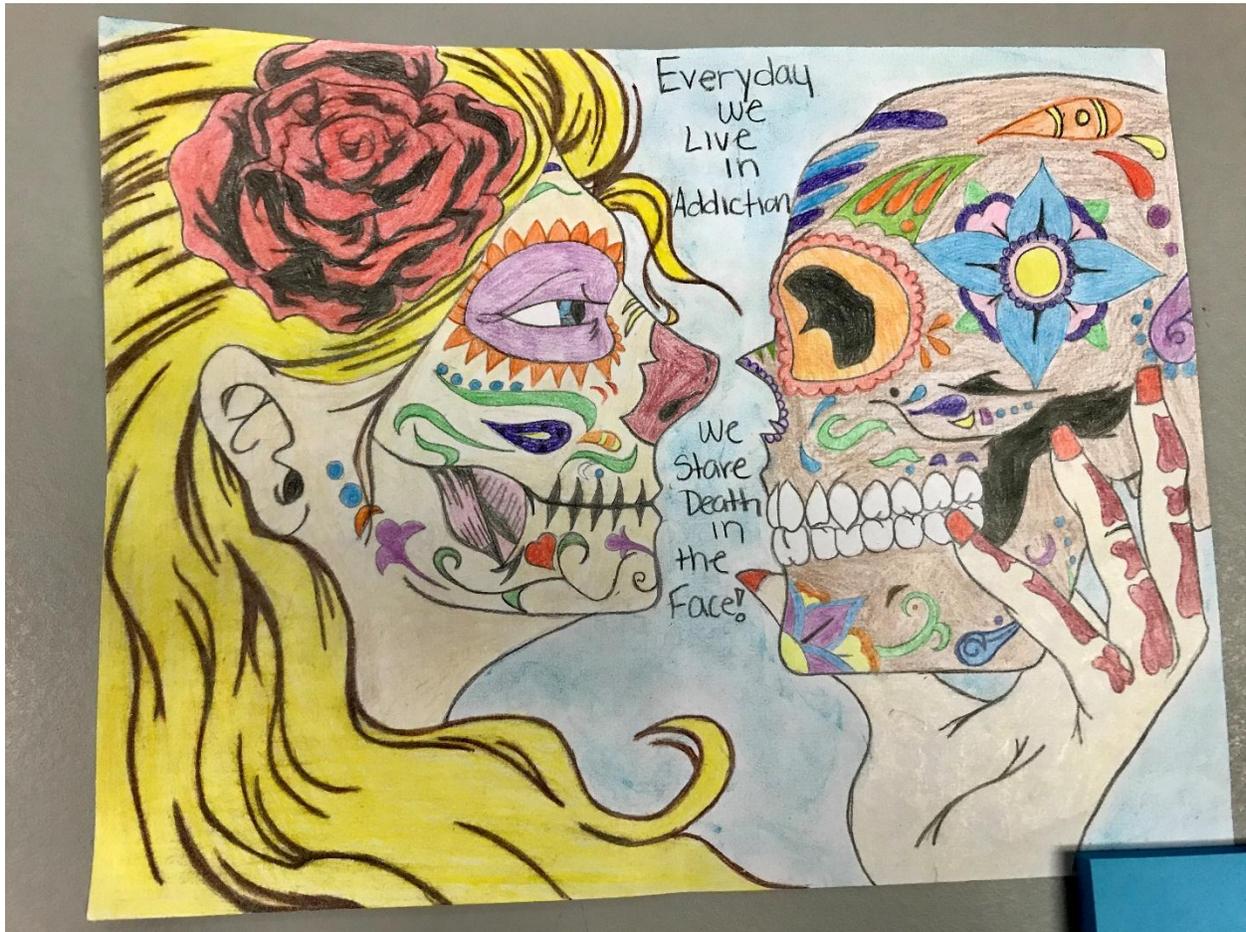
My name is Charles [redacted]. I am a 43 year old man in recovery that knows all too well the true effects of long term addiction. I've been in and out of facilities like the one I'm in now over drug-related charges for the last 26 years. I used to believe that my drug use was only affecting my life. However, I can finally understand the impact on the lives of the ones who love me, my community, and the local government who is battling drug use in their own side of the spectrum with the costs of crime, housing, disposal of chemicals etc. And to be completely honest, I'm ashamed of the person I've been due to my disease. I can only pray that this submission is chosen for publication and through that, it helps someone else out there that's going through the same situations I have over the years.

My poem "151%" is about the thoughts and feelings that come with realizing how destructive my drug-use really was. To the precious hearts of those I love and let down, to all my sober friends I shunned to get high, and to the integrity of the [redacted] name my grandfather spent a great part of his life building. It shows the awareness of responsibility that lies solely with myself to take the medicine offered to me in the rooms and positive goals and boundaries.

Written by: Charles M.

LSCC SAP

Every Day We Live in Addiction, We Stare Death in the Face!



My piece represents addiction and how we stare death in the face every day that we continue to live in it.

Drawn by: Carrie V.
KCIW SAP

Wide Eyes

They look at us with their eyes wide
ready to give voice and opinions about
our past lives.

Thinking their definition is right, then
placing us behind a red line.

Stigmatizing, creating bad vibes.

Recursing our minds back to those
obfuscating times when addiction ran
wild and our worlds were full of
mis-directed guidance.

The only things in our way were
our own prides and own minds.

Getting help was easy, but what
about the faith we needed from those
who despised us.

What about the judging the critical
criticism, or those that went the extra
miles to see if they could break our
spirits and take our smiles?

Pushing us off the edge just to watch
us drown. Wanting us to say forget it
so they could regret accepting us, depriving
us of our right to be proud...

Because we made it!

They look at us with eyes wide
ready to give voice and opinions
thinking they know about our
past lives, but they don't.

I speak on the stigmatizing that people in my position get. I explain how when we make improvements but mess up once, and our past becomes our future.

Written by: Gerald H.
RCC SAP

Silent Noise

I can hear,
The drop of a pen, the screams from within.
The hollowed out place in the girl down the hall...
Call me crazy if you must, but I can hear it all.
The writings on the wall, the tiny child inside the girl who stands so tall.
The lost memories of the loved ones you can't seem to recall.
The sorrows of my bunkie, the body fiends of the new kid/junkie.
The silent pleas of the harlot laid up in the floor.
The battle-bruised heart of the chick who lives in the cell next door.
A mother of 6 missing her young, a girl weeps alone thinking she's got no one.
Laughter from the confused, just trying to mask her pain,
Pulling hair from another who swears she's going insane.
Prideful puns from those plotting the demise of everyone else.
The quiet one who plays mysterious, though she's been hurt the most.
Powerful desires too, on her wanderlust alone you could overdose.
The loner who stays away but truly only wants to become close.
The dried up alcoholic who's just waiting for the next toast.
The simple one that's yet to live but is the first one to boast.
The one who's giving nothing at all, but thinks their owed the most.
A poet just trying to be herself, studying on her next punch line.
Wait! Yeah I believe, yeah that thought was mine.
The one made of stone, who will never get caught crying.
And she who seeks the truth but can't bring herself to stop lying.
An old heart filled with new love and unknown to her before.
A new Christian feeling firsthand the knock, knock, knocking on heaven's door.
A hustling card counter, secretly keeping score.
A true friend just wanting to love. Nothings less, nothing more.
Young mother mourning her child who she recently did abort.
Can you hear deceit? Well, I can!
Be it tailor made or an off brand, at first it was hard.
To understand all these thoughts that weren't my own.
But now interpreted, I know firsthand who is a friend and who is foe.
Like the one who's full of jokes, covers herself in humor, uses it as her cloak.
Or the one that can make you believe anything, in reality it's just smoke.
A reader that stays buried in her books, afraid to look up, afraid of us crooks.
The mother hen of the block wanting to kill off her spawn,
Daily dreading this role that she so respectfully took on.
Natural born leaders but world class deceivers.
The attention seeker, wondering if she looks okay,
While the prettiest girl wishes that her looks would just fade away.
The lady with no teeth, embarrassed of her smile,
The wanna be gangster, her mind is all but a freestyle.
The dark girl in the corner praying her skin would fade,
While the brightest one in the room is now a lighter shade.
One green with envy, always trying to compete,
And the fighter runs away in total retreat.
And oh the bitter ones, are even sweeter with their tongues...

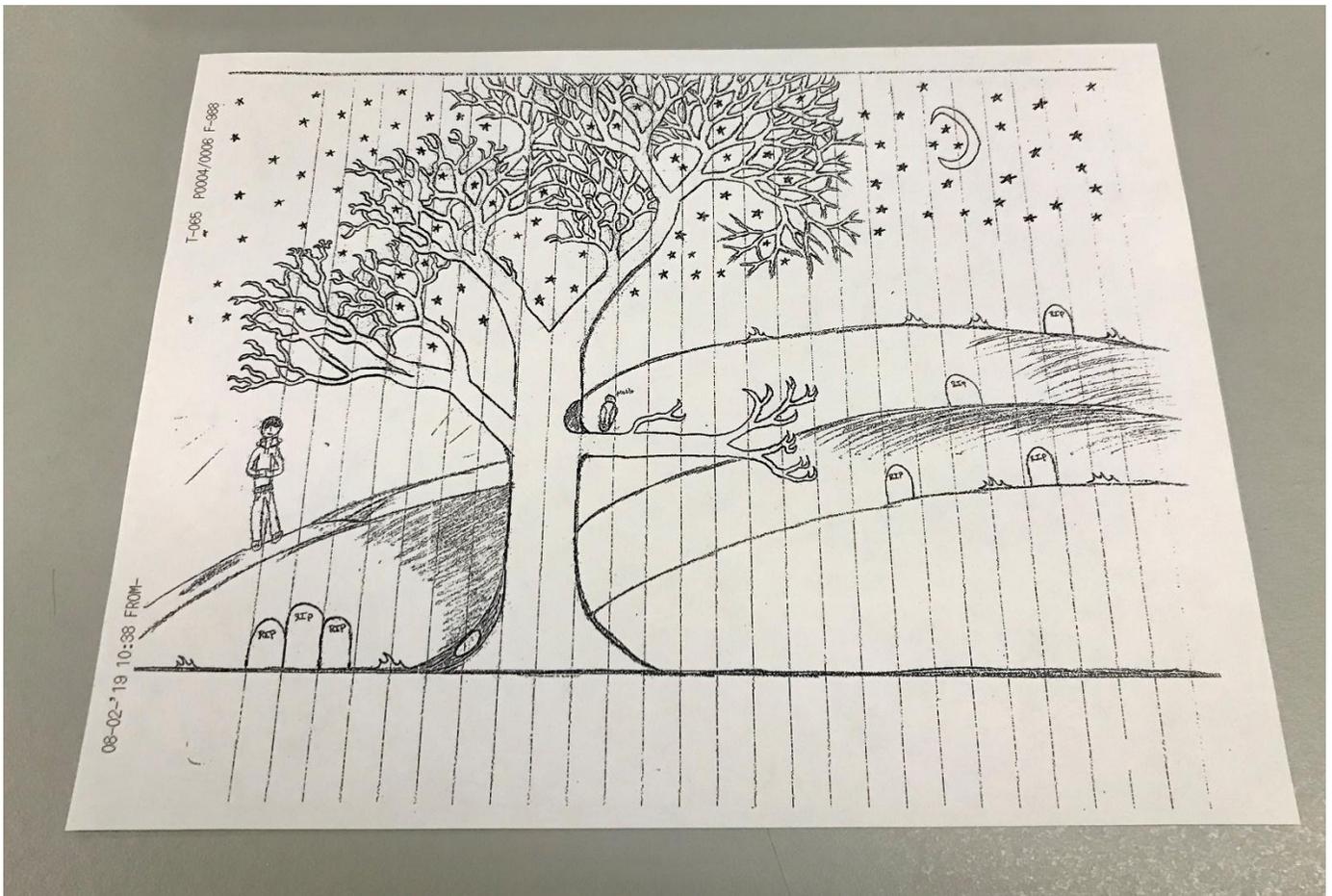
Will never admit defeat even if their battle is never won.
I hear them all overwhelming my mind with their thoughts.
If I could pick the story this is not a book I would have bought
The teacher that is still being taught.
But if I am too blessed with such gifts as these to hear the cries of the hopeless and the scheming of thieves.
To hear the unsaid mind ramblings at work, who am I to question such things?
No matter the tears and the pain that it brings.
The misunderstood, the fountain of the youth, the unknown hero, a liar seeking the truth.
The know it all, the been there done that,
The mad hatter, who seems to have lost her hat.
The trap queen who has no crown.
Those who can't seem to get up for being so down.
The broke millionaire, the dancer who sings without a care.
The most brilliant one is dumbfounded and unaware.
The twenty to life has no time to spare.
The biggest heart in here seems unwilling to care.
And the most helpful one is lost and full of despair.
An insecure child begging for praise.
A room full of mothers though no child has been raised.
No home to speak of, no bills have we paid.
Most fearless of all is torn and afraid.
Thinking of what we could have done differently if our past could be erased.
I know who's who without seeing a single face.
How can I... Peace be still, while traveling all these places?
I've had revelation, a harsh truth that I'm facing.
The kicker is, what's really messed up, with so many thoughts to complete.
How can I judge a single one when they share the same thoughts as me?
For I have a thought all of these things my silence is just as loud.
Insecure, miserable, ashamed, lonely, happy, proud.
Didn't mean to mind rape you, ones thoughts should be their own.
So find comfort in your lies as you reap what you have sewn.
Insane, thief, thug, liar.
Addict, bum, killer, conspirer.
Baby, jester, gambler, dweller.
Loner, whore, story teller.
Witty, hoarder, teacher, cook.
Innocent, slut, student, crook.
Quitters, losers, saints and winners.
Traders, hustlers, followers, sinners.
I forget to remember the crime is irrelevant. We are all here together.
Yet still so desolate. But I hear every word of it.

-Silent Noise

Written by: Amanda E.

Cumberland Hope Recovery Kentucky Center

Hope



I was born and raised in Henderson, KY. I drew this picture because it explains a lot about my addiction. In alone time you feel you're in the dark. Everything feels black and white. My life has been full of death and darkness; but even in the darkness there is always light. In this picture is a lonely person who sees what he has missed and realizes people are dying from this disease. The stars and moon are the light. The tomb stones are people who are gone. The tree of life is a new beginning, you could say. In the Big Book it says after all my suicide attempts, "I had no fear of dying" but I could not stand the idea that I would go back to living that way again. Now I see the light and feel hope. I have slowly started to change and have begun to pray. I have started to work the steps and yes, I have lost people but I can reach out and help try to save others. This is no way to live. Everyone has a story -- a story of pain and hope. If we hold on, pain will end.

Drawn by: Demi H.

SkyHope Recovery KY Center

Bigger Picture

Who cares about a name when it's
linked to negativity? Who has gratitude
for one's existence that brings chaos perpetually?
Who really loves a person's mind that's out
of sight? Who wants life more than an
Addict?

We assume we know everything that come
within eye sight. We label the multitude.
We quickly give names to stereotype, creating
division, and then we draw a line between
humanity.

We feel like our opinions matter. We often
compromise when we want to fix the problem.
The problems are on-going.

We believe that our flaws should be forgiven,
but our words many things and with actions,
nothing's forgotten.

We want to become something, but to be
come anything we have to know the definitions
between right and wrong. We have to
lose the superiority that our minds
think we have. Life is much bigger than
selfish aspirations. So much bigger

This poem is about selfishness. My life in so many words has been crazy, chaotic, and broken. Writing has been my only source of release to deal with the misfortunes I've been dealt. Writing has become part of my everyday life.

Written by: Gerald H.
RCC SAP

Mindfulness



Mindfulness, the ability to pay attention in the present moment, is a natural human process that we are all born with, but tends to diminish as we grow older and get caught up in the world of thoughts. While thinking this is important, when our lives are spent anticipating the future, or living in the past, we miss the richness of the moment we are in now. Fostering mindfulness allows us to more consciously participate in our lives, breaking us out of the mindfulness routines we often fall into automatically. When facing challenges, we can learn to step out of old habits that make the situation worse, consciously responding rather than unconsciously reacting. Mindfulness has also been touted to help an amazing range of problems, like stress, addictions, anxiety, depression, chronic pain, cancer, eating disorders, heart disease, post-traumatic stress disorder and more. Mindfulness is paying attention to the small things in life, but also paying attention to the distractions of normal life. But in the process of the distractions coming back to the 'moment to moment' of meditation. And being free from anxiety, anger, worry, stress, and depression along with other emotional problems we deal with on a daily basis.

Drawn by: Shaun D.
Hopkins County Jail SAP

It's Always Me

I've been down for so long... I forgot which way's up.
I prefer drinking my poison from a golden cup.
The grass is always greener on the other side.
But when I jumped the fence the whole yard died.
Curse my name, Curse my soul
Hold on tight, and don't let go.
In the end it's always me.
I'm the one who can't be free.
I've travelled this Earth from inside these walls.
Slept with an Angel who from Heaven did fall.
Climbed many mountains, took a dip in the sea.
If you looked in my eyes would you even know me?
Bless my name, Bless my soul
Show me love. Let me grow.
In the end it's always me.
Some day soon, I'll be free.
I'm always the same. Both the Kettle, and the pot.
Can't tell you who I am, but I know who I'm not.
I'll continue to cruise through this world on my own.
Like a dog with no leash. Searching for his bone.
Save my name. Save my soul.
Lay the blame, and let me go.
In the end it's always me.
Now is my time. I'm finally free!

I wrote this poem after learning of the talent competition. Poetry has never been something of importance in my life, until I discovered its therapeutic value during my incarceration. Poetry became a medium for me to express my feelings. Today poetry is a large part of my recovery.

Written by: Andrew H.
Dismas St. Ann's SAP

A Piece of String

To you that may only be a little piece of string
Oh but to me it brings so many things
Sometimes joy, sometimes pain
A string associated with a little string
A sting followed by a push
A gush of fluids, filled with a rush
A powerful potion, elixir if you must
Not much water, strong with a punch
Mmmm the kind of dose straight to the brain
Makes you cough, X's out the pain
In that very moment, hearts beating fast
Wishing forever this moment could last
Sweat sometimes beads, flavor engulfs your mouth
The feelings rush through you, it's so freakin stout
A pleasure filled body, but what do you know
The traces and tracks are starting to show
Spend hours digging, drives you insane
Numb to the shit, like its novacane
Everyone notices but you still won't quit
Because your dope fiend sexy, a dope fiend legit
I know your struggles, I feel your pain
I know firsthand cause I am the same
Addictions so powerful, controlling your brain
Hope for the worst, expecting the same
I know the trouble and I know the joy
I've been the junky substances destroyed
I keep telling myself it's never too late
But with the ghost of my past I can't levitate
So keep pushing my best advice
And before getting too far you better think twice
A syringe is a demon always following me around
As stupid as that sounds it's haunting me now
The rush is the joy, the product of pain
Addictions best weapons, distorting your brain
But now I'm recovering and if this sounds right to you
There is hope in the world, you can beat it too.

Written by: Amanda E.
Cumberland Hope Recovery Kentucky Center

Overburden

My heart is growing older, I'm attempting to chip this force off my shoulder
Backs hurting, weighed down by the size of this boulder
Gaining wisdom as I grow older (or not)
Paying more than enough cause I'm a ten folder (you forgot)
Spirit of a soldier, though past ready to right
Got to use up what's left before the "it" expires
Like pulling teeth with pliers – a lie for the liars
A secret for the conspirers – jacked up- on the wires
In straights for the dire
A mass collection, lack of reflection
Who needs protection?
In constant question of a second guessing
Have I learnt this lesson?
This affliction overwhelming me, I'm trying to maintain
A criminal in suffering, actions subject to change
Am I Benjamin button? Is this opposite day?
Trying to make things better- stop and look back- catastrophe
Escaping reality, Tuesdays gone
Life is a tour, I just sit and ride along
Sorry to all those who I may alarm
Got tricked three times so I kept the charm
Jotted down some notes, didn't mean any harm
Writing on these scrolls instead of marking up my arms
Insult to injury and salt on the wound
Digging a shallow one marking my own tomb
Breaking the cycle but none too soon
Love is floating, beat has no tune
Scars remind me of how I've been cut
Memories of the wounds
A general of my own emotion though no longer worthy of saluting
Grasping at these straws, always the one losing
The one true only, no substitution
Aggressive, disturbed, silent mass confusion
Caught up in the fantasies of this perfect illusion
All these problems, still no solutions.
-Overburdened

Written by: Amanda E.
Cumberland Hope Recovery Kentucky Center

Letter from Disease of Addiction

Dear Felicia,

Hey, well I see that I got you here again right where I wanted you, back in the pen.

Jokes on you, I always win. I don't know when you are going to learn that I will always be the rabbit with the gun, just when you thought you was about to have some more fun. Bam! Slam! Thank you! Ma'am! You like the sound of them doors, come get you some more, that's all it's going to be, and you come to me.

So tell me? Felicia, how long did you last this time out in society? 8 months after serving 26, now in prison doing 24 more, I am almost convinced you like the sound of the slamming of them doors.

So you got two beautiful kids at another family's home, giving another woman a mother's day card and gift. History repeats itself again cause Felicia their pictures mommy they call her cause that's all they know of her anymore is in prison once again.

They are getting older asking questions now, it's time to get yourself together cause I'll kill you, take you to your grave. I hate for them to bury you before they turn 18 like you did your mom because of ME.

So what's it going to be?

Time to Break the Chains

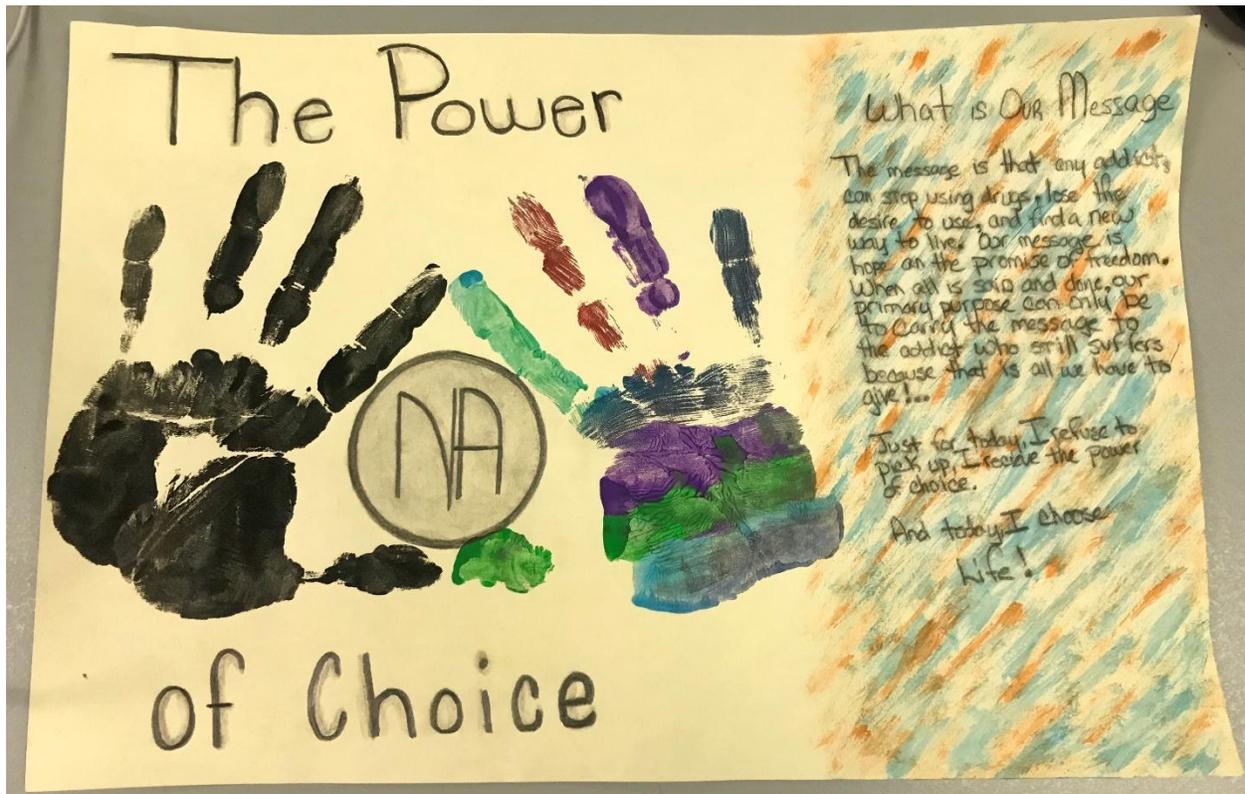
BYE Felicia!

Your Disease of Addiction!

Letter to me from my Disease of Addiction

Written by: Felicia H.
KCIW SAP

The Power of Choice



The piece that I have made, comes from the gift that NA has given me: The power of choice when I don't pick up and use. My piece reflects what the program of NA has given me: the power to block the pain of addiction and choose the power and will of the Creator. I have struggled for years. Before I found the solution, there was no hope and I just thought that this is the way I would be forever. Through working these 12 Steps (solution) having a great sponsor, attending my home group, and helping my sponsees, I have found a new way to live -- and spirited freedom, love, and peace. I am no longer responsible for my addiction. I'm only responsible for my recovery.

Drawn by: Troy M.
RCC SAP

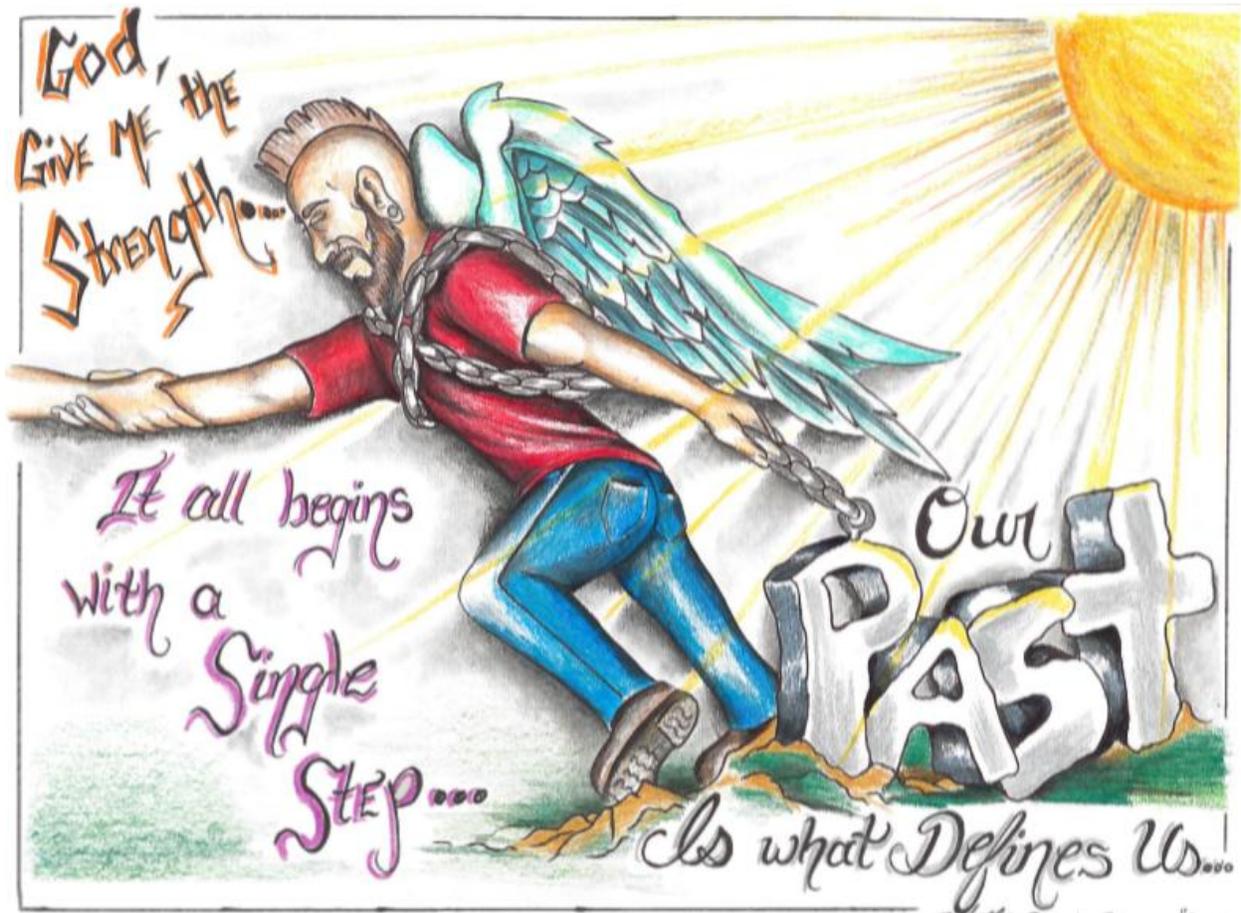
Roman Bully



Roman Bully - It's of a Roman soldier riding a bull through town, wounded and scared.

Drawn by: John M.
RCC SAP

Man in Chains



A friend once told me, "it's easy to be a gangster, but it's hard to be a man." That friend is now gone due to addiction. The man in chains is a tribute to him. I've been in jails and institutions for most of my adult life. I've struggled with addiction since an early age. For 13 years my addiction has taken me away from everything I love until one day it was all that was left to love. I hope this will help any individual seeking change - for the want to change is in us - so we must plant seeds to help us grow in our recovery. Thank you for this chance.

Drawn by: Brandon S.
WKCC SAP

I Know Now

As a kid, I went on a field trip with my teacher, my fellow 4th graders at my school, and all of the other 4th graders in my area. We all attended a “JUST SAY NO” rally. I remember saying to my teacher, “I don’t know why we have to attend a “JUST SAY NO” to drugs rally because none of us is ever going to use drugs.” And the teacher just smiled. I didn’t know why.

Next year, we attended a D.A.R.E. rally with all of the 5th graders in my area, and I said the same thing to my 5th grade teacher that I had said to my 4th grade teacher, “I don’t know why we have to attend an event like this because none of us is ever going to use drugs.” And just like the last teacher, this teacher just smiled, and I didn’t know why.

About one year later, I was in 6th grade, and I was high, and so were the majority of my peers. I never would have imagined it. I never saw it coming. And neither did they. But there we were----Stoned. We had traded in Nintendo and sports for indo weed and Newport shorts. And I thought to myself...I didn’t know then. But I know now.

“I Know Now” is a short story based on the changing of perspective in regards to drugs and drug addiction.

Written by: Richard G.
RCC SAP