

## **September is National Recovery Month: "Join the Voices for Recovery-Recovery Benefits Everyone"**

### **Personal stories about Recovery**

With nearly 11 years of continuous recovery, I am proof that recovery is possible. Today, I enjoy a life filled with manifold blessings and comforts, but I didn't always.

It didn't take me long to completely bottom out from the time I first took marijuana at 14 to being in my fourth treatment center at age 20, as an IV drug user with a total of 16 cents, 2 pairs off pants, and 3 shirts. I was sick, and my substance use disorder had led me to do things that I swore I never would. It caused me to make decisions that hurt everyone who had the misfortune of caring for me.

That was then, but recovery has given me a life. It has changed me from a sick man without anything to a man who has everything I could ever imagined existed. I went back to school three times to earn a

G.E.D., bachelor's, and master's in vocational rehabilitation counseling.

I have a wonderful wife, two terrific kids, a sense of direction, and a positive attitude that I might have taken for granted otherwise. I work daily to bring hopes and dreams to at-risk youth. Through my experience, I can offer hope to otherwise hopeless situations.

-Stephen D.