

# Overcoming the Odds

by Tracy Lynch

When I was a young girl my parents were heroin addicts. I grew up around many addicts. I was three years old the first time that I smoked pot. I was four when my grandmother forced me to drink beer, I got drunk and sick. My father got out of prison when I was three years old and at that time he began beating me. He felt that I was spoiled. He was very angry and hurt me very deeply. I struggled most of my life with my own addictions and my scarred self-esteem. I feel that I have defeated my battle with my addiction. I don't think that I have completely gotten over the abuse, but I have learned to forgive. I have come a long way, and I can only see it getting better.

I had periods of time when I didn't use drugs, like when I finally moved out of my parent's house, and in with my grandma. I was fifteen years old when I finally moved out. My father beat my mom so badly that it didn't even look like her. When she told me she was staying with him I was so angry with her. I was also sad for her. I wondered why she stayed with him. I didn't understand why she let him hurt us like he did. When I lived with my parent I smoked pot everyday, unless I was being punished for something. I would get a beating and I was grounded from smoking pot. The addiction was my first battle to win because, I didn't think that I had a problem. Everyone that I knew did /drugs except for my grandma. She would drink some but I don't think that she had a problem. I was using drugs to medicate myself to cover all of this pain. I was an addict until I turn twenty-four years old. I got to the point that the drugs didn't work any more. The pain and anger was so over powering I couldn't medicate any more. On my birthday December 18, 1995 I said good bye to drugs. I have had a slip or two but for the most part I have not been abusing drugs.

Another obstacle was the low self-esteem that I had from the abuse that my father had inflicted on me. I really wasn't a bad kid. I would wake myself up for school and get myself

dressed. The only thing that I needed help with from my mom was fixing my hair. Then I would walk myself to school. I was in kindergarten. My father punished me for little things almost every day. He was the meanest man I had ever known. I remember not being able to sit down because it hurt so badly. I remember my mom rubbing medicine on my legs because they were bleeding. He would kick me in the butt and call me stupid, or thump me in the head. I felt pretty bad about myself. I really only had one person in my life who treated me like she loved me.

Thank god for my grandma she saved me. After I moved away from my parents and

in with grandma I started to feel loved. I had a good amount of time sober then and I graduated high school. I think that I started to use drugs again after high school because I didn't know what I was going to do next. I got scared, and I turned to drugs to protect me, or so I would have an excuse to fail. When I got sober I had a friend who taught me a lot about feelings. Learning to communicate my feeling was very hard because I really only knew two feelings anger, and sadness. I learned to recognize many different feelings. I learned to communicate those feelings without placing blame for my feeling. I have spent many years in counseling and I continue to read books that help me to deal with every new experience. Like I said earlier I have come a long way but I have much more to learn.

I had learned to take responsibly for my own actions. For a long time it was easy to blame my parents for all the bad things in my life. As I started to look at my life and my choices I had see that I made some of those choices. I had to see my part. It wasn't my fault that my father was abusive. It wasn't my fault that I had drug addicts for parents. It wasn't my fault that I was introduced to drugs at an age when children are learning to talk. At some point in my life I made that choice to use drugs and not be present an accountable for my own life. I had to choose to get the life that I wanted. I had to do the work that was required to get better. I had to stop being the victim.

I have all of these skills to help me do well in school. When I take responsibility for

myself I take responsibility for everything I do including my school work. I had to do research on depression to help me conquer mine. I had to continue on my path until I felt well enough to move forward. I think that shows that I can stay focused on my goals. I see that I am a strong person and if I can make it through all of that I can make it through anything. I believe that I can use these skills to help me in all areas of my life. I learned many of the life skills that I didn't get from my parents. I had to do all the research myself with a little help from professionals.

So I know that I have a long way to go, but I have accomplished so much. I am proud of my accomplishments. I look forward to my educational journey and hope that I can use the skills that I have gained to help me out while in school. I glad I'm not the victim any more. I think that I have the skills needed to be a successful student. I also feel that I am open to the challenge. I also feel open to the growth as person.

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