

Paula

What was your living situation prior to your stay at the Coalition?

I had recently spent all my savings to move here from St. George following a failed relationship. I ended up jobless, homeless, and very embarrassed about my situation. I lived in my car for 6 months until winter set in and I worried about freezing to death. City parks around the valley had become my bathroom to get ready for job interviews and I visited my storage unit every day to get clean clothes. Emotionally, I was a mess because I felt that my best efforts were not getting me ahead and back on my feet.

The Food & Care Coalition provided you transitional housing. In what ways did this impact you?

Initially, it was an answer to my prayers to find stability in my life. I desperately needed something to restore my peace of mind. I had this overwhelming feeling of safety after checking in. Even though I had a car while on the street, I was very anxious about strangers doing me harm and law enforcement forcing me to move or receiving tickets for being parked where I wasn't wanted. I felt the support of staff encouraging me towards independence. After 9 months, I was able to save enough money to move out on my own as the Coalition didn't charge me for my stay, food, and case management services.

Where are you now in your road to recovery and independence?

Not many of my family and friends know that I stayed at the Coalition because I was embarrassed to share this information. During my stay and since, I've spent significant time re-connecting with family and friends. It has been difficult financially being on my own, but I remind myself to take baby steps each day. I also have felt a sense of empowerment in my struggles which has increased my sense of worth and self-respect. I've learned to just take things one day at a time, remembering that our difficulties are only temporary. I've learned to do something each day for myself and ignore those people in my life that want to bring you down or tell you – "you can't do it". Have faith in yourself and know you can do anything you set your mind to.

Thank you to all the volunteers, donors, staff, and client who made this success story possible!



"It is a 2-way street and effort is required to become independent again. It is a hard road sometimes, but one worth taking! Do it for yourself and those you love."

- Paula



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