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# Life Lines

Lifeline Connections | Fall 2013



We're grateful that Sandy agreed to tell you her story. We hope it enriches your life as it has ours.

## My Recovery Story

by Sandra Lane

My mental health issues began in my teens, made blatantly clear by an attempted suicide. There were three additional attempts at taking my life, and for a long time I didn't comply with my mental health treatment. Eventually, I began self-medicating with alcohol.

life. Lifeline allowed me to feel secure in myself. The structure of group meetings taught me to maintain structure in my life. Now I strive to be accountable to myself for myself. I am the most important person in keeping me healthy, sane and sober.

By the time I was in my forties, I was raising a newborn grandson, working up to 60 hours a week in management, and taking care of my own very sick child. My drinking was escalating in the evenings, and I was still not in treatment for my mental health. Then I was laid off.

*"...I strive to be accountable to myself, for myself. I am the most important person in keeping me healthy, sane and sober."*

With the job loss and the bad economy, my drinking escalated. I was barely functioning but still couldn't see I had a problem. My mental health issues were at an all time high. And then one day it all fell apart. Child Protective Services came to my home, removed my grandson and told me I had 15 minutes to pack a bag and get out. I had nowhere to go, and I was forced to live in my car. My unemployment had run out and I was flat broke.

I realized I needed help so I could get my grandson back. I had been told about Lifeline, so I went and completed residential treatment. But I relapsed as a result of emotional stress. In no time, I was running wild, drinking heavily.

So I went through detox, and was approved to enter residential treatment again. This time I wanted it for me. This time, I was going to get the mental health part I needed, too.

The traumas have continued. One of the most painful blows was when my grandson was adopted out. Then in 2010 following one of my group sessions, I learned my ill son had been taken to the hospital and was in a coma. My counselor drove me there and stayed with me. Eventually, we took my son off life support. Finally, last year I lost my only sibling. Through all of this I have been able to maintain my sobriety.

Today I am living on my own in an apartment. I am active in my mental health recovery. I will have four years sober in October 2013. Recently, I accepted the Chair position on the newly formed Lifeline Connections Alumni Committee. I am so grateful to be able to give back to the recovery community which has done so much for me.

At Lifeline, I learned that it is possible to experience horrific traumas without drinking or taking my own

hope help Healing

YES! I want to support Lifeline Connections's mission to inspire hope and support life saving changes for people affected by substance and mental health conditions.

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If you have questions please call Jeri Shumate at 360-397-8246 x 7554  
Donate online at [www.lifelineconnections.org](http://www.lifelineconnections.org)

Please Return Form To:  
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Interested in learning more about Lifeline Connections?  
Call Shannon Edgel for more information or to schedule a tour: (360) 397-8246 x7451

You can help. Volunteer opportunities are available for either individuals or groups. Contact us today by emailing [employment@lifelineconnections.org](mailto:employment@lifelineconnections.org).

**VOLUNTEER NOW!**