

**Caitlyn Stone**  
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My name is Caitlyn, I'm 26 years old, and I'm a recovering addict. To tell you a little about myself I should start with my past. I was brought up in a middle class family. There were issues of abuse and substance abuse within my home and my parents divorced when I was young. Growing up I always had self-esteem issues and no constant role models. I started using drugs at age 12 with older kids. It started with marijuana and alcohol. I felt relaxed and confident when I used and was always interested in trying the next drug available.

I got in trouble as a teen for drinking and using but my consequences never deterred me. I experimented with a lot of different substances. At age 18 I started using Oxycontin regularly with my college boyfriend. My addiction escalated quickly after that. I ruined relationships, stole from the people I loved, and lost all ability to feel remorse. I got in legal trouble and moved home from college and at that point started using heroin regularly. I lived as a slave to heroin for a long time. I couldn't hold a job and my only priority was getting my next fix. I went to treatment after a bad car accident that was my fault and that was my first introduction to recovery and freedom from addiction.

I stayed clean for a while but eventually strayed away from the twelve step fellowship I had been working and used again. Things got even worse after my relapse. I did more and more demoralizing things as my disease progressed. I felt like I couldn't stop. I had heart attacks, renal failure, comas, and a variety of other health issues due to my use. That didn't stop me. I had no self-worth so my personal consequences didn't affect me. Finally after a series of horrible events I went back to rehab and got clean.

It was the best decision I've ever made and first good decision I had made in many years. After treatment I went to a sober living facility and stayed away from any person or place that threatened my recovery. I work very hard at a twelve step program and it has paid off. I'm now married, a mother, a home owner, and a productive member of society. Today I have a life I never thought possible. I work hard today to repay my debt to society and those I harmed. Recovery saved my life. I look forward to being of help to you all.