Transformation Depot

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Susan McKenzie

A story of Mom and Her Family

When I was born I was immediately put into the system and was adopted at two weeks old. Growing up I thought I had it made. My dad was a successful attorney, my mom was a nurse, we lived in a nice neighborhood, had a big house, we went to private school, took great vacations, had nice things, etc. We were a picture of the post card family with the white picket fence. My dad and mom were my world. To me, we were the "perfect" family. That is exactly how I looked at us. That is what I believed.

Things took a dramatic change when I was 10 years old. My dad left, and when he did he didn't look back. From that point forward life as I knew it forever changed. My mom wasn't able to handle my dad leaving so she too checked out. No more helping with homework, packing school lunches, fixing my hair, but worst of all no more talking to me - no more mommy. Both my mom and my dad very quickly turned to excessive drinking. My mom became a very angry person, a very mean person. Soon after my dad left the abuse started. She hit, she kicked, she spit, she burned, she did everything – but hug me. I was called every name that could be called. There would be days at a time when I would be locked in our dark basement and would just have to wait till she let me out.

It didn't take long for me to begin to believe what she said to me was true and what she did to me was deserved. I learned very quickly to hate myself. Why wouldn't I? Someone who I loved the most in the world went from loving me greatly to hating me greatly, so why wouldn't I feel the same about myself? I knew within myself I was unlovable. I knew that I was who my mom said I was. After about 3 years my dad came back. When he came home a whole different level of abuse started. My dad came into my room one night and again everything changed for me. Now I was going through every type of abuse – physical, emotional, verbal, and sexual. My "perfect" life became my own personal hell.

Eventually I had enough and I left when I was 14. I was in and out of different houses. It didn't take long for my drug use to start. I started smoking pot and drinking alcohol. Pills soon became my drug of choice and they accomplished my goal – not to feel. I was shut down from anyone or anything. I went deeper and deeper into my drug use – it was my survival. I moved around, staying high for roughly 5 to 6 years. Escaping through pills had become my life and I did whatever I had to do to live that life. It didn't matter who I used, who I hurt or who I let hurt me. I was hard, tough, and in control and no one was going to change that. No one could hurt me anymore because I was in control. My drugs became my family. Drugs were what I could depend on.

I met my husband in 2001 and then my lifestyle became a secret. Growing up everything was a secret with my family, so I knew how to live it and put my smile on. Wes is a great man of God and I knew that my secret life would be unacceptable to him.

We dated a short time and got married. I soon had my life with Wes and my drug life. Two years into our marriage, Wes got his ministers' license and took a position at what now is our church as a worship and youth pastor. I was now a pastor's wife with a secret life. After eight years of marriage the depth of my addiction finally became known and I just stopped caring. I wanted my drugs more than my family. We have 3 beautiful little girls together, but yet I still couldn't give up what I had grown to trust and depend on – my pills. An ultimatum was finally given to me - get help or lose it all.

Wes and my pastor found ***New Beginnings*** and that became my only option. I was totally against it, but I went because I wanted to see my girls. When I got to New Beginnings I was so beat down, I didn't think I could be put back together. I was closed off, shut down, and locked up in my own private tomb. It took me a while to actually be a part of the program, but when I finally stopped fighting what God was trying to do, things began to change.

When I finally allowed God to have the control, I experienced what I wanted more than anything in life – love and freedom. I received the love that my Daddy God had for me and my walls started coming down. I was able to begin to learn how to love and to let others love me and developed a whole different love for Wes and my girls, as well as a love for myself. I experienced true freedom. The pills that I thought were the only thing I could trust had been replaced after 16 years by the ***ONE*** and ***ONLY*** true Healer! I stand now with a restored home, family and ministry with my husband. At the point that I felt there was no hope, and that I could never live a life filled with joy, peace and freedom, God pulled me up out of my miry pit and set my feet upon a rock where the foundation of my new beginning was built.

To God be the Glory!

I have been so proud of Susan McKenzie since her return from New Beginnings. It's been amazing to see the change in her life. While at New Beginnings, she has truly learned how to flesh out her heart's desire to serve God in her everyday life. I see it everyday in her relationship with her husband, her children and her church family. I am extremely proud of Susan and I am thankful for New Beginnings for equipping her to fulfill her God-given destiny.

Pastor Johnny H. Moore
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