

### **Lisa's story continues...**

As I continued in my addiction I needed more; more drugs and more money so I turned into a drug dealer. The money was good and life was good. During this time I had two children (a son and a daughter). The substance use had significant impact on my marriage and children but I couldn't see it. In 2006, our home was raided by the police where they found \$10,000 in cash and 47 guns along with drug paraphernalia. I was arrested and sent to prison but because of a plea bargain my sentence was for only one year.

I stayed clean for one year after I got out of prison but went back to my same lifestyle and habits. Recovery is a lonely place. I wanted the money and my friends back

On November 12, 2013 my heart stopped due to the meth. "I blew my heart up." I was in a comma for seven days and ICU for 13 days. While in the comma I had an out of body experience where I went to hell and back and experienced creatures biting me. It was the most frightening experience of my life. The doctors told my husband that I had 15% chance of survival. During this time, Greg bought me a bicycle helmet and titled it the "Helmet of Hope" knowing that if anyone could survive it would be me.

While in the hospital, the chaplain told Greg about Lifeline Connections and arranged for a social worker to work on getting me into treatment. I assessed at the outpatient level and entered treatment December 10, 2013.

In treatment, I learned that I am a woman worthy of love, honor, trust, dignity, and respect. I learned that I had to completely change my lifestyle if I was going to be successful. The most difficult barrier for me to overcome in recovery was losing my friends but once I was willing to give up those relationships that were so toxic I found and reconnected with my best friend, Greg, my children and my Dad.

My children and I have begun to redefine our relationship in a more positive way with work still to do. I am proud of my children and they are beginning to be proud of me. My daughter said that "As an addict, mom wanted to run from me or create an argument. Now, she is kind of pushy with things. She's changed for the better. I think the experience in the hospital took all the evil out of her. It was like living with the devil."

Finally, my story is a story of true love. My husband Greg has followed me through this journey. He is a man of integrity and honor. When my mom was dying, and we were 20 something years old, he promised my mother he would take care of me. He has done more than that - he has loved me and for that I am truly blessed!