



## *My Story* by X

I started using drugs at age thirteen. Everyday day of my life I was high, drunk or on pills. I lost everything due to drugs and my mental illness: my family, my kids, my job, everything I owned. I went to South Community and took meds for years. But I was also high off of street drugs or drunk every day on top of my meds. I used to walk by the IDDT door and tell myself at least I'm not so bad off I need to be in there. I was never so wrong in my life. Three years ago at 5:00 am in the morning I was in bed messed up on pills and pot from a late night. My door exploded. I didn't wake up till I landed on my face on the floor. I woke up with a bunch of people dressed up in black with lights on and machine guns yelling at me. They turned on the light and the nightmare came true. They were DEA, SAS, and DOJ agents. The United States of America had come for us. They chained us up, took us in a room and told us why they came for us all. The sad part was that didn't even scare me enough to quit. I was not charged and three days later I was getting high again. In 2007 my therapist talked me into joining the IDDT program. I thought why not. I showed up the next week (with a joint in my car) and gave it a try. For the next few weeks I brought a joint to smoke everyday on my way home from class and lied about being clean. I sat and listened to everyone and still said to myself I'm glad I'm not a drug addict. I couldn't have been so wrong again. I was going to end my life on Easter Sunday 2007, but God came to me and told me He would help me if I would trust in Him. I started getting clean from that day. The withdrawl was bad. I wrote goodbye letters and sent them to my family. I couldn't take it. One day I was going to end it all again, I looked at my kids pictures and began crying. I walked out and went straight to Church and begged God to help me. I didn't want to die. I walked into IDDT the next day a new man. I had been clean twenty-four hours, the next day forty-eight, and on and on. After a week I had to say goodbye to my old using friends for good, all of them. This was my last chance to save my life. I started going to every class I could, five days a week. See I was not only fighting drugs, I was fighting anxiety. I never went out to eat and never drove more than five miles away from home for 10 years. IDDT had many tools for me to use and I needed them all. I was in bad shape. Thirty days later I got an AA token for not using drugs. I was so proud. But everyday was a fight. The drugs wanted my soul. Every night I asked God to save me just for that night. At forty-five

days clean I passed my first drug test since I was thirteen years old, I'm now forty-three. I was so proud. I was clean! Then anxiety kicked in. I wanted pills to stop my pain. I didn't ever believe it would go away without pills. I almost gave up several times. But I kept going to IDDT for my problems and then I was clean ninety days. Wow! ninety days! I figured I had won this war, but once again I was wrong. The drug came to me in my dreams. I would wake up shaking. But after a minute I knew it was only a dream. My brain had just had a using dream. I prayed almost every night. I went to IDDT and talked to my therapist and case manager a lot. I didn't give up. It was so hard! I had to learn to live again in this world but clean this time. I learned I was not alone, that others also were in there for this fight called life. Today I'm going on my ninth month clean and thanks to the IDDT staff and the people in my program I'm still alive. This war takes time. I still have a lot of work to do to get over the damage the drugs did to my body and soul. The key for me was to take meds as directed, believe in God, talk with my therapist and case manager a lot, and share my story and listen to others in class. IDDT was by far the best way to learn how to get clean and understand how to manage my life with a mental illness Together as a group we can win this war. Today I'm proud to say I have been clean nearly three hundred days. I've quit smoking tobacco after twenty years. I can also eat out now and drive over five miles from home. I have learned how to control my mental illness and have reduced my anxiety meds by 90%. So anything is possible. This is a 100% true story of my fight with drugs and mental illness. Thanks South Community and IDDT for helping me have a new life.