



# Housing Transitions, Inc.

Providing shelter, guidance, and hope to Centre County since 1984

SHELTER has many definitions. My favorite is a refuge, a haven; something that provides cover or protection, as from the weather. When I got knocked down by the storms of life, I first found my way to the Centre House homeless shelter, a program of Housing Transitions, Inc. As a survivor of childhood sexual abuse, adult sexual assault, and having lost my mother to cancer when I was in my third year at Penn State, among other circumstances, I had to discontinue my college career. I didn't know what to do, or where to go, but I found my way to Centre House, where I found a safe haven, and was met with smiles, welcome, and non-judgment.

The structure of the program helped me to get back on track. I had conditions, rules and regulations I needed to adhere to, but most of all, I had support. At Centre House, I was able to see that my situation was not as bad as I thought it was, and that there are some people who are intrinsically good, who genuinely care: the Centre House staff. I was able to share with the other residents a smile, encouragement, advice, just love. Additionally, I learned from them too.

When I left Centre House, I lived in an apartment for two years and worked. Then I decided to move to another town because I got depressed again. I got my own place and a car...for three years. However, I lost focus after getting involved in a relationship that went awry with a man who hurt me. This resulted in me getting sick from stress, to the point that I got high blood pressure and diabetes. I lost my job. I had no income, no resources, and no help. I found my way back to State College. State College once was home for me, and I realized there is more support and community here than where I was living. I recently came back to State College and had to return to Centre House.

I needed a job, so I called in a favor to "Sheila", a young lady who was my roommate at Centre House in the past. Sheila struggled with depression and cutting. I remember days when she didn't want to go to the job she worked full-time. The staff would have to literally get her out of the bed in the morning. We kept in touch while I was gone. I found out she had gotten a promotion at her job. I asked her if she could help me get a job, and she did. She is not the same young lady I remember. Centre House helped her. She still lives in the same place she moved to when she left Centre House.

I am not in the same place I was years ago...emotionally, mentally, spiritually. In many areas I still struggle, as I recover from severe health issues, and issues that constantly plague my mind. But I know that I have people supporting me and rooting for me at Centre House. They are here for everyone in our community and for that I am very thankful.

*This is a testimonial written by "Grace", a former Centre House homeless shelter resident. Centre House is a program of Housing Transitions, Inc. – a Centre County United Way partner agency.*