

**When a client moves out of the Mission, our goal is for them to stay housed permanently.** That's why we connect them with resources they continue to use once they are housed. Many of our clients form positive relationships with social workers, counselors and partnering agencies, who monitor clients and help them stay on the right track. Many former clients also stop by the Mission to receive meals and food boxes. That can make a big difference for someone just starting out with paying rent and other bills.

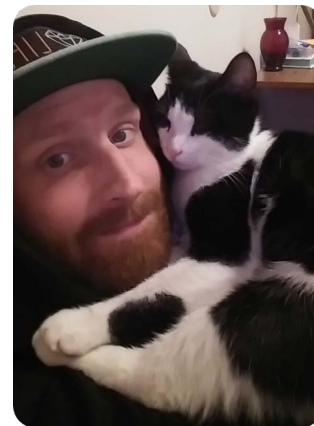
If you read our letters last year, you may remember Travis. Travis came to us from Minnesota, having lived on the streets for years while battling addiction, hunger, and cold weather. During his time at the Mission, Travis stopped using drugs. He met regularly with a case worker at Spectra Health. He built a resume in the Mission's computer lab, and he qualified for Section 8 housing with the help of the Mission's advocacy team.

Shortly after we sent Travis's letter last March, he moved into his own apartment. He is still living there today, continuing to work on his addiction and build for his future. We spoke with Travis recently to check in on how things are going. ***"I'm doing good,"*** Travis told us. ***"I'm still very focused on recovery. This addiction is something I have to work on every day. If I let myself get comfortable, that's when I could relapse."***

The road to recovery has not been perfectly smooth for Travis. Earlier this year, he slipped up and began using again for a short period. The difference this time was that Travis had a support system from his time at the Mission and at Spectra Health. Travis continued to meet with his licensed addiction counselor. He spent a short time in a treatment center, and he is now sober again.

Travis is currently receiving dialectical behavioral therapy, a form of cognitive behavioral therapy that helps individuals cope with stress, regulate emotions, and focus on immediate goals.

***"I'm learning to put myself and my mental health first,"*** Travis tells us. ***"I practice thinking about what I want to unfold in my life right now. I want to go to the gym. I want to see my family. I want to volunteer."***



Travis is focused on small victories each day. His therapy encourages him to set attainable goals and plan behaviors that serve as an alternative to drugs. *"Drugs give a rush of euphoria, but what else does?"* says Travis. *"The gym does. Exercise, meditating, muscle relaxation techniques . . . those are things I'm doing now to stay focused."*

Avoiding negative situations is key for Travis. He showed us an app he is using called Sober Grid. *"It's kind of like Facebook, but it's a lot safer environment,"* he says. *"There are strict rules; you can't post about drugs or harass anyone. A lot of the conversations are focused on mental health and recovery. It's a space for healing."*

Another component of Travis' recovery is self-compassion. When he was young, Travis saw both physical and drug abuse in his household. That stuck with him and negatively impacted his self-worth. Self-esteem boosting exercises are important because they help Travis see drugs as a danger to his health and his goals, rather than as a way out.

*"I know there's no limit to what I can achieve if I believe in myself,"* Travis says. *"I just need self-discipline, self-commitment, and to keep setting small goals."*

Travis was very excited to tell us about one more positive change in his life. He recently adopted a tuxedo cat, Max. Max has brought some emotional stability to Travis's life. The responsibility of caring for an animal has improved Travis's self-esteem and helps him stay focused on his other goals. *"Max has gotten attached to me,"* says Travis. *"Every time I go home he sits on my lap, which I love. Having him around is just really helpful for me."*

Now that Travis is in a positive state of mind, he is looking for ways to stay engaged. Currently, he volunteers a few hours per week at the Mission, helping unload food donations and organizing the Backpack Program room.

Travis still receives help from the Mission, too. He'll often stop by the Mission for meals. Occasionally, he will pick up a food box. He tells us that the food boxes were a big help when he first moved into his apartment.

Travis is currently searching for a new job at a tech repair shop in town. He sent applications to a few local shops and hopes to hear back soon. Travis knows an impressive amount about building and repairing computers and smartphones. He described to us how to open an iPhone to replace the screen or the battery. *"I like doing that kind of stuff,"* Travis says. *"I can build computers, I can fix phones, even code a little."*

For now, Travis will continue his therapy while caring for himself and Max. He has one more very important goal in mind, though. *"I want to reconnect with my family,"* Travis says. *"When I was little, my grandma was always there for me. I started using drugs, and I wasn't taking care of her. It's time for me to get back. I want to go back home [to Minnesota] and take care of my grandma. I want to take care of my mom."*

More than a year after leaving the Mission, Travis is still housed. He is in a positive place with resources at his disposal and his future ahead of him. You've given him that opportunity, and we could not be more grateful.

*"If I had kept going with the life I was living, I would probably be dead,"* Travis says. *"Now, I'm looking forward to the future."*

God Bless,



Sue Shirek  
Executive Director

*Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial,  
for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life,  
which God has promised to those who love him.*

**James 1:12**