

Write off Addiction
By Brandon Stains

My name is Brandon Stains and addiction is one of my life long struggles, but my mental health is the root of it all. I used to be ashamed to say I had issues with mental health, but now I'm more open about my problems.

When medications didn't make me feel better, I turned to drugs, I self medicated to shield my insecurities. I've never really discovered who I was, or who I wanted to be. I went to several places in my life like rehabs and hospitals, but nothing seemed to help. I couldn't figure myself out.

One of my most memorable struggles with addiction was when I went to a seven day detox and said I was ready to be clean, but I wasn't. My mom held hope for me to get better and be honest with my sobriety, but I left the facility too soon and had reservations to use again. I lost hope at having any sobriety whatsoever. The love and trust my mom had in me made me feel guilty for lying about my sobriety and sneaking around to use. Eventually the love and trust she had in me showed the difference, because it pushed me to recover. I needed that love to guide me in the right direction for myself and for others.

Now at thirty years old in state prison, I've found what takes me away from my life long struggle. It is writing, and all my life it was right there, but I had no idea I would love it. I found that writing helps me, and I feel that it could help others. I get better each day, and each day I feel better about myself. I'm still learning and I want to take what I learn and inspire someone else to try it. Maybe it will help you, maybe you will enjoy it, and maybe you will love it. Together we could write off addiction and make an change, make a difference.