The Colorado Health Foundation™

When You Keep Looking in the Past, That's Where You End Up

One woman's remarkable story led to the creation of a community organization in Denver that focuses on helping women, transwomen, men, transmen and non-binary individuals fight their own battle to be free from their past, live in the present and create a meaningful future. It's called The Don't Look Back Center.

You might wonder, "Why such a unique name?" Well, it all comes from the incredible journey of Corinthiah Brown, the founder and executive director for the center, and her desire to help others rebuild their lives and not look back.

A Journey of Resilience

Corinthiah knows the struggles of dealing with both mental health issues and substance abuse. She's a woman in recovery, herself. Her childhood was traumatic and surrounded by abuse and abandonment. By the age of 12, she became a runaway and found herself in and out of group homes, facing teenage pregnancy and having to grow up way faster than she should have. Life continued to spiral downward, as she ended up in and out of jail, struggled with addiction and lost custody of her four kids – all boys. Once Corinthiah served her time in prison, she decided that enough was enough. "I can't continue doing another 20 years of this life," she said.

Opening The Don't Look Back Center

In 2019, Corinthiah established The Don't Look Back Center, drawing inspiration from her own experiences and life lessons. The name of the organization stems from Isaiah 43:18 – a verse that encourages us not to dwell on the past but to look forward to the future.

The center is built on faith, Corinthiah's personal experiences, and the lessons she's learned along the way. It's intentionally staffed by people who are open-minded, nonjudgmental, caring, compassionate and have lived experience that allows them to make real connections with the people they serve.

Impacting Families in the Community

The center's inclusive and holistic approach is what truly makes an impact. Unlike cookie-cutter treatment plans, they dig deep into understanding what led their clients to where they are. They incorporate cognitive behavioral therapy to help change thought patterns, behaviors and remove barriers to recovery. Specific programs, treatments and curriculums have been designed to meet the individual needs of each client, including Habilitation Empowerment Recovery (H.E.R), Mommy & Me, Sober Living Homes, Parents On a Mission, the Trans Outreach Program and Habilitation Empowerment Accountability Therapy (H.E.A.T) for men of color, just to name a few. These programs provide vital support and resources to help individuals rebuild their lives, reconnect with their families and regain their independence.

Story of Transformation

There are numerous success stories of clients transforming their lives, but there’s one that stands out to many of the staff members at the center. One young lady was in prison and seven months pregnant. At some point, she would be forced to make the difficult decision of giving her baby up for adoption because she had

nowhere else to turn. When she learned about The Don't Look Back Center, she discovered she had options and chose to keep her child. Thanks to the center's support, she now has her own place, a job and childcare for her baby. These stories reflect the importance of the center’s mission and work to support health equity and racial justice for those who have so many barriers to move.

Looking Ahead

The Don't Look Back Center is on a path of growth. They've obtained additional office space to extend their services to men, transmen and non-binary individuals who need the same types of support and resources provided for women and transwomen. The need for their unique approach extends far beyond the women they've served so far.

A Message of Hope

Corinthiah wants everyone to know that no matter where you are in life, there are countless ways to rebuild. Her own journey from hardship to leadership demonstrates the power of resilience and the difference one person can make in their community. When you keep Looking in the past, that’s where you end up. Let’s live in the present and learn to create a meaningful future for ourselves and our families.

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