



Name

Address

City , ST Zip

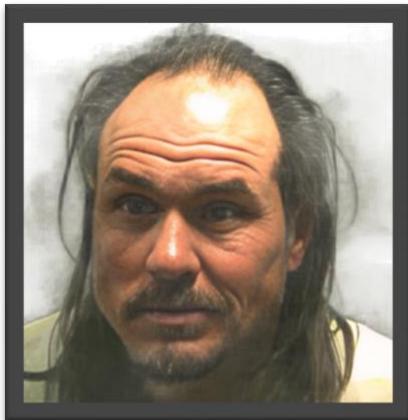
Dear (Name)

**Most of us don't think much about the foundation our lives are built on.**

It forms over time, shaped by what we see, what we are taught, and what we come to believe is normal. *Those early lessons settle in long before we question them*, and they become the base we build everything else on. When that foundation is steady, life has something to stand on. When it is not, things can begin to shift, crack, and eventually give way.

At Another Chance House, we meet men from all kinds of backgrounds, but many arrive carrying patterns and experiences that have made it difficult to build something stable that lasts. And when that happens, moving forward is not just about making better choices. Sometimes it means going back, clearing away what is not working, and learning how to rebuild from the ground up. That is where the work begins.

**John is one of those men.**



He did not grow up seeing another way to live. Addiction was not something hidden from him. It was part of everyday life. It shaped what he believed was normal, what he expected from others, and what he came to expect from himself.

***“I thought it was a normal behavior... I thought it was something that everybody did.”***

When those are the lessons you carry into adulthood, they do not stay in the past. They show up in the choices you make, the relationships you build, and the direction your life takes.

For John, that meant addiction became a constant presence in his life. When he got married, it followed him there. He and his wife were both using, both trying to build a life together without anything stable underneath it. There were moments that looked like things were working. They had children. There were glimpses of what life could have been.

But without something solid to hold it together, it did not last.

Over time, addiction took more than it gave. The strain grew. The instability deepened. What started as something they shared became something that pulled everything apart. The distance between him and his children did not happen all at once. It happened gradually, through missed moments, broken trust, and time that could not be recovered.

***“I didn’t know where I fit in... I had no foundation to build as a man.”***

Eventually, the consequences of the life he had been living caught up with him, and he was sent to prison. For John, that time was not just about serving a sentence. It was years spent looking at everything that had unraveled and everything he had lost along the way. His family. His freedom. His place in his children’s lives. Life continued moving forward for everyone else while he remained in one place, carrying the weight of it.

When he was released, he stepped back into a world that had kept going without him, and to his credit, he tried to rebuild. He went back to work. He enrolled in school. From the outside, it looked like progress.

But underneath, the same foundation was still there.

The same thinking. The same patterns. The same pull back toward what had always felt familiar, even when he knew where it led.

He understood something most people never see. Relapse does not begin in a moment. It begins in the quiet conversations you have with yourself.

He described it as a constant negotiation. Thinking through his days, trying to figure out when he could use without getting caught. Not because he wanted to lose everything again, but because part of him believed he could manage it this time. That he could keep the job, stay in school, avoid violating parole, and still hold everything together. Maybe not today. They might test me. Maybe later this week. Maybe I can plan it around work. Maybe just once.

And all the while, another part of him knew exactly where that thinking led.

***“No matter where I went... I always relapsed.”***

That tension stayed with him every day. He had already lived the outcome more than once. He knew what it cost. But knowing that was not always enough to stop it.

While he was in a halfway house, he heard about Another Chance House and was told that if he wanted a chance to get in, he needed to call every day and put his name on the waitlist. He was also told it might take time. This was not a place that rushed people through. It was a place that built men, and that meant beds did not open up quickly.

**So, he called. Every day.**

Not because he was certain it would work, and not because he fully understood what he was stepping into, but because he knew he needed distance from the life that was pulling him back in. He was trying to get ahead of something he could feel catching up to him.

By the time a place opened up, he was exhausted in a way that goes beyond being tired. He had been fighting something inside himself that never seemed to quiet down.

**He got on a bus anyway.**

When he arrived, it was late. He was worn down, uncertain, and still holding onto the same plan he had from the beginning, to stay briefly and move on. But that first night did not unfold the way he expected.





**Someone was there waiting for him.**

Not just to process him in, but to walk with him through what needed to happen, to make sure he understood, and to make sure he had what he needed. There were rules, and they were clear. There was structure, and it started immediately. But there was also something else there. *Care.*

It may not have felt significant in the moment, but it was.

Because for someone who had spent years trying to hold things together on his own, that consistency was the beginning of something different. *It was the start of a foundation that did not shift under pressure.* The expectations stayed the same. The support stayed the same. And for the first time in a long time, he was in a place where both existed together.

He stayed the night.

The next day, he still planned to leave. But the structure was still there. The same rhythm. The same follow-through. And this time, he was not alone in it. There were other men there, each one working to rebuild in their own way. Men he could talk to. Men who showed up to meetings. Men who understood.

**So, he stayed another day... And then another.**

He started going to meetings, even when he did not want to. Sitting in rooms, listening, watching. Over time, he began to see something he had not seen before. What healthy relationships looked like. What it meant to show up for yourself and for others. How to recognize progress, even when it felt small, and how to celebrate it in someone else.

It did not happen all at once. But little by little, something started to take shape. *The floor underneath him began to feel steady.* The structure of his life, piece by piece, began to hold in a way it never had before.



***“My addiction... it’s not just mine... I don’t have to do this by myself anymore.”***

**For the first time, he began to understand that the life he had been living was not the only one available to him.**

Today, John is sober. He is working. He is continuing his education. He is building something that is steady enough to last.

***“I’m grateful to be here now... this place is a blessing.”***

And that change does not stop with him. When a man finds stability, it reaches into every part of the community. It means fewer repeated crises, fewer systems carrying the weight of those cycles, and more individuals who are able to contribute, reconnect, and rebuild.

*This is what restoration looks like.* It takes time. It takes consistency. And it takes a place where someone can stay long enough for that change to take hold.

As we enter this season of spring, we are reminded that meaningful growth often happens over time, built layer by layer in ways we cannot always see at first. With the right support and the right environment, what once felt unstable can become something strong enough to last.

**That is the work you are part of.**

Your support provides the stability, the structure, and the consistency that allow men like John to stay, even when they are not sure they want to at first.

A gift of (Ask 1) helps provide meals and daily essentials.

A gift of (Ask 2) helps ensure access to transportation for work and recovery support.

A gift of (Ask 3) helps provide safe, stable housing.

A gift of (Ask 4) or more helps sustain the full continuum of care that makes lasting change possible.



**Or please consider becoming an Agent of Change! Monthly giving helps ensure that when the next man arrives, fighting that same internal battle, there is somewhere for him to land.**

Because this kind of change does not happen all at once. It is built over time, one decision, one day, and one step at a time.

**Thank you for being part of that work, and for helping make stories like John's possible.**

With deepest appreciation,

Steve Smart  
Another Chance House  
Executive Director

P.S. John is just one story. There are men walking through our doors right now, hoping for the same opportunity to rebuild their lives. Your gift today helps make that possible. You can scan the QR code to learn more or give online or simply use the enclosed envelope to send your donation today.

