My Story:

I grew up in a very religious household. We were never allowed to go to other people’s churches and I really didn’t know about any of the worldly things. I believe that I was very sheltered with everything going on. I was always a happy child and even in middle school I always remember having a smile on my face regardless of the things going on around me. My home life was not amazing but whose was. My parents did fight and at a couple of times I could remember my dad staying in hotels or not being home. I could remember getting spanked with a leather belt or the wire end of the fly swatter. When I look back at it now, the way we were punished would be considered child abuse now. I was always a wild child that was always loud and outspoken. There were a lot of days when I did not feel like I fit in with anyone.

My childhood friend was just as loud as I was, and it was nice having her there. Later though I found out that she liked my older sister more than she liked me. I think my fear of not being wanted started in Elementary school. There are those times when you feel like you just do not belong because you don’t fit the mode of what everyone else wants. The tempers always flaring in my family, aunts being able to spank us like we were their own children. Even to this day I feel like I am constantly looking for approval for the things I do.

When I reached, I believe 15 years old, my parents got in a huge fight while I was in the shower and I had nowhere to go. That was a morning before school, and I remember that morning very vividly. I was a sophomore that year and I could remember going to school crying because I knew I was going to be one of those kids whose parents were about to get divorced. Trying to explain to people that your mom did not want your dad anymore was hard. I am sure there was more to everything, but they never let us in on it, even as adults. The only thing you keep in your mind is what you saw and what you heard growing up.

I remember my mom sitting us down and explaining to us that she was moving out and why. I do not pretend to know everything that went on between my parents but for the longest time I was so angry with everything surrounding their divorce. When my mom moved out, I wanted to go with her but she had taken a graveyard job so I could not. One thing that has stuck with me through my life is the day my dad told me that if she wanted me, she would not have taken a graveyard job. It was hard with them divorcing and I do not know if I ever faced the feelings with all that stuff. I had a lot of resentment towards the entire situation and could not see myself as the child of divorced parents.

I had a friend my freshman year who was an amazing influence on me. We weren’t into anything that all the other kids were into. We didn’t drink, we didn’t do drugs or think about any type of sexual activity with anyone. I like to say the people I hang out with influence my decisions but that wasn’t the case at all. I made those decisions because I wanted to. During the summer of my sophomore year, I met a guy who destroyed my world, and, in the process, I lost my best friend as well. He made me feel like the only girl in the world and that he wanted to be with me all the time. I later found out that he only wanted one thing from me. I remember the day that happened. It wasn’t like anything I had imagined in my head. He came over while my parents were out of town and I remember telling him over the phone I was ready. When he got there and it came time to do it, I had changed my mind and told him I didn’t want to anymore. He told me that I couldn’t change my mind and that is why he came over. So, I gave in and in the middle of it I wanted him to stop but he said that I had already said yes and that I couldn’t say no. The next day, he called me and broke up with me. I later found out the only reason he was with me was for that reason. Looking back now, I was sexually assaulted my first time.

After that, I lost my friend and she didn’t want anything to do with me. I started hanging out with a different group of friends who were not a good influence on me. I went through my sophomore year dating my best friend’s twin brother. After my first encounter with sex, I thought that that was how you get and keep a guy. I didn’t care that he called me every name in the book or treat me like some piece of trash. I wanted to be liked and loved. My sophomore year was when I got into drinking and smoking weed. It was always easy to get alcohol because we always knew someone older that could buy for us. I remember my first beer was absolutely disgusting and I did not like it whatsoever. I could remember having Captain Morgan for the first time as well. I felt like all this stuff was disgusting, but if I wanted to be cool, I had to do it. On the weekends, I would get drunk then go home like nothing had happened.

My junior year, I got even worse. I didn’t care what guy I was with and my friends and I always partied. Everyone says they drink because they want to escape a reality that they know or because of some traumatic experience. I used to blame my parent’s divorce on everything and how I acted or the fact that my sister got burned the beginning of my junior year. I can’t blame my actions on anyone but myself, regardless of any underlying issue. My junior year was bad, but it wasn’t one of the worst years.

My senior year was a lot better. I had met a guy who was so different from the other guys I had met. At the time, I was talking to another guy but ended up ending that because he had his eye on another girl. When I started talking to this other guy it was like he wasn’t in it to get the one thing out of it. I can remember going on our first date and ending the night with a hug. It was so different from what I expected because I was used to being used and thrown away. In all of this, I do not want anyone to think that I am a victim of anything because I’m not. My choices and my decisions. The first time we had kissed was on our 6th date. 6th months after we started dating was when we had sex for the first time. This was a guy I thought that could be the one and the guy I could be spending the rest of my life with.

In October of 2004, I remember having a dream about my boyfriend and it was amazing. I woke up and my pants were around my ankles and a guy from up the street was in my bed. He had been touching me and I woke up to that. I told him to leave and I wanted to tell my dad that night but was scared I would get in trouble. He had broken into my window and decided to sexually assault me that night. The next morning, I told my dad about it and he called the police. They took me to the hospital to do a rape kit but since his mom was a dispatcher at the police department, they said I was lying and didn’t do it. He called my house the next day and my dad yelled went off on him. My older sister found out and went up to his house banging on the door. My dad said he thought she was going to kill him.

I remember going over to his house and even staying the night at his house as a senior, which was so odd to me because my dad allowed that. His mom was big into wine and fuzzy hot chocolates. Every time I went over there, she would make me a fuzzy hot chocolate during the winter or a glass of wine during the hot seasons. A fuzzy hot chocolate was hot chocolate with Kahlua. It was one of my favorites. We hung out with his friends a lot and they always drank so we always drank. I had more access to alcohol as a senior and started drinking quite a bit that year.

When summer 2005 came, I decided to move out and move in with my sister for a bit. We lived together for a couple of months. During this time, it was a non-stop party because I would always be with my sister and her friends. My boyfriend and I moved in together in August 2005. In October of 2005, we were up in Ruidoso and he proposed to me. I was 18 years old. I was beyond happy because I thought that was what you do. That is what my family has always done. Throughout those years I drank more and more every day. I remember passing out with a bottle of wine in my hand, that was the second bottle I had finished off. After a couple of years with him, I became very unfaithful. I wanted the attention from other guys, and I got it. Every time he would go out of town for work or with his friends, I would throw a party and invite a bunch of people over. I brought other guys into our house and into our bed.

I would be at the bar every weekend without him and hanging out with all these guys. He didn’t deserve for me to treat him that way and yet I did. A lot of his friends told him what I was doing, where I was and who I was with, but he just ignored it. I was out of control with my drinking and promiscuity. I don’t remember the exact number of guys I cheated on him with, but it was quite a few. I had lost both my engagement ring and the wedding band when I was messing around on him because they didn’t want me to have it on while we were together. There were nights I would stay at other guys houses and not come home until early in the morning. When he asked where I was, I told him that I stayed at a girl friends house. I felt nothing lying to him. I had started to get good at it or so I thought. I do have a lot of shame for what I did but at the time I didn’t care. I don’t have a reasoning for it or an excuse. I was just a horrible human being and it didn’t stop there.

In 2008, I started talking to one of his best friends in a sexual way. I can remember the first text I ever sent him and exactly what he said and where I was when he text me back. He had a girlfriend and I just didn’t care. Him, me and another friend always hung out together. I had so much fun with them because they loved my wild side and my personality. I never felt judged by them. In March of 2008, we started messing around and it was great because he made me feel amazing. He was one of my good friends because I felt like I could talk to him about anything. My 21st birthday, which was May 24, 2008, I started drinking at midnight and continued drinking all day long. The boyfriend I had at the time ended up going home and I decided I wanted to keep partying, so my 2 guys friends and I went to the bar. We ended up getting caught that night, but we played it off and just denied it. We calmed things down for a few months but then picked it back up.

We messed around for a couple of years. I don’t remember exactly what year it was. By this time, I was drinking every night after work and started in the morning on the weekends if I didn’t have to work. I was a very functioning alcoholic. At one point of our sexual relationship, I remember going to his apartment and telling him that I think I am falling in love with him. He just sat there, so I left because I was so embarrassed.

On July 4, 2010, the guy that I was engaged to ended things with me and a few days later I moved out. From August to October, I believe, I accumulated 30 bottles in 3 months. Southern comfort, Malibu, Jack Daniels and anything else I could get my hands on. This time in my life I was out of control. I was always partying with the guy that I was seeing at that time and my good guy friend. In October of 2010, the guy I was seeing at the time got a job out of town. The night before he left was probably one of the hardest things in my life. I didn’t know if I would make it out of my hometown and be able to be with him. I held him and I cried because I thought everything was going to change. He came and saw me almost every weekend. He put aside everything that was important to him for me. At the time I didn’t think I was being selfish but looking back now I was a horrible selfish person. If he didn’t come every weekend, I would throw a fit and go out with a girl whom I thought was my friend.

A year went by and things between us were rough on and off. The reason they were rough was because I was beyond defiant. I was drinking a lot more and just wanted the emotions gone. On November 27, 2011, I was up at a bar that I usually drank at and got so upset that I decided to take my car out in the middle of nowhere and try to flip it. He found me out there and called the cops. I remember throwing my alcohol out of the car and yelling at him and the friend he brought. There was one point I even ran from them when the cops showed up out in the middle of nowhere. The cops told me that I could either be arrested or go into the hospital on my own accord. I had him and his friend drive me to the hospital.

I remember being in the room with my face down on the bed of this room that they put people who were suicidal in. He was in the corner of the room with his head down. I remember he told me that my mom was out in the waiting room and wanted to see me, but I told him she couldn’t come in because I didn’t want to see her. They kept me there until morning and when he drove me home and we laid in bed, he looked at me and told me it was either him or the alcohol. Regardless to say, I chose him.

That week I went to my first AA meeting. When I went in the room, I saw all these people that looked ran down, teeth missing or even looking extremely dirty. I had the guy who was running the meeting come up to me and ask why I was there. I said, “I think I might be an alcoholic.” He said, “You don’t look like an alcoholic.” In my head I was thinking well what an alcoholic is supposed to look like. All these people in that room resembled my version of what an alcoholic is supposed to look like. The people went around the room sharing their stories. I kept thinking that I was not like that at all. A lot of people who go to AA come out saying that those meetings make them want to drink. After the meeting was done, I went to my car, called my boyfriend and told him that I couldn’t do this. I could not think of being 24 years old and telling people that I am an alcoholic.

The house that I lived in at that time I was in the middle of moving out. My dad had come over to help me and I said, “Dad, I have something to tell. I think I am an alcoholic.” I remember the look in my dad’s eyes and him just starting to cry and hugging me. At that time, I moved in with my cousin while I was in the beginning stage of my detox. Every day was a struggle to get up. I would wake up shaking from withdrawals and could not keep anything down. Every night I would go to bed with cold sweats, still shaking. I couldn’t eat anything and when I did, I wasn’t able to keep it down. I was throwing up every day. The detox lasted for about 2 weeks. During that time, I had come out and told more of my family that I was an alcoholic. My mom told me that she didn’t believe I was an alcoholic that she believed my drinking pertained to my choice of company.

I had bad mouthed the guy that I was with a lot. I said extremely horrible things about him, not only to my family but basically to anyone who would listen so that they would feel sorry for me. Looking back, his actions were a reaction of the choices I had made. I was unfaithful to him a lot. When things were good, I would still go out and get attention from anyone who would give it to me. I would make it seem like I was in this horrible relationship that I couldn’t get out of and that I was being controlled to stay. I said that I was emotionally and verbally abused. I played the victim well and I am still in the process of making things right with that. That is when my family decided to insert their thoughts about it, and I let them put their thoughts in my head and just ran with what they told me.

During the first 2 weeks of my detox, I could remember my cousin being so happy because they had their own designated driver. They took me to the bar the second week I was sober. We got to the bar and I just remember not being able to stand being there. I had no idea how to be happy sober. Without alcohol, I had no idea who I was. On December 19, 2011, my best friend rolled his car and died. I found out right before my appointment with my therapist. She wanted to talk about it but all I wanted to do was leave. It was devastating losing someone that you were close with.

For the next 8 months, I was sober. I did everything that I was supposed to. I went to meetings, I talked about my issues and I got my 8 months sobriety. In June 2012, I moved to Odessa. I was still sober, and I had found a meeting up here that I could go to. I found myself a sponsor and met and talked with her every time we met. In August of 2012, we went to Twin Peaks and I remember telling him that I could control it. He didn’t stop me, and I am glad he didn’t. I let that beer sit there for an hour before I took a drink. Little did I know that I really couldn’t control it. I have asked myself the question of, “Why did he let me take that drink?” We have talked about it. I had to do my sobriety on my own to really take it seriously. And when I got sober, it was not my choice. I just did not want to lose him.

The bad thing about moving to a new place is that if you don’t change the habits from one place to another then it will never be better. So, between Odessa and Midland, I began to bad mouth him yet again. I was still doing it to my family as well. I was beyond a crazy person, pretty much a psychopath. I did not have any desire to make life easier for him. I wanted to make his life a living hell, regardless of how I perceived or what I had to do.

I began drinking a lot again. I remember one night we were out he told me when I started feeling that tingling sensation to stop. That was the first night I remember throwing up from drinking. New Years of 2012 I visited the place I drank at all the time. My dad had remarried, and she ended up moving in with her ex-husband and I saw her that night. She sat there and told me how she loved him and missed him. By that time, I was already drunk, and I couldn’t stand it anymore. I told her that if she loved my dad she wouldn’t have left and moved in with her ex-husband. I told her to leave my dad alone and quit playing games with his head. The next day I got a call from my dad asking what I told her, and I let him know. He said thank you for sticking up for me.

On January 2, 2013, I decided to quit drinking. I was not given an ultimatum or anything. I just remember thinking that I didn’t want to feel that way anymore. I made that decision that day by myself. To this day, it is still the best decision I have ever made. I started going back to meetings and being more about my sobriety. I took it very seriously the second time around. Things with my boyfriend and I still weren’t great, but I felt that we really had a chance this time around. I didn’t go through a full detox the second time around or at least I don’t remember going through that. I was still playing the victim, so that mentality was still there.

For the next few years, I was looking for attention. I wasn’t looking for anything sexual but getting emotionally involved with other people was still being unfaithful. I put this man whom I loved through the ringer. I destroyed him and everything about him. There are no excuses for that. There are no excuses for threatening the man you love as well as his home. During all this, at one point I had reached an all-time low and tried to end my life a second time. I am not sure when this was because I don’t remember but I remember taking a whole box of Sudafed to just end it. He called the cops and they picked me up and took me to the hospital. I had to drink this horrible charcoal stuff and unlike my hometown, they did not let me go home.

I was transferred to a mental institution for a 72-hour hold. I remember thinking that I was nothing like these people. They were crazy, but so was I. My mom came and brought me clothes and just cried about it. 3 days later I was released to her and had to stay with them for a week. After that stint in the institution, I swore to myself that I would never do that again. It was hard for me thinking that I could have left all these people that loved me.

Fast forward to 2016, I had found a job that I really loved. Things were looking good for me. I had a great job; I was going to school and my boyfriend and I were doing great. I had learned a trade that I loved, and I was great at it. I had moved into a nice apartment and was able to get a nice reliable car with the help of my brother. I had always tried to maintain being an independent woman, but everyone needs help sometimes. I was working towards my Associates in Engineering and had just gotten back into school that year.

It was hard to do things with the company or to find friends that understood you. I had quit going to AA and started going to Celebrate Recovery. I did enjoy AA when I first started. It helped me so much. What I did notice though a lot of the time was that people were only there for hook ups or to be co-dependent on someone else and that is okay. It wasn’t for me though and AA I have noticed is not for everyone. I do read my big book; I do look at the 12 steps. I just think that Celebrate Recovery is more for me because it is faith based.

In December of 2018, I was the first one in my family to graduate from college. That month I had bought myself my dream car. It was not just a car for me, this showed my hard work. In January of 2019, I had started finishing my classes for my Associates in Engineering. That year was by far my hardest in school. In the back of my head, I kept telling myself that I was not smart enough to do this. I was very insecure when it came to the knowledge of those things. I had failed one of my classes the Spring semester and had to retake it in the Fall. I had passed it in the Fall though and in December of 2019, I was the first one on both sides (mom and dad) to graduate with an Engineering degree. I had done it. Out of 20 students in the engineering program that were supposed to graduate only 8 of us walked.

Things were looking up for me. I still could not and have not been able to get my family on board with my relationship or some of the stuff I do in my life. I honestly feel like yes, they want me to be happy but only on their terms. I have tried so much to get away from the mold of what my family is. I have learned how to conceal my crazy and control my anger. It sometimes feels like they don’t understand me. I don’t feel like I can talk to them about much because half the time I don’t feel supported in my decisions. I have always let people influence me and usually it is always a bad influence. I have gone from “friends” who have wanted things from me to no friends because people don’t understand my lifestyle.

My boyfriend has always been there for me. I may not have liked a lot of the stuff that he has done or said but he was the only one who saw my problem and helped me with it. He has shown me my true potential in life. The best support system I have had throughout this entire thing has always been my boyfriend. It isn’t manipulation or me imagining a reality in my head. No one has sat there and flat out told me what I am doing wrong and the potential that I have. People you love will always be there for you no matter what. When I say that I mean they will tell you the harsh reality of the truth and that is what he has done for me throughout my life. There are no words to ever thank him for helping me see what I am truly capable of.

I don’t need to have kids to be happy or be fulfilled. I don’t need to be a persona of everything that my family has been. From 2016 to now 2020, I have made decisions for myself. I have removed people from my life who have no interest in telling me the truth or the way it is. I don’t want friends who sit there and tell me I am always right. I want friends who support me and don’t judge me. There have been so many ways that I have tried to explain to people the stuff I have done in my life. Sometimes it is hard for people and especially your family to understand. I don’t think I am better than anyone else. I have a different path I have set for my life. I am enjoying being able to make mistakes and learn from them, granted a lot of my mistakes were made over and over. You can love the people in your life and not agree with the choices they make; you just also need to be there to be a shoulder to cry on. That is one thing I wish I could take back. When I needed someone to vent to it was always my family. So now I am trying to build that back so I will be able to have this man that I love in my life.

I don’t put the blame on anything I have gone through in my past or situations that I have come across in my life. That is one thing I have noticed. I am not the victim and regardless of what anyone thinks, I will continue to make myself happy. I won’t buy in to the things other people want me to do. I needed that push to get me to admit I was an alcoholic. I needed that push to go to school and see what my potential could be. I will not let others, and even friends and family dictate what MY happiness should be. I will be happy for myself. For the first time in my life I am truly happy. It has taken me a long time to get here. I needed to get to a place where I loved and respected myself.

I am living for myself and no one else. My choices and my decisions are mine and I am beyond proud of everything I have accomplished. Believe me, it was not easy, and it is not over. I will be fighting this battle for my entire life.