

REFLECTIONS ON THE *Journey*

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CELEBRATE
THE *Journey*

2021 ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

REGISTER NOW! Details inside.



WALTER'S STORY: TURNING DARKNESS INTO LIGHT

When Walter Coppage encountered Journey to New Life for the first time during his incarceration, he admits, he was in a dark place. "When I met Rita, I was like 63, and my mind had allowed me to believe that I didn't stand a chance coming out of prison," Walter said. "I was an old man, and my credentials weren't the type that any employer would immediately and anxiously want to hire. This is the stuff that was in my mind. No one told me this. I had never had a conversation with anybody about these inner thoughts that I had. So when I met Rita and Georgia, and they explained to me what they were doing, that was

"Rita is just so beautiful. She's got this little light in her eyes. They twinkle and will want to make you do the right thing."

- Walter Coppage

my light of hope. Rita and Georgia, they were that ray of hope that I so desperately needed." Walter was afraid that he would re-offend once he was released from prison. He couldn't see a path in front of him that would allow him to make money, clothe himself and be self-sustainable at his age. He had never panhandled before,

and he didn't think he had it in him to start. He'd lost out on important things in his life during the 32 years he'd spent in and out of prison. Perhaps the most important being his son who died at the tender age of 16, when Walter was just 44 years old. "I didn't get to see him as the old man, and he didn't get to see me," he said. That loss affected Walter deeply, it took years for him to come to terms with the loss. "It's a never-ending heartbreak until you realize, until you understand that the 16 years that he was here, that's what he was allotted, 16 years," he said.

But Walter's entire outlook changed once he met Journey to New Life's Rita and Georgia.

"When Rita and Georgia came along, I knew God was talking to me deep then. I knew He was because once I started talking to those ladies, I couldn't wait to come home," he said. "I felt like I had the beginning of a support team. And if you've ever met Rita, you know, she is just so beautiful. She's got this little light in her eyes. Her eyes twinkle, and they will make you want to do the right thing, you know."

And doing the right thing is what Walter is focused on every single day. He was released on March 7th, 2019.

[Walter's story continues inside >](#)

WALTER'S STORY: TURNING DARKNESS INTO LIGHT

Continued

By April 1st, just days later, he had a job. He was so excited that, even though he says he's not computer literate, he turned to social media to announce his employment to the world. When the pandemic hit a year later, Walter's company got hit hard. Management reduced staff from around 200 to eight. Walter was one of the eight.

To say he feels blessed would be an understatement. Things were never easy for Walter growing up, and rarely has he been able to say things have just fallen into place like he feels they are now. When he describes the circumstances of the first time he got in trouble, you get a unique look into a reality many of us can't even imagine.

"You remember when you went to school, and they had the little paints with blue, red, yellow and orange in there?" he asked. "I went into the store because I couldn't afford any, and I stole some paint for school — and some M&M's. And I got caught, and that was the first. They took me to the juvenile space, and they kept me there until my mother got there the next day. They told her they wanted to keep me overnight and process me. Well, that was the first time that I ever slept in my own bed. That's the first time I got three meals a day. The sheets were clean. So I actually got put in jail, technically as a kid, and the living conditions of the jail were a thousand times better than the environment that they took me from."

Walter credits Journey to New Life for helping to turn so much darkness into light. "What they gave me was a new life," he said. "A new life with the desire to go out here and do the right thing and make a difference, you know, and it started here."

Today, Walter is still working at the same job. He's staying with his sister, helping her take care of her granddaughters that she has custody of, and he says he just does the best he can each day.

"When God puts something together for you, it might not be what you like, but at the end of the day, if you can look at yourself and say, for that day, that you've done the best that you could, then nobody can get mad at you. Nobody can get mad at you," Walter said. "Nobody should ever get mad at you, if you've done your best." 🌱



"All those dark, hopeless thoughts, they're gone now. I know I can go down there and see Rita. She'll help me out. She'll give me a kind word. She'll let me in. She won't tell me, 'oh you can't come in here.' She's a champion. That's all I got on her, she's just a champion."

- Walter Coppage

REGISTER NOW @ JOURNEYTONEWLIFE.ORG



CELEBRATE
THE *Journey*
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We can't do what we do without the generous support of you — our donors, volunteers, staff and community. We're so glad you're on this journey with us, and we hope you'll join us for this special night to recognize the progress that's been made and the lives that have been impacted.

Invite your family, friends, neighbors, colleagues and other special guests to join us as we Celebrate the Journey.
Register today to secure your tickets.

You'll have an opportunity to meet and mingle while enjoying heavy hors d'oeuvres and your choice of house red or white wine, draught beer, coffee or soda. **You can also shop and bid on our silent auction items — which are growing by the day!**

We continue to monitor local, state and national guidance, and we'll keep you informed of any changes to the event.

We look forward to seeing you!

Thursday, August 26, 2021

5:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Boulevard Brewing Company

Muehlebach Suite

2501 Southwest Blvd, Kansas City, MO

REGISTER NOW @ JOURNEYTONEWLIFE.ORG

SILENT AUCTION ITEMS

*Our list is growing by the day!
Here are just a few of the items you
can bid on at the event:*

Five-night spa getaway in
Arizona

Four-course dinner and wine for
four at Garozzo's

Margaritaville tickets for 2 +
preferred parking

Beauty basket, including
manicure and pedicure

Various jewelry items, art prints
and restaurant gift cards

plus so much more!

*Visit the event site at
journeytonewlife.org to see
auction items up for bid.*

INTERNS: OUR UNSUNG HEROES

Meet our three summer interns, Anna, Claire and Maureen, who were sent to us through The Bishop Sullivan Center. Anna is a junior at Rockhurst University studying non-profit leadership. Claire is a senior at Kansas University studying social work. Maureen is a junior at Gonzaga University studying English literature and solidarity and social justice. They are all interested in pursuing careers in human service, and Journey to New Life, they say has taught them so much.

Here's what they had to say:

Our time at Journey, while short, has been exceedingly meaningful. We really value the opportunity to provide direct service and interact human-to-human with the clients that Journey serves. A major opportunity to do this happens during Emergency Assistance where clients come in for any help we can provide. One story that all three of us found valuable has to do with two Emergency Assistance clients.

These two men personify resilience, friendship and commitment to the future. They came into Emergency Assistance together with every intention of supporting each other throughout the process. They actually grew up together as childhood friends and reunited after their separate times in prison. One spent the last 28 years of his life in a Department of Corrections facility, and the other spent the last 21 years in and out of facilities. They now stand, walk, run and succeed together with the full knowledge that they will have each other's support and will have someone keeping them on the road they intend to follow. Journey to New Life merely acted as a helping hand to provide some resources that can aid in their journey.

We were so moved by how committed these men are to succeeding and to each other. This instance also gave us perspective as to just how difficult this transition from prison to the community truly is. After spending the majority of one's life within the walls of a facility, everything outside can be incredibly overwhelming and anxiety-inducing. Thus, Journey to New Life gets to be that place where they start. We can give resources — and a listening ear. We can be a safe space in a difficult world.

These newsletters often showcase big success stories, as they should! However, we have noticed that Journey to New Life also makes a huge difference in smaller ways that often go unnoticed. For one, a jar of meal tokens to Thelma's Kitchen not only feeds a hungry person, but provides them a joy they did not anticipate. We also provide a small pantry of food where people can grab a bag on their way out. Journey has

"Our time at Journey [to New Life], while short, has been exceedingly meaningful."

- Anna, Claire and Maureen



amazing volunteers during Emergency Assistance that truly know and have relationships with the clients. They get to be a familiar, smiling face to an otherwise unfamiliar world. Often, our clients merely need to use a phone or make some copies on the printer. Also, many times our clients need an article of clothing or a pair of shoes so that they can work. We are able to provide steel-toed boots or a black shirt. All of these small instances make a world of difference for people. It can be the difference between eating or not eating that day or losing a job because of a material need. Even being able to provide a dry spot in the rain means something.

The justice system does not position itself to help our clients after incarceration. Journey to New Life makes it their mission to do the opposite; to create a system that works for clients. On our first day, we were told to never say no. There will always be something that we can do to help. If Journey does not offer a specific service needed, we can find someone in the area who can. At the very least, we can listen to the human being sitting in front of us and hear their fears. Since being at Journey to New Life, we have learned of the power of making another individual feel heard. We all feel truly honored to be in the position that gets to listen and be a friendly face on their journeys.

Thank you,
Anna, Claire and Maureen

Journey to New Life is so grateful to our interns for sharing their time and talent with us and our clients. We know they have many options when looking at internships, and we are very fortunate they chose us. 🌱

KITS FOR CLIENTS

We appreciate our supporters who donate items to help our clients.

The pandemic has limited what we can accept, but our clients still have needs. So, in an effort to make it easier, we are offering an option to purchase kits for clients, either once or on a monthly giving program. The kits are designed to meet the basic needs of clients based on their individual journey. We will continue to accept the donations that we can. This is simply another option to meet the needs of our clients.



\$10.00

Provide clients with the basic necessities.



\$25.00

Help our clients and their families by providing the kitchen supplies they need.



\$25.00

Provide clients with the basic self-care necessities.



\$15.00

Provide clients with the tools needed to clean their new home.



\$25.00

Help clients moving from a shelter into their own home feel welcome.



\$15.00

Help clients land their first job, next job or their dream job.

...and more!

To help us provide these kits for our clients, we are looking for 50 donors to commit to our monthly giving program. Start your monthly giving today!

For more information about what is included with each of the kits, visit:

KITS.JNTL.ORG



3120 Troost Avenue
Kansas City, MO 64109

journeytonewlife.org

Your help
makes this
possible.

Register for Celebrate the Journey 2021!

Our annual celebration will take place on August 26th.
See inside for more details.

JOURNEYTONEWLIFE.ORG

VOLUNTEER OR DONATE ITEMS
Journey to New Life is always in need of volunteer assistance and basic living and hygiene items.



PLANNED GIVING
Remembering Journey to New Life in your will is a great way to create a lasting legacy that reflects your support of the organization's mission.



MONTHLY RECURRING GIVING
If you're giving by credit card, simply check the box to make an ongoing monthly contribution.



MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS
Does your company match charitable contributions? If so, make sure you submit the giving request.



WAYS TO GIVE