

the Harvester

A Harvest House Newsletter | Winter 2022



"I was NOT condemned to a life of slavery to drugs": Mat's Story

In September 1995, one question was going through Mat's head: "How did I get here?"

He was 22 years old and picking up cigarette butts off the street. He had nowhere to go because he had just used the last of his rent money to buy drugs. In desperation, he decided to go to a detox center in Ottawa where he would have somewhere to sleep and food to eat. That is where Mat heard about Harvest House.

Story continued on next page

HARVEST HOUSE MINISTRIES OF OTTAWA-CARLETON MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Harvest House Ministries is to rehabilitate young men who are chemically dependent, to instill in them self-discipline, and to reintegrate them into society by an inner change brought about by faith in Jesus Christ.







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"I was curious about Harvest House," Mat says. "I remember thinking, Why would someone I've never met drive their own car, come interview me in the messed-up state I was in, tell me I'm a great candidate for the program, load my stinky bag into their car and drive me to the program all without expecting anything in return?"

One of the things that attracted Mat to Harvest House was the fact that the program was a year long. Mat knew that a 30 or 90 day program was not going to cut it. He decided to give us a call and a Harvest House staff member drove to meet him at the detox center.

"At Harvest House, I came to the realization that I wasn't condemned to a life of slavery to drugs and alcohol," Mat says.

Coming to Harvest House was a turning point in Mat's life. As he built a foundation in recovery, he began to realize that there was hope for him.

He was also taught lessons that continue to bring him success today, such as the motto "find someone you can trust, ask them what to do. and do what you're told".

Today, Mat is 27 years sober, has been married for 21 years, and has five children and two grandchildren. He is also a trusted leader in the Smith Falls community. He and his wife own several small businesses, including The Pickled Pig and Polcan Design Group, and Mat is the president of the Minor Hockey Association in Smith Falls. He finds it rewarding to help make sure that players learn important skills like playing on a team and how to win or lose with dignity.

Mat attributes his success to that day in 1995 when a Harvest House staff member met him in detox.

"All this success goes back to that first day," Mat says, "back to this guy who showed up, reached his hand into the pit and said 'I've been there, let me help you out.' That's what the people at Harvest House do. They make sure that this place is here for the next person."

YOU help make stories like Mat's possible!!



Today, Mat himself is actively involved in helping people get out of the pit of addiction. He attends meetings at Harvest House and has mentored young men in their recovery. For him, one of the most rewarding parts of his life is knowing that he has made a positive impact on someone.

Mat with his children and grandchildren.

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THANK YOU SPOTLIGHT: JILL FERNE



Jill's involvement at Harvest House began in 1985 when she heard one of our staff speaking at a youth group her children attended. The message resonated with her and she began supporting Harvest House. Over the years, her relationship with Harvest House grew and she became a member of our board of directors. In 2007, she helped start our GED program and since then she has helped over 120 Harvest House men earn their high school equivalency diploma. Jill has served as the president of our board of directors since 2012.

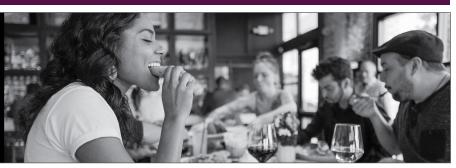
"Harvest House is all about the men," Jill says. "We get to see God at work in their lives and to see change happening — change that they want, but have never really been able to achieve before. The most rewarding thing is watching the men at Harvest House begin to live whole lives!"

Thank you Jill for your years of service to the men at Harvest House!!

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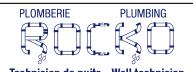


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