

Learning Changes Lives

A year ago, I completely changed my life. For many years, I struggled with addiction, and I finally reached a point where I knew I needed a fresh start. I made the big decision to move from Moncton to Saint John to build a better life for myself. For a while, it felt like a rollercoaster, trying to pick up the pieces and start over from where I had left off so many years ago. It took many difficult steps and a lot of hard work, but I was determined to keep moving forward.

During this transition, I attended a course at Working NB. That is where I met my employment counsellor. Even though I didn't have any high school credits at the time, she saw something in me. She told me to keep her number and to phone her whenever I felt ready to start my CAEC. It took several months to find the strength, but I finally gathered the courage to make that call. Looking back, that one phone call opened several doors that I truly thought were closed to me forever.

My biggest motivators are my daughter and my family. While attending recovery support groups and counselling gave me a vital foundation, I knew I needed more to truly accomplish my goals. I needed my education so I could build a solid future for my daughter and my personal growth. Even so, my self-esteem was low. I struggled with the thought that I could never actually carry out this goal. On my first day of class, I had so much anxiety that I remember walking in and out of the front door several times before I could finally force myself to stay inside.

Once I was through the door, I quickly realized I didn't have anything to worry about. It was a very kind and friendly environment, and I saw that I wasn't the only one starting from scratch. Slowly, my confidence began to improve. I started learning new things about the world, improving my writing and reading, and developing the essential mathematic skills I needed. People in my personal life started to see a big difference in me, and I started to see it too.

After many years of feeling hopeless, I can finally say that I want a bright future. Not only that, but learning has actually become exciting! I have already passed my exams in English, Social Studies, and Science. Now, I am down to Math—my very last one. I already have a plan and meetings set up for college, which is somewhere I never could have pictured myself being just a year ago. I finally have hope and a positive vision of where I will be in five years.

Learning changes many lives. No matter what circumstance you are in, you can do it. This essay is just a summary of how much education has changed my life, and I want to encourage anyone who is struggling to push themselves toward their education. I believe everyone needs to have a passion in their life, and for me, returning to school was the best way to figure out what that passion is.

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