

## JUST WORDS

### The Stories of Working People In Our Community

#### Episode 51: Beth

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Welcome to Just Words—the stories of working people in our community.

**Last May we met Beth, a 44 year old woman whose life went on a downward spiral after an unexpected pregnancy. She lost her job, started using drugs, and became homeless. She had to send her daughters to live with her sister. All seemed lost. But she was able to get a bed in a rehab center, and then went to live at Sarah's house, a transitional housing center at fort Meade.**

#### How is Beth today?

A previous employer that I worked with, offered...he asked me to do a side job like a catering job, and when I went on the catering job, I like working with food anyway, and so uhm, I asked if they needed helped in the shop as well, and they did. So I got hired back. So I have been there ever since and I really do like it. It's a little bit more money, and it's what I know.

**Beth wants to take college level culinary courses to turn this job into a career. She's been clean for 15 months, and her oldest teenage daughter has come to live with her.**

She would have never a year and a half ago ever said, I want to come stay with you. She couldn't wait to come with me. And I feel more comfort zone with her, and she, she can talk to me now. It's like, there was a time when I was, let's face it, that I wasn't exactly in my right mind...so, now when she talks to me, she is talking to me, she knows my best interests, so. There was a time when she tried to take care of me but definitely not anymore!

**Her oldest daughter has been amazed by the change her mother has undergone in the past year.**

The thing that has changed the most is before when she wasn't doing good, I didn't think there was any hope—it was never going to happen. I was just like, you know what, it wasn't going to change, and it did. So it gave me—like if I ever have a rough time I can overcome it from watching her. This addiction is nothing I would ever want her to have but it made her who she is which I wouldn't change.

**In just five short months, Beth will be moving out of transitional housing, and making a home for her three daughters, all together at last. She's trying to keep her future in perspective.**

Sometimes you see people and I mean, things happen, and they can use something like this as a revolving door and sometimes need be, things happen, and I know I have been there. But I don't want to have to do that, I want to be able when I leave here—this is the opportunity for me to stand on my own two feet and be able to like say, I can do this now—I know—I got the tools. I just try and keep it simple. I am not asking for a lot, I just want to be able to make it, and able to be alright. I am satisfied with that—you know—I would be satisfied with that—anything else would be a plus, you know.

**Beth's future looks bright. She is one of the lucky ones. Transitional housing for women with children is rare, and not many women are able to get this kind of assistance.**

**Music: Alicia Keys, *No One* (instrumental)**

Produced by Jessica Phillips. Hosted by Marc Steiner.

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