

My name is Jessica Burt, and I am 37 years old. I was an all-star athlete growing up right here in Maine that is until I started experimenting with drugs at the early age of 13. I grew up around alcohol and marijuana which brought me to thinking it was ok. I was expelled from school my freshman and sophomore years for smoking marijuana and fighting. This left my days to drink and abuse drugs. My life started to spiral out of control and I did not even know. I met my first husband when I was 18 and we found out we was pregnant on Christmas of 2006 with a precious baby boy who we would name Matthew Michael. We got married on April 7th 2007, and we had Matthew on August 22nd 2007, we would later have two more children but before that I will tell you I ended up with severe sciatic nerve pain and my doctor at the time decided that I needed pain meds to deal with the pain so without much knowledge about the drug he prescribed me methadone. I didn't know much about the drug that is until I became dependent on it. I did experiment with drugs as a teen, but I was not a full-blown addict until I started taking methadone everyday.

I was prescribed methadone while being pregnant with my son Kobey Jaymes and my daughter Ella-Elizabeth Grace, not knowing the danger of stopping the medication while pregnant and what it could do to the baby. So I was stuck, either I stop taking it or I continue taking it and have a baby born addicted to prescription drugs. So I was scared and I decided to continue taking it and have my doctor watch my pregnancy closely so we would know if something was wrong. We was very blessed to have both of our children be born with minimal to no signs of withdrawal and I went on to be a stay at home mom for 10 years with 3 beautiful children who were healthy and happy. I was prescribed methadone for 8 years and then I decided I wanted to get off it. So I started using cocaine so I could get over the sickness of not being on a narcotic but of course I gave a UA to my doctor and it tested positive for cocaine and he took my script away.

This is where the addiction really takes over my mind body and soul. I couldn't stay off methadone because my body hurt without it. In the way of an addict methadone was expensive and heroin was cheap, so I started using heroin to maintain so I could care for my children. Unfortunately for me this resulted in me losing my home and everything that was in it including my children. In July of 2025 it will be 8 years since my kids were taken from my arms because I was addicted to drugs. No one wanted to help me, not even my own family because they were sick of it. They were sick of my destruction that I caused since I was a teen and they just had given up on me. That's how it felt anyways, it felt like I had no one to help see me through this awful mess I had made of my life! So here I was alone and on the streets, my husband at the time had gone to jail for an armed robbery and I was literally alone! Losing my children was the piece to make me fall all the way down the rabbit hole. I was on a path of destruction like I never imagined possible. My parents and my brother had decided tough love was

the key to fixing me but little did they know I was going deeper and deeper into my addiction that would soon leave me lifeless if I kept going down the road I was on.

I started selling drugs not long after I lost my children which would lead me to a prison cell. In 2020 my trap house was raided by the feds in New York, although I was in Maine it was a conspiracy case that took down 49 people and one of the most notorious crime enterprises in the United States. I had no clue who I was working for but I soon found out. I ended up with state charges and federal charges, but honestly it was the best thing that happened to me because I was able to go to rehab and get the help that I needed and wanted. It was a wait to get a bed but once I finally got a bed at wellsprings in Bangor I was on my way to recovering from my addiction.

I started going to meetings and working an honest program which has lead me to going to school to become an addiction counselor so I can help others who are struggling from drugs and alcohol addiction. My dream is to open an inpatient rehabilitation facility for men and woman to recover from substances. My dreams wouldn't be possible without the beautiful gifts recovery and the people who have helped me get to this point, have shown me and I'm forever grateful for each and every one of the people in recovery! My life used to be unmanageable and chaos but today it's truly amazing and beautiful! The recovery community that I have been apart of for nearly 4 years is truly amazing and I couldn't be doing what I'm doing today without them so thank you to the Bangor area recovery network, also known as the BARN! I wake up grateful in the morning even though I still don't have my children in my life. I know that someday god will reunite us when the time is right and I've had to live by that for the last 4 years and put my faith in the lord. It was the most rewarding thing I've ever done.

I couldn't have managed 4 years of sobriety without a bed at a facility that could help me learn the techniques and coping mechanisms that I was able to learn from entering treatment I would not be where I am today in life! I live an honest and productive life today, trying to help others recover from this awful disease! I am a productive member of society today and coming from where I was, running a trap house for a criminal enterprise and doing and selling drugs to feed my own vices, has to show you that recovery is possible. My parents if they was telling this story would tell you that their daughter was addicted to drugs worse than anyone they had ever seen, but today I am sober and loving life! Please take this serious, we are losing lives younger and younger to this disease and I personally don't want to see it get any worse than it already is! I hope my story gives anyone who is struggling the hope that they need to over come such a powerful disease!