



NATIONAL CAPITAL  
TREATMENT & RECOVERY  
INSPIRING HOPE SINCE 1962

## CONVERSATIONS ON RESILIENCE

**9/21/23 - Cherron**

*This interview occurred after her successful completion of the NCTR continuum of care.*



**1. What made you come back to NCTR for help?** *I came back to treatment to save my life, get my family back and show other people caught in the grips of the disease that this program really works. You know, this is my second rodeo and relapse is apart of my story. Unfortunately, I wasn't successful the first go around. Thank God I made it back, but that relapse needed to happen for me. It taught me so much about myself and my disease. Just how cruel, cunning and progressive this thing could be IF you get the opportunity to live through it and make it back. I said to myself, it has to be Phoenix House. It was the education piece that I knew I needed more of that I was missing, I needed to surrender and accept the fact that I was an addict whether I liked it or not. I couldn't go to war with an enemy (which is my disease) that I don't understand or know anything about. And also- the staff, they were like my very own personal guardian angels. I believed they were placed in my life at that exact moment to guide me through this journey and I needed to experience that support again with a fresh perspective of what I envisioned my life to be in recovery. You have to have a special kind of passion, dedication and heart to do this kind of work. Also, the setup of the program, how it helped shape me by living my life on a productive schedule. I was taught how to maximize my time during the day by executing goals that would help me progress in this process. I learned how live with other women from all different walks of life and backgrounds, problem solve our differences and learn to accept people, places and things I didn't have any control over at that time. I had the opportunity to see myself through each and every one of those women. I got a peek at all of the good, all the bad and all of the ugly of self. We are all more alike than different, I didn't see that before. My perception of an addict was all wrong, but that picture is so clear to me now as of today. It felt like my heart and Higher Power guided me right back there, where I needed to be.*

**2. When you think about your recovery journey, what were the elements that made a difference for you in your community?** *Going to meetings and being around other recovering addicts just trying to get better one day at a time. The things that gave me the most courage—which was the experience, strength, and hope of other people who lived my exact story and some even worse. Learning to be HONEST with myself first and then with other people. Being honest about what got me back into residential treatment and what I wanted to do about my problem moving forward. I had to have the WILLINGNESS to show up when I didn't want to, change my thinking which affected my behavior, and just simply NOT USE even when I was compelled to. It was imperative for me to be OPEN-MINDED to the suggestions of those that had more recovery experience than me. Being open-minded, that if this recovery journey worked for others then it could most definitely work for me too. Getting in service to help the newcomer and other people who were struggling with this fight. That gave me a sense of being a part of something much bigger than myself. You get paid for service work, maybe not financial but it's a spiritual payday. I got a Sponsor and stilling building a network of fierce women who are strong, tenacious and resilient in this recovery. My Sponsor always reminds me that we do not have to do this alone. There's something about exposing my deepest darkest secrets, fears, and behaviors to someone I am safe with, bring them to the light so they can die a natural death, and that I can began the process of healing in that area. I live my life by the Spiritual Principles which are found in the recovery literature. It helps you break down and understand why you're an addict which started long before the using of chemicals and mood-altering substances, what to do about my problem and how this program works for people us. This disease is not curable it lies dormant in our thinking waiting to attack when were vulnerable. However, it is treatable and can be arrested the right treatment plan.*

**3. What are the personal strengths that helped you get to where you are today?** *Being open-minded and coachable. I played sports growing up and this helped me remain open to receive suggestions and constructive criticism from people who want the best for me in this process and saw the potential in me as well. And the gift of desperation—it became a strength for me too in a strange way. I was so desperate to get better and live a new way of*

life I saw other recovering addicts living, that I was willing to try anything to escape the death grip of my disease. Stepping out on faith, stepping outside of my comfort zone, adapting to different environments, feelings, emotions, behaviors, thoughts and learning how to respond to them verses not reacting to them. Curiosity and eagerness to identify character defects and certain triggers that affected me in different areas of my life. Courage to go back to the very beginning, where I had to face childhood trauma and reopen unhealed wounds. Having the resilience and willingness to do the internal work which is a lot easier said than done. It takes some mighty guts to face the person you were in active addiction.

**4. What was the turning point in your recovery journey?** In active addiction we have all this junk going on in our heads like chaotic webbed thinking and compulsive behaviors. It's all clouded all the time. But to have someone on this recovery journey help you with each and every triggering thought, and assisting you with how to deal with life-on-life terms when life decided to show up was one of the most beautiful things I've ever experienced in my life. I really wasn't alone and not just that no matter what happened to me I did not have to use because of it. If I didn't pick it up, I wouldn't use it. That statement literally blew my mind. I always felt like I had no choice but to use, even when I didn't want to. Learning and Identifying those triggers and how to navigate through my thinking one thought at a time was a game changer for me as well. My counselors at National Capital Treatment and Recovery really helped me with sorting, organizing and breaking down my delusional distorted thinking patterns to the most simplest form. Once I learned this formulated recipe, I just duplicated it and applied it to every part of my thinking and decision making to help get me to the next level.

**5. What does resilience look like in your life?**

Resilience! It's not fun and I don't think it's suppose to be. It's about being uncomfortable to get comfortable so that you can "grow through" instead of "going through" the challenges that life throws at us. When we are faced with curve balls we should be uncomfortable, it has to hurt, we have to be pulled and stretched to the point where we feel like giving up. But when we endure that pain, when we dig deep down inside and access that hidden power that we all have the ability to bring out of ourselves and make it out on the other side. We morph into something that is unexplainable. It's one of those unexplainable laws of life kina of like magic. It's like beating a board on a video game and making it to the next level. You build on that muscle and each obstacle you face on each level gets a little bit easier to navigate because of the muscle memory you've developed throughout the journey of the game. Life's rewards are just waiting for us on the other side of the storms, hurt and pain. No one is exempt from it.

**6. Do you have a message for others in treatment now?**

You never ever have to do this again! If you don't pick it up, you won't use it. Everything is a process – a thought, a choice, and all you need is a desire and a mustard seed of faith and hope. You have a choice- we were all born with choices. There's a whole new life just waiting for you, but you must do the work, you have to endure the pain to get through on the other side. I promise you, if you trust this process you too will know exactly what I mean. If I had one super power, it would be to hold the hand of every addict in active addiction trapped in the grip of this deadly disease and show them what their future would look like if they trusted this process and gave themselves a chance. I have gifts of life today and the gifts of recovery just keep on giving and getting better for me and my family. But most importantly the best reward of it all, I have FREEDOM from active addiction and the opportunity to create and become the architect of my life.

If no one has told you they love you today, I do and there's nothing you can do about it. We need you brothers and sisters! See you on the other side 😊

With lots of Love,  
A Recovery Addict By the Name of: Cherron J.

*Interviewed by Jennifer Walden of NCTR*