

Berl's Story

Berl is living proof that mistakes don't have to define the rest of your life. He made a choice to do better and it turned his entire life around.

Meeting Berl, you would never imagine that he was once addicted to drugs and alcohol. It took a series of good decisions for him to become the man he is today.



His first decision was meeting with a drug counselor. His counselor suggested that he leave Baltimore and move to Frederick. He started his recovery at the Olson House. Once he was sober, his life took a drastic turn and he met his future wife. He found a job in IT that he loved. He and his wife closed on their first home together.

For some time, Berl's group had been training a team for a new division. They didn't know they were training their replacements. The stability that he fought so long for was on the brink of collapse.

He searched hard for a new job. With his time off from work, he volunteered as an IT specialist at United Way of Frederick County. Berl realized that his associate's degree wouldn't be sufficient if he wanted to succeed in his field. With the help of the Frederick County Workforce, he was able to go back to school full time.

"I was 50 years old in classes with people who weren't even born yet the last time I was in college," Berl says.

Although returning to school was rewarding, Berl still had bills to pay. He took a part-time job at the Frederick County Library, but still wasn't making enough money to support family. Berl started attending the Prosperity Center's Credit Café. There he discovered the Savings Account Program, where every dollar he saved towards his education would be multiplied by \$8. This allowed him to save \$4,500. After hard work, Berl graduated with his bachelor's degree in 2016. He is using his Prosperity account savings to pursue his master's degree while still working.

Berl successfully transformed his life, several times. He'll tell anyone who will listen about the resources that helped change his life.

