



From Running Away to Showing Up

For Brent Hudson, recovery wasn't just about sobriety—it was about becoming the father, man, and servant God created him to be.

Before coming to Open Door Mission, Brent spent twenty years of his life struggling with cocaine addiction.

Starting in 2015, Brent cycled in and out of rehab programs, but none of them brought lasting change.

In 2018, a friend recommended Brent try Open Door Mission's Doorway Recovery program. He graduated from the program in 2019, but then relapsed when life began to feel overwhelming again.

"I made a choice to do what a lot of us on this journey do—I ran from my problems," Brent admits.

But when the weight of life became too heavy to outrun, Brent knew exactly where he needed to go.

In March of 2022, Brent returned to Open Door Mission and was accepted into the Doorway Recovery program for a second time.

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"I finally realized it was time for me to grow up," Brent remembers. "Life isn't all about me. It's about others and what I can do for them. I knew I had a lot of people depending on me, so I better do some things differently."

LEARNING TO TRUST THE PROCESS

Brent's decision to seek help from Open Door Mission came quite simply from a desire to truly live and "be there" for his two sons, Hayden and Reid. But after previous failed rehab stints, Brent lacked confidence that this time would be any different.

Brent admits, "I didn't know if I really could change, no matter what I did, or if I truly even wanted to change."

But a literal "wake-up call" from his two sons would make the difference, giving Brent the insight and motivation he needed to truly commit to the program and to sobriety.

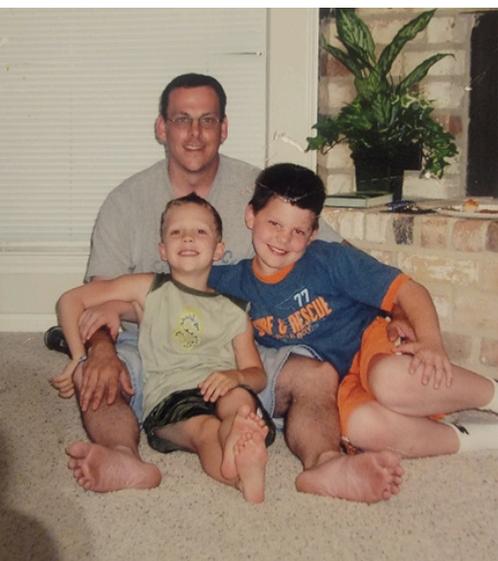
"I was on the phone with my boys and they told me, 'Dad, we love you and we honor you as our father, but we can't do his anymore,'" Brent remembers. "I tried to say something, but they didn't want to hear the same excuses I'd been giving for twenty years."

Until I started doing things differently, they couldn't be part of my life anymore."

The boys' words landed with painful clarity.

"I realized they were two young men setting boundaries with their dad. They still cared about me, but they were just tired of me not being a dad."

When the rest of Brent's family echoed his sons' feelings, the message finally began to sink in.



**Brent with
sons, Hayden
and Reid**

Brent's newfound clarity didn't make the journey easy, just unavoidable. He still faced challenges to his recovery, the biggest one being waking up every day and trusting the process.

"I had to fully trust that the Lord Jesus Christ was doing things in my life that I didn't understand and couldn't see, Brent says. "And every day I had to keep moving forward and not look back. It's so destructive to look back and beat yourself up for the decisions you've made."

During his time as a client at Open Door Mission, Brent discovered a community and lasting friendships that let him know he wasn't alone on his recovery journey.

Though Brent was a believer when he first came to Open Door Mission, he had never truly given control of his life to the Lord. But during his time in Doorway Recovery, Brent learned that surrendering control was the key to finding sobriety and the purpose in life he had been searching for through his addiction.

Brent came to Open Door Mission hoping to find life, and in the process he found the source of true life—Jesus.

"I thank God for the mission, and for giving me the opportunity to come back a second time."

GIVING BACK WHAT WAS FREELY GIVEN

By the grace of God—and with the support of friends and family—Brent has remained sober since graduating from Doorway Recovery in 2022.

In addition, he now works as the In-take Coordinator at Open Door Mission, a position that allows him to serve just as he was once served.

"As a staff member, I get to help men that struggle just like I do," Brent says. "And seeing their faces when they reach goals, and the joy they have when they walk across that stage at graduation, that's awesome."

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Though life still brings challenges Brent's way, just like it does for everyone, Brent has learned that he really can make the changes he needs and wants to see in his life. "If I keep all my faith in the Lord, then even when things aren't okay, they're really okay."

The Lord's mercies are new every morning; great is His faithfulness.
(Lamentations 3:22-23)

And along the way, Brent hasn't walked his path alone. He credits the love and support of his mentors—Charlie Chafin, Randy Riley, and Dick Ebling—for being a huge influence on his life and sobriety since graduating from Doorway Recovery.

"These men have stuck by my side and been people I can depend on whenever I'm going through difficult times," Brent says. "I can reach out to them, and they'll speak Jesus into my life and just love on me."

GRATEFUL TO BE ALIVE

In the years since his recovery began, Brent's relationships with his family have been restored and are stronger than they have ever been.

His youngest son, Reid, lives in Kansas, but Brent gets to visit him and his wife a few times a year. While he lost his oldest son to a fentanyl overdose in 2023, Brent has two grandchildren from Hayden that he gets to visit whenever he travels to Georgia.

Brent also participates in morning devotionals with his brother who lives in Georgia, as well as a weekly Bible study via Zoom with his brother, aunt, and uncle.

While his family members are quick to tell him how proud they are of the changes he's made, they also make sure he knows they will keep him accountable for his decisions moving forward.

Brent's primary goal for his life now is to keep living life the way God intended him to. He regularly reminds himself and others in the program that growth is a process, so it's important to extend yourself grace along the way.

"God made us and He knows how we are," Brent says. "He knows Brent Hudson's a little twisted, and He wants to see that corrected. He wants to see me reaching out to him. That's what brings Him joy, hearing me reach out to Him for help."

Brent with son, Reid, and daughter-in-law, Kristen



Before coming to Open Door Mission, Brent says waking up in the morning felt like hell—now his is life full of joy.

"I really am just grateful to be alive," Brent says. "Every morning when I wake up, the first thing I say is 'Thank You.'"

About Open Door Mission

Founded in 1954, Open Door Mission has served as a place of refuge and restoration for men facing homelessness, addiction, and life-altering hardship in the Houston community. Through a compassionate, faith-based approach, the Mission provides safe shelter, nourishing meals, and essential care at no cost, while offering structured recovery programs that address the root causes of crisis. By combining spiritual support, counseling, life-skills training, and job readiness, Open Door Mission helps individuals rebuild their lives with dignity, purpose, and hope—one open door at a time.



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