



PATHWAY OF HOPE

August 2016

West Division Newsletter

Nebraska

South Dakota

Iowa—wst/cntrl

Cassy's origins come from the Rosebud Sioux Tribe in south-central South Dakota. She does not, however, remember much about it; she only remembers sitting at her dying mother's bedside. Everything else, she recently shared, was pretty much a blur.

Cassy was soon sent to foster care where, as a nine-year-old, her new-found parents relocated to Tucson, Arizona. She remembers this as being mostly a happy experience—watching waterfalls during family outings—when “we took to the mountains.” After five years, this serenity came to a halt. Her foster mother took to drugs... and was lost. When she was located—sleeping in the desert—the state removed Cassy from her foster family. At 14 years old, Cassy returned to Sioux Falls, South Dakota—to an unsupportive family.

As a young adult, life was hard for Cassy. She married, only to be in a controlling and abusive environment. Pregnant with her fifth child, Cassy remembers running through a corn field while her husband tried “to run me down.” She added, “The only way to survive was to get away.” With resolve, Cassy packed up her children and left, though her husband's stalking forced Cassy to always be in hiding.

Cassy recently stated, “I struggled within myself,” adding that alcohol addiction and homelessness took their toll. She shared, “I knew I needed help... it [Pathway of Hope] was my last resource



Sioux Falls' Case Manager Darlos Cook with Cassy

for reaching out.”

While living in Bishop Dudley's Hospitality House and utilizing resources from Sioux Falls' Salvation Army (TSA), Cassy met Darlos Cook—Pathway's case manager. “All my life people say, ‘Cassy, you need to trust people’—no I ain't!” retorted Cassy. But she quickly conceded, “They [TSA] didn't judge me and they gave me a chance. She [Darlos] didn't hold my past against me—not judgmental... she sat down and actually visited with me.”

While a Pathway of Hope (POH) client, Cassy went from homelessness to a family apartment; paid past bills enabling her to obtain a driver's license and insurance; and successfully completed addiction treatment, along with two of her sons.

Darlos recently stated, “Cassy is very tenacious... she is driven to make her life better for her children, not just herself.”

When Cassy was asked what receiving the POH Certificate meant to her, she replied, “It gave me a sense of accomplishment. A lot of people didn't give me a chance to prove myself... she [Darlos] did!”

By Mark Dougherty
Client Name Changed