

How could we be capable of forgetting the old myths that stand at the threshold of all mankind, myths of dragons transforming themselves at the last moment into princesses? Perhaps all dragons in our lives are really princesses just waiting to see us just once being beautiful and courageous.

Ranier Marie Rilke
Poet

Superior Court II
Jail Chemical Addiction Program
JCAP
The Women's Edition



The women in JCAP, like the program, are truly a work in progress. This book is dedicated to their strength in taking on the dragons in their lives and transforming into beautiful princesses with the courage to be themselves.

Judge Sally Blankenship
Superior Court II



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JCAP: Path of Progress

The Jail Chemical Addiction Program (JCAP) like many of the JCAP participants is a work in progress. In 2007, Superior Court II and probation staff began exploring new ways to address the devastation of drug and alcohol abuse in the lives of individuals and families in our community. The Court was faced with a growing number of criminal offenders with heroin and opiate addictions and was in a unique position to see the effect on children, families, and businesses. Deaths resulting from drug overdoses; young lives lost to the abyss of addiction; crimes of violence, burglary and theft; and young women giving birth to babies born with toxic drugs in their system are a too common reality in our local justice system.

The JCAP Program grew from an effort to address these issues. Through resources from the Indiana Judicial Center and a site visit to the jail program in Lebanon, Indiana, JCAP began to take on shape. The effort was supported by our Sheriff and Prosecuting Attorney. The Program was initiated with funding obtained from fees collected from the Superior Court II Alcohol and Drug Education Program and community grants. The program has continued with no use of local tax dollars.

In 2007 the Court hired the first masters' prepared counselor and JCAP began on a 16 bed male pod in the Law Enforcement Center. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), life skills, individual counseling and self-help groups are key to the program. Accountability, self-management, mentoring and giving back to the community are the end result. Through each participant the program develops and builds strength.

In 2011, the Dearborn Community Foundation awarded a grant to Superior Court II to initiate the woman's JCAP. The Sheriff worked with the Court to provide an eight bed pod for the women which has remained full with a waiting list from day one.

The women's JCAP offers promise to many young women and mothers. They have shared some of their writings in an effort to shine a light on addiction in our community and what JCAP means for them.

The JCAP success stories are more than one person's individual success. Each success touches each of us and they are giving back through mentoring, educating students and sharing.

Judge Sally Blankenship

“My Scars”

My scars are more than the eye can see.
Each having a story of God's great mercy.

The scar on my stomach would be the first on my list.
I was only a little girl when I had to endure this.

I remember waking up with a tube down my throat-belly so sore...my fingertips felt broke.

I can remember my family there by my side and my mother trying to hide her fear of the fact that I might die.

Thank God for prayers of others. I believe that's what kept me alive.

Then one morning, later down the road-I woke to find my mother asleep and very cold.

I tried to wake her up. I screamed her name out loud.

But there was no response-Satan was on the prowl.

The pills she swallowed to make the pains of life go away.

It must've been a scary feeling to think that would be her last day.

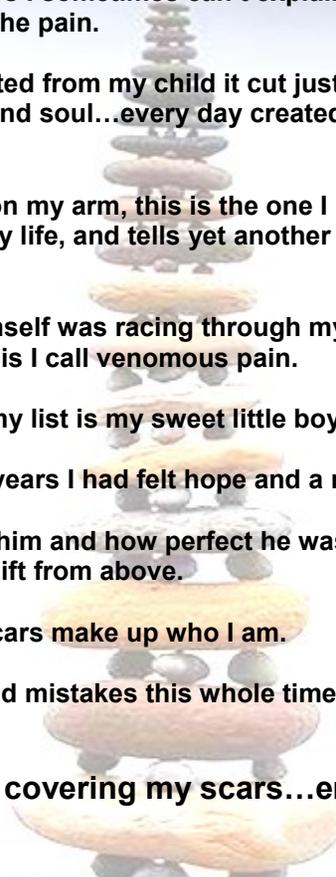
I was too young to assume what she'd done, but when the doctor confirmed she'd tried taking her life, all I could think to do was run.

I ran from my feelings and tried not to cry. I decided since she lived, maybe I should die. Now this scar was different, it was unique, for this scar was left on my heart, not one you could see.

Years went by and it was my senior year. Thought I was okay to drive, thought my head was clear. But the spirit of death was again very near, it was a head-on collision that nearly took my life.

Strangers gathered to pray and put up a fight, the accident left scars on my head, leg, and face, which has been a constant reminder of God's mercy and grace.

Next there is my scar of God's most precious gift, the gift of a child, a memory I could never forget, to hold my little girl so innocent and sweet, but little did I know all I'd accomplished was defeat.



This scar was both visible and invisible too. I was so disappointed in myself, the burden was too heavy...as your mother I had failed you.

Drugs took over in ways I sometimes can't explain, feeling helpless and lost I quickly numbed the pain.

To be a mother separated from my child it cut just a like a knife, slashing through my heart and soul...every day created more and more scars inside.

Then there's the scar on my arm, this is the one I mostly try to hide, it screams the truth of my life, and tells yet another story of how I shouldn't be alive.

It seemed the devil himself was racing through my veins, I couldn't seem to shake him...this I call venomous pain.

Now, the last scar on my list is my sweet little boy.

It was the first time in years I had felt hope and a new kind of joy.

I remember looking at him and how perfect he was and knowing right away he was another gift from above.

You see, all of these scars make up who I am.

Through my regrets and mistakes this whole time I've been in God's hands.

For years I've tried covering my scars...embarrassed and ashamed.

Today I'm learning to love myself and my scars because through them, so much I've actually gained.

Today I can accept that my scars will always be a part of me.

But I thank God that I now realize they no longer define the person I am striving to be...

JCAP Participant



COMING INTO JCAP

Today I found a portal, I walked through it though I was afraid. When I walked through I found myself in a world I was meant to be in. It was beautiful and bright but the light hurt my eyes. Everyone was happy and smiling but I was still skeptical. No one ever told a lie though I was still dishonest. No one ever cheated but I still wanted to get ahead. No one ever hurt me yet I still felt so uncomfortable.

Everything was serene yet I yearned for chaos. That day I found a portal, I walked through it though I was afraid. When I walked through I found myself in the dark realm, the one I was born in. I felt at peace. I realize now the world can change but if I can't change I will never know contentment.

JCAP PARTICIPANT

The Day of Addiction

I come to a moment in life when one action is pivotal, when one decision becomes the catalyst that takes away years of my future decisions. I replay the day I became addicted to drugs in my mind constantly. It was the day the path I chose would alter my entire life. It was the day my actions would change the lives of so many others. I should have just taken a shot gun and took my life. How could I have fallen so far? By being so easily manipulated, living with mental abuse, emotional instability, low self-esteem, and lack of experience and maturity and you have the recipe for a disaster. I've realized over the course of time that I don't know exactly why I ultimately did what I did. There was no good reason, and I had nothing to gain. Even if I had a reason in my destructive mind, it would not have justified my actions. I was an out-of-control kid who had just hit rock bottom. These past 19 months of my life have made me mature and be able to heal enough to be able to look back on my life with a worthwhile and insightful perspective.

JCAP Participant

Dear Oxycontin, Heroin, Meth, Xanax, Pot,

I am writing you this letter to let you know that I want nothing to do with you anymore.

I never want to touch you again. This has been very hard for me to do because you were my everything, my best friend, my lover. When I was sad you made me feel better; when I was down you were there to pick me up; when I was confused you made me understand. I loved you more than anything.

But what I have come to terms with is I let you play me as a fool. You've done nothing but numb me and ruin my life! Why I choose to let you have control of me, I don't know.

You are the worst thing that has ever come into my life.

You have overcome my life for too long. You have made me do insane things to myself and loved ones. I am so ashamed of myself because of you, you are a big risk in my life. Well I feel so small and guilty because you made me feel so low and worth nothing. You have took so many years of my life not only from me but from others.

I am glad I caught your scandalous tricks while I was young because I still have my whole life ahead of me. You may have got some of my life, but just remember you didn't get it all! You have taken everything from me. There is nothing else left except my life that I still have because I let you go but I am sure you would have taken that eventually also.

I realize now that I am twenty one and sitting in a jail cell that all you wanted was to make me miserable and eventually kill me!

You probably thought I would come crawling back but what I am doing is turning my back! I am finding true happiness in myself now that I am sober! You are out of my life and I have come to terms that I can live life without you. I am going to prove to everybody that I don't and won't let you be a part of my life anymore. Without you I think well of myself, I am capable of living well, I have strength. I consider myself worth-while, I feel stable and secure inside. I will be a better mother to my son, I can grow, work, think clearly, be appreciative, vulnerable, sympathetic, be more open-minded, responsible, caring, loving, etc.

And, just for today, I've got enough will-power to not let you take these qualities from me again! You are no longer an option or a choice to me because I am worth more and so are my loved ones, and I am choosing to be clean and sober. I am choosing "LIFE"!

**Good Bye
Forever**

**P. S.
From the beginning I thought meeting you could only end in parting, yet I ignored the coming down and I gave myself to you!**

JCAP Participant



Glad To Be Incarcerated



What I'm getting from JCAP is respect for myself. Knowledge and faith in my higher power and I'm coming to realize that I don't need drugs to escape my past or my present issues and dilemma. I'm learning how to take all of the negative thoughts I have and turn them into positive thoughts. I'm glad to be where (jail) I'm at today and doing JCAP. I'm learning a lot from this program.

JCAP Participant

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What **I** am learning is that **I** am responsible for how **I** want to live my life and what kind of life **I** choose to live.

I am learning that **I** am in control of my thinking, feeling and behavior; all of which shape my perspective and reaction and determine my action in my life.

Today **I** know **I** can no longer blame others or society for my life. **I** also know if **I** am unhappy with my life, there are many things **I** can do:

I can change my perception by changing me and change my reaction;

Or

I can do nothing and be miserable. It's all up to **me!**

JCAP Participant

Strength

When I was first accepted into J.C.A.P. I knew that I had an obvious problem with drugs and alcohol. It wasn't until I began working the 12 steps and attending groups that I discovered that most of my problems were rooted long before drugs/alcohol became a factor.

This program has allowed me to see why I am who I am today. I'm learning so much about myself and every day I love myself a little more. For years I've struggled with insecurities and using gave me a false sense of confidence that provided an easy "escape".

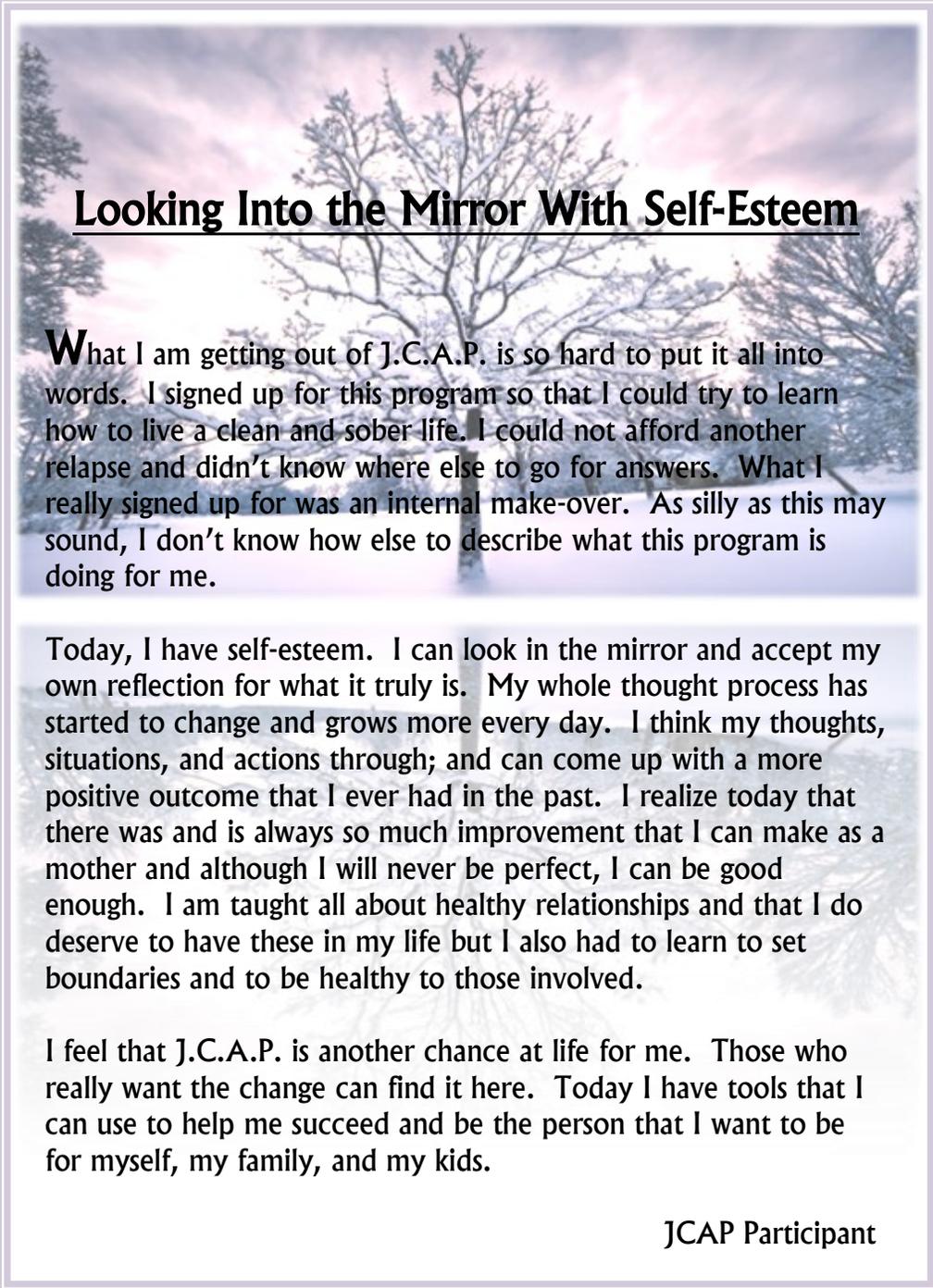
Today I walk in new freedom knowing that I have a choice as to whether or not I decide to use. I never felt I had a choice before and I no longer have to run from my feelings.

I feel as though I had to be stripped of everything, including my children, to find the strength that I have inside of me to get out of the mess of life I'd created. This is a quote given to me when I first entered J.C.A.P.

“A woman never knows how strong she is until strength is all she has left.”

I'm so grateful for the J.C.A.P. Program. I know this is only the beginning for me and I have a long road ahead. There's so much more left to learn. Every day more is revealed to me. The N.A. book teaches us that it is progress rather than perfection. My hope is simply that God will see me through.

JCAP Participant



Looking Into the Mirror With Self-Esteem

What I am getting out of J.C.A.P. is so hard to put it all into words. I signed up for this program so that I could try to learn how to live a clean and sober life. I could not afford another relapse and didn't know where else to go for answers. What I really signed up for was an internal make-over. As silly as this may sound, I don't know how else to describe what this program is doing for me.

Today, I have self-esteem. I can look in the mirror and accept my own reflection for what it truly is. My whole thought process has started to change and grows more every day. I think my thoughts, situations, and actions through; and can come up with a more positive outcome that I ever had in the past. I realize today that there was and is always so much improvement that I can make as a mother and although I will never be perfect, I can be good enough. I am taught all about healthy relationships and that I do deserve to have these in my life but I also had to learn to set boundaries and to be healthy to those involved.

I feel that J.C.A.P. is another chance at life for me. Those who really want the change can find it here. Today I have tools that I can use to help me succeed and be the person that I want to be for myself, my family, and my kids.

JCAP Participant

Discovering Me

Well I made it through J.C.A.P! My 90 days is today. I'm so amazed with how far my thinking has come in 90 days. I'm so very thankful for this experience. I will always remember the love I found in these walls. I will always remember the Megan I found here. I've learned how to be human again. I've learned how to smile again and laugh. I've learned how to care again and cry. I'm more content with myself than I've ever been. The first goal I had coming here was to learn to be comfortable in my own skin, and today, I believe I truly am. What a difference 143 days can make. This experience has been monumental to me, I can't wait to put all this to work soon but I'm still nervous.

JCAP Participant



**A special thank you to the many who have
helped to bring the women's JCAP program to
our community.**

Judge Sally Blankenship
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Chief Deputy Sheriff David Lusby
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Ron Michaelson, MSW
Shavonne Mehlbauer, MSW
Aaron Negangard, Prosecuting Attorney
Karen Ernst, Project Manager
Barbara Koch, Volunteer
Superior Court Staff and Probation
Dearborn County Law Enforcement Staff
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 Successful JCAP graduates