

Paige Berry: Overcoming the Little Voice

Paige Berry's biggest struggle in life is her "little voice," that takes her back to the past when she was addicted to drugs and lost her confidence. Her little voice tells her not to come to classes, that she is not going to get her GED® and that she's stupid. "Honestly, part of me wants to quit every day," Paige reveals at a meeting with a funder. She has been clean since June 22, 2016, and the little voice is slowly disappearing.

"I'm not as bad as some people, so I am blessed. I know how to read and write. I do know basic math, I'm not illiterate. I am nervous though, because my memory is pretty messed up from drug usage and because I have a lot of health problems. I struggle because part of me is still scared."

"Fortunately, through all the years of the hell I have been through I have gained a lot of people that love me. I don't have family other than my children and grandchildren. A lot of my friends have stood by me for years. This year has been the best year of my entire life." She dropped out of school when she was in 10th grade.

After Paige quit drugs she deliberately waited until she got stronger before coming to Center for Literacy (CFL) in May 2017. She rarely misses a class and is never late. "I have Mark [Edmonds] as my instructor and he is like the coolest ever. I think he is the perfect teacher for me because he's pretty patient and I am inquisitive—I ask a lot of questions when I don't know stuff plus was taught by a grandmother a long time ago that if you don't ask then you don't know. He allows me to ask a lot of questions."

"I like coming to CFL. I love the fact that there's no set time. I don't have to do all this in six months. I love Mark's confidence in me. It's wonderful. Mark told me 'I think you'll be done in six months' [getting her GED®]. I think he's trippin! That's not me putting myself down, it's just I think I need at least a year because my struggle is the math, really."

"I'm proud that I finally have the confidence to get my GED®. I am going to graduate come June of next year. I think that's a good goal—June of 2018."