

Evelene Duhart

I am a native of North Carolina, the daughter of sharecroppers. I graduated from Phillips High School in 1968. I moved to Washington, DC the same year. I started my career at People's Drug Store. I married and had a son, Clarence, in 1970. My career progressed with work at the National Bank of Washington for 10+ years and work at Howard University for 15 years.

I started a career of helping others with the same organization that introduced me to a new and different way of living, [SOME \(So Others Might Eat\)](#). Someone saw something in me what I was not able to see. I subsequently started working for [North Street Village](#) as a Case Manager for women in recovery, then as Manager of NSV's Housing First Program. I am currently a Recovery Support Specialist with NSV.

Two co-workers introduced me to the [Ignatian Spirituality Project](#) over 12 years ago. I started this process as a retreatant, then a witness, a volunteer, and now a team member and a leader in their Ambassadors of Hope program. ISP was and is the gift my Higher Power gave me. I am not a person that dabbles in religion. I am a spiritual person and have a strong belief and faith in God. WHO or WHAT could have saved me? I no longer have to ask this question. My connection with God has and continues to be my saving grace. I don't claim to have all the answers.

I bring to this conversation my experience as a 71-year-old black woman, recovering from homelessness, drug addiction, and life struggles, but most of all I am an individual willing and open to change. I have firsthand understanding of the disease of addiction and a calling to accompany others in their struggles. I cannot fix others. I have been called to just show up.