When you choose to enter an addiction treatment program, you are making the choice to invest in yourself and your future. You will get out of it what you put into it, and the more of yourself you put into the program, the better you will feel. It’s definitely not something that will happen overnight; it’s a process. But having the right mindset in your approach will benefit you throughout the duration of your stay.

A friend that I’ve known for most of my life recently entered addiction recovery, and her journey was a long and challenging one. When she finally made the decision to commit fully to a rehab program, she told me she was ready to put in the work to take back her life. She set her mind to sobriety and hasn’t looked back — but I know it’s an every day battle.

Her strength inspired me to reach out to other recent rehabilitation graduates to find out what got them through treatment and what advice they would offer to others headed there. Here are some of their insights.

**Connect With Others**
One thing that stuck with me about rehabilitation is the sense of unity people talked about: your peers in the program are going through the same emotions and anxiety as you. And the more you can connect with them, the more comfortable you will feel. These people will be there for you throughout this process, and you will be able to do the same for them.
Steven, a proud graduate of A Forever Recovery in Michigan, said, “You get through the program and know you're worth it and know you're not doing it for anyone else but yourself. The people were nice, my peers were supportive, and everyone was very friendly.”

And Doug found that connecting with others was an essential part of therapy.

“My favorite part of the program was the groups — I really enjoyed them. …. The information they have and their opinion on addiction and how to cope with different aspects of your addiction are priceless. That's what you get out of the groups, and I found that very valuable. But I found that a lot of the social experience there was also therapy, because you're getting to know different people and realizing that you are not alone.”

Be Open-minded
Some people told me that as an addict, looking in the mirror is incredibly hard — and I think all of us have had a moment where we struggled to confront ourselves. I know I have. Stepping out of your comfort zone is hard. And it’s OK to be uncomfortable, but you’ll find that if you open your mind, it will become easier as you move along in the program.

Tara explained, “It took some time for me to be comfortable with being there. But once I quit focusing on how long I was going to be there, I didn't mind being there at all. The day I graduated, it felt like I didn't want to leave. I've realized that there is another way, that I am capable of living a sober life, and that I can be happy without drugs.”

Do the Work and You’ll See the Difference
Part of what I find so inspiring about the decision to turn to sobriety is that it isn’t just about making the choice to quit using; you have to make the commitment to yourself to do the work. If you do, it will pay off.

Alex adamantly told me, “This place can work for anybody. As long as you're willing to choose to make it work for you, and as long as you have the choice to make a change, you will change. I can definitely say I've changed from the moment I got to treatment. What helped me was everything in this program.”

This was a humbling project to work on, with each story as inspiring as the last. The resilience of the recovering addicts I met tells me that we are each capable of defying even the greatest of odds. Best of all, the reward of taking on that fight is a beautiful, lifelong joy.

“The more that you go through that program, the more that they begin to synchronize, and you feel less warfare within yourself and with your body. I am more at peace. I wake up every day just happy to be alive and happy to go on with the day, and I can handle anything that comes at me,” Ryan said.