

My name is Veris Yordy and at thirty-nine years old I am about to embark on a new career, or as I jokingly call it “the oddest midlife crisis ever”.

My first career was working in my family’s kitchen and bath business, and I was the heir apparent to take over the business when my mother and father retired. I was exceptionally good at designing the kitchen and bathrooms of my customers’ dreams, and had circumstances been different I would have been content to follow my family’s plan for me. But that was not meant to be for me.

At twenty-three years old, I attended residential treatment for a severe substance use disorder. I had five previous back surgeries and became addicted to opioids. While in treatment, a counselor told us to look around the room, and said that of the thirty-two of us sitting there, one of us would be sober after one year and the rest of us would relapse. I remember searching to find the exact odds of a person remaining sober after treatment and they range anywhere from a sixty to eighty percent recidivism rate for the first year alone. Fifteen years later I continue to be amazed with what sobriety has given both to me and my family.

In September of 2007, I found a new passion for what I wanted to do with my life which was to work in a mental health and substance use treatment center. I did not have an education, aside from a high school diploma, so I could not be a therapist, but I did have a drive to help the people around me who were suffering in a way that I knew all too well. I threw myself into my work and said yes to every position offered to me. During my time working in residential treatment, I had the following job titles: driver, maintenance technician, behavioral health technician, lead behavioral health technician, admissions counselor, clinical program assistant, assistant director of program services, and director of safety and security. I worked with both adolescents and adults, and I put every bit of passion I had into helping the people around me achieve the gifts of recovery.

In October of 2017 I welcomed a beautiful baby girl into this world at the ten-year mark of my sobriety. At that moment my priorities changed as I know I had to be able to provide a good life for her and most importantly be available for her. I started to go to college in hopes of getting a better job to provide a better life for my child. I will admit that my first few semesters of college were attended under protest. Neither of my parents are educated and higher education was not important in my family system. I never considered engineering as a potential career for me until I was in school. It turns out I enjoy math and love problem solving and I even found myself enjoying the experience of learning.

Today, I am a college student attempting to obtain his bachelor’s degree at Florida Atlantic University, a loving father, and a man who defied the odds of a deadly disease. I couldn’t be happier and prouder to embark upon a new career in the field of engineering.

Thank you for taking the time to read about me.

Sincerely,

Veris Yordy