

I wrote the following story for my ice breaker speech in my toastmasters club. Out of four speeches given on the night of Nov 29 2016 "Happy Birthday Casey" I was honored to receive the best speech of the night award.

After 15 years in prison I have sobriety, work ethics, self-esteem, a beginning relationship with my children. Most importantly I am now a man of God who has blessed me with the above mentioned blessings.

Thank you, whoever you are for reading my speech.

Sincerely
Roland Stoecker Jr
Psalm 147: 3

MR. Toastmaster

Good evening gentlemen.

The following story is true. I will be talking about the moments of my life that I thought defined me as a man. For 30 years of my life I've made my decisions through the wounds of my childhood. My true initiation into manhood wasn't going to prison. It was the positive choices that I've made while in prison that's made me a man.

On July 5th 1975 I was evicted from my mother's womb. My parents MR. Roland and Debra Stoecker both had drug and alcohol addictions. Growing up I watched my parents drinking little colored bottles that would make them angry. Most nights were full of screams and broken things. One of my first memories is of my Dad getting arrested for beating up my mom.

After the divorce of my parents, My younger sister and I lived with our mother and her many male friends. My mom would eventually meet and marry a man named Alex who also had drug and alcohol addictions.

When I was five years old, I tried to wake my mother up from her drunken stupor. When she didn't wake up I went to school in the following outfit, T-shirt, tightie whities, ~~and~~ shoes and socks. Needless to say but my sister and I was abducted by child protective services that morning we were placed into the back of a police car and driven to Albert sitting home, its a holding pen for children who were taken away from their parents. Once we arrived, my sister and I were separated and for the first time in our young lives we were alone.

The foster family I went to was a nice black family. They had children around my own age. They took me camping and to a Raiders game at the Coliseum. Every morning that I was dropped off at school I was embarrassed because I was different and motherless.

After about a year my Dad regained custody of my sister and I. My life gets even more chaotic once my Dad marries a woman wearing a devil mask. From the age of 7 to 17 my step-mother made it very clear that she didn't like me. Every day she would tell me, ~~that~~ no one likes you, no girl will ever love you. Your incorrigible and her favorite thing to say was if your Dad could afford it we'd send you to a boys ranch.

I wasn't a bad kid, but I became one, once I started to believe my step-mother's lies. I began to act out in class and my antics got so bad that a doctor diagnosed me with Attention Deficit Disorder. Look a squirrel! I was given little beige pills called Ritalin that overstimulated my brain to the point of becoming a zombie. I was put into the special education program because of my negative behavior. I began to steal from teachers, classmates and eventually from friends.

When I was 17 I ran away from home. I proved my step-mother wrong when I fell in love with a girl named Misty. I was arrested at school for marijuana possession. On Nov 29 1993 my son was born. I had just turned 18. On Sept 29th 1996 my daughter was born. I was a heroin addict and so was Misty.

In 1998 I met my future wife Alicia. She was also a drug addict. When I went to prison in 1999 my wife was 7½ months pregnant. On January 4th ²⁰⁰⁰ I called home and my wife told me that she gave birth to a healthy baby girl and in the same breath she told me that my mom and step-father were in the hospital. My sister's husband attacked them as they slept with a hammer. They both survived.

I was released from prison on Nov 20th 2000 and married Alicia on Nov 27th 2000. In 9 short months I was able to destroy everything I loved. My wife was 8 months pregnant when I got arrested. I called my wife on Sept 13th and she told me she had given birth to a healthy baby girl.

I am more than my wounds, I no longer blame my childhood for the person I became. I chose to believe the lies, I chose to do drugs, I chose to abandon four children, I chose to hurt innocent people with my life of crime.

I am now a man of integrity and for the first time in my life I have self-esteem. I Strive everyday to be a better man than I was yesterday. Thank you gentlemen for allowing me to share these moments of my life with you.