

211 SNAPSHOT: AUBREE

These days, Aubree seems to have it all: a job that aligns with her values and pays the bills, a partner she shares a home with and a bright, beautiful nine-month-old baby girl.



But it hasn't always been this way. In 2020, Aubree was enrolled at Western, intent on eventually earning a law degree. Her future looked bright. Then COVID hit. Remote learning began, and it wasn't a great fit for Aubree: she began to suffer from feelings of isolation and sadness. To save money, she moved back home. She eventually graduated. Eager to start her career, she moved in with her aunt, where she helped take care of her little cousins and looked for employment. But there were no jobs to be found, and she quickly slid into despair.

Like many college students, Aubree had partied on campus sometimes. Now, unable to find a job, devastated at the loss of her law school dreams, Aubree began to drink daily. It began with a nip each day, and then a bottle each day. Before long, Aubree was struggling with alcoholism and serious depression.

As the months passed, Aubree managed to cobble together a few part-time jobs, juggling shifts at Staples and Subway by day and at a gas station at night. She started to see a therapist. But her depression just wouldn't lift.

Then one November day, a Staples customer got nasty with Aubree, shouting – the customer cocked her head, poised to spit on her. Aubree broke down, utterly defeated. "I felt like a waste of space," she says.

The therapy wasn't helping. The drinking was out of control. The future looked bleak. She called her best friend, who worked in the Department of Social Services. "Call 2-1-1," her friend suggested.

For three days, Aubree would dial 2-1-1, then hang up, overwhelmed. Her friend came over, called 2-1-1 on speakerphone, went into the next room and closed the door.

That day, Aubree took her first step toward healing: when a 211 Contact Specialist answered the call, Aubree shared her story.

You're okay, Aubree remembers hearing. On the other end of the line was a caring, kind and reassuring person. "She let me know that I just needed to find help. And I'd taken the first step."

The Contact Specialist understood that addressing Aubree's addiction needed to be the top priority. Given how readily available alcohol was where she lived, she knew Aubree needed to change her environment, or no solution would be reached.

The Contact Specialist connected Aubree with support groups, a shelter for people struggling with addiction and a program to help her afford food – and provided locations, hours and phone numbers to make her way forward clear and accessible.

In the days that followed, Aubree moved back in with her mother and started working on her sobriety, turning to 211 almost daily for support, resources and information to help her identify her next steps.

As she found her footing, her confidence grew. She found employment at a bank, securing a steady income, expanding her skill sets and laying the foundation for career growth. She fell in love. She became a mother.

Five years later, she has completely turned her life around.

"211 pulled me out of a dark place," Aubree states. "Each time I reached out, there was a patient person there to listen and figure out the next steps. They not only helped me – they helped me prepare a better world for my daughter to grow up in."

Now, Aubree has a new job, where she "can give back and help people, just like I was helped" – she is now an Eligibility Services Specialist at United Way of Connecticut.