

# A Year with the Family Peace Center

## ~A Survivors Testimony

This past year has been one of profound growth, healing, and rediscovering myself—one I did not walk alone. Family Peace Center walked beside me through one of the most painful and disorienting seasons of my life, when I felt stripped of my voice, my stability, and my sense of self. When I could not see my own strength, they held space for it until I could.

They reminded me to trust my intuition when I had learned to doubt it. They encouraged me to advocate for myself when I felt powerless, unheard, and overwhelmed. Through their domestic violence groups and unwavering support, I found the courage to stand firmly in who I am and reclaim my life.

Family Peace Center didn't just listen—they believed me. They empowered me. They reflected my worth back to me when I had forgotten it myself.

They cared for me in ways that went beyond survival. Through self-care services like acupuncture and a sensory deprivation tank—experiences I had never tried before—I was able to reconnect with my body, my breath, and my calm during a time when peace felt out of reach. Those moments helped me feel human again.

Their support showed up in countless, deeply meaningful ways. They provided gift cards to help get my pets registered and healthy, gas cards that helped me keep moving when I was starting from nothing, and donated Ring cameras that brought safety and peace of mind back into our home. I also received one-on-one support from a case manager who checked in consistently—encouraging me, grounding me, and gently helping me find my way when I felt overwhelmed or lost.

Family Peace Center also connected my family with vital community resources that changed my son's future. Through Comprehensive Community Solutions (CCS), he is now close to completing the program with OSHA certification, a carpenter's license, and a solar panel certification—opportunities that once felt unimaginable and are now opening real doors for his life after high school.

Their holiday party touched my family more than words can express. During a season of deep financial strain, they helped provide gifts for my children, lifting a weight from my heart I had been carrying silently. They brought joy, dignity, and light into a moment that could have been filled with fear and loss.

With their encouragement, I found the strength to confront a deeply narcissistic situation and reclaim my home for myself and my children. Their belief in me ignited something I didn't know I still had—the desire to want more, to do better, and to believe in a future beyond survival.

Step by step, I moved forward. I earned my CDL. I started a career as a bus driver. I rediscovered my sense of purpose. I am now even considering taking classes to become a diesel mechanic—expanding my opportunities and building long-term stability for my family.

Family Peace Center didn't just help me survive—they helped me heal, grow, and rebuild. They changed the trajectory of my family's future, and I will carry their compassion with me for the rest of my life.

Recently, I had a moment that stopped me in my tracks. While driving my bus at dusk, I watched a small family of deer—a doe, a fawn, and a young buck—prepare to cross the road. The sun was setting, the sky washed in soft sherbet orange, and everything felt still.

**by Heard and Held**

*Holding space for voices finding their way home*

And in that quiet moment, it finally hit me: *I am standing in a life I once prayed for.*

I lived for so long in fight-or-flight mode, always bracing for what might come next. Because of the support of Family Peace Center, I now feel safe enough to slow down. Safe enough to breathe. Safe enough to notice beauty, silence, and simplicity.

What once felt impossible is now my reality. Family Peace Center helped me believe that I was always capable of more. This next chapter of my life is about honoring peace—being present, grounded, and at ease with everything I fought so hard to build.

*~Offered under a pen name to honor confidentiality, lived experience, and the safety of those whose stories are still unfolding.*

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