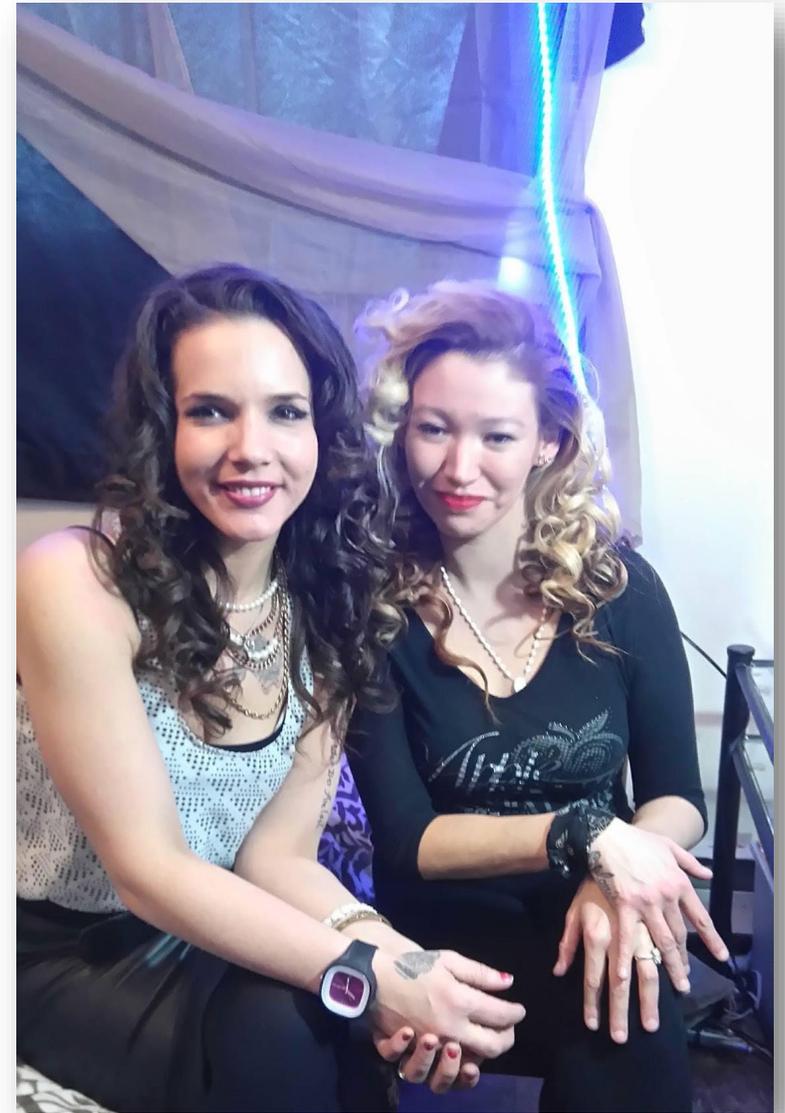
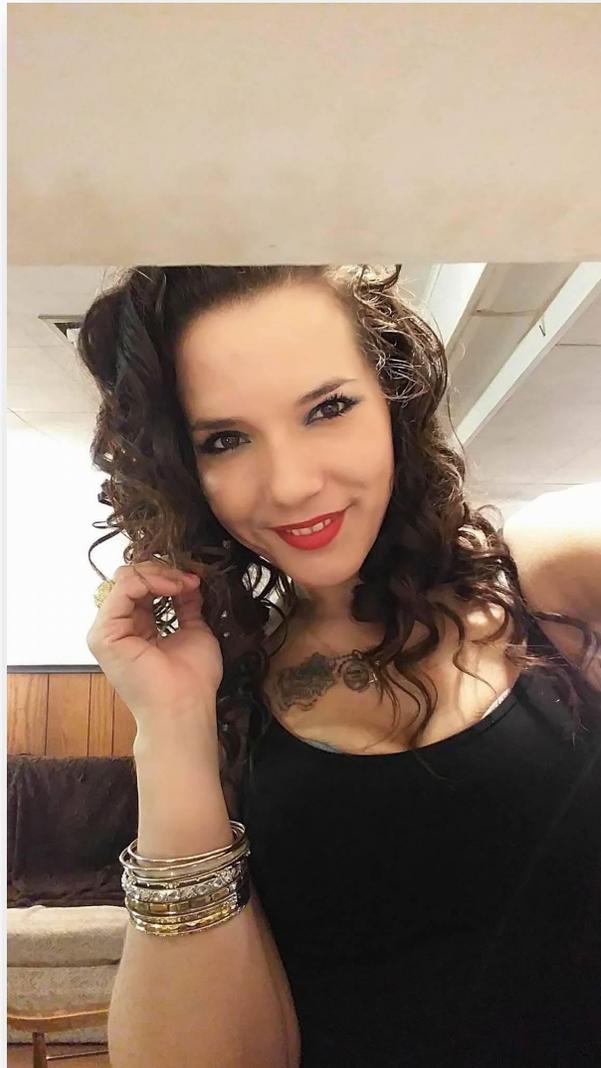




Patricia  
Whyte

*My Journey of  
Resilience*

How my life  
was before  
incarceration...



# How my life was before incarceration



## A Memory from Edmonton Institute for Women, 2018

*We had each other to lean on, but that doesn't mean our time in prison was easy, just, or humane.*



“The humans doing the convicting and sentencing inside this system, must understand that isolating someone away from their environment doesn't heal a person, but restricts them to survival mode. In this state, healing, moving forward, and contributing to society in a positive way, is a gamble that the policy makers are conducting without knowing it. With humans. Humans just like them. Only struggling. With the absence of dignity.”

“The entire prison system is completely dehumanizing. Prisoners are abused, locked in cages, herded like cattle, and counted like products. It is extremely rare for guards to treat prisoners with respect and dignity. Some of the non-security staff are friendly and reasonable, but the vast majority of guards are rude assholes. They demean and belittle us, make false accusations and ridiculous assumptions, blatantly lie and even plant contraband during searches, destroy our property, trash our rooms and living unit, steal our food, swear at us and call us names, steal our belongings, treat our families and friends like criminals, and often have no concern for completing necessary paperwork we require for attending programs, school, work, and parole.”

“Constantly strip-searching women, many of whom are survivors of childhood sexual abuse, incest, and rape, does not provide any respect or dignity. Strip searches are one of the most dehumanizing and undignified aspects of the system.”

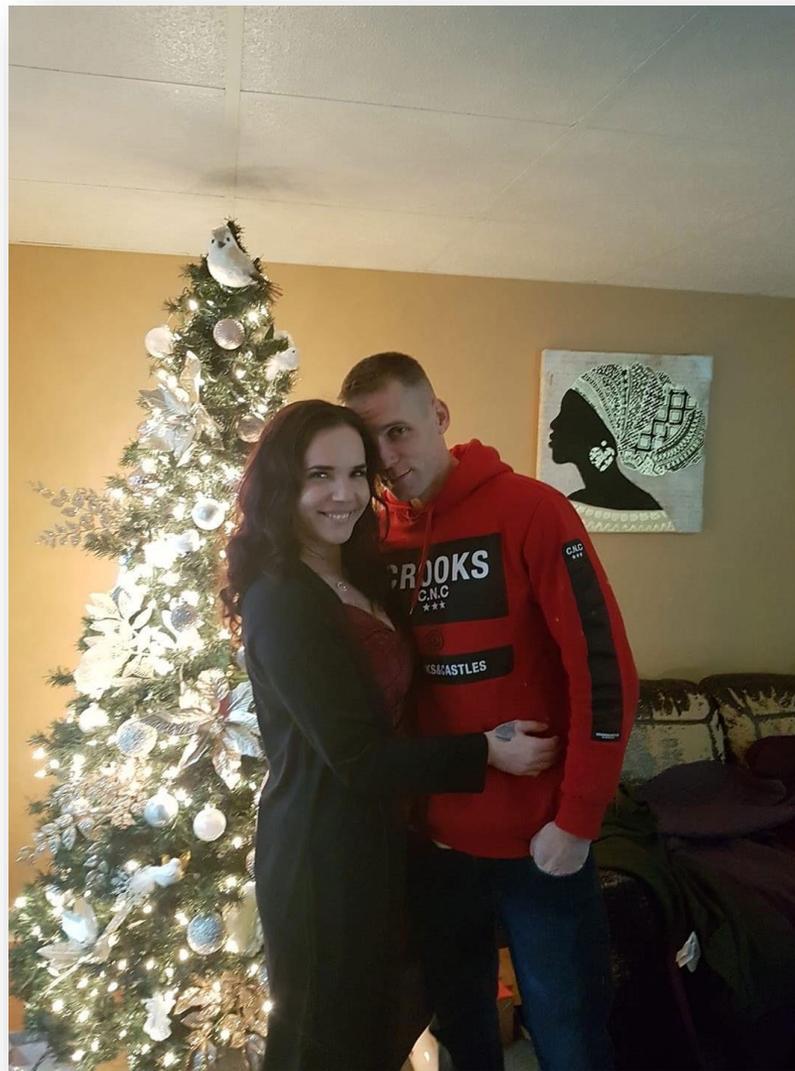
“Placing women with mental health issues in segregation certainly does not provide respect or dignity, nor does restraints and use of force by guards against women who have experienced male violence. Dry celling practices are particularly demeaning.”

Almost Exactly  
Three Years Ago  
Today, I was  
Finally Free.

*"Another day on the  
right side of the fence!  
Blessed."*



*I met the  
love of my  
life*



## Living at Holly House was Life-Changing

Holly House, the Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia's transition home, helps women to heal, grow, connect, and reintegrate post-incarceration.

*"It saved my life. I met the best people and lifelong friends. If I hadn't of went there, I wouldn't be with E Fry now. Who knows where I'd be probably dead."*



Those who  
box together,  
break barriers,  
heal, and grow  
together.



*I'm so thankful  
for my E Fry  
family- how we  
grow and  
support each  
other, every  
day.*



*To Montreal I went,  
with these fellow  
change makers—  
Since being released  
in 2019, my life has  
taken a complete  
180.*



With the Transformative Voice and Systems Change Committee, my work in advocacy and strategizing systemic change has flourished.



My life has changed dramatically, but recovery and reintegration post-incarceration is far from easy.

“Dignity, a needed ingredient for healing, is excruciatingly difficult to get back once gone. This in turn, affects the way a formally incarcerated human navigates their world. This navigation either takes away societal safety for the person who is released or makes the journey to success almost impossible to attain, or both. That person is a risk for poverty, recidivism, and relapse. Because why not? The person believes they are nothing and their dignity is gone. The media has demonized them and the stigmatic lens they are seen through demoralizes and debases them.”