Hello there! My name is Chloe Long and I am 21 years old. I am a lover of cats, pizza, movies, books, and most of all, helping others.

Now if you quickly scroll right now, you’re probably going to sigh and say this is too much to read and believe me I feel the same! Hahaha. So in a nutshell here’s my story: Lived in a Christian household but didn’t understand or recognize what God’s love meant for me till I was in my mid teens. God has helped me overcome anorexia, body dysmorphia, depression, anxiety, getting out of an abusive relationship, and is currently helping me with my family situation. He has helped me through speaking to me through mentors I’ve had over the years, including the wonderful Miss Tammy, friends, and even therapists, which inspired me to one day become a Child Psychologist, to be the help I need when I was younger. I have learned that God works on his own time and that makes me frustrated at times (a lot of the time actually), but I know it’s good thing because His way is always better than any other way I could possibly imagine. The Bible verse Isaiah 61:1-2 “The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor and the day of vengeance of our God,to comfort all who mourn,” has been placed on my heart to be a kind person to everyone no matter their status, race, beliefs, sexual orientation/gender identity, etc. and with it has brought me all of the various careers I have at this moment starting as a secretary for Blameless, a youth counselor at a foster home, a behavior technician for an ABA therapy company (helping children who have autism), and being a child care provider. I have a heart to help others and feel especially drawn towards youth and I can’t wait to see where God will take me next.

Now if that intrigued you to read a more in-depth testimony, keep reading. If you’re done, well let me just say that I welcome ya to our organization and hope that you’ll feel as drawn to helping others as we do!

Although I may be a very young woman in my 20s, it feels as though I’ve lived a very long life with everything God has done to bring me on this path of being called to help others.

I’ll admit that I have lived a very privileged life by being raised in a middle class suburb and never having to face any economic hardships of my own, so when I say that “growing up was tough,” I’m not considering the obvious privileges that I had. I say it because the unconditional love that’s needed in fulfilling healthy family relationships was lacking in my household.

Since my parents were considerably older than the parents of my friends, they raised me with lessons from when they were young, which brought up a bit of outdated values. A main one that unfortunately brought some damage onto me was that I (a young female) was put here to satisfy a man and that I would not be valued unless a man was by my side. I looked at myself and thought that I was worthless unless I had someone. It didn’t help that I was encouraged to lose weight since that would make me more desirable. A dark era occurred where I would try not to eat (purge if I did), eventually become so depressed that I would stay in bed for days, and never stop comparing myself to others; I was only 13. I eventually gained a boyfriend, but nothing good came of it. I was introduced to a whole new world of sexual gratification, but I knew deep down I wasn’t ready and I wasn’t comfortable with it either.

When I was sexually assaulted, that’s when thoughts of “this is what you deserve… this is your future…” plagued my mind and I felt trapped. It went on for three years because I was desperate to be valued; I thought this was my only option. My anorexia worsened and it got to a point that after my 15th birthday, I landed in the hospital because my organs were shutting down and I also had a pregnancy scare; not ideal for your 15th birthday I might add. It was there in that hospital bed, with an IV in both arms, that I started crying and wondering why did things get this far and feeling absolutely devastated that no matter how much I would message my boyfriend (at that time), he never once responded to me being in the hospital. I was furious, sorrowful, and numb all at once and I asked God why.

I remember eventually getting a gut feeling saying that now is the time to start over and that it wasn’t my fault. I didn't really know if God was truly real or not before then, but after that feeling, I knew what my new answer would be.

I was raised in a Christian household but I didn’t know what that meant till I was older, even after my hospital experience. I never knew that God loved me just the way I was until I was in my adolescence, despite going to church all of my life. It made me realize that saying you’re a Christian and living like a Christian were two very different things. After my time in the hospital, the more I went to youth groups, summer camps, and other fellowship activities, the more I was able to experience unconditional love. I thought recommitting to God every chance I could would keep my bases covered and that now that I no longer feel depressed or actually feel comfortable eating, nothing could go wrong, right?

A dear friend of mine started cutting herself about a few months after I was better (note how I did not say healed; I believe God is STILL healing me even though it’s been 5+ years. Everyday is a battle). I immediately thought to myself about the miracle healings Jesus had done in the Bible, so I called up the prayer team at my church and scheduled a meeting after my youth group ended so I could bring my friend and that she would be healed radically. I prayed everyday until then because I thought that THAT would do the trick. I brought her in, some people prayed over her, and presto! Nothing changed. Instead I felt embarrassed and angry that nothing had happened. Though it did not happen immediately, this experience humbled me into realizing and remembering that God works on his own time and no matter how much I could hope or pray, nothing can change God’s plan. What did happen however was a bitter season which included me falling out of the church and falling back into my depression. I knew I needed help.

I eventually headed into therapy, thanks to my father and his access to healthcare. My mother adamantly told me that mental illnesses don’t exist and that if I was actively experiencing something of that nature that it’s my fault and it’s because I wasn’t close enough to God. Despite my mother’s comments, I knew this was the right thing to do. Therapy definitely helped me. It helped me understand that it was okay to be angry sometimes, that it was okay to cry it all out, that it was okay to not be perfect or in my case to not fit into my mother’s standards.

About a year later I stopped going into therapy because I thought I was okay and could fight my own battles. Boy oh boy was I wrong.

What ultimately kept destroying me was this lesson about understanding that God knows better than I do. That his time and plans for me often look quite differently from mine. Through my abusive relationship, through my eating disorder, through my dear friend’s experience, through those that God had called to come home with Him and pass away from this planet, and through my newest challenge of living with an alcoholic brother who physically assaulted me and my parents who have become increasingly distant from the church, God knows what he’s doing even though some days I really question if He does.

This has brought me back to therapy and has humbled me yet again. It’s okay to ask for help and I am proud to call myself a mess. I am a work in progress, I am loved, and I am called to love others.

Through it all, I have come to understand that putting my complete faith and trust in God will not result in a walk in the park, more often than not a very bumpy ride, but still having the comfort that I’m not alone and that God still manages to answer our prayers gives me the courage to keep hanging on. Maybe it might not be in the way that we want, but God does hear and does answer.