



My name is Jonathan deFries. I was born in Durham, NC and raised in Mebane, NC near Chapel Hill. I was raised by loving Christian parents and grew up in a Southern Baptist Church accepting Jesus Christ in my life when I was twelve. Things came easy to me in school. I was placed in all the upper-level classes but I didn't apply myself. I participated a lot in youth groups at church, but outside of church things began to change. Right before high school, I was exposed to drinking and partying. I thought I found the greatest thing in the world. After that, partying became an every weekend event for me. The cigarettes followed, along with the weed, other drugs, girls, and all other parts of the lifestyle. I always had a job so I was always able to supply myself.

On November 18, 2005, I was the cause of a motor-vehicle accident in which I rear-ended a truck. In the bed of that truck was a passenger that was ejected and died two days later. After that I began using drugs heavily. I was always on something at school, work, and home. I attended Appalachian State University and did well but still held on to drugs. After spending some time at home recovering from a dog attack, I came to the conclusion that I would never be able to break the chains. My youth minister strangely happened to come by that night and that started a process that got me into Dare Challenge. It was by the grace of God he saw my despair and offered me a way out when I was certain there wasn't one.

When I got there I found the program difficult and wanted to leave but my Dad said no. It was rough but I stayed and let God do the work after getting a message from Him through another student. After about a month and a half, I surrendered it all and God poured over me. Walls of shame and hate were broken down, walls of defense, walls of unforgiveness, and walls of hardness began to crumble and God showed me my heart again. I am now in phase II of the program in Rehreshburg, PA and God continues to work in me by giving me a passion that I had in youth group.

Through Dare Challenge and all the activities we did, God began to fulfill what his word says in Matthew 12:34, "for out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh." He changed my heart and he changed me. I serve a mighty God who spoke the universe into existence and I want all to see the wonders he can do to those who seek him diligently.

Update: As of August 2010, Jonathan is a short month away from graduation at the Teen Challenge Training Center in Rehreshburg, PA and planning on getting back to college to finish his studies.