



## Journey: From Trauma to Triumph, Advocacy, and Music

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Tina's life began in an environment few can imagine, shaped by addiction, chaos, and uncertainty. Born to a father deeply entrenched in gang life and a mother battling addiction as a stripper and prostitute, her early years were marked by instability and danger. As a young child, Tina was kidnapped by her mother and taken to Mexico, where they hid during a bitter custody battle. The sights and experiences of her childhood were harrowing: from witnessing drug use in her home to surviving drive-by shootings while with her father, Tina was exposed to extreme trauma at an early age. By the time she was 8, she knew how to shoot up heroin, not from personal use, but simply from growing up surrounded by it.

At 8 years old, Tina was rescued from this environment by her grandparents, who moved her to Arkansas. Although she had escaped the immediate chaos, stability was still elusive. Over the next several years, she lived in many different households, moving from one family member or friend's home to another. By age 17, she was alone, navigating life without a consistent support system. Despite the trauma and heartbreak, Tina's spirit was not broken. She discovered early on that her experiences gave her a unique ability to relate to those who felt forgotten or invisible. Having watched her mother struggle with addiction for years—only to find sobriety finally, now clean for five years and dedicated to helping the homeless—Tina realized the transformative power of redemption. Her mother's recovery reinforced Tina's belief that no one is beyond hope, and this belief has been a driving force in her life. This personal understanding of the darkness that addiction can bring and the light that can emerge from it inspired Tina to take action in her community.

Over the years, she has become heavily involved in advocating for veterans and those battling mental health challenges, issues that are deeply personal to her. Having witnessed many veterans with addiction struggles and depression, she has seen firsthand how combat, trauma, and substance abuse intersect. Tina turned her passion for helping veterans into tangible action by founding Patriotic Clips, an organization that provides free haircuts to veterans in VA facilities. What began as a local initiative has now expanded to 40 states, offering not just a service but a moment of dignity, care, and human connection to those who have sacrificed so much for their country. Through Patriotic Clips, Tina has been able to use her platform to honor veterans, helping them feel seen, valued, and respected. For Tina, the power of using one's platform to make a difference is paramount. She strongly believes that the challenges she has faced in life were not meant to be hidden but rather shared with others who may be experiencing similar struggles. "Our stories are powerful," she says, "and by sharing them, we can inspire hope and healing in others." Tina's personal mission is to reach the broken, to help those who feel unseen and unheard find their voice, and to offer a path to recovery and redemption, just as she has witnessed in her own family.

Now partnering with Called2Duty, Tina is more determined than ever to use her platform to create real change. She understands the importance of giving a voice to those who have been silenced by addiction, mental health challenges, and trauma. "You can't make a difference if people don't feel heard," she says. This is why Tina's work is not just about offering services or assistance—it's about making connections and empowering others to rise above their circumstances. Whether through a haircut, a conversation, or a shared story,

Tina is committed to making sure that no one is left behind. In addition to her advocacy work, music has played a central role in Tina's life. She found that music allowed her to process her pain and turn it into something powerful and healing. As a result, she started the Tina Cossey Band, where she writes and performs songs inspired by her life's journey. Most of her music reflects the experiences she has been through, from the heartbreak of addiction and the struggle for survival to the moments of triumph and redemption. Through her music, Tina continues to share her story with a broader audience, knowing that her words and melodies may resonate with others fighting their own battles. For Tina, music is not just a creative outlet—it's another platform through which she can make a difference. "Music has a way of touching the soul," she says, "and it can speak to people in ways that words alone can't." Whether on stage with her band or in her advocacy work,

Tina's goal is always the same: to connect with people, to inspire change, and to remind them that no matter where they come from, they are not alone. Through her advocacy, music, and personal journey, Tina has shown that no matter how deep the struggle, you can always find a way to give back, make a difference, and inspire others. Her dream is simple yet profound: to use her platform to reach the broken, ensure that their voices are heard, and help heal the wounds of those who have suffered in silence. In Tina's world, there is no such thing as a hopeless case—only untapped potential waiting to be realized.