

To the person(s) who stumble upon this,

I'm here to tell you about my urgent necessity for truly affordable housing. We as Americans wish and strive for three of several things: Independence, Stability and the Pursuit of Happiness, although some may invoke the idea we as people with special needs only wish to take advantage of such things. In my personal experiences, the need to be independent is something I not only strive for, but live towards. We in the Key Clubhouse aspire to live just as every American wants to, just as we all strive to live the American Dream. However, for the large percentage of people living with mental illness, it has turned into a nightmare. Let it be known that as a full grown adult, born and raised in Florida, I have seen both ends of the class spectrum: from people having whatever their hearts' desire to digging up food from the trash. As a brilliant mind, I was raised as one who had everything, and just as I began to grow, the pressures of our future as well as real life struck me at one moment as I went down the rabbit hole. I was never really accepted in private nor public school and was viewed as "odd and eccentric, however kind-hearted."

A few days before my Graduation, my mom was pressuring me to walk just like everyone and graduate while I was at the precipice of failing. The girl I had fallen for at the time was talking to my best friend and I felt an incredible jealousy towards it. At that point, my life fell as I lashed out at my family without knowing. When they sent me to the hospital, I unleashed every bit of rage and emotion at my doctor, immediately being Baker Acted and labeled as mentally ill. From that day, I never looked at life the same. I was released after my graduation and never got to walk. The nightmares still affect me to this day. Never would I be able to trust anyone, man nor woman. It took a lot of my time and at that point I've tried everything from going to the doctors and taking their medication to therapy. In reality, a void was still empty and growing in my heart. It was difficult to get muster up the courage to get school and work done, now that I was labeled with something. My life, my dreams of joining the military, my freedom, all of it was gone.

I was at the lowest point of my life, and it didn't stop there. I heard of this place called the Key Clubhouse and wasn't too interested at first to go. I was self-conscious of my label, feeling like a freak. After a while, I mustered the courage to come here and day by day the void is being filled. The Key Clubhouse has given me the 2nd family I've longed for as well as friends I could cherish for life. I will never stray towards a negative path as long as I have the support group here and every day I am thankful for the opportunities present, however it's still

difficult to get a job. I make nothing currently and rely on my mother, my health insurance expires at the end of the year and I have almost no place to live. I' m 25 now and as a millennial, an American and someone with mental illness, it is still difficult to find a place to call my own.

I just wish one day I can live a full Independent life with the virtues I listed before, but it is more than a bit difficult. In my quest for Independence I urgently need affordable housing in my life. Words cannot express my feelings towards this. I suffer with a High Functioning Asperger' s and Depression. This is my story...

Andrew Molina