

# Me and My Journey



Hello, my name is Terry Grahl, and I'm the Founder and President of Enchanted Makeovers. I'm also blessed to be an award-winning interior decorator and have trained with the amazing Joanne Lenart-Weary, founder of [OneDayDecorating.com](http://OneDayDecorating.com).

"A polka-dotted pillow changed my life and my journey." When I tell people this, most will say, "what?" and then envision a pretty, feminine, polka-dotted pillow, trimmed with a big flowing ruffle. Well, that is exactly what my heart saw when I viewed the photo (below), but not exactly what my eyes saw the very day I took this photo.

You see, on January 15, 2007, I received a call from a gentleman asking for help. He was the black tie event coordinator of a local shelter. He said, "we would be so grateful even if you just painted one wall." Honestly, I was somewhat fearful of going. I really didn't know what to expect. I had never been to a shelter. I decided to make the



visit and, as with consultations with my private clients conducted with my decorating business, I needed to take

photos to assist with any necessary planning and visualization.

That is, if I would actually accept the volunteer job.



A week had passed since my first visit to the shelter. I hadn't given it much thought. All I know is that I had this lingering feeling of despair knowing the living conditions of the women and children. I began to reflect upon my own expectations for my life and the dreams of a child. I was a big dreamer; my mother instilled this upon me and my siblings. Had I forgotten my own dreams?

***"Once upon a time, there was a little girl who believed in the magic of her own imagination. Her parents were wise and caring adults who encouraged the little girl to follow her pixie-dusted dreams."***

My mother taught me that decorating didn't need to be motivated by money and that by relying on your own creativity and vision –

each home improvement was a selfless act of love. For my mother, making a home where her five children felt safe and where their spirits could soar was as important as keeping us fed and clothed.

How could I have forgotten my own big dreams, given my stable circumstances. But, more importantly, how could the women and children in the shelter realize that they were worthy of so much more? They too had dreams, but where could they be found again?

"The pictures, the pictures — I must look at these pictures." As I downloaded them to my computer, there it was, **THE picture**. There amongst black metal posts, a stained mattress and an unfinished sheet rock wall was an answer. There amongst the harshness was something dear to my heart: a polka dot, a safe pattern that has no sharp edges. There on that seemingly ordinary pillow was an answer. It was an answer from within me but not directly from me. When I saw the polka dots in that picture, I heard, "Trust me." From that moment, I knew I was prepared to do whatever I could to bring hope to those women and children.

Soon, I was back at the shelter presenting them with a design plan and a vision of what was to come. There was no turning back. I vowed to see this project to completion. With no funds and no volunteers lining up at the door, I had only to put my trust in God, keep the faith and, most importantly, I needed to step away from my ego. These women and children must not be disappointed again. As I presented the plan to the group of women and staff, I was overcome with emotion. I again was that vulnerable child wanting their acceptance. I realized the thin wall that separated our lives. We all deserved and desired the same things. It was simple, but seemingly so complicated in its simplicity. I would find a way to break through this thin wall.



Transforming the shelter took more than just my decorating skills. It required finding and organizing enthusiastic volunteers and donors nationwide to help me carry out my vision. Six months later, the makeover was complete and it was amazing. Even more amazing to me was that I had found my true calling. I wanted to use all of my talents and skills to provide refuge, solace, and hope to people in need.

As I continued accepting work from private clients, I felt something was missing. I had taken on additional shelter projects in 2007, but continued to hold onto the security of my paying clients. December, 2008, I decided to close my decorating business, Terry's Enchanted Cottage. I knew without a doubt that God had much bigger plans for my life, and He needed to use me for His glory. We made a deal with each other on that day. I asked that He would continue to provide the needs for my family (food and a roof over our heads) and His request was, "Glorify Me".

In January of 2009, Terry's Enchanted Cottage, established back in 2005, ultimately became Enchanted Makeovers, a non-profit organization that changes shelters for women and children into places of peace and possibilities.

Today, transforming the shelters that save people's lives into beautiful sanctuaries that heal their spirit is my vocation.

**I have a passion and belief in my cause which is something greater than myself.**

The answers are in and around us. Seek them out by joining me in bringing blessings to those in need.



Terry Grahl

Founder & President

"In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" Proverbs 3:6