

FOREWARD

I will never forget the shock, fear; grief and guilt that my wife and I felt the day we discovered our 14-year-old son had a drug problem. We were literally paralyzed by the circumstances into which we had suddenly been thrust. Nothing in our lives had prepared us for the journey we were about to take and no life experience from our past was of any help. This was new and dangerous territory about which we knew absolutely nothing...not surprising, since neither my wife nor I had ever even experimented with drugs. We were and are a typical middle class family; law abiding, tax-paying, hard-working, good citizens generally with very traditional moral and ethical values. Even though we knew generally that drugs had seriously invaded our culture, we mistakenly believed that it would never happen in our family. We thought it only happened in dysfunctional families....OTHER families.

Over the past ten years of this ordeal that we never expected to have to endure, we have become educated on the issue of substance abuse and addiction...not the typical institutional type educated but more “street smart” educated. Contributing to our learning experience were interactions with rehabilitation facilities, psychologists, parent support groups, other addicts (my son’s “friends”), literature, the internet and a host of other sources. As we progressed through the process of helping to facilitate our son’s recovery, I wrote a number of essays designed to clarify in my own mind the feelings, discoveries, milestones and conclusions I had reached as we continued to move forward. I am by no means an expert. I have no credentials. I am not a counselor, psychologist, clergyman or mentor. Nonetheless, many people have told me that my essays helped them along the way in their own journeys. It is because of that encouragement and a sincere desire to help other parents/relatives get through this adversity, that I have put this little book together.

I am happy to say that the efforts my wife and I made were worth it, as our son, now 24, has been drug-free for over three years, is a sophomore in college, and has at long last redirected his life in a positive way. God bless you and may you never lose hope.

John C
November, 2007