

Parent Story: Our 20 year Journey to Hope (continued):

He transferred from one college to another in his junior year. The problems seemed to get worse. He was arrested for battery, he wrecked a car, and things were getting out of control. He also never graduated.

He moved to Chicago and started using harder drugs. At one point, he called his brother to come and get him. His brother found him at his apartment in very bad shape as he had been cutting on himself. He talked about hating himself, I was more and more worried as to what he might do. I decided to pick him up and he was willing to go to a rehab in another state.

He decided to move there and after rehab he got a job through a friend and that's the only reason he was able to keep it. He was generally not reliable. He would regularly miss work, and couldn't make his rent. He'd call me and ask for money and I paid his rent many times. I bought him food, I just didn't know what else to do. Sometimes he seemed like he was fine and I always thought, ok, he's doing good. However, it never lasted. During these years he went to another rehab but he just kept falling back to his old ways. He was arrested three times for DUI.

In 2014 he came back to the area where I lived and he moved in with a girlfriend. He was around a lot and I knew he was doing "something," he was very dark, angry, hard to talk to. I learned that he started using Meth along with his girlfriend. These were VERY unstable times, many ups and downs. He'd want to come stay with me, saying he wanted to get "well," then he'd go back to the same old thing. It was around this time, in early 2017, I came to PAL.

I did not want to keep "helping" him stay an addict. I started to learn healthier ways to respond. This last year was an up and down struggle. But I believe PAL played a key part in my healing. By the grace of God he reached out to his longtime "brothers from another mother" (people in recovery) and the whole thing just came together. I don't know if I'll ever lose that fear, waiting for things to crash and burn, when will the other shoe drop??? But right now, things are great for him and that's all I can ask and I am working on myself.

What a loooooooooooooong journey it has been, (20 years) and no I wouldn't wish it on anyone. But, it does show that the length of the addiction doesn't mean certain doom.

PAL was there when I needed someone and I swear it was the beginning of this transformation. I think whatever changed for me sent ripples out to Ian and gave him that final push to change. Many other things came into play and I don't want to minimize those events. Ian has come to a strong desire to be clean and sober. Thanks for all you do.

I attended Ian's graduation from Navy boot camp today!

~ Grateful PAL Mom