



Newsletter August 2018

Still Missing After Two Years – Read more

When we didn't hear from her, we were on the computer looking up court records to see if she was arrested again. Our life was consumed with the "what ifs" of life which made us feel all the more hopeless. We had a wonderful son who was responsible and loved his family. We spent so much time worrying about our daughter that we overlooked him and the many blessings we had. That's another tragic consequence of addiction in families. The ones who are healthy and surrounding us with love get overlooked or ignored. Addiction affects everyone in the family – not just the addict. It was affecting our marriage, and we desperately needed help.

Our daughter finally admitted she needed help after being arrested for a second time on drug related charges and agreed to go into rehab. That's where we discovered PAL meetings. The meetings were free – a support group of parents helping other parents with an addicted adult child. At that time, there were no PAL meetings in our town, so we would drive almost 90 miles one way every week to attend meetings– the meetings were that good! PAL offered us education, prayer, hope, and encouragement through every trial we were experiencing with our daughter. We felt loved and accepted. We realized there were other parents going through the same pain we were, and for the first time, we realized we were not alone. It was in a PAL meeting that we learned about false guilt and that we didn't cause our daughter to use drugs. We learned we can have great influence over our children but we cannot have ultimate control. That was a hard lesson for us to learn because our daughter's life was so out of control.

We also learned through PAL that the hope for our daughter would come from the changes we would make in how we helped her. So, we stopped giving her money, and paying her debts. We also learned how to set healthy boundaries with her. Changes didn't happen overnight for her or for us. It took us a while to be willing to let go and not be fearful that by doing so, something awful would happen that we could have prevented. Thank goodness PAL helped us realize that we could not control her addiction nor should we try to control the consequences.

We are still on our journey, but by educating ourselves we started to feel hopeful rather than hopeless. Through PAL, we are in a much healthier place emotionally, physically, and spiritually. We started going on vacations again – something we didn't feel we could do because we felt compelled to be available to our daughter every moment whether or not she asked us to do so.

There have been years of sobriety for our daughter, but also relapses. Currently, we have lost contact with our daughter for over two years, and it has been difficult and sometimes we are very sad not knowing where or when we may hear from her, but we still have hope. Our PAL "family" is the one constant, positive support we can rely upon to get us through wherever the journey takes us.