

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

Drugs and alcohol have been a part of my existence for over two-thirds of my life. In a sense, it's all I really know. ~~It was~~ like so many, my story is one of progression. At a young age it started with alcohol and weed. At that point it was a social thing, a way for me to come out of my own skin and feel accepted by my peers. I never thought it was a problem or affected my life negatively. Looking back now I see that I was wrong. As time went on ~~and~~ I got introduced to opiates. It didn't take long for me to get the feeling that something wasn't right and that I might have a problem. My life in so many ways was being brought down by this drug, but I had no idea what addiction actually was. For a while, somehow I was able

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to keep myself together and be a functioning member of society. A few years later I was introduced to heroin, a drug I swore that I would never do. The next thing I knew I started injecting it, something else I always swore I would never do. That is when I crossed that line in addiction where there is no going back. Absolutely nothing in my life has ever been the same since. Everything spiraled out of control very quickly. I have attempted numerous times to get clean myself by detoxes, rehabs, or doctors with no success. Each time ending up with criminal charges, becoming homeless, ~~and~~ suicidal.

This was a very dark time in my life. ~~When~~ I would pray every night that I wouldn't wake up the next day or that the next day I did would pass

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me ~~and~~ ^{under} I finally got to a point where I thought I couldn't take this misery anymore and tried to take my own life.

This is when Heroin Kills NJ intervened in my life. Tom and a few volunteers came and visited me in the hospital, more than once. They sat and talked with me for quite a while about what they do, what they can do for me, and most importantly just let me know that they are there for me if I need the help. Unfortunately, I wasn't ready. I still thought I could beat this my way. A few detoxes and criminal charges later, I was done and wanted help. ~~For~~ ~~known~~ ~~save~~ ~~the~~ ~~extra~~ Just from that bit of time that Heroin Kills spent with me months earlier, I know

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who to call. They were people who I felt understood me and truly ~~did~~ wanted to help me. Within twenty-four hours they had me at our detox and in-patient rehab. These few weeks away gave me some time to clear my head and see that I don't want to die anymore; that I want to live. I can see now, regardless of those awful decisions and actions I made in my addiction, that I deserve to live, be the father, son, and brother I want to be.

Heroin Kills ~~has~~ didn't stop being a part of my recovery just because they got me into rehab. They helped me with my after care and are there for me whenever I need anything, even if it's just to talk and be around positive ~~people~~

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The greatest thing Heroin Kills has done for me is to be a tremendous support and help to my family. We addicts often forget that our family suffers more from this disease than we do. They have given my family advice, ~~and~~ education on addiction, support, prayer, and even a shoulder to cry on. Now my family has become very involved with volunteering at Heroin Kills anyway they can. I am very grateful for this today because I know it is helping them deal with the effects of my disease in their and my life.

Even though I may still be relatively new in my recovery journey, I owe a great deal to the wonderful wonderful people of Heroin Kills. I

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will never be able to show how truly grateful I am for everything they do. ~~Getting~~ Getting the help I needed in New Jersey has always been so difficult. No funding, multiple calls with rehabs, ~~and~~ ^{getting} turned down because no one has beds available are only of the few obstacles. ~~Heroin~~ Heroin Kills made the whole process so easy and handled everything for me. They gave me the chance to live and I would not be sitting here writing this today if they hadn't.

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