

## Tammy's Story

My (very) shortened version of HOPE. For 15 years my son was an addict. It started with alcohol and weed, progressed to pills, and finally to heroin. It went down the predicted path- homelessness, psych institutions, jail, and finally (almost) death. I say that because on Feb 29th my son overdosed and died. They threw him out of the car and he was left outside for dead on the front lawn. I brought him back life with naloxone that I received in a TOPAC training class. It was a class I signed up for thanks to Patti DiRenzo and Ed Brazell I found in the Facebook group Addiction Really. I believe on the ambulance he was given another injection of Narcan but the time went so fast, I can't really be sure, and he isn't sure either.

Within 90 minutes at the hospital he was screaming "I just want to leave and go get high" because he was in full withdrawal and there was nothing the hospital would do but release him. It literally brought me to my knees on the floor in sobs. I knew my son would leave and subsequently overdose again, probably that same night, and die.

I sucked up enough breath somehow before he left the hospital to call the cops and his parole officer and tell them both he had heroin on him. He was arrested outside the hospital and put in jail. He HATED ME. I mean HATED for weeks. I pretty much stalked his parole officer and demanded rehab at his gagnon 1 hearing. The parole officer kept telling me it never worked before. I said some things that I'm not proud of and probably could have gotten me a cell next to him.

Anyway he got court ordered rehab. **A whole 17 days** is what they would pay for here in PA and is currently in a Scholar-shipped 6 month program in Florida (founded by 2 other collaborative recovery groups on Facebook, Magnolia New Beginnings, and New Hope Family Addiction Support Group, and provided by Ebb Tide TC of the Palm Beaches). That's where he's at today. And for today he is clean and for that I am grateful. Today he thanks me for the "opportunity", but it wasn't always like that. There are many many challenges ahead. Whatever I can do to help, make my voice heard, I want to do- so many suffer in silence and alone and lost as I did for so many years. Even family turns their back.

Where there is breath, there is HOPE - NEVER give up, and ALWAYS carry NARCAN!