

For Families & Loved Ones looking for advice:

Hey Cor,

You asked me if I had some advice for a family member that reached out about a brother addicted to pills who had just left the hospital and they were wondering what, as family members, they could do.

I will share what I know from my own experience.

1. As much as I wanted to, I could never "fix" your struggles with drugs and alcohol. I had to learn to work only on me and let go of you!
2. What I learned is that I had to set strong boundaries about my decision to not let anyone (even my own son) into my life if they were using drugs and alcohol.
3. I had to learn to cut off all communication with you and what I said every time you called was "I love you son, call me when your clean/sober"
4. I had to learn to let go of worrying about what you were doing with your life. I was always so busy on your path (mostly stepping in and fixing your problems for you) that I lost sight of my own path and I allowed the chaos of your world to cause ME pain and suffering.
5. I encouraged everyone I knew to stop communicating with you and stop helping in any way shape or form.
6. I learned I should NEVER do anything for anyone that they can and should do for themselves. This means I had to let you feel the pain of your own decisions and have your own consequences.
7. I would love, love, love you in my mind and in my heart but I had to stop being involved in your drug/alcohol addicted world. (That included giving you money, cars, phones, etc)
8. The only way you became self-sufficient and learned to live through the hard times was when I got out of your way and you figured it out on your own.
9. I, as your parent, truly believed I was just loving you, protecting you and helping you to be ok. What I didn't realize is that I WAS LOVING YOU TO DEATH.
10. I had to learn a new way to love you, which included learning that I could be loved and not be perfect.

The information I could share with a family is endless. These are the first 10 items that came to my mind and, ironically, they are the ones I am sure to address when working with families that reach out to me for help.

Let your friend know I would be happy to talk to them (and their whole family for that matter) if they are interested. They can email me anytime at iaokliebner@gmail.com

Hope that helps!

Love Mom