

THE LIFELINE

September 2021 - Hope, Help & Healing for Everyone Affected by Addiction.

A JEW & A MUSLIM RECOVER TOGETHER: FADI'S STORY

They say Jews and Muslims are enemies, but in my experience we are family.

My name is Fadi. I was born in Beirut. My parents moved to Canada during the Lebanese Civil War in 1980. I was 5 years old at the time.

No one in my family ever spoke about their experiences in Lebanon and I have no memories of ever living there. Years later, I found out why. The horrors of the war were deeply traumatic and affected my parents, my siblings, and I throughout our lives.

Unlike most Lebanese, I was very quiet. I was a nerd, studious and dorky. This led to merciless bullying throughout elementary school.

In High School, I discovered cocaine. Initially, I did it to try and impress girls at a party, but I got hooked fast. And it quickly ruined my life.

Every spare moment, I was trying to make money to get another fix. My life revolved around cocaine. Somehow, I got through college despite my obvious drug addiction.

I first sought help while studying for my master's. I had destroyed every relationship I had. My Dad had thrown me out of the home, I hadn't had a girlfriend in years, and my roommate moved out.

The help I received at the time was very clinical. I sobered up, but two weeks later I crashed once again.

This was a pattern that kept repeating itself. I would work, sleep, and use cocaine for months at a time, get help, sober up for a couple of weeks, and fall off the wagon.

Twelve years ago, I met an angel. My wife. While we were dating, she introduced me to Chabad Lifeline. She brought me to the front door and waited outside as I went in.

My first thought was, "this place isn't clinical. It's a home. I must be at the wrong address!"

Then I was warmly welcomed by a Jewish rabbi (!) and handed a coffee and peanut butter sandwich.



It was so radically different than anything I had ever experienced from recovery centres that I was caught completely off guard.

I was given a form to fill out before meeting with Ruth, the intake counsellor. Instead of asking only about my addiction, it was detailed. That too blew me away. They wanted to know about all my habits, my lifestyle, and then some.

My intake experience was amazing. I was already starting to realize things about myself that I hadn't thought about ever.

That was the beginning of my recovery which is still undergoing. I was given a strict program to follow, and sent to attend meetings.

As part of these meetings, you're supposed to find a mentor/sponsor. Would you believe that my sponsor is an observant Jew?

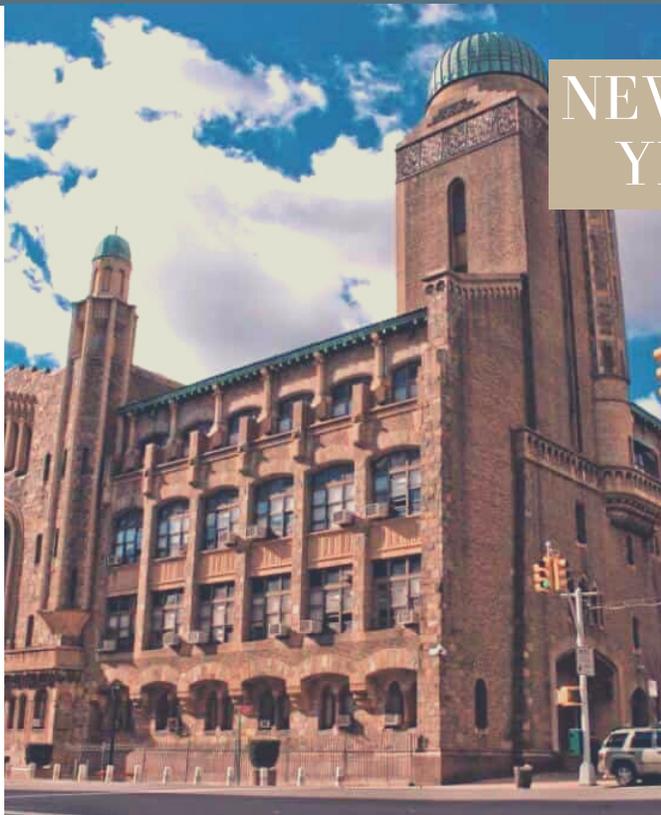
You may find this odd, but it's come full circle. Now I sponsor a young Jewish man!

Chabad Lifeline saved my life. They allowed me to recover, get married, and make friends with people of all races and backgrounds.

Like I said at the start, Jews and Muslims are not enemies. At Chabad Lifeline, we are family.

Please note: the names and certain identifying information about the person this happened to have been changed to protect the anonymity of those involved. Regardless of your background, if you are affected by addiction, please reach out to us at 514-738-7700 or email us info@chabadlifeline.com.

info@ChabadLifeline.com. 514-738-7700. www.ChabadLifeline.com

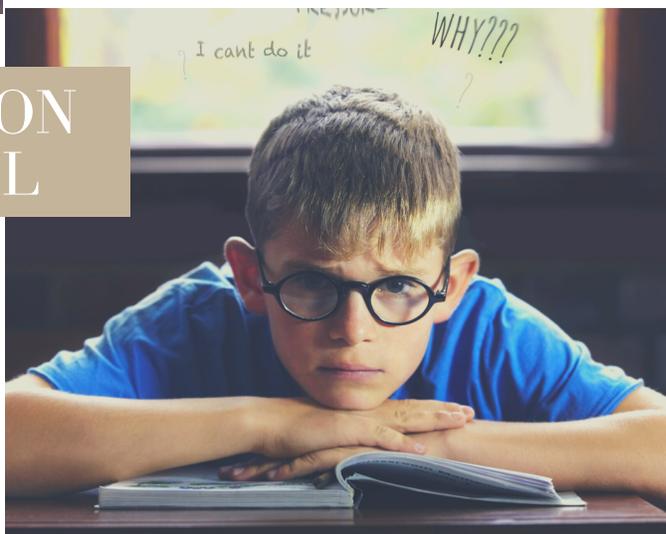


NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

This year, Chabad Lifeline began a new partnership with YU, bringing in Shua Naparstek to conduct his internship under our Clinical Director and Family Counsellor, Karen Bresinger. After training interns for McGill University over the last 10 years, we've grown internationally, meeting the standards of excellence and professionalism for a Master's Program demanded by the Wurzweiler School of Social Work.

NEW COLLABORATION WITH LDMONTREAL

Our Director Rabbi Benyamin Bresinger will be delivering a webinar on Learning Disabilities and Addiction for LDMontreal, an organization providing excellent support for people with learning disabilities



SUPPORTING RECOVERY FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

Our Director Rabbi Benyamin Bresinger was recently interviewed by the Concordia Link regarding the importance of Counsellors receiving proper training to be able to offer services to get to the root of students' addictions..