

THE LIFELINE

July 2020 - Hope, Help & Healing for Everyone Affected by Addiction.

WHY I GAVE MY SON MY SEDATIVES: ART'S STORY

I love my son more than anything in the world. My little boy.

Seven years ago, I wasn't sleeping at night. My days were filled with angst. I had several panic attacks, and my nights were spent lying awake in terror.

I was 81 years old and my son had spent our life savings on his drugs.

My wife and I immigrated to Canada 25 years ago. Our son, 22 years old at the time, had been studying abroad and decided to settle in Montreal. He invited us to join him.

We arrived, and never really picked up the culture, the French, or the English. We lived in our little bubble, our lives revolving around our son and our work.

My wife and I worked hard. Saved our money for retirement. Lived happy, healthy, simple lives.

I don't remember how or when it started, but our son began using drugs. When we first found out he said he only did it once and would never do it again.

Then he began borrowing money from us. Small amounts at first, then larger. He got fired from his job about 15 years ago, which we would later find out was because of drugs.

He started asking us for rent money, and we begged him to move in with us because we wanted to take care of him. He was going through such a hard time.

We thought things would get better when he moved back into our apartment, but they got a lot worse. We caught him with drugs. I told him, "we sacrificed our lives for you, but now we don't recognize you anymore!"

He stole from us, borrowed all our savings, and got in trouble with the police.

Six years ago, I nearly suffered a nervous breakdown. The stress of dealing with my son kept me awake all night.

My doctor prescribed a sedative to calm me down and help me sleep. It worked, and I had two nights of bliss.

When my son heard about the medication, he told me that he also wasn't sleeping at night. That he was under tremendous stress.

He told me that he was in big trouble with loan sharks.

My son is my whole world. When he begged me for one of my pills, I gave it to him. I didn't want him to suffer.

He begged me every day for more pills until I had no more left and was back to staying awake all night. I also borrowed money to pay his loan shark.



When the medication ran out, I lied for him. I went to my doctor, and got more. A stronger dosage.

Rock bottom was when he told us that he needed more money to pay the loan shark again.

My wife called Chabad Lifeline. She got the number from a friend they had helped. When she called, she was worried about our son and wanted to get him urgent help. She spoke with Karen* and we met her that afternoon.

We joined Karen's group and worked intensely with her for many months. She gave us so much support and clarity. We realized that our son had been manipulating us and robbing us physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

That began our path to healing. We changed our behaviours and enforced consequences on our son. Our entire relationship with our son changed.

And the best news is that he finally reached out for real help. We sent him to Chabad Lifeline, and thank goodness he's started his recovery process.

---*Karen is Chabad Lifeline's Clinical Director and Family Counsellor. Karen works individually and in groups with families suffering the debilitating impacts of addiction on the family unit by one of their members, whether a husband, wife, child or parent.

Although a family member may call for help to take care of an immediate emergency, the solution to the family's problems often lies in changing family dynamics that have enabled the addict to continue their injurious behaviour.

To protect the anonymity of those involved in this true account, some details have been changed.

If this account speaks to you, and you are in a similar situation, you don't have to be alone. We see addiction as a family disease and offer immediate help to anyone affected. Please call us at 514-738-7700.

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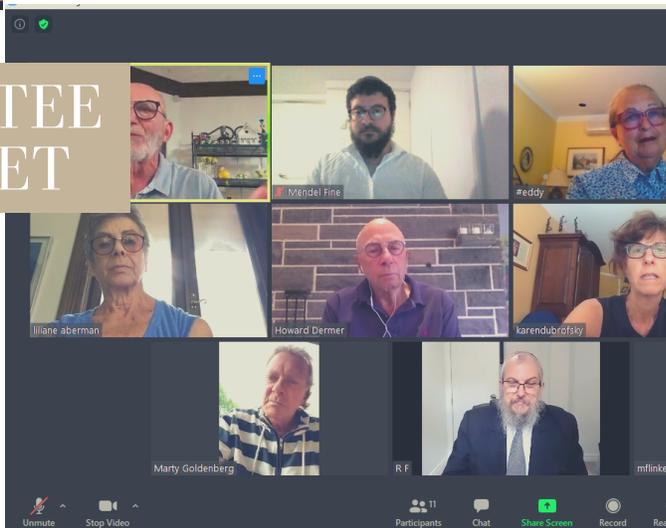
NEW EDUCATIONAL VIDEO SERIES ON THE FAMILY DYNAMIC

In a two part video series, Chabad Lifeline's Clinical Director and Family Counsellor Karen Bresinger explains how family members react when chaos and dysfunction erupts due to an addiction. The first video can be seen at <https://youtu.be/NGWzH2V2Ys0> and the second video of the series at <https://youtu.be/HWgLh167UeA>.



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HOLDS SPECIAL MEET

Recently, an emergency meeting of our Executive Committee was called to discuss our essential raffle. Remarkably, every member pledged to raise more funds in this difficult year!



AWARENESS & EDUCATION AT COLLEGE CDI

We recently spoke to students at College CDI about addiction, treatment plans that work, and our view on process vs substance addiction. Educator Marguerita Drayton left a wonderful testimonial on our website.

