

How One Man's Plea for Happiness Transformed a Family

Everyone else had gone into town, leaving me home alone in the ranch house. "Now is my chance," I thought. "This time I'm going to push the limit and really get high."

My friends and partners in the drug smuggling business had been worried about me. Sure, we were all users, but I had taken it to a whole new level, and my body and mind were showing the effects. Thin and drawn, scars from needles dotted my tattooed arms. Hair down to the middle of my back, and an earring highlighted the dark circles around my glazed eyes sunken into my callous face. No one would have guessed that I had once been a robust college football player.

I was slowly killing myself and didn't know it. Or maybe I did. I'd already been snorting coke, smoking weed and drinking all day long. That was pretty much my existence. I lived to get high. But all the snorting, smoking and drinking that day hadn't given me enough, and I needed more. Now I would shoot the cocaine straight into my veins, what we called mainlining.

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To ensure I would get extra high, I doubled my normal portion. When I shot it up, however, the needle missed my vein, and I didn't realize it. "Wow," I thought. "I didn't feel a thing." So, I doubled that amount and missed the vein again and didn't know it. Still feeling nothing and growing frustrated, I did something only a foolish addict would do. I doubled the portion a third time. This time I hit the vein, sending a lethal amount of pure cocaine directly into my bloodstream.

Almost instantly, my heart exploded into a rush of rapid, violent palpitations constricting my chest, causing labored breathing, trembling and profuse sweating. As my body collapsed to the floor, I cried, "I'm dying. I'm dying."

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Then, something strange happened.

Something surreal.

In those split seconds hovering between life and death, it was as if time stood still. I was acutely aware. My mind was clear, clear enough to speak to my Creator, whoever it was. "God," I pleaded, "don't let me die until I find out what happiness is."

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