

Substance Abuse – Drew Reed & Jennifer Matesa
TRANSCRIPT

Drew: I was 23 years old and I was in a motorcycle accident and that day changed my life forever.

Jennifer: 20 years ago I had a very long, difficult childbirth and my body just broke down.

Drew: With those injuries came pain. So they prescribed prescription pain medication to help with the pain.

Jennifer: I would get headaches that would leave me throwing up for two days and I'd become terrified of the pain. Within a year of starting pain treatment, I was on pure Hydrocodone, Morphine, and then my doctor added Fentanyl which is the strongest pain killer known to man.

Drew: Before I knew it, my 30-day prescription was out in seven days.

Jennifer: My addiction took hold.

Drew: I made the inevitable switch to Heroin. That's when my life truly truly became unmanageable.

Jennifer: If I had any amount of emotional pain, I'd take drugs. I took drugs when I was happy because it was part of the celebration. Because I was numbing my feelings, I wasn't present to my life or my son.

Drew: As a paramedic, I've literally come on the scene and saw a needle still in a guy's arm and he's unresponsive, not breathing. Seeing that still wasn't enough to deter me from using.

Jennifer: My dad was diagnosed with Cancer. They prescribed him Fentanyl and he was getting one quarter of the medication that my doctor was prescribing me for a migraine. I definitely had a problem.

Drew: I got high one day, so I went up in the mountains. I had a loaded gun with me and I sat for about two hours with the gun loaded to my head. I didn't want to live one more second in the Hell that I was in. That was my rock bottom.

Jennifer: I didn't know who to tell so I found a doctor I could tell.

Drew: I decided to move to a recovery house. I moved eight and a half hours away from my children. It was tough to be away from them but that's a drop in the bucket compared to having the rest of my life clean and sober with my children.

Jennifer: By the end of two months I was off pain killers. It was one of the hardest things I've ever done.

Drew: If I can recover from being seconds away from taking my own life, anybody can recover from this disease.

Jennifer: What recovery is, is learning how to do life while you're free. It's learning how to be free.

Drew: My names' Drew Reed. I'm a recovering drug addict. I am working towards becoming a certified Recovery Specialist.

Jennifer: I'm Jennifer Matesa. I think essentially addiction is about self-abandonment and I think recovery is about reclamation of the self. We actually uncover what was already there and beautiful. That's what I try to do in recovery.