

Worrying about our own well-being is challenging enough. Worrying about the well-being of family members and close friends is even more stressful. Sadly, this type of worrying falls into the category of things that are often out of our control. While we can help others out, as best we can and should, at the end of the day, we have no control over what another person chooses to do with their life. Be it a spouse, child, parent or close friend, THEIR personal choices, regardless of how self-destructive they are, are for the most part, out of our own control.

Interventions to compel someone to seek help are only effective if that person truly WANTS to get better. Even then, overcoming addictions are extremely difficult. Unfortunately, there is no perfect formula for preventing a person from becoming their own worst enemy. There are countless examples of children being raised in the same household with identical sets of rules, developing different mindsets with completely different outcomes. While some family members may be talkative and outgoing, others may be quieter and more reserved. Some would never even consider using drugs, while another member might choose to endanger their well-being by experimenting with drug use to help them cope with whatever challenges life throws at them.

The Tyber Lustig Foundation wishes it had a secret formula to share, to prevent drug use in the first place. Obviously, that is not the case. What we attempt to do is to raise the questions that are in desperate need of answers.

While there is no shortage of worries a person can have when it comes to family members, this content piece is going to focus on being a parent of a child with drug issues. A common mistake a parent can make is to assume or say, "My child would never do drugs!" Just because your child is on the honor roll at school, a top athlete or displaying talent in other areas, does not make them immune to the evils of drug abuse. As we have noted in our content on Gullibility, challenge your thought process. Assume nothing. Question everything. Every parent that has dealt with their child's drug or alcohol issues regrets not being more aware of the risks of addiction earlier. That begs the question even if a parent was proactive, "What does a parent do about it?"

Most therapeutic rhetoric is centered around the parent in some capacity being an ENABLER and to stop whatever it is that you have been doing to enable your child's behavior. While this might be a common textbook recommendation, in real life, it is easier said than done.

The parents of our foundation's namesake (Tyber Lustig) were often faced with this dilemma. They tried their best to provide Tyber with the happiest life possible despite seeing concerns in his early high school years. What was the alternative? Punishing him by making his life less happy and more stressful? As he got older, despite glimmers of hope that he had found himself, troubling signs still appeared. There is no shortage of tough love advocates that would have emphatically insisted they stop making his life so easy and throw him on the street to fend for himself. That will straighten him out.



While some thought was given to utilizing this approach, Tyber's parents chose to continue to do everything they could to help him free himself of self-medicating his sorrows away anytime life became overwhelming for him. They loved him unconditionally; he was consistently seeing a therapist and completed a stay in a drug rehab facility. The Thanksgiving shortly after his 30th birthday, Tyber was showing signs he was finally on the right path.

Tragically, despite all his family's love and support, Tyber chose to take a pill to calm himself down over an argument he was having with his girlfriend. Unbeknownst to him, that tiny little pill was laced with Fentanyl, and it abruptly ended his life.

Under any circumstances, dealing with the death of a child is beyond anyone's comprehension unless you have been unfortunate to experience it yourself. The grieving is often unbearable and never ending. On a daily basis, you are constantly asking the question, "What could I have done to prevent this?" While the answer is most often unanswerable, it still doesn't ease the pain. In the case of Tyber, what if his parents had taken the tough love approach and forced him to figure out his struggles on his own and fend for himself? Maybe that would have worked and maybe not. No one will ever know the answer.

What we do know is that whatever unimaginable grief Tyber's family is experiencing, one could only imagine how much more devastating it would be if they did abandon him, and he died the same way. Not that it would be any less painful, but at least Tyber's family can try to cope knowing that THEY did everything they could to help him cope with his struggles in living life. His parents devoted themselves to giving Tyber the best childhood imaginable. While parents have the luxury of controlling a child's early years, that level of control diminishes rapidly as time goes by.

Once again, The Tyber Lustig Foundation wants to reiterate that there is not a one size fits all blueprint for building a happy life for yourself, let alone for your child. Our mission is to provide resources to help people cope with their journey to lead a happy life. This journey is often hard enough even without drugs as a crutch. For this reason, our foundation is going to place particular effort into Drug PREHAB to help discourage drug use in the first place.

