



# Parents Empowering Parents

Providing education,  
innovative programming,  
support and hope for individuals  
or families dealing with or  
concerned about substance  
abuse/addiction.

Spring 2015

## A Parent's Letter to Her Son

Dear Son:

We started this journey 12 years ago. Sometimes I wonder how we have survived the trip. I prefer not to dwell on where it will ultimately take us.

You were a young man searching for something; maybe just a place to be content. You have ended up battling an addiction that consumes your life.

Many times you have walked away, vowing never to go back. You were clean and sober for 2 years. You had a great job, car, good friends. You let it all slip away.

There have been many bottoms. Last fall you overdosed. Do you understand? You died. Some stranger cared enough to bring you back, to give you another chance. I am not sure how much farther you can go but you keep finding new depths of despair.

You live on the precipice of the law. I am sure you have broken the law. I am certain that it is only a matter of time before you really cross that line.

Even so, I am grateful that you are still with us. I wonder every day for how long. You stayed with us for a while but prefer to be almost anywhere else. You left the house 2 weeks ago. I know you have been back when we are not home. Last time you took your tent and sleeping bags. Does that mean you are homeless?

It's okay really. I can't live the chaos that is your life so I have to let you go. I wonder where you are and if you are okay.

I stopped asking why a long time ago. My stone heart is what keeps me sane. That and hope. It is like watching someone hanging on the edge of a 20 storey building - barely hanging on, slipping away ever so slightly every day. There is a ladder within reach.

I actually sleep pretty well. I have worked so hard to try to help you but it won't ever matter until it matters to you. I leave it in God's hands.

I am so very sad.

And I pray.

Visit  
[www.pepsociety.com](http://www.pepsociety.com)  
for upcoming events  
and collaborations  
with community  
partners

# “change begins with me”

by Lerena Greig



**A**t Parents Empowering Parents meetings, the meeting is ended with all participants stating “change begins with me”. We are powerless to change others and empowered when we change ourselves. As a parent it is not unusual to have dreams and hopes for your child and a desire to help them. When does that help become a hindrance, a form of enabling instead of helping? Brene Brown, author of *Daring Greatly* states “I used to struggle with letting go and allowing my children to find their own way, but something that I learned in the research

dramatically changed my perspective and I no longer see rescuing and intervening as unhelpful, I now think of it as **dangerous**”. Self-proclaimed experts have written many books on the do’s and don’t’s of parenting. Are we focused more on perfecting versus engaging and loving with vulnerability? Do we recognize that the best learning moments may happen in those imperfect moments?

Today, are we supporting each other with encouragement or do we still cultivate a culture of shame and blame? It is time to change the social stigma about addiction

and recognize it is a mental health issue, not a moral failure. At PEP meetings through education, awareness and supporting each other, parents can express their pain without shame or blame and begin to heal and discover hope. “We need to teach compassion by practicing compassion with ourselves first; then with each other” says Brene Brown. “Change begins with me”.....

**Lerena Greig**  
Executive Director  
Parents Empowering Parents (PEP) Society

**Meetings**  
are held every  
Tuesday (7-9pm)  
in alternating  
locations

## Sherwood Park

Strathcona County Hall  
2001 Sherwood Drive

March 3	April 28
March 17	May 12
March 31	May 26
April 14	

## Millwoods

Sunrise Community Church  
3303 37 Street NW (upstairs)  
Edmonton

March 10	April 21
March 24	May 5
April 7	May 19

# my worst fear

Recently, an article was published in the *Edmonton Journal* about Danny Schulz, 25, who died from a fentanyl poisoning. The parents are speaking out...

The Schultz family decided that they would be open about the way their son died. These are a few of the statements Peter Schultz made during the interview.

“There’s a stigma attached to losing a child to suicide or an overdose”

“It’s like your child did wrong and you didn’t do right”.

“You don’t read obituaries where somebody said he died after a courageous battle with addiction”.

“We are proud of Danny, we were proud of who he was, what he did and what he accomplished in his short life”

“My worst fear, here it is”: Edmonton family speaks out about son’s fentanyl overdose

At Parents Empowering Parents meetings, the parents are speaking out – they are supporting each other and openly discussing the crisis without

fear of judgments or the stigma attached to having a child who struggles with substance abuse disorder or addiction illness. “PEP has definitely given us support and a lot of information about

“You don’t read obituaries where somebody said he died after a courageous battle with addiction”.

drug abuse and ways to manage this situation” says one parent.

“Thank you for being the outstanding resource to families in need of change” said another parent.

PEP has been offering free innovative services to families for over 10 years guided by professional facilitators. You are part of a community that cares.

Strength in numbers and power in knowledge... Let’s take the next step together.

## Testimonial of a MEDD-X Participant

PEP was not exactly what I expected it to be. I received a lot of insight on how addiction affects not only the addict but whole families. Being an addict in recovery and “ex-drug dealer”, I’ve never took time to see life from anyone else’s point of view, those who live with and/or love a person who uses uncontrollably. It was hard to hear some of the parents share their stories because I could relate to what they described their kid was doing. PEP has made me appreciate my family more. This program encouraged me to continue all the right things I was doing and to be proud of my progress. The parents have been really nice and supportive which I didn’t expect towards me the “ex-drug dealer and addict”. I have also learned how to identify whether you’re enabling or helping the addict and have been directed to resources that helped me in my current situation. Being able to provide my opinions and experiences to the parents was very rewarding, to hopefully give the parents a better understanding on why/ what their child is going through. PEP became a part of my routine and then a family to me.

An Ex-Drug Dealer

To read the entire article:

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/news/edmonton/Breakfast+Bylines+Dangers+fentanyl+pollution+Edmonton/10786675/story.html>

## Thank You to our Partnerships, Supporters, and Parents

With your help, we are working together to empower families in crisis towards health and wellness.

Most recent grants (funding) awarded 2015 acknowledgement:

MEDD-X Program Grant

Felix and Pat Kuefler Fund



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Mail form to: Parents Empowering Parents, 2001 Sherwod Drive, Sherwood Park, AB T8A 3W7 or Fax 780-449-1220

## PEP Programs

### Parent Support Meetings

PEP convenes weekly to provide support, education, strength, and hope to parents and families of youth, young adults, and/or adult children. Professionally facilitated discussion provides insight and direction for parents and families dealing with their child's substance abuse issues. No registration is required to attend these drop in meetings, which are held:

**Weekly on Tuesdays from 7pm to 9pm alternating locations each week:**

#### Sherwood Park

Strathcona County Community Centre, 2001 Sherwood Drive, Sherwood Park

March 3    April 28  
 March 17    May 12  
 March 21    May 26  
 April 14

#### Millwoods

Sunrise Community Church, 3303-37 Street NW (upstairs), Edmonton

March 10    April 21  
 March 24    May 5  
 April 7    May 19

For the schedule of dates for each location, see page 2 of this newsletter or visit our website at [www.pepsociety.ca](http://www.pepsociety.ca)

### Parent Mentorship Program

This program connects parents with parents. Mentors selected to listen, relate, share hope, share ideas, and provide additional support to parents new to PEP. Request for this service can be made with the meeting facilitator.

### U-Turn for youth

U-Turn supports youth & young adults involved in substance use to explore their situations through casual discussion and education in a no-pressure environment. Runs concurrently to the Sherwood Park PEP meetings. See website for schedule. Drop in Meeting. No registration required.

### MEDD-X

The Motivational Education for Ex-Drug Dealers (MEDD-X) is a recognized program that provides convicted drug dealers an opportunity to gain an understanding of their impact on individuals, families, and the community, while supporting parents/families with insight into the drug/street world. Participants for this program must be referred and approved by staff via phone 780.410.8516 or email [pep@strathcona.ca](mailto:pep@strathcona.ca)

## Rebuilding Hope Through Giving

PEP Society relies on individual donations, grants, corporate and community group support.

This equips us to support more families dealing with the effects of substance abuse and allows growth in the professionally facilitated programs that we offer.

### There are many ways to provide hope:

1. Monthly giving visit [www.pepsociety.ca](http://www.pepsociety.ca) and go to [www.CanadaHelps.org](http://www.CanadaHelps.org)
2. Monthly donations directly mailed to PEP Society
3. One time donation mailed or on-line [www.CanadaHelps.org](http://www.CanadaHelps.org)
4. Year-end donation for tax reasons.
5. Directed by your request through the United Way (Alberta Capital Region)
6. Corporate Sponsorship
7. Third Party Fundraisers

Thank you for your consideration in supporting your community and rebuilding hope for families. PEP Society is a registered charity



[www.pepsociety.ca](http://www.pepsociety.ca)  
[pep@strathcona.ca](mailto:pep@strathcona.ca)

**support line: 780-293-0737**  
 tel: 780-410-8516  
 fax: 780-449-1220

2001 Sherwood Drive  
 Sherwood Park,  
 AB T8A 3W7