



## Instantaneous Commotion

By Ali Wadas

**D**RUG and alcohol abuse affects almost everyone, either by personal encounters or by watching loved ones become servants to their addiction. The harsh grip of drugs ensures that no one is set free without at least a scar to show their battle. My first battle with drugs and alcohol came when I was 12, and had just moved in with my mom's fiancé. He had bought the most beautiful Victorian house for us to live in and everything seemed perfect. The problem with drugs is they act as tinted windows; outsiders—even those close to the victim—looking in may never see the chaos and destruction happening within someone, until the glass shatters and the world is let in on that person's deepest secret. That is what happened the summer before my 6th grade year.

My mom had just uprooted us from New Mexico to move in with

her fiancé in Wyoming. I was staying in New Mexico for an extra couple weeks to say goodbye to friends. While sitting in my grandpa's comfiest chair reading a book, the phone rang; it was my mom calling. I was far too entranced in my story to talk, so I let my grandma answer. Suddenly, all the events happened quickly: my grandma yelling at me to pack and get in the car, my grandpa looking for his momentarily lost keys, the dogs barking at the instantaneous commotion. It wasn't until I was sitting in the backseat of my grandma's 2005 red Hyundai Tiburon, on an eight hour road trip back to Cheyenne that I was finally informed of what was happening. My soon-to-be step-dad had been hospitalized that night.

We drove through the night and finally arrived in the early hours of the next morning; no one knew the cause of the sudden illness. It wasn't for a

while into the hospitalization that the doctors finally came to a conclusion: it had been an overdose. We were all stunned. He had been a doctor himself and he had secretly used that to his advantage to gain access to certain available drugs. The devastation was greatest for my mom; she had built a life—with him as the foundation—and now drug abuse had crumbled that to pieces.

After a few days, we were able to all sit down and talk about a plan for what was to come. It was decided that my mom's fiancé would go to rehab, and we would stay in Wyoming and wait for him to get better. That worked for a while. Then, the secrets and drugs crept back into our lives in a dramatic, flamboyant fashion. History repeated itself, and there I was once again packing everything I had in a mad rush, commotion buzzing around the house. In a matter of 24 hours, my family had once again been uprooted and relocated into a temporary house; our lives were altered for the second time that year. In the year of 2008 I lived in 3 different houses, and attended two different schools.

In my experience, drug abusers and their families can never completely get out from under the reign of their addiction. The abuse in my family was not handled correctly. Although I still believe that rehab was the right answer, it clearly wasn't enough to stop the abuse. Following the second explosion, my mom and I made a decision that we stand by today. We packed up, left and got out of that environment as soon as possible. Everyone in my family has made an effort to keep drugs out of our lives for good. The destruction that the first encounter left in all of our lives was enough to last a lifetime. ☹️

### ALERT SCHOLARSHIP

Ali Wadas is a high school senior from Wyoming. *Alert Magazine* congratulates her for winning the Alert Scholarship and we encourage her in the pursuit of her academic goals. We would also like to encourage future seniors to participate in our scholarship program.