Like Tim C. and his family, millions of our loved ones, neighbors, friends and colleagues struggle with the disease of addiction.

In fact, the U. S. Surgeon General has warned that one in seven Americans will face addiction in their lifetime. That makes addiction America’s number one public health problem.

As a nonprofit organization, the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation relies on donors to ensure the care we deliver and the resources we provide are the very best they can be for every individual, family and community in need of our help. In other words, your generosity makes a lifesaving difference.

TOGETHER, WE CAN SAVE MORE LIVES.

Please give generously at HazeldenBettyFord.org/Mission2019 today.
WHY WE GIVE

PAYING IT FORWARD

A Grateful Family Turns Their Hope into Help for Others

When he heard about a 15-year-old family acquaintance arriving home blackout-drunk, Tim C. had a full-circle moment.

"Here’s a kid who has everything going for him," Tim shares. "My first thought was, why? My second thought was, ugh, that was me at age 15. I got drunk for the first time on two-and-a-half beers and caused a terribly embarrassing incident. I should have known then that drinking would be hugely problematic for me."

If only.

Instead, it would take more than three decades and a whole lot of heartache, disappointment and regret before Tim would face his substance use problem, get into treatment and, eventually, help others to do the same.

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Today, through transformative gifts to the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation, including a major annual gift to the Children’s Program, Tim and his family want others to know healing is possible and hope is within reach.

“The impact of addiction on our families and the people we love is devastating,” says Tim. “If our support of Hazelden Betty Ford helps even one person get into treatment one day sooner, that’s a victory. And if our support of children’s programming helps even one more child know they’re not alone and they’re not to blame for a parent’s addiction, that’s a victory, too.”

THE TRUTH BECAME INESCAPABLE

Tim grew up in a home where excessive and everyday alcohol use was normalized. The liquor store made home deliveries every week. Although he experienced negative consequences from his drinking and drug use, Tim was 47 years old before he seriously considered going to treatment. It was an “if-I-don’t-go-she-would-leave” conversation with his wife, Saffron, that made Tim sit up and pay attention to his situation.

“Saffron wasn’t issuing an ultimatum. She was simply informing me that she needed to do what she needed to do in order to protect herself and our family from the hurt and chaos of addiction.”

When the likelihood of estrangement from his family began to sink in, the truth about his substance use became inescapable. The only person Tim was still fooling was himself—until he couldn’t do that anymore, either. Tim replays the moment when he understood his substance use wasn’t normal.

“I’d spent the evening in my hotel room using cocaine and drinking red wine. When I got up for a meeting next morning, I poured the leftover red wine into two to-go coffee cups to take along. So, I’m walking into the office building acting as if I’m drinking coffee like everyone else. But it’s not coffee. It’s wine. And it’s 8:30 in the morning. Dude, it’s 8:30 in the morning. Maybe this is a problem.”

PEOPLE DON’T CHOOSE TO DESTROY THEIR LIVES

While it wasn’t easy to walk through the doors, once Tim checked into the intensive outpatient treatment program at Hazelden Betty Ford in New York City, he knew he belonged. “There was so much professionalism and empathy and integrity in how I was treated,” Tim shares. “The counselors were a godsend. They were absolutely bulletproof, in the very best sense. Tough love. Not a lot of room for argument. It’s a potent combination when someone refuses to take your nonsense and, at the same time, shows you unconditional love.” Tim also developed a deep respect and strong bond with many of the men in his treatment group.

“We want to keep the programs at Hazelden Betty Ford as strong as possible.”
“I was astonished by how successful these guys were in other aspects of their lives. Addiction seemed incongruous to their storylines, like the chief of surgery who spent days living in a crack den. It was a shock and a relief to hear their stories.”

The concept of addiction as a disease came as a shock and a relief to Tim as well.

“It’s very powerful and healing to learn that people don’t choose to have addiction and destroy their lives of their own volition,” Tim explains. “Addiction is a medical condition, like cancer or heart disease or any number of other diseases more readily recognized as such. In the same way chemotherapy and radiation help people overcome cancer, the programs at Hazelden Betty Ford help people overcome alcohol and drug addiction.”

GIVING BACK AND “FUTURE-PROOFING”

Tim shares that, in just about every way possible, the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation has become a source of help and healing for his family since he first found recovery 11 years ago. In addition to his outpatient rehab experience at Hazelden Betty Ford in New York City, Tim’s family members have participated in inpatient addiction treatment programs in Minnesota and California, continuing care groups, structured sober living, and family and children’s programming.

“There are a number of things I wish I could change about my past,” Tim acknowledges. “All of them could have been avoided if I hadn’t been using.”

With grateful hearts, he and his family see their gifts to the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation as equal parts giving back and investing in hope.

“Our support is a way of paying it forward to help families we’ll never know. And—given the genetic and relapsing nature of addiction—our support is also about future-proofing our family’s own interests because we could very well be back for help again. We want to keep the programs at Hazelden Betty Ford as strong as possible.”

Donor and alumnus Tim C. with his wife, Saffron, and their four children Flora, Tyler, Finn and Olivia.

Like Tim C. and his family, you can turn your gratitude into help and healing for others. Please pay it forward by giving at HazeldenBettyFord.org/Mission2019 today.