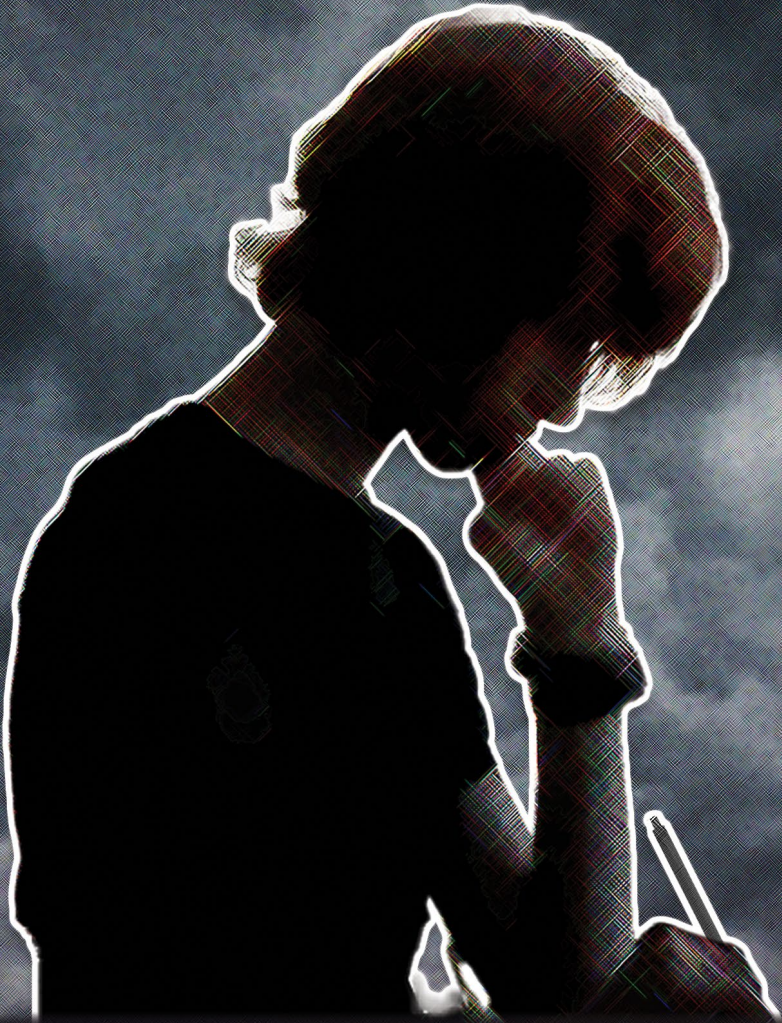


Dear...



A book of letters from
the forgotten families of addiction



Edited by JOHN TAYLOR

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Featured letter writers

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1 John

Dear reader...

When I was a young boy growing up with an alcoholic mum, a lot of harm was done to me.

I was in a place where no one listened and no one cared. I was invisible without a voice and I carried all my childhood shame well into my adulthood because I thought it was all my fault.

For nearly two decades, I have worked trying to give a voice to children, families and friends who are being affected by another's addiction.

I have used letter writing in my professional practice for years as a powerful therapy tool to help people process the trauma they feel whilst watching their loved ones in active addiction.

This book is a collection of letters from my clients and other family members expressing their thoughts and feelings as they watch someone they love destroying themselves.

They have all agreed to have their letters published to reach out to the millions worldwide who are still suffering in silence because of another's addiction and to let them know they are not alone.

By John Taylor

Belinda

Belinda has been attending Turning Point's Families and Friends support group since 2017 to help her deal with her two sons' addiction. She stated that in over 30 years supporting her sons in their addiction, no professional ever asked her how she was until she came to the families service.

A letter to drugs,

How dare you exist knowing the damage that you cause?

The heartache and pain / the stress / the anxiety / the destruction / the mistrust / the unmanageability / the worry / the time wasted / the life wasted / the interference of plans / the fear / the great expense / the chaos / the anger / the indecisions / the loss / the selfishness / the confusion / the mess and procrastination.

You have been in my life for over 40 years and caused endless despair and aggravation and disabled so much.

But now I feel that you are not ruling my life anymore. I have such hate for you and you will no longer overpower me.

Mother

Maria

Maria, 24, has been attending Turning Point's Family and Friends support group since 2023 to help her deal with the pain of losing her relationship with her mum because of her addiction.

Dear mum,

If only you knew the heartbreak you've caused. The ache in my heart that persists day in, day out.

Unimaginable grief, you're here but you're not. A shadow of your former self. I miss you, I miss my best friend, I miss our laughs.

Despite my desperate attempt to fill the void in my heart, romantic relationships and friendships will never quite play your part. For the depths of my love for you might well destroy me.

For years your actions have caused me to doubt and invalidate my own feelings. No space for my emotions of course because this is your show.

I want to be angry, I want to be bitter, I want to hate you, but I can't.

If only you knew the relentless anxiety and fear I carry daily. The intrusive thoughts haunt me the worst at night. Will you meet my future children? Will today be the day I get that dreaded call saying you've passed? And sometimes I'm disturbed that maybe up there you'll have better peace.

For what is a life in which you consistently endure chaos and pain. But I can't

lose you, no one will ever love me the same.

If only you knew how much you are loved, maybe you would rise up above. While I'm surrounded by your family and friends, your absence is felt heavily.

If only you knew my distance is not a result of anger but self-protection. For years I thought I could save you, and now I know I can only save myself.

Love Maria xx

Judith

Judith has been attending Turning Point's Families and Friends support group since 2020 to help her deal with her son's addiction. Judith stated that since coming into the support group she has found her voice.

Dear Will,

Despite everything, I still have faith in you, but I don't trust you.

It is my deep love as a mother that I am writing these few lines so you can begin to understand how I am feeling.

Your behaviour is a feeling I cannot endure. I cannot bear the strain through constant suffering. Your addiction is destroying your mind, body and soul. I am watching this day after day, what joy is in that?

I am drowning in your impulsive behaviour, your lies and manipulation; struggling with doubt and confusion causing unimaginable chaos. Is it all worth it, "NO", will it make you feel better, "NO".

In my mind there is fear and hope with great uncertainty in the middle. To be completely honest, I am afraid of the awful expectation that hasn't happened.

This is not how the story is meant to end. Let it be the beginning.

Please seek the help I feel you desperately need. I cannot fix you. I am here, I am not abandoning you. We both have to navigate a world we cannot foresee.

Let's not have any more texts like this one which I am always petrified to open.

"I'm safe. Just very distressed and feeling that I want to jump out of my skin. I'm sorry. I'll let you know when I am coming home."

All I ask of you is to give me, that 'little ray of hope' before it is too late. I believe it is possible. It is about mutual respect, don't throw it all away.

You are living in your own time just as I am, so let's rise above the storm and find the sunshine.

Your mother xx

5 Cher

Cher has been attending Turning Point's family and friends support service since 2023. She said reading the letter out to her peers in the group brought up feelings of anger, sadness and anxiety.

Dear son,

Since April I have been telling you that I feel you need to get help with your addiction to drugs. I have made appointments for you at different places and agencies and you have not attended any. I have endured and tolerated your behaviour for far too long.

It pains me to see you when you are under the influence of drugs, and the days it takes you to recover and then you are back out there doing it all over and over again.

You may not realise the upset it causes to me and your sisters and brother.

I don't want to let you go but I can no longer live with the disruption your lifestyle is causing me.

The worry, stress and not knowing is too much for me now.

I can no longer have any kind of visitor, be it family or friends. I never know what is waiting for me when I get home. You laying unconscious in the hallway, or you screaming, or looking for people who are not there.

The mornings are depressing, not knowing what the day ahead is going to bring.

I feel anger or shame when I give in to you when you ask and then beg and beg for money. Money I know you are going to buy drugs with. It rips my soul out.

I love you very much. I will always love you.

However you have to leave.

I can no longer live like this. Please take your things and go.

I really would like you to leave on your own accord and not that I have to call the police to remove you.

I hope one day we can come together again like how we used to, laughing and joking, dinners and outings and simple things.

This comes with a very heavy heart, but it's time.

Mumma xx

June

June has been attending Turning Point's Families and Friends support group since 2020. She said attending the service helps her to process the intrusive thoughts she suffers with that her son is going to die from his addiction.

Dear son,

Whatever you say AND forever and a day, "I am not having it". "Are you listening, "I AM NOT HAVING IT; I am powerful and I am me".

I am shouting it from the rooftops and it is echoing back to me from the four corners of the earth, and it feels GOOD.

I would like to say to you. I have endured and tolerated your behaviour for far too long. It is just a constant theme; relentless, not ending anytime soon. What is the BEAST that has all encompassed you? Shown interest, be encouraging, be supportive – I have done all of these.

From the moment of your journey into this world I have been there for you. I can only give you my love but not my thoughts, for you have your own thoughts. I love you with all my heart, but I am carrying a heavy sack, so I say again, "I AM NOT HAVING IT".

For me it feels like an enigma – something not quite clear and puzzling. There is little reward for the effort I put in, so, the answer is, NO, I am not having it anymore. My box has opened and these words are falling out like delicate confetti washed away by the rain.

On high alert, no; feeling confused, no; feeling guilty, no; not anymore. All I ever wanted for you was to be accomplished, admired and loved. I feel I have loved and lost you. Will we ever laugh and joke again, will we get back those lost years? But I want you to know that hope always prevails in my darkest moments.

I am not abandoning you, but, “I AM NOT HAVING IT!”.

For years my head was totally empty, without inspiration or a game plan. I felt rather like a soul in disarray. What happened defies all imagination. I completely ran out of steam, feeling dizzy, dazed and dumb, and would question, ‘what is happening to me’. It eclipsed everything, could life be so cruel? I was truly ‘at wit’s end corner’.

I shall not look upon these days with any kindness. I suppose I will never get over it, but I am determined to learn to accept it. I am a survivor.

At times I have felt like I needed a psychological first aid kit. It has been unimaginable chaos, loss of freedom, many tears and sadness. But today I am building confidence, power and strength to achieve the best, with the support here, my beliefs and being me.

In my little garden, my little piece of paradise, I say again, softly this time, “I am not having it”.

There is a quote by Mario Fernandez, that says:

‘Rise above the storm and you will find the sunshine.’

It’s all about perspective. Change the way you think and your life will change and you will find the sun, ready to illuminate your life and cast away the darkness.’

Mum xx

Tracey

Tracey has been attending Turning Point's Families and Friends support group since June 2024.

Dear drugs,

I don't know what to say to you except to say, you have ruined my son's life. You have taken away his career, family life and respect.

My son thinks you're his best friend, he just doesn't see what you have done to him. He is now completely reliant on you.

You have also ruined my life. My son is not the person he was and we are not the way we were.

He was smartly dressed and took care of himself and his kids but I am ashamed to walk down the street with him now.

I hate you drugs for what you have taken away from me.

Mother

P.S I still hate you

Helen

Helen attends the Turning Point's Families and Friends support group. She said that she was losing her mind before she came into the families service.

My dearest son,

This Addiction has stolen you from me, consumed us both and I can't continue being part of this madness any longer. It breaks my heart, I've tried everything, but I can't allow myself to go through this painful path with you. I need to step back and I truly hope you find the strength to overcome this disease.

My love for you is unconditional. That's what makes it so hard to set boundaries and take this step. But for my own well-being, I need to take care of myself too. This decision hasn't been easy, but I have to protect my mental and emotional health.

I've stood by your side through all the struggles, offering all the support I could. It hurts so much to see you lost in this, but I still believe that the real you is there, waiting to come back. I miss that person deeply.

I've come to understand the 3 Cs of addiction: I didn't cause it, I can't control it, and I can't cure it. This realisation has lifted so much guilt from me. I now know that your addiction is something I can't fix, and it's time to let go of that responsibility.

You've shown such incredible strength in the past while you were abstinent, and I've seen the brilliance in you. I was so proud of how far you've come.

You relapsed, but now you're back on track, and I truly hope you continue down the path of sobriety, because I know how much you can achieve when you stay strong. I believe in your ability and strength, and I'll always be here cheering for you to succeed.

I've also learned that relapse is part of the addiction journey, and while it's painful, I've come to accept it. It doesn't make it any easier to witness, but I no longer blame myself for it.

"My love for you is endless. While I can't walk this path for you, I will always believe in your strength to find your way. No matter how many times you fall, I will never stop hoping for the day you rise above it all."

Lots of love 

Mum xx

Jess



Jess, 19, has been attending the SFAD Routes young persons project in East Dunbartonshire, Scotland for five years. Jess said that she put things in the letter that she has never said to anyone because it's too embarrassing to say out loud. However, she said after writing it she does not feel so angry anymore as it's like a whole load of weight off her shoulders.

Dear mum,

If only I could describe the heartache and broken trust. For 19 years you've chosen alcohol over your kids and no words will describe how hurt and heart-breaking that is. I only wish we were better than the alcohol and drugs that you take. All the money spent on things you said you needed. What about your kids?

I've grown up always thinking it was my fault. That I wasn't a good kid. The words of pain can't even come out. I honestly want to scream. You've made a lot of wrong decisions in life but trying to tell you that, isn't worth the argument.

I hate these things you take and drink and I honestly don't know why you do it. The anger inside me grows every day and sometimes I wanna just say, "why the hell am I not enough?"

You brought us up to care about everyone, be nice and always forgive but I don't think I could ever do that—I can't forgive the monster you turn into with drugs and alcohol . Honestly you can get lost, now I've tried with you but you seem to pick everyone else and your addictions over me.

So, you know what? I won't be the one to keep giving you money for your rubbish, I won't be the mug in your story.

I'll say this, I can't hate you and that's what's going to kill me, for whatever reason, I can't walk away because I'm better than you. I don't leave people I care about and I won't be the one to help you get your buzz. YOU CAN GET LOST! All I wanna do is scream "I hate you, I hate you" but I can't because I'd be lying to myself but what I do want, is for you to leave me alone.

I love you mum, I miss my best friend and my lunch dates. But I don't love the monster that comes out when you drink and take your drugs that you take.

I am not 5 years old anymore mum. I am so scared I'm going to turn into you and become addicted because that's what my life's all about—alcohol and drugs, but I am going to be different.

I only hope you change so I don't get that phone call I don't wanna hear but until then mum, it's goodbye. I'll always be your daughter, but I need to protect myself now, I love you but for now, goodbye.

Love your daughter Jess

P.S thanks drugs and alcohol for stealing my best friend

10 George



George, 15, has been attending the SFAD Routes young persons project in East Dunbartonshire, Scotland for three years. George said he wrote the letter for his three younger siblings.

Dear dad,

I don't like what you've done to my life. You've messed everything up. You've broken my family and ripped it apart. It's everything that comes along with it as well. It comes with deceiving, stealing, gambling.

I remember you stealing from my piggy bank when I was small. It made me feel just kinda rubbish.

I remember when you came home and passed out in the garden, and the police came and arrested you. I was scared for you and I still remember it.

I just wish I had a normal life, with Mum and Dad and a normal house

without arguing and shouting 24/7. Whenever you wake up or go to sleep it's just so depressing. My younger siblings don't understand it because they're small, but I think they're just trying to stop the arguing and make it a normal family.

It's so devastating when you end up in hospital. It's like have I got a dad anymore or have I not?

I remember being convinced you were gonna kill yourself, and being really scared and worried for you. I don't even know if you knew I felt that for you. I just always feel like you're going to kill yourself.

I'm past caring at this point. But I'll always be there for you, I'm just fed up of the drinking and you starting problems again.

George

11 James

James, 18, and Ruby, 20, are siblings who came into Routes young persons project in East Dunbartonshire, Scotland, four years ago after their father died from drugs. Their mother still struggles with alcohol and they both wanted to write the letter together because addiction has been such a big part of their lives and they want to help others.

To drugs and alcohol,

You've taken so many lives, especially the ones that are close to us. Like our Dad. I wish things could be different and you never took him. You pull us in and you swallow us up and you make things too hard for us to cope then we have to deal with everything.

I regret that you were ever made because if you were never made you wouldn't have ruined our life. It's made us look at life differently and not take things for granted and not be judgemental of others. But it also makes us panicked about our own lives in case it pulls us in too.

You've influenced us to make bad choices having been brought up surrounded by drugs and alcohol. But there's always a light at the end of the tunnel, we just have to hope that things will be ok.

James & Ruby

(Brother and sister)

12 Albert

Albert, 15, has been at Routes young persons project for 3 years and has four younger siblings. He wrote the letter to help other families who are going through something similar.

To drugs and alcohol...

You've affected a lot of people in multiple ways, where people's families have struggled with food or I don't like to see my family member using you.

It feels horrible, it's the fact that you're affecting them and affecting me. It's the fact of their hurting themselves more using you than they are without you.

It's a hard thing to witness and go through. It affects our financial state, and the whole aspect of food because you could not have enough to get food or bus travel or whatever you need money for. We feel like rubbish and get annoyed, we just feel like absolute rubbish for it.

I was young at the time so I didn't understand it much. You made him really unwell and when he's unwell like that I don't like to see him like it. I feel worried and have anxiety due to it.

Now I'm a bit older I understand you and the way you affect people and their family. I feel like I'm disappointed that people have to resort to using you to escape or because they feel like you numb them when they could get actual help instead. But instead they turn to drugs and alcohol which isn't the best idea.

I wish I could get rid of you, drugs and alcohol, because you ruin the lives of families and their situation. I'm really disappointed in you.

From Albert

13

Ian

Ian attends the SMART Recovery Family and Friends group.

Dear dad...

You are not around anymore. I have an odd feeling of numbness around you. I do not hate you and I am not angry, but nor do I feel great warmth or love for you. My brother remains furious. He had greater expectations of you than I did. As a child, he was into sports, and he always wanted that male parental figure in his life, somebody to cheer for him from the stands. That was not so important to me.

Mum always felt a bit frail, and we did not want to upset her. She was so angry, furious, with you for so long. She wanted us to be angry too. So, my brother got angrier, and he has stayed angry. He tamps his emotion down with Cannabis. I wanted to be the peacemaker, so I shut off feeling and ate them away.

Even from a distance, your addiction got to us. Mum tells us about all the money you wasted, squandered away. Money hard earned by our immigrant Grandmother who fled Russian Pogroms, married an East End Jew, moved to Golders Green, and started a business which thrived. You threw that money away. Lived a lifestyle that you had not earned. Casinos, Rolls Royce's, and expensive holidays. That wealth is mostly gone. All the while, I have no family memories of you as a child. None. No days out, no birthday parties, no attendance at parent's evenings or school plays.

There is a silhouette of a man in my memory. Mum told us you even raided

the childhood bank accounts set up for us at our births. The financial security that could have been enjoyed by my mother in her old age, your children, and your grandchild. It is not there.

I remember as I got older and you and Mum divorced, we saw you occasionally. Your mother insisted on it. But you did not seem to care much for us. We were an inconvenience. You would have lunch with us and then go to your room and watch sports.

I do not know if you ever felt any guilt over what you did... Everybody is the hero of their own story I suppose. You overcame your addiction. With the help of your second wife. She was harder than our Mum. We never spoke of it. We mostly talked about Arsenal because that was a 'safe' conversation. I am sorry for what we all missed out on because your addiction. You have left a legacy, the first domino which knocked subsequent dominoes in the lives of your children. If you had understood the consequences of that initial domino before you toppled it, would you have paused?

Anyway, rest in peace because in the end, life is just this ethereal fleeting moment but the echoes live on.

Yours, A 53 year old son

14 Kathryn



Kathryn Georghiou is an award winning actress and director. Her short film Changing Tides is loosely based on her father's end of life alcoholism and has scooped a host of awards in film festivals around the UK. Kathryn's father passed away in 2008. She is a passionate advocate and speaker volunteer for Nacoa UK.

Dear dad,

I wish you could see have seen how amazing you were. I wish you knew how loved you were. I wish you could have seen yourself through my eyes.

I wish...

When I was a young child, you were my hero. I'd love our days together when mum was at work and my sisters were at school, before I was old enough to go to school myself. I remember – like it was yesterday – sitting on your lap and you teaching me how to tie shoelaces after we'd spent the day in the park feeding the ducks. And the times we used to make up stories together about

fantastical lands that didn't exist. And our Christmases were the best! You waking us up at 4am when you got in from your taxi shift just so we could open our presents together. The living room a carnage of wrapping paper, toys, giggles and love.

I wish I had more of those days...

And I wish you hadn't got ill. Sometimes I wonder, would that have stopped you hitting the bottle? Or would it have happened anyway?

In the years that followed, I saw the man I admired more than anything in the world become something I was scared and ashamed of. The real you slowly being drowned out.

It stings when I think of all the incredible people in my life who never met you. All the people I met and hardly told them about you. Every time there was talk of dads, my heart would ache for the dad I was losing right before my eyes. Your passion for drinking was a long, slow, painful suicide.

I wish we could have helped you. I wish you could have helped yourself.

I've spent years wondering what I did wrong? If I'd been a better person would you have stopped? If I hadn't been born maybe you wouldn't be this way? How could I make you go back to the dad that was my hero?

It's taken me years to understand that it wasn't my fault. Years to understand that you're just a human trying to navigate a traumatic world that got too much for you. But that doesn't mean it makes it easier. In many ways it makes it harder because now I can appreciate how lost you were.

I wish you'd sought help!

My heart hurts when I think about how much I loved you, and still do. There's some solace in knowing you're now at peace and out of pain. And whenever I think of you, I always try to remember the amazing man you were, instead of the person you became.

Rest in peace dad.

Love you to the moon and back xx

15 Natalie

Natalie came into the Al-Anon family recovery program after being in love with an alcoholic. This relationship took her to a place of insanity and despair as she hit a rock bottom dealing with his Jekyll and Hyde character. Natalie says she got hope from her first meeting and has just celebrated her fifth Al-Anon birthday in the fellowship.

Dear alcohol,

You've affected my life for so long, and still do, even at this present moment.

I lived in survival mode. I buried my feelings, controlled, manipulated. I had no boundaries. I lived in fear and denial, was unauthentic. My wiring was all messed up with distorted thinking. I felt abandoned, unloved, insane, unmanageable. I shut down and got lost. I went to unavailable people.

People, places and things aren't the answer.

You robbed me of my peace of mind. This has been painful. You hurt me.

Now I understand you're a disease and a family one at that. I've learnt to have compassion for those who suffer with this disease, just as I would someone with cancer.

I didn't cause it, I can't control it and I can't cure it.

Today I have hope. I can detach with love. I can let go, have peace of mind and freedom. I'm living my own life today.

Thanks Alcohol for all you've taught me.

You've walked me into recovery. Now I'm a grateful, recovering member of the Al-Anon fellowship.

Natalie

16 Daniella

Daniella, 24, attended Alateen family recovery groups and had family therapy at the Tavistock Centre as both of her parents were in active addiction when in her early years. Daniella is now a mother of two herself and both of her parents are in recovery and been clean and sober for many years.

Dear addiction,

Life is not easy. It's not easy if you are struggling with addiction – or even if you aren't. My insight into your world is only through observation. I do not wish to walk in your shoes, but I can tell you what it is like to walk in mine.

As a child I never truly understood how different my life was. I was well kept and fed, to the outside world nothing was wrong. As I started to grow, I picked up on signs, never being on time for anything. Mum barely left the house so left dad in charge of bringing me anywhere or picking me up. However, he was never on time, EVER. The feeling and anxiety at pick up time just knowing he was going to be late. It's something I still suffer with now around timings, the anxiety will never let me be late again.

I will never forgive you for the time you stole away from me. Those younger years when I really needed my parents. The time spent alone in the living room playing alone watching TV. I will forever be thinking of the what ifs, even more now I have my own children.

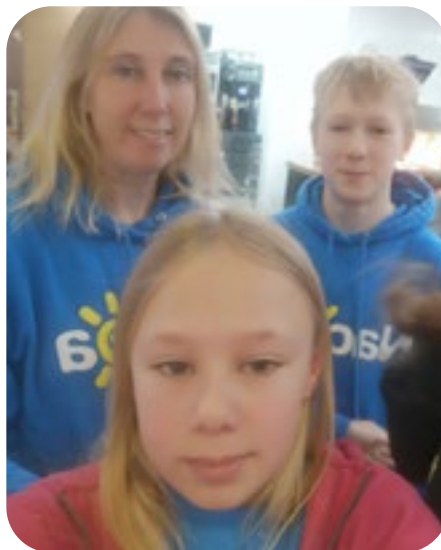
Although this is my parent's first time at life, I never deserved this. I never deserved to have my parents robbed of me and spend years in therapy for

issues and scars to forever remain. I will forever be that little Girl inside of me and I will never get that time back. I will forever be thinking “What if?”, “If only life was different.”

I now understand this was the life I was given and sadly nothing can change. All I can do is be grateful to have two parents that are currently in recovery. As I truly have no clue what would’ve happened if neither of them was able to make it through.

Love Daniella

Amelie, Isaac, and Lucy



Amelie

Amelie is now 12 years old and a special young ambassador for Nacoa UK. Having lost her father to alcohol in 2022 she has shared about her journey of grief to help others. With her mother, Lucy, and brother, Isaac, she is helping to campaign for better support for families affected by addiction. In 2024, she spoke at the UK Parliament to read her letter reproduced below.

To people who made alcohol,

Thanks for destroying my life. My dad died because of you. How would you like it? I'm 11 years old and had to deal with lots of rubbish, mostly because of you.

Also, the fact that you show it off in shops — NOT HELPFUL! I'm sure many people relate with cigarettes and vapes, so please do something about this all.

And to the government...

Please change the law around alcohol and help children like me so not as many people end up like this.

If you even care about lives and want to save more people, then the NHS won't be so busy! Please I beg you! :)

Please help Nacoa to help the children of alcoholics so they can be happier and have someone to understand them.

I miss my dad so much and so does my brother. I would be so happy if you help us ALL. Please! :(

From Amelie

18 Isaac

Isaac is the big brother of Amelie. He loved his dad and did everything he could to try and make him go to hospital. He and his family are now supporting each other and keeping in touch with Nacoa UK to navigate the difficulties of coping with the death of a parent.

To daddy,

I know Amelie's written you a few letters so I thought I would write one. I really miss you and hope you're not in pain any more. Having a nice party in heaven.

I love you lots and lots and jelly tops xx



Isaac

19 Lucy

Lucy is Mum to Amelie and Isaac and wife to her late husband, Daniel. After a long battle with alcohol-dependency, it claimed his life in 2022. Lucy was left picking up the pieces for her family. Since then, she has been a tireless Nacoa campaigner to improve support for affected families, after the disappointing treatment she endured from statutory services.

To alcohol (it doesn't deserve dear)

I see you staring at me from every location. In the shops, on adverts, on buses, on trains, on the TV, on boards.

In the parks, in the hands of passers by, in the high street, in hotels, on the corner of my friends' kitchen tables, the pubs, the clubs and hundreds of other places.

Every place I can think of, you are looking at me.

You have caused unimaginable pain and suffering, you have killed more people than any other drug and yet you get away with it.

You quietly wait for your next victim, your pull is strong, you're the devil in disguise.

I'm afraid of you and I hide from you in a way.

Not only did you kill my husband, the father of my children, you traumatised us and tried to take us down too.

You wouldn't leave, you took possession of a man who was once strong and able and turned him into the shadow of himself.

Where we saw potential, you saw weakness in him.

He chose you to help him with his pain inside and you took advantage by isolating him and taking away his friends, family and job.

Eventually, you sucked the life out of him, destroying him from the inside until there was no life left or fight and we had to turn off the ventilator.

You have left two young children without a father, you have left me struggling, throwing me into another life. I have to learn to live again, rebuild my life and trust again.

I continue to try and raise awareness of who you really are. I know you hate people coming together to defeat you, so that's what we will do.

Eventually, YOU will be isolated in your place and not everywhere.

Where the world can see you for who you are and we will be free from you.

Lucy

Coda: From the editor

20 John

Dear Mummy

Mummy, mummy, lying on the ground with a cut on your head.
I have just rushed home from school, are you alive or are you dead?
Beside you the vodka bottle and I see it's empty again.
The trauma has been set in stone and I am not even ten
Wake up mummy, wake up please.
I know you are an alcoholic, you have the disease.
But I wanted to tell you about the maths exam I passed.
I wanted you to be sober and I wanted you to ask.
But these are just pathetic dreams because the booze always wins.
Maybe it's my fault and that I am paying for my sins.
Yes it must be my fault, there's no other way
I always turned it on myself, that's how I got through the day
When I think of my childhood it's the everlasting fear

I am so detached from the feelings that I can't shed a tear
The world became a frightening place, I learnt to shut down
I became the school joker but they were tears of a clown
All I wanted as your son was for you to tuck me in at night
To give me a cuddle and tell me everything will be alright
The pain and hurt I had, was buried deep below
The toxic shame I felt, stretched from my head to my toe
But as the years rolled on, the drink certainly took its toll
And as your illness progressed, it took your mind, body and soul
However on reflection today, I know deep down you love me
It's just that you were beaten by your demons, for that I can see
All the trust we had was broken and all the damage that was done
When all I ever wanted as that little boy was to be the special one.

Love little John xx

Extract from: www.alcoholstolemymum.co.uk

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The Alcohol
Service
Bi-borough of Kensington
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Children growing up in families with addiction carry emotional baggage. Writing about how the disease has hurt their families allows kids to begin letting it go and healing.

Jerry Moe, MA

National Director of Children's Programs, Emeritus

Betty Ford Center USA

I know how it feels to be pilloried for daring to tell the truth about my childhood with parents who drank too much and how painful that can be.

Sadly, the great British public are still in love with alcohol and their children are at best hidden harm, at worst wantonly ignored and abandoned to their fate when they are twice as likely to drink themselves.

It's a merry-go-round of misery; internalised childhood misery is buried deep. Letter writing is a good tool to break the silence and will open doors so that children, young people and adults still lost in their pain will start to identify and find their authentic selves.

Hilary Henriques MBE

CEO of Nacoa UK

Reading my letter out to my peers in the group brought me even closer to the group which I did not feel was possible.

June, mother (Letter 6)

Attending the families support group helps to bring back some sanity and stability in my life.

Maria, daughter (Letter 3)

General editor, John Taylor

No send letters are a powerful tool to help people process the trauma they feel whilst watching their loved ones in active addiction.

This book is a collection of letters compiled by families addiction specialist, John Taylor.

Family members express thoughts and feelings reflecting on the chaos created by a loved one's addiction.

Letter writing is a good tool to break the silence and will open doors so that children, young people and adults still lost in their pain will start to identify and find their authentic selves.

Hilary Henriques MBE
CEO and co-founder of Nacoa UK

