

My Opioid Story

By: Rudi Rudisill

My name is Rudi Rudisill, I am a believer in Jesus Christ, and I struggle with drug addiction.

My story starts at a very early age.

I grew up in a home with loving parents and am an only child. I had a normal childhood. When I was in junior high school, I started playing golf and got really good. In high school I started feeling less than others even though I had hundreds of college scholarship offers for golf. I was in the newspaper a lot for golf.



I also discovered pot and it made me feel “normal”.

After high school I went to the University of South Carolina on a full golf scholarship. I just wanted to feel accepted so I experimented with drugs. I developed back issues and was prescribed pain meds and left college. Initially I thought I had found freedom but that was when my spiral down started.

Opiates took me to the lowest of lows. I was on a journey that broke me mentally, physically, and spiritually – I had lost all hope – I almost lost my life and my family, and I was just in bad shape.

In September of 2008 I cried out to God “please help me, I cannot do this anymore.” I was finally willing to do what it took to get off opiates. I was in and out of treatment facilities prior to that and I just couldn’t get out of my own way.

Fast forward to today: I have been clean from drugs since September 2008, I will be married 33 years this May, my youngest daughter was married in 2020, and my oldest daughter is getting married this April.

I feel like I always wanted to, except I don't have to use drugs to feel this way. I have great relationships with my family and friends.

I have great relationships with my family and friends. I am now trusted. I don't feel 'less than' and I don't feel like I am looked at as a cast out or addict. I am looked at like a child of God.

When I was using opioids, after completing treatment and in my early years of recovery, I often felt stigma from other individuals. Friends shunned me. Close family and friends looked at me as if I was going to steal from them, leave the room and get high, or get arrested for breaking the law to get drugs. Some called me a 'junkie' and worse.

I understand their doubts.

But they didn't understand how difficult it is to break opioid addiction. And they didn't see how treating me as unredeemable only made it harder for me. In fact, their words and looks made me feel badly about myself, which was often a trigger to use pills and heroin again.

For anyone struggling with opiates there is hope, help, and support.

And for those of you who have loved ones with substance use disorder, set boundaries, don't be manipulated ... and above all, don't give up on them. Because addiction affects the whole family, and not just the addict, please get counseling, join a support group, and talk with trusted family, friends, and your pastors. You need to stay well in the face of this difficult condition.

Thanks for allowing me to share my story and may God bless those that are struggling or involved with someone that is struggling.