

From: Henry Michael Welna <henry.welna@maine.edu>
To: Sandra Jimothy Rustle <[REDACTED]@tormail.org>
Sent: Monday, December 31, 2012 4:30 AM
Subject: Happy Holidays!

Hi,

Hope you had a great Christmas!

Just thought I would drop you a note wishing you a Happy New Year and wondering if you spoke with Will lately. He never responded to my e-mail. When he does he is usually brief but he never has expressed being angry or belligerent with me, just sarcastic sometimes. I think he feels trapped with his mother and does not realize he needs to create his own independent identity and set short and long term goals for himself to achieve independence which are the developmental tasks of late adolescence. Not satisfying these needs often causes anger, anxiety, frustration, and ultimately depression and low self esteem.

Well, I hope is doing well, I think about him every day.

Happy New Year!
Sincerely,

Henry Welna

From: Henry Michael Welna <henry.welna@maine.edu>
To: Sandra Jimothy Rustle <[REDACTED]@tormail.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 13, 2012 9:55 AM
Subject: Re: Will

Will can not get any support where he is. His mother would repeatedly tell him that she wished he was normal, that he is useless, etc. The whole environment he is in is a cue to drink and whatever. The only hope for him is to have him meet with a DHS worker who's job is to connect him with the resources, counseling, housing, and training he needs to get on his own two feet.

His mother only thinks of herself. She has a son Mark, from a prior marriage than to myself, who left her and has refused to talk to her in over 15 years. He lives here in Maine. She was very abusive and uncaring to him also. When she left she took my dogs with her and had them killed without ever contacting me. I doubt that she even loves her husband. She married him because she needs someone to take care of her. Remember Will was very different when he left here, she created what he is today, encouraging his drinking and destroying his self esteem.
Well, I am on lunch break, have to get back to facilitating groups.

-H

On Thu, Dec 13, 2012 at 9:22 AM, Sandra Jimothy Rustle
[REDACTED]@tormail.org wrote:

It's understandable. Everything you have said has always shown love for Will. Dashing out a quick email is okay.

I do think Will is self-medicating his life away. He's the guy who can take several No-Doz pills and go straight to sleep. I hope that, through love and encouragement of others that he can find his way into a healthy lifestyle. As it is, he weighs around 265 pounds now, but I know that if he seeks treatment for the alcohol and anger, that the weight can be brought down into the healthy range. I continue to encourage him, and so do others, but at this point, we are like you in that our hands are tied. He does have to want to make the leap. It sounds like you have a very happy house full of love. Don't feel bad that you cannot let Will live with you, because that is not what he needs. He needs to learn independence, something he has never had. Sorry that I did not get back with you yesterday. Tis the season to be running around with holiday things.

From: Henry Michael Welna <henry.welna@maine.edu>
To: Sandra Jimothy Rustle <[REDACTED]@tormail.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 13, 2012 2:53 AM
Subject: Will

Sorry, I wrote the last e-mail very quickly. I am very busy this time of year. Just wanted to clarify that for years I offered Will an opportunity to stay at my townhouse apartment which was large and had three bedrooms with the intention that he would show up because he said he hated his mother. I offered him a college education and to get him a decent car. That was 3-5 years ago. There is no room at the house I have now and it is not my decision whether he can stay here anyway. I may be able to get him his own apartment up here if he agrees to go to school. My suggestions for Will are based on little knowledge of what his problems are. What he conveyed along with what you said, Will may be an alcoholic. This may be the source of his rage or the cause of it. Regardless, nothing will change and will probably get worse if he remains where he is. You can not change people. They must want to change themselves. Will must realize this and that it will take a maximum effort on his part. I can not help him if he will not even make the effort to talk with me. Trust me, it is all because of his mother that he is in his present situation. He may need detox, AA, and anger management counseling, I do not know....

Thanks for your concern,

-H

From: Henry Michael Welna <henry.welna@maine.edu>
To: Sandra Jimothy Rustle <[REDACTED]@tormail.org>
Sent: Tuesday, December 11, 2012 4:29 AM
Subject: Re: Hoping to talk with you

The main reason that I entered the field of Mental Health, Human Services, And Psychology is that I needed not only to understand what had happened to Sheryl and myself, but to see if I could help prevent it from happening to others. I have seen many many families destroyed by addiction. Even my GF had a similar experience with her husbands alcoholism. Addiction changes people to the point of not caring for anything and anybody except themselves. To better understand what I am saying, find any articles by Alan Leshner who is the foremost authority on addiction.

The whole problem with Will and his mother has a basis in the power of addiction. I work with victims of addiction every day and through my understanding, addicts never recover, they can only motivate themselves to face the problem and learn the skills to cope with the disease. You are right in saying that Sheryl and Will must realize that change must occur. It is however changes that must happen in themselves and not between them. Long time addicts like Sheryl are very reluctant to change because they have seen life through a veil created by the substance so long that they do not see their addiction or their behaviors as a problem to themselves or others. They are self serving in everything they do and how they treat people. Addicts use defense mechanisms that after time, they truly believe in. Most addicts really have to hit bottom to realize what is happening. Sheryl, like most addicts, surround themselves with enablers. For Sheryl it would be her sisters, mother, Will, and a husband. They serve as her safety net. Think about it, what loving mother would remove her son from the life of their father. We see that this served her purpose, supporting lies that allowed her mother to take them in and win the sympathy of others. Will has told me that on his 21st birthday, his mom and husband took him to the bar and got him plastered. He said this is what they did regularly thereafter. Keeping money that was supposed to be for Will's education. Will on the other hand has been conditioned to believe that his father never Tried to contact him saying that he was the problem. She poisons his mind to Support herself with no regard to Will's need to develop moral values and social skills. Will believes that his mother is his only support much like in Stockholm syndrome he defends and bonds to a toxic relationship. I am sure she uses threats of abandonment if Will were even to suggest contacting his father. This would threaten. What loving mother would allow her son to isolate himself from the world, social supports, intimate relationships and enable him in alcoholism?

I am sure that Sheryl has real nasty things to say about me and with her Family parroting them back at Will, he has come to believe them. He is a drunk, a drug user and no good. Truth is, I never used drugs, I used to drink with Sheryl but since she left, I do not drink at all. I do not think I would have the awesome GF I have now if I did. (she thinks alcohol should be illegal and suffered for years at the hands of an alcoholic husband). Also, as a CDC, I have to submit to random drug testing and if evidence of drinking is uncovered, I automatically loose my license for two years. I certainly would not encourage my son to drink and isolate himself from the world and of opportunities to lead a productive life, I would not treat a dog that way.

Fact. Sheryl is the underlying toxicity in Will's life. She is the primary enabler and controlling factor. I sincerely hope that Sheryl would change, but that is highly unlikely and even if she was motivated, it would take a very long time. As for Will, he is caught in a downward spiral which will end in disaster or worse if there are no interventions. If Will came to me

as a client, I would first do an in depth assessment as to his suicidal ideation. This may just be his way of crying for help. Will is being intelligent and actually shy by nature. His intelligence and wanting (cry) for help as well as his computer skills are his strengths. Because of his lack of strong social supports, lack of social and life skills, and him being in a toxic environment, I would try to get him into a residential treatment program. Involuntary commitment would not work unless it can be proven that he is a danger to himself or others (Baker Act).

However, I would use motivational interviewing techniques (worth researching). This would involve having Will identify with his core values and goals and then having him realize that his behaviors conflict with his values, goals, and expectations of himself. This discrepancy with positive encouragement and realizations of his strengths has been successful in many people. It is not such a simple process though and must be approached with attention to the individuals stage in the change process. A great book (not too long or overly complex and well worth reading) is "Motivational Interviewing with Adolescents and Young Adults" by Sylvie Naar-King Mariann Suarez. 2011, Guilford. It is not too expensive and available on Amazon or if you would like, I would even send you a copy.

Anyway, the bottom line is that Will needs to get out of that environment. He is and has been sheltered too long and needs to learn social and life skills, as well as accountability. It is unlikely he would want to come here to Maine and I talked to a few colleagues and it would be too much of a changer at first due to the very high pace of my household. My GF and I are up at 2:30 am (she must be at her job at the hospital by 4 am) and I am working at my office. Her son is up at 4:30 and out to work and her daughter is a full time student. This place is in a frenzy most all the time. All of us are very busy. If Will does not get out of there into a normal environment, he will end up in treatment anyway or worse. You may look into getting him a state caseworker, they can be very helpful in this situation but they can be overwhelmed with work. Worth a try though.

Well back for work. Thanks for your concern and reading my short emails. :o)

ps/ Oh, I forgot to add that what puzzles me most about that fire was how Robin showed up within hours with a very large trailer and proceeded to Empty my house of everything. hmmm... (I am a 6 hour drive away)

-Henry Welna

On Mon, Dec 10, 2012 at 4:11 PM, Sandra Jimothy Rustle [REDACTED]@tormail.org wrote:

It is crazy what people do, and what they become once there is a substance in their lives. I have found that most of the people in that situation were the most intelligent people, and also people who are ADHD, ADD, or have some other learning disability. They are smart people, but their focus is off.

You mentioned that I seemed to have a knowledge of Human Services. That I do, just not in the same field as you. I have been a paralegal for over 15 years. I specialize in criminal law - mostly murderers and pedophiles. Every

attorney I have ever worked with has always had a wonderful "take accountability" philosophy. Basically, I know things may seem black and white, but I see them in shades of gray (shades of right and wrong). Good people do bad things, but we have to be accountable, and we have to want to change, we can't use loopholes in the laws to skirt our own actions. I have seen a case where a guy was the trigger man, but, because he took accountability, he only received 7 years, wherein the others around him that were involved got life (just one example of what I do). I think people can change, once they understand who they are and how to manage. Don't get me wrong, sometimes it is hard to come home at night with the weight of what other people have done on your shoulders.

That is what I saw in Will, a good kid who had a desire to do good things, but not the drive. I want to see him succeed, I have seen him vulnerable, I have seen a spark in him. It just needs to be cultivated, and sometimes it is hard to undo years of how other people wanted you to be, or how you were raised, and it is most certainly hard to get them away from a comfortable environment. (Yes, I am a fixer. I know that is one of my downfalls.)

I guess that is why I reached out to you. Sometimes you come to the end of what you can do to help someone help themselves. I truly hope that he can see even a glimpse of that man that I have seen in you, and the years of damage can be undone. I believe that people are inherently good, and even if they have done bad things, there is a hope for change. Maybe Sheryl and Will can both come to that conclusion.

Here's to hoping.

p.s. I have really enjoyed talking with you. You have given me so much insight, and reminded me, yet again, that there are always several sides to a story that someone tells you.

From: Henry Michael Welna <henry.welna@maine.edu>
To: Sandra Jimothy Rustle <[REDACTED]@tormail.org>
Sent: Monday, December 10, 2012 8:29 AM
Subject: Re: Hoping to talk with you

Again, I appreciate your concern for Will. I e-mailed him this morning just asking how things were going and what he was doing, offering him support. I encouraged him to write me back.

I will never know for sure about the fire. All I do know is that Sheryl would go into my studio to take cigarettes while I was not there. Will is taking Sheryl's word about it. I would argue with Sheryl at times saying that the house would burn down but it was in reference to the electric baseboards we had for heat. Sheryl would stack her dirty cloths on these baseboards and then want to turn them on when she felt cold. Sheryl would not do any laundry for months and there would be piles of her cloths all over the room. Will and Sheryl would have violent fights many times as Sheryl would want Will to cook for her. She basically stayed in bed most all the time doing drugs. That is why Will would occasionally loose it and call the police on her.

You may think that Will had an anti-social personality disorder however

he displayed more symptoms of social anxiety disorder. He was always keeping to himself and his computers and I remember trying to bring him to school upon which he would get very sick and throw-up on the way. He had no friends and frequently told me that he wanted me to take him away from his mother. Sheryl was very verbally abusive to Will saying he was a freak and abnormal and that she wished he was a normal kid. Sheryl is quite a different person behind closed doors and has a very dependent personality. She always needed someone to take care of her. That is why she got married within 6 weeks of our divorce. This is also the reason she wants Will around. I am sure that she does not encourage him to be on his own to satisfy her own need of having to be taken care of.

Will has told me that she is still taking narcotics and drinking even though she has advanced hep C which she acquired by using needles. Fortunately, I have been tested and do not have it. Hep C is hard to contract sexually.

I believe that the bottom line is that Will is stuck in this toxic environment and relationship with his mother and his social anxiety is also preventing him from leaving. He is lashing out because of it. He lacks any social support or encouragement and has adapted the "blame everyone else" defense mechanisms of his mother. I think that Will would benefit from some intense counseling and residential treatment. As you can see, all I could do is offer him support and help but he has been conditioned against me.

My GF and I have her three children (young adults) who are close to Will's age and two are in college at this time and one lives outside of our home. I am not in a position to offer Will a place here without discussing it with my GF and do not see the point if Will is unwilling to leave his mother.

I know that Sheryl is not a nurse. Possibly a CNA but she had tried taking one course at U-Maine and gave up. For the 20+ years I was with her she tried to do many things but always gave up without even putting in an effort. She only worked once at a bakery for one day and they sent her home saying that she was too slow. Don't get me wrong about Sheryl. She was a different person once, very honest and kind. The drug addiction is what changed her into a different person. She puts the drugs and her needs first now and she is just using Will. I was shocked when Will told me he had to borrow \$700 from Robin to get a car years ago when a lot of money was awarded to Sheryl that was supposed to be for Will.

Well, all I could do now is see if re responds to my e-mail. Sorry, I wrote so much but as you know, at least half of what I do is type reports, assessments, evaluations, etc.. which is what I have to get back to...

Thanks again,

Sincerely,
Henry Welna

ps/ Seems to me that you have extensive knowledge or work in an area of, or related to Human Services.

On Mon, Dec 10, 2012 at 8:17 AM, Sandra Jimothy Rustle

[REDACTED]@tormail.org wrote:

Forgot to say, I have not told him I am talking with you. You are right that it would just stress him out, and cause him to lash out. But your insight is invaluable!

From: Henry Michael Welna <henry.welna@maine.edu>
To: Sandra Jimothy Rustle <[REDACTED]@tormail.org>
Sent: Sunday, December 9, 2012 8:19 AM

Subject: Re: Hoping to talk with you

Thanks for writing back. Sounds like they are staying at Sheryl's sisters farm off of the Chamberline Hwy going towards Meriden. I thought Sheryl had gotten married? How does Sheryl support herself? Just curious. I have not been in CT for about 20 years and have no plans of going down unless I have to. I am very busy here.

It sounds like you care about Will so just to give you background info, Sheryl became addicted to Oxy because of migraine headaches. She was up to over 200 mg a day when her doctor shut her off as well as the local hospitals. As you probably know, it is hard to stop Oxy addiction and impossible for that amount. Will had called the police on his mom because she was drinking and drugging heavily and DHS gave custody of Will to me. Sheryl had no choice but to take everything and run to CT to get drugs. While I was fixing dinner for everyone, Sheryl must have accidentally or intentionally started a fire in a garbage can in my guitar studio and she called the fire department. The fire was out and could have been put out with a glass of water but she told them I was burning the house down. They removed me and Sheryl called Robin to come clean out the house into her horse trailer and off they went to CT. She took out a restraining order so I could only send letters. I am sure they never gave Will the letters. In accordance with the divorce agreement Sheryl was supposed to give Will about \$30,000 for his schooling from me but Will said he did not know a thing about it. For years I wrote letters to Sheryl's mothers house. We had closed down the guitar shop we owned prior to the divorce so I decided to enroll at University of Maine and within four years received a BS degree in Mental Health with a minor in Psychology. I work in that field presently while taking graduate courses (and CE) toward a masters. Like I said, I offered to pay for Will's college (again) but last minute he decided to stay in CT, no doubt influenced by his mother and her family who may not be aware of her substance dependence problems.

I met my present GF who is a professional woman with three college degrees and is a published author. I write Will once in a while and he seldom writes me back and when he does it is usually only a few words. Well, all I could say is that if he would contact me I would certainly help him. I could see how he can get crazy living with his mom. I think it best if he does not know about this communication as it may upset him and put you at risk. All I could suggest for now is to encourage him to contact me or get out of where he is and of course cut down on any substance use like alcohol. I would ask him what he wants to become. What steps he is taking to achieve the goal and where he sees himself say a year or two from now if he takes steps to change his life.

Well, I have to get back to work, but feel free to write me anytime. I love Will and care about him and hope he can make the right choice to turn his lifestyle around. He is very intelligent and that is his strength. Presently his mother is enabling him and his lifestyle is toxic.

Thanks,
Henry Welna

On Sun, Dec 9, 2012 at 6:19 AM, Sandra Jimothy Rustle <[REDACTED]@tormail.org wrote:

I do know where he lives. His information is freely available on the internet actually, you just have to know where to look. In fact, another gal and myself called law enforcement a year apart and had them check on him because he was raging and threatening to kill himself, even going so far as to say he had taken horse tranquilizers and had a gun. Both times a welfare check was done.

I know that no parents wants to hear the bad things about their kid, but you sound like you are diplomatic about him. I wish I could say the same for Sheryl. She defends him tooth and nail even though he calls her horrible names to her face and rages at her. I think she enables his lifestyle in that he lives with her, he does not have a job(he hasn't for several years), etc. He just lives in his room, staying up for days at a time while he attacks people on the internet (he calls himself a "master troll"), and drinking way to much alcohol.

He did move out to Idaho last year, but because of his anger issues, he was sent back to live in CT with his mom. The farm they live in in Kennsington is a better space for him because, in the real world, he cannot be so aggressive to people (only online).

It is refreshing to hear you say that Will needs to take accountability For his actions. The choices we make in this life are ours, and we do need To own them. Did you learn that in your career, or are you in your career so you can teach that?

I will keep in contact with anything I can do to help. If you have questions, just ask, because (outside Sheryl), I am probably the person who knows him the best.

Much Respect.

From: Henry Michael Welna <henry.welna@maine.edu>
To: Sandra Jimothy Rustle <[REDACTED]@tormail.org>
Sent: Sunday, December 9, 2012 2:43 AM
Subject: Re: Hoping to talk with you

Greetings Sandra,

Thank you for writing me. I will help him any way I could. I have

been trying to help him but he has been turned against me by his mother and her family. He has had a rough time dealing with what they tell him about me and he knows that his mother had (and may still have) a serious addiction to narcotics. When I contact him, he either does not reply or tells me that he moved to Idaho. Just to let you know, I work as a CDC (chemical dependency counselor) which includes crisis and family counseling.

In conveying suicidal ideation, many people are seeking attention and sympathy. No suicidal ideation should be ignored. It becomes very serious when a person has concrete plans and a means to carry them out. If they are serious about suicide they will often start giving away valued possessions and may even take on a un-natural calm demeanor. People will suicide due to depression and feelings of helplessness. If you believe he is serious enough, you need to call a Crisis hot line or 911. Unfortunately Crisis lines have volunteers that have little training but will know what to do. I live in Bangor, Maine and I do not know where he lives and with who. In the infrequent communication with him, he will not tell me anything. If I knew more about him and his current situation (employment, financial stressors, support system, etc), I am more than willing to help him any way I could. He (like his mother) blames me for everything in his life. I have told him that he must make intelligent choices and take responsibility for those choices because there are consequences, good or bad. I almost had him convinced to come here to Maine and go to the University but he backed out of this several years ago.

Let me know how things go and encourage him to contact me. I am and always was willing to help.

Sincerely,
Henry Welna

On Sun, Dec 9, 2012 at 12:22 AM, Sandra Jimothy Rustle
<[REDACTED]@tormail.org wrote:

If you have time and are willing that is. I used to date your son, and I heard some pretty horrible things. Unfortunately, after a few major incidents with him, I have to rethink the things he said. I am worried about his constant state of suicidal ideation, attacks on women, etc. Any insight you could provide that would help with that would be appreciated.

Thank you in advance.