

A Hard Decision  
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I have a son who is an alcoholic. I love my son and I would like to make his life as tolerable as possible. To this end I have just done a two and a half year experiment to give my son the opportunity to get his life together.

I rented him an apartment and bought him a car after my ex-wife kicked him out of her house. I also went to Colorado and made sure that he was receiving social security disability payments and Medicare. I paid off his student loans so that he would not have deductions taken from his disability payments.

My son did recover and was able to get his drivers license back. He also started grooming himself better. I was optimistic

I constantly encouraged him to do something constructive as either a student or a volunteer. I had done everything a father could do to allow his son to make his life better, but he refused by dint of his actions that I describe below).

I live in California and my son lives in Colorado. Hence I was not observing any of what he was doing. I was however advised by a lawyer friend that I was taking a personal risk to let my son drive the car I bought for him. I felt that he was taking good care of the car and I felt that having a car was a good incentive for him not to drink because the risk for my son was too high of loosing everything. He already had two previous drunk driving convictions, one in California and one in Colorado. Colorado has severe drunk driving penalties for multiple convictions.

About two months ago my son was arrested again for drunk driving. He tried to spin the situation to me that he was not actually driving when the police came. However, it was obvious that he had trespassed onto someone's private property and that the owners had locked the gate and called the police. My son had driven up to the gate and had apparently gotten out of the car to see how to get around the gate. My son was arrested for drunk driving, did not take a Breathalyzer test, and was very belligerent, calling the lady policeman a bitch among other things. My son claimed that he was "helping a friend" when this happened but refused to give any other details about why and who was he with. My ex-wife bailed David out of jail and he was required to give urine samples three times a week until his court date.

My son called me and told me that he had failed to appear in court for his driver's license hearing., and his license was suspended for a year. He added that he had a girlfriend living with him without my permission. I knew through my ex-wife that he periodically let drunks from the street stay there, and that he even had some police action relative to one of his "guests". I told him at that time that I was going to give his car to his mother, my ex-wife, and that I would be OK if his girlfriend stayed with him. I hoped that a woman friend might be a good influence on my son.

Next, my son walked out on a session with a lawyer that I had selected. My son said that it was too expensive, but the truth is that he was still feeling the effects of his drug usage and did not like the idea that he might go to jail. I told him that I would pay for a lawyer, but he would have to find one. I was optimistic that David could beat the charges.

My son did find another lawyer, which I agreed to pay for. Then I found out that my son's girlfriend was the person my son was "helping" when he was arrested. My ex-wife's husband told me that my son's girlfriend had to go to the emergency room for too much alcohol. She also called my other son and told him to go F-off. My conclusion is now that my son's girlfriend is just another street person, a Cherokee Indian in fact, who is an alcoholic just like my son is. She is anything but a good influence.

To top it all off my son informed me that he had to sign a new lease on his apartment by the end of December, even though it was in the middle of December and his court date was in the first week of January. I wouldn't know if he had to go to jail. I decided to only commit to a long-term lease if the lawyer said that there was a good chance of getting probation. If I chose to go month-to-month there would be a 25% increase in rent. I agonized about what to do.

My initial reaction was to rent the apartment for the month of January at the higher rate, not pay for any lawyer, and let my son go to jail for whatever duration that a public defender could negotiate. My son apparently has just been gaming me for what he could get and obviously had no intention to get his life in order.

I talked with the lawyer that my son found, and he pointed out that my son was certainly going to jail. Hence, the one-month rent would work. The lawyer pointed out that he might be able to get my son into a lock-down recovery facility. He said that my son was definitely mentally ill. For example, even though he was getting urine tests my son was positive for alcohol and pot. It is now clear to me that my son has no control at all over his behavior.

My experiment is done. I have set up a special needs trust for my son with which I will pay for the rehabilitation and for another apartment when my son gets out of rehab and/or jail. I am currently having heart problems and I am committed to do whatever I think is in my son's best interest until the day I die.

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