March 27, 2015

Dear Mr. Greenagel,

My name is xxx xxxx and I just sat through the workshop you presented today on 21st century drugs. I just had to e-mail you to let you know what an impact this presentation had on me, how your words touched me and how your tears towards the end provoked my own.

I am 26 years old and have been in recovery for the past 4 years. I did my first drug at the age of 12 and my last one at the age of 22. As I'm sure you can imagine, being on drugs for 10 years wasn't easy, and getting to the point where I realized I needed (and deserved) a better, happier, and healthier life was harder. But I did it- long enough to put myself through school and become a social worker. I am tempted every single day to take five steps back..... but then I remember what life was like back then, and I don't ever want to go back to that place where I have to sell my body and sleep on the streets to get the high that never even lasted long enough to keep me happy. And then, sometimes, I meet people like you, who remind me that sobriety is possible even when it seems like it's not.

Your presentation drove me to tears. I did so many of the drugs that you spoke about today and I lived in the same hell that those children you helped lived in. I remember feeling as though there would never be a way out- not just out of the drug life but out of everything else that came with that kind of lifestyle.. the pain and the heartache and the struggle. Four years later and I am a much better version of my old self.

I was mostly touched by the end of the presentation, where you talked about how a parent thanked you for saving his child's life. I don't know that child. But what I know is that you did for him what someone did for me. You believed. You believed in the power of change. And most importantly, you believed in that hopeless addict, and helped him to believe in himself. You believed in better days for him, for people like him, for people like me.

On behalf of all of us, thank you, thank you, thank you.

My best to you always,

xxxxx