

# Epiphany

by Zachary Meier



My home has never been one where drugs are permitted. My parents have always told my brothers and me the dangers of taking drugs. They have told us that not only are drugs illegal, but they can be dangerous to us and the people around us. Even with the knowledge my parents equipped my siblings and myself with, my older brother fell into that world and did drugs anyway.

My family has moved place to place more than a few times. We moved to Phoenix, Arizona, for the second time during the summer prior to my older brother's freshman year of high school. As I have gotten older, I now realize how much a "hot spot" for drugs Phoenix really is. This influence definitely hit my brother. It was at the beginning of his freshman year that he first started doing drugs. He knew the dangers of the much more hard core drugs, and instead he smoked marijuana.

When he first started this habit, nobody in my family noticed any

changes in him. He was getting his homework done, passing all his classes, playing football, and staying out of trouble. The weed wasn't part of his life, just something he did from time to time. But as the year progressed, he regressed. He was sneaking out at night, ditching school, and his grades were slipping. My parents finally began to catch on to him. They knew when he was high, sneaking out, etc. They would ground him, and he would stay clean for a period of time. However, the influence and peer pressure would get to him, and he would just pick up where he had left off. He was heading down a path that nobody but he could choose.

The next couple years were more of the same. The only difference was his mistakes became magnified. He started to grow the plant, selling the drug, and getting into much more trouble. I remember more than a few times where he was kicked out of the house or chose to move out.

As my brother was entering his senior year, everything changed. My father caught my brother with marijuana once again, and it seemed my dad had run out of options and no longer knew what to do. He grounded my brother, talked to one of his co-worker's spouses who is a police officer. The officer arranged for my brother to go to the detention center and speak with some of the inmates. He learned of many of their situations, including how they got to where they were. He learned that many of them had been just like him, good people that made some poor choices and were unwilling to change. At about the same time, a few friends of his had been arrested, and the combination of events helped my brother realize the mistakes he had made and where the path he was following would lead.

After my brother's "epiphany," he became a new son, new brother, new friend, and new student. I had always loved him, but now we never fought. There wasn't a day that he was skipping school to get high. He passed all his classes once again, and was getting accepted by many different colleges.

Based on the end result of my brother's situation, I would say his incident was handled the right way. As his brother, I wish that he never had to experience some of the things he went through. I wish he would have been able to enjoy much more of his high school years, instead of being grounded for long periods of time. I wish he would have never been exposed to the dangers and the world drugs got him into. However, I thank the Lord that he has had these experiences; because he has matured and learned greatly from his mistakes. In my opinion, my parents and my brother got the situation handled correctly.



*The editors and staff of Alert Magazine are proud to congratulate Zachary on winning the South Dakota scholarship and would like to encourage him to pursue his academic goals. We would also like to encourage future seniors to enter our essay contest.  
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