

LIVING AND DYING AS AN ADDICT

A Tribute to the Talent and Struggles of a Deserving Gifted Client

Heinz Max Tempelmann was a very young man whose parents retained me to defend him from his first to many criminal cases for possessions of drugs, so common these days of social unrest. I got to know him and his family well. I was impressed. He was smart and sensitive and nurtured by his loving family. Max had all the benefits of a promising future. Perhaps it was his sensitivity that led him to explore deeper feelings. Perhaps it was just curiosity that led him to experiment with drugs. Perhaps it was a party with friends that began his journey into the abyss of drug addiction. It does not really matter to his family and friends how it all started – now that his gifted life was taken by such a hideous unbreakable addiction. But it should matter a great deal to the countless others who may follow Max's footsteps in his journey to life's end. Listen to Max's experiences that cry out warnings to take another path. Listen to his plea that will give his life purpose and meaning to others. May God bless him and provide comfort to his parents, Nancy and Heinz Tempelmann.

Max wrote a poem at an early age, one of many throughout his short life. He was kind and sensitive and appreciative of what we all should be appreciative of in life.

EARLY POEM

Oh, what a beautiful night!
The dark sky seemed as deep as an ocean
and the stars
embedded this ocean of darkness
and glittered like gold in the sky.

I taste the fresh air
I feel the smooth breeze on my face
I smell the charred wood from a fire
I see the bright stars
I hear the calmness,
peace,
and tranquility of earth.

Max Tempelmann (fourth grade)

During his last days at a treatment facility, Max wrote to his grandmother expressing optimism that he could beat his addiction. He struggled hard without lasting success.



God
Bless
You

To: Oma

From: Max

Oma

To My Dearest Grandmother,

I write to you
because it has been
too long since the
last time we spoke.

I often wonder, how you are doing.
Thinking of you makes me proud because
you survived and kept your dignity through
the most difficult of situations.

I feel dead inside when I think of
the time I have wasted and the shame
I have put on my name.

I have ~~4~~ something to tell you, which
is that since March I have been
living in a place where I can't work, take
classes, exercise, and most importantly
not take drugs. The living conditions
are not the best, and I would kill
for a stuffed cabbage roll, but for once
I am at peace.

If you wonder what's going on with me, just know I am happy. I have friends that respect me. There are not many European people here, but I make sure to set a good example for the younger ones. I haven't even smoked a real cigarette in months.

I plan to stay here for a few more months until I know I am strong enough to resist my past temptations. If I am lucky, I will even get a ^{free} apartment and a job on the outside when I leave where I'm at.

The next time you see me, you will see the healthy man god intended me to be. I miss you so much, but my absence is not in vain. I am getting stronger every day.

Sincerely,

Max

I so wanted Max Tempelmann to succeed in his recovery. His many court cases paled in comparison to the serious consequences of not staying sober, and to the risks of ingesting substances that are cooked up and cut by criminal suppliers, uninterested in anything but their drug dealing profits. It is a failure not only of the drug user to recover from his addiction, but also it is a social failure to assure available and effective rehabilitation – and effective measures against drug manufacturers and suppliers. We all can and should do better to make that happen. It is hoped that Max will be remembered, and that his gentle and precious life will be inspiring to others.

Rest, my friend, in the peace that you found. May Heaven hold you closely.

Warren J. Breslin