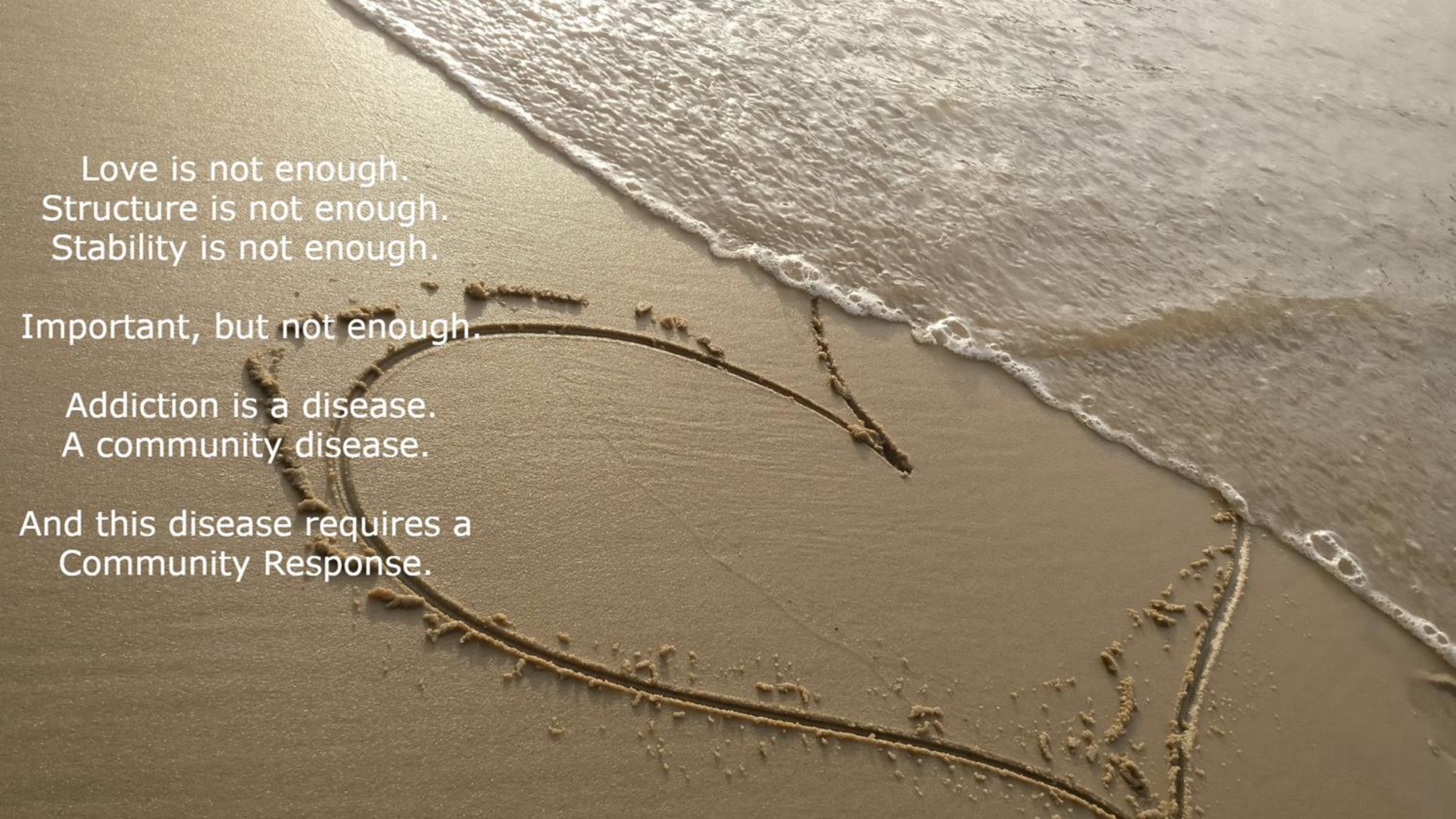




What I Wish the World Understood

Pattie Vargas, MA
Kessler Certified Grief Educator
Certified Grief Informed Professional
Peer Parent Coach, CRAFT and ITC
Author and Advocate
Mom

An aerial photograph of a beach. The top right corner shows the ocean with white foam from waves washing onto the shore. The rest of the image is a wide expanse of golden sand. In the lower-left and center, there is a large, hand-drawn shape on the sand, resembling a stylized letter 'A' or a similar symbol. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image in white, sans-serif font.

Love is not enough.
Structure is not enough.
Stability is not enough.

Important, but not enough.

Addiction is a disease.
A community disease.

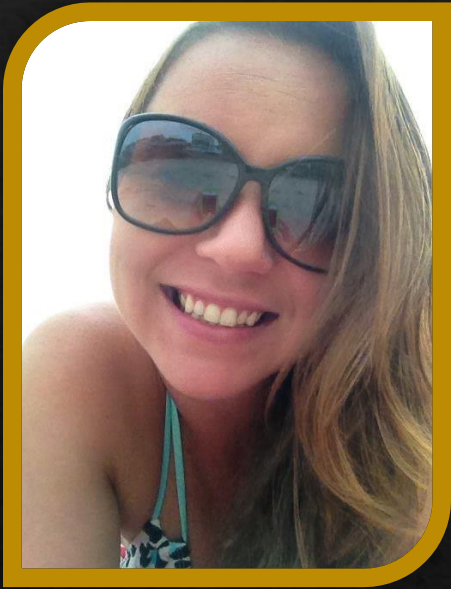
And this disease requires a
Community Response.

Let's Just Stop Thinking ...

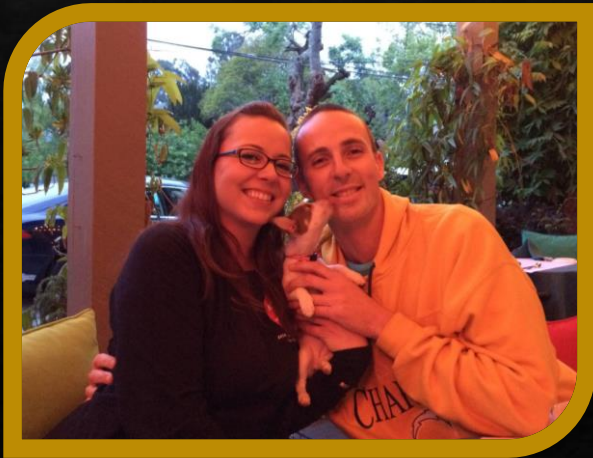
- ❖ This will never happen in my family
- ❖ People who use drugs are criminals
- ❖ You must have caused this
- ❖ If they haven't gotten it right after X number of times, they never will
- ❖ If they loved me, they'd just stop
- ❖ Addiction is a choice
- ❖ Anything other than "tough love" is just enabling

Our Journey with Joel





Not One,
But Two ...



November 2017



Reframing the Family's Approach to Substance Use

Maybe this behavior made sense all along

What if we could have more empathetic, meaningful conversations

No one wants to live this way

What works for others might not work for my family

It really isn't about me after all

Maybe it doesn't need to be all or nothing

A Community for Healing



A Community-Focused Response Ensures:

- ❖ A continuum of care with no gap between identification > treatment > recovery support > sustainable wellness > reintegration
- ❖ Readily accessible, equitable, and varied treatment modalities
- ❖ Integrated and collaborative responses from first responders, emergency room staff, healthcare providers, mental health professionals, street teams, shelters
- ❖ Education that normalizes, rather than stigmatizes
- ❖ The focus is on restoration, not isolation and punishment

Ways To Connect

- ❖ Website: <https://theresilientjourney.net>
- ❖ Grief Support: <https://theresilientjourney.net/grief-support>
- ❖ Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/theresilientjourney>
- ❖ Twitter: @TheResilientJo1 or @pattiev
- ❖ YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@FamilyGrief>
- ❖ pattie@theresilientjourney.net 760-420-8444



Bekah: Sobriety Date
11-17-2021



Joel David
1981-2017