Dear Mom and Dad,

I wake up every day and the first thing on my mind is getting high. I can’t stand to be in my own skin any longer. If I feel for too long, I shrivel up inside. I can’t feel this pain. I have to escape it and be rid of it and the only way I know how to do this is by using drugs. I know I’ve disappointed you. I know you had big plans for my life, and I want to say this is not your fault.

I’ll take the responsibility. I will not remember the traumatic details of my past. And those that were not so traumatic, but hurt nonetheless, I will not remember those either. People don’t see me the way you see me. They look through me. Another statistic. They call me a junkie, an addict. I am of no use to them. I don’t recognize myself in the mirror anymore. I used to be happy. I know this. But, I am not happy now.

I see your missed calls on my phone. I know you are trying to reach me. But, what can I say? I am ashamed, embarrassed, afraid. I don’t want to hear how much I am hurting you. I know that’s selfish but I don’t know another way to live.

The drugs control me. Everything I do revolves around getting high or finding a way to get high. I know no other life. I know you say that you can help me. You ask me to stop and I tell you I will. I really want to stop, but I don’t know how. I have plans to go to treatment. I don’t want to live this life. But, I can’t go today, or tomorrow, or next week. I am not ready to face the reality of my situation.

At times I feel hopeless. My thoughts are dark. I think of what it would be like to not be here any longer. The thing that is keeping me alive and hopeful is your love. You are angry with me and I understand. I am angry at myself. But, you still tell me you love me. You still answer the phone when I call. Your belief in me allows me to have belief in myself. When you tell me I can recover, I actually believe you. I do.

But, recovery seems far away and it seems hard. I’ve tried before and every time I leave treatment, I end up relapsing. I don’t know how to stay sober in the world I live in. There is so much shame and grief. I don’t know how to handle my own feelings without drugs. I follow direction, but I am constantly triggered. My cravings consume me. I know you don’t understand that and I pray that you never will. But, the drugs hold power over me and I fear they always will.

I know the difficulty in loving me. So many of my friends and other people who were once close to me have given up. They don’t answer my calls. They are tired of trying to help me. I get it. I do. I have manipulated everyone around me. I have lied to you. I have been heartless and selfish and at times completely devoid of empathy for you and the situation you are in.

I make promises to myself to quit and I truly want to stop. I flush all my pills and paraphernalia down the toilet. I feel like I am constantly starting over. I can never stay away from drugs for very long. I pray that you keep calling me. I don’t want you to give up on me. If you gave up on me, I don’t know what I would do. Someone once told me to hang on to hope. That’s what I am doing. Will you do that for me too? Will you pray that I recover?

I want to tell you I am sorry. I have ignored your feelings for far too long. You have offered your help and I keep turning it down. I keep lying to myself and you by telling myself that I am not ready and that I can’t do this. Guess what? I can. I can do this.

I am going to answer your call. I am going to say yes to treatment. I don’t want to die and I don’t want to live this life anymore. Please hold out hope for one more day. I can do this, but I can’t do it alone. I love you. I am sorry. Please help me. Please don’t give up on me. I think I am ready. Will you help me?