

Jesse's Story

Jesse was a son of professional parents in a well-to-do Toronto neighbourhood -- a normal childhood, lots of friends, a girlfriend, an athlete, an outgoing and cheerful teenager. Until schizophrenia stole him away.

"His family, helplessly, watched Jesse vanish, as surely as if he had been kidnapped. They didn't recognize the shaggy, bearded intruder who now lay like a zombie in the bedroom upstairs and ranted at them about God."

In less than a year, there was a police car in the driveway, and their son was handcuffed and put in a cruiser. His parents weren't without resources -- his dad a successful architect, his mom a lawyer who knew her way around the system, friends who were psychologists. Even with all of that, it took appointment after appointment and many hours composing an affidavit to get him help.

Jesse's recovery was remarkable. He went on to work as an advisor for the Canadian Mental Health Association -- living proof that his story doesn't have to be the exception. It can be the norm.

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