There used to be a time when you made me feel loved and wanted. I couldn’t wait to come home after school knowing that you’d be waiting for me along with all of my favorite snacks, ready to give me a big hug and ask me how my day went. I used to sit in your lap while you helped me read my chapter books. You used to show up to things. You used to get to know my friends. You used to encourage me. But you’re not that person anymore. I watched as your addiction consumed you and turned you into a monster. Your loving words turned into hateful actions. I watched as you became angry at the world until your substances were the only thing that mattered anymore. Nothing was good enough for you, and nothing could save you... not even me.

It took me a long time to realize what was even going on. I was old enough to know that drugs were bad, but still young enough that I had no idea what they looked like or how a person may act while taking them. I didn’t know that when you locked yourself in your room with strangers you were getting high, or that it wasn’t normal for people to sleep for twenty hours at a time. I used to think that maybe if I had asked other adults more questions I would have figured it out sooner and you could have gotten help. I used to think that if maybe my sister and I didn’t fight as much, or if I didn’t complain every time you told me to do something, that maybe you wouldn’t have been so stressed out all the time. But the truth is, it wasn’t my fault. It wasn’t my sister’s fault. This was all on you.

An Open Letter To The Parent That Chose Drugs Over Me
Written By Jayme Bigger

The effects of childhood trauma follow people for a lifetime. Effective therapy is necessary to help them lead healthier lives.

By Carolyn Steber

If something traumatic happened to you as a kid — like some form of abuse — it’s possible your brain may have repressed the negative memories, leading to all sorts of issues as an adult. You might experience anxiety, have a fear of abandonment, or feel really strange in certain situations. It can be frustrating, especially if you don’t know why you’re feeling this way.

That’s why it’s good to know the signs you might be repressing negative childhood memories, mostly so you can get yourself to a therapist ASAP. “These unresolved memories can stifle [your] growth and development [and lead] to a ‘stunted’ adulthood in terms of self-esteem and personal identity,” says licensed professional counselor and psychotherapist Bruce W. Cameron, in an email to Bustle. “It is very important to go to therapy to unlock the memories and likely trauma.”

Where there is anger there is always pain underneath.

- Eckhart Tolle
Join AMP for a week of fun and learning!

Variety AMP Camp will be held from June 19 - June 24 at the Forest Lake Camp in Bloomfield, Iowa. Thanks to the generosity of Variety the Children's Charity, this will mark the eighth year of camp for foster/adoptive youth. Variety AMP Camp has room for 50 teens, ages 15-18, and 10 mentors from Aftercare & PAL programs. Campers will participate in camp activities geared toward teens; the focus of AMP camp is to build advocacy & leadership skills, improve relationships and practice transitioning to adulthood. Youth are encouraged to be AMP members or attend an AMP council meeting previous to camp attendance. Your attendance is based on the application below and your willingness and ability to follow our camper expectations. All activities will emphasize building healthy, active, and involved AMP leaders. Mentors are encouraged to share their personal story with other campers and staff with the goal of building personal pride in their journey and hope for a brighter future.

Previous campers rave about AMP Camp!

Applications are available on the AMP website so reserve your spot now!
http://www.ampiowa.org/en/happenings/variety_amp_camp/2019_variety_amp_camp_applications/