



How My Father's Decision to Embrace Sobriety Changed Lives

Douglas J. Swanson, University of Missouri-St. Louis

On this Father's Day, I'm remembering the profound legacy left by my dad — a legacy that reminds us how the right support at the right moment can change not only one life, but many.

More than 30 years ago, my dad decided to stop drinking. A natural salesperson, he had worked for years in insurance and later in auto sales for a friend who owned several car dealerships. One day, his friend told him, "You have a drinking problem, and it's affecting your work." Dad said, "Ok, I'll quit drinking."

Knowing him, he probably could have quit on his own. But what made the difference was that his boss didn't just identify the problem — he offered support. He told Dad he could keep his job and his health insurance if he went to a 28-day treatment program. When Dad returned, his position would be waiting.