

A Family Thing: Talking with Unlikely Songwriter Patricia Bronson

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For the entirety of our Artists in Recovery Series, Recovery Unplugged has been focusing on how musicians use music to help cultivate and sustain their recovery. Our latest installment flips the script and discusses how the love of family can be expressed through music to help addicts bounce back and overcome drugs and alcohol. Recovery Unplugged recently had the honor of speaking with one mother who realized just how valuable music can be as a source of healing and empowerment. This is a woman who is determined to take control of her own story, and we were happy to help her tell it.

There are mothers and then there is Patricia Bronson. Patricia is from Pelham, New Hampshire and her daughter is one of thousands of addicts in a state that has been essentially **decimated** by **heroin** and prescription **opioid** abuse. She developed an alcohol problem in college; but like many parents, Patricia didn't recognize her daughter's drinking problem until it was too late: "I just kind of wrote it off as a typical teenager going off to college. But it had become more excessive and it came to the point where she was really making bad decisions and hurting herself." Eventually Patricia guided her daughter into a treatment facility in Florida, where she remained for about nine months.

Unfortunately, however, the story doesn't end there. After a stint at another rehab in Maine and a subsequent year in a half of sobriety, Patricia's daughter soon found herself battling heroin addiction: "She called me one Sunday and said 'I need to check myself into rehab.' I said 'You're drinking again?' and that's when she actually told me 'No, I'm doing heroin.' We had tried to convince her to go back to Florida, but she didn't want to go." It took her daughter three days to find help, a problem that many vulnerable New Hampshire residents face, despite a glaring need for increased treatment resources throughout the state. On the last day, with assistance from her mother, she found a facility in Massachusetts. She completed a day-program and has been sober ever since.

As the mother of an addict, Patricia has done everything she possibly can to make sure her daughter gets the help, love and support she needs, including penning a song for her when she reached an important milestone: "The first one was for her one year of sobriety [from alcohol]," says Bronson. "What we did as a family is we took verses and turned them into a hip-hop song."

After finalizing the lyrics, Patricia collaborated with a production company in Pennsylvania to bring the piece to life. The partnership has continued through three other works. She and the rest of her family presented the song to her daughter at a meeting.

Patricia wrote the first song so that her daughter could have a constant reminder of the support in her life when she felt vulnerable: “It was for her to continuously listen to when the days got tough.” Her writing credits don’t end there. As an active member of the [Pelham Community Coalition](#), an organization dedicated to educating and empowering the Pelham community about substance abuse to prevent overdose, Pat put her frustration with her town’s lack of action toward this crisis to music. “The town, itself, is still in denial that they have a problem. It’s very hard to get people to talk about it because [they think] it’s never going to happen to them.”

For her own part, Patricia has no plans to stop writing songs to chronicle important events in her life: “I could get hit by a bus tomorrow and these songs are always going to be there.”

In a subsequent conversation, Patricia informed me that there have been multiple overdoses in Pelham since the interview, leaving two dead.

Topics: [Recovery](#), [Treatment](#), [Alcoholism](#), [Heroin Addiction](#), [Music](#)



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