

Mission Moments

Made Possible By YOU!

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“I feel human again.”

Sometimes the positive impact of Tangram’s work on individual lives is best described by the people and the families who experience it. In March, Tangram received the following note from Gary Wobler, whose daughter, Sandra, was helped through Tangram’s HELP Resource Center:

“It’s been nearly 12 months since we last communicated. At that time, my daughter, Sandra, was experiencing her emotional problems as she had over the many years. As a small child, my late wife did everything possible to change the situation, but to no avail. That included the Toledo [Children’s] Hospital and others. That was 50-55 years ago. Throughout her life, she dealt with emotional problems, but then, if that wasn’t enough, shortly after her mother passed away from breast cancer, Sandra was found with it as well...At the time I had contacted you, she was experiencing her usual, but shortly after, it became much worse—to the point I thought we would lose her. One psychiatrist gave up on her, another gave her more drugs. She ended up in the ER at least five times.”



Above: Gary, Sandra, and Megan smile as they celebrate how far Sandra has come.

That’s just the beginning of Sandra’s story. When her father, Gary, learned about Tangram, their family was at breaking point. Diagnosed with bipolar disorder and a developmental disability, Sandra’s mental health was unpredictable, putting a strain on her family and jeopardizing her ability to live independently. Gary didn’t know where to turn and was losing hope. His stepdaughter recommended Tangram and he reached out immediately.

Two members of Tangram’s leadership met with Gary and Sandra and determined that Sandra would be a good candidate for the HELP Resource Center, a free Tangram service that helps individuals access community resources and supports for which they qualify. The service provides someone to walk alongside an individual and help identify and connect with these resources. Megan Lauman, a licensed social worker, is the manager of the HELP Resource Center. She oversees a team of BSW and MSW interns who are trained to identify available resources.

Megan reached out to Sandra’s schools, which, unbelievably, still had Sandra’s special education records. Having this health history helped Megan find a starting point. She determined that Sandra was being treated by three different mental health providers who were not communicating with one another. Each provider was prescribing different medications, which led

to Sandra ending up in a manic state. Megan found a new mental health provider for Sandra, one with experience in working with people with developmental disabilities. Once Sandra's medications were stabilized, she was in a much better place. Megan also worked with Sandra to apply for health insurance and find a job.

In a recent interview, Gary said, "I want to show you something." After scrolling through his phone for a few minutes, he found a photo of Sandra in the throes of a severe panic attack. With tears in his eyes, he looked at Megan and said, "I can delete this photo now."

Now for the rest of the story, as told by Gary in his note to Tangram:

"Along came Tangram and your own Megan. With her guidance and help, Sandra is an altogether new person. Megan provided a counselor, which Sandra doesn't visit anymore, but can if needed. That alone is remarkable...She's happier than I've ever seen her—her speech has changed dramatically. She laughs and now has a great husband and wife relationship...and further, she now takes pride in her self and is working alongside her husband. And never complains like before.

"Only us near to her can explain the change in her life. 'She has it back.' It brings tears to my eyes every time I think about what has transpired. The supporters of Tangram should hear the story and how their contributions have affected others. This is not just about Sandra's life but our entire family."

For her part, Sandra is also grateful—grateful for Megan and for the fact that her father never gave up on her. "I feel human again," she explained.

Outcomes like these are only possible because of the generous support of our donors. The HELP Resource Center is completely free for individuals to use. Your donations allow Tangram to provide individualized support to the people who need it most, like Sandra and her family.

To support HELP Resource Center, please make a donation at www.thetangramway.org/donate. Thank you!

