



### **GHCC Shalom Ministry Welcomes Speaker Gary Mendell, founder & CEO of Shatterproof**

Rev. David Rowe welcomed Gary Mendell, founder & CEO of Shatterproof, to the Greenfield Hill Church on October 25, 2022, as part of the church's Shalom Ministry Speaker Series. Over 50 people gathered that evening to learn from Mr. Mendell about the national non-profit organization he founded in 2013 dedicated to reversing the addiction crisis.

Gary spoke poignantly of the loss of his son, Brian, at age 25, after his valiant struggle for many years with addiction and its relentless cycle of shame, isolation, and failure. After losing Brian, Gary promised to do everything he could to spare other families the pain his family had experienced. He spoke of how he has been inspired to engage the public with him and to build a national movement to treat addiction like other chronic diseases while offering evidence-based resources for prevention, treatment, and recovery. "This movement will foster tolerance and compassion, and dismantle the discrimination and judgment associated with this devastating disease," said Gary.

Shatterproof's goal is to transform the treatment system, end the stigma that dehumanizes those with addiction, change the language and image around substance abuse disease, and be a source of encouragement and advocacy.

Presenting alarming statistics, Gary outlined that there is much to accomplish. Addiction afflicts more than 22 million Americans every day and impacts tens of millions of family members that love them. It is the third largest cause of death in the U.S. behind cancer and heart disease, and the main cause of death among young people. Yet, as Gary explained, there is not one nationally known, well-funded organization devoted to funding research and implementing national standards of care for addiction through healthcare systems like other diseases. "Shatterproof wants to help empower citizens through science-based evidence to help reverse this public health crisis."

The [Shatterproof website](#) provides a wealth of addiction treatment resources through [ATLAS](#) (Addiction Treatment Locator, Assessment and Standards Platform), a free public-facing website now available in ten states and rapidly expanding, to help individuals with addiction and their family members locate high-quality addiction treatment. [There is also an Addiction Treatment Needs Assessment](#) to direct people to the correct type of treatment. Additionally, Shatterproof is focused on ending addiction stigma, advocating for change, and engaging and empowering communities. We encourage those who wish to get involved to visit, <https://shatterproof.org/blog/resolve-get-involved-shatterproof>.

Please go to the [Greenfield Hill Church's YouTube channel](#) to view Gary Mendell's inspiring presentation about Shatterproof's mission, activities, and many valuable resources.

*This new speaker series is just one part of the new [Shalom Ministry](#) launched at the Greenfield Hill Congregational Church in September 2022 by pastors Rev. David Rowe and Rev. Alida Ward. "We are living in a world with dramatically increasing need for mental health information and resources," said David. "Our mission is to be with people in their journey through mental health crises, whether within themselves, or among loved ones; to identify and bring resources that help along that journey. We need to be an encouragement for each other; to be the source of Good News at the heart of our faith."*