**CORE VALUE – THINK TWICE**

The number ‘one’ has had different definitions for me throughout my life. It started off as just a number. Over time, it started to mean a position. And that stayed the case up until one moment where I truly understood the meaning of ‘one’.

On October 18th 2019, I got a call that would shatter my heart. It was the mother of one of my closest friends from college. In a terrified voice, she tells me that my friend had met with an accident and that he was in the hospital. I couldn’t believe what I was hearing, because it was only a little while ago that I had talked to him and everything seemed fine. Not knowing any of the details, I rushed to the hospital only to find out that it was too late.

We hadn’t known each other for very long, just over a year in fact. But in that time, we became very close. I started eating my meals and spending a lot of after-class time at his house and over time, his mother started considering me a second child. In the very essence of the word, we had become family. He had just lost his father a few years ago and being a single child, he was all his mother had left.

At the hospital, I found out that it was a car accident where my friend was drunk. It took me a while to come to terms with the fact that my friend was no longer there. When I did, my emotions started to creep in. But then I saw his mother. She was crying her heart out. Trying to hide my tears and put up a brave face, I go up to her and she just hugs me. Barely able to speak, the only words that came out of her mouth were. “What did I do wrong?”

That absolutely broke me.

It made me realize that ‘one’ decision could ruin yours and your family’s life.

His mother passed away 5 days later of a heart attack.

People say that every drop of water makes an ocean. I learnt that every single decision you make creates a future. It is the ‘ones’ of everything that makes a difference.

I vowed to never drink again. It’s been almost 3 years and every day I wake up knowing that I have to think twice about every decision I make.

I am not an emotional person, but I came across a poem but takes me back to that night and reminds me of the consequences of drunk driving on others and it always brings a tear to my eye.

I went to a party Mom,  
I remembered what you said.  
You told me not to drink, Mom,  
So I drank soda instead.

I really felt proud inside, Mom,  
The way you said I would.  
I didn't drink and drive, Mom,  
Even though the others said I should.

I know I did the right thing, Mom,  
I know you are always right.  
Now the party is finally ending, Mom,  
As everyone is driving out of sight.

As I got into my car, Mom,  
I knew I'd get home in one piece.  
Because of the way you raised me,  
So responsible and sweet.

I started to drive away, Mom,  
But as I pulled out into the road,  
The other car didn't see me, Mom,  
And hit me like a load.

As I lay there on the pavement, Mom,  
I hear the policeman say,  
"The other guy is drunk," Mom,  
And now I'm the one who will pay.

I'm lying here dying, Mom....  
I wish you'd get here soon.  
How could this happen to me, Mom?  
My life just burst like a balloon.

There is blood all around me, Mom,  
And most of it is mine.  
I hear the medic say, Mom,  
I'll die in a short time.

I just wanted to tell you, Mom,  
I swear I didn't drink.  
It was the others, Mom.  
The others didn't think.

Why do people drink, Mom?  
It can ruin your whole life.  
I'm feeling sharp pains now.  
Pains just like a knife.

The guy who hit me is walking, Mom,  
And I don't think it's fair.  
I'm lying here dying  
And all he can do is stare.

Tell my brother not to cry, Mom.  
Tell Daddy to be brave.  
And when I go to heaven, Mom,  
Put "GOOD BOY " on my grave.

My breath is getting shorter, Mom.  
I'm becoming very scared.  
Please don't cry for me, Mom.  
When I needed you, you were always there.

I have one last question, Mom.  
Before I say good bye.  
I didn't drink and drive,  
So why am I the one to die?

Thank You.