



Stories of recovery
from addiction:

I did it for my boys

My family were all growing up they were teenagers and at the age where maybe they would start drugs and drink and I thought, I don't want them to see me like this – I don't want them to be like this, the way I was. It was a horrible life, taking a drink and drugs to blank out what was in my mind, put me to sleep, I hid away in my room. And I thought I don't want to be like this.

I started feeling an awful fear. Thinking about death, what would happen to my boys if I wasn't here? I thought about how my mother and father would be ashamed of me.

And I felt as if they'd all be watching what I was doing.

A fear went into my chest and I thought I was going to have heart attacks, I was panicking, couldn't sleep, tossing and turning, pure fear. I just wanted to open the door and walk away for ever, I wanted to join my mother and then I'd think about my boys and didn't want to. One of these times, my boys phoned NHS24. They spoke to my boy, I was on medication for depression at the time, and they took me to hospital and that's how we discovered that it was through the drinking that I'd been feeling the fear. They offered me counselling and all the rest of it. I said 'yes' at the time "get me back to my old self, build me back up" but when they said it would involve social workers,

I took an awful fright and said 'No' I don't want them coming anywhere near me.

I saw a doctor for counselling and I screamed that 'I didn't want to be like this' and he said 'That's all I need to hear'. So he arranged all my further counselling for me. I think it was a sister who first came out to see me, she threw her arms around me and I started to feel quite contented. The Dr. actually said to me, 'we don't want to see you back here'. The sister mentioned social workers again and it put me right off, I wanted to do this myself. I wanted to do it for my boys too, but I was worried about them knowing I had a social worker.

But then I took another drink and ended up back in the hospital. I opened up and talked a lot in hospital. I said I'd take counselling again. So I got the letter from the hospital that referred me to a local women's help group. I was delighted because I felt too ashamed to go to AA and let people know I was like that. So I've landed here and it's been a great help to me. We all get to know one another and I'm more confident. We're all dead close. I don't need to bother with anyone else because I've got my friends and my sisters and my boys. If I say I'm not going today my boys say 'You're going!' And if there's anything that crops up or getting me down, the boys say, 'Are you going to your

wee group tomorrow?’ That’s what we call it, my ‘wee group’. The boys support me and always encourage me to go to the group. Now I can get up and go out the door. Before I just sat on the couch or went to my room to cry. I can go anywhere. I’ve got my bus pass. I’m sixty now, but before, it was the cost of getting about that put me off. I can go to my sister’s, to the shops, to the group. The bus pass has given me some amount of freedom because we were poverty stricken.

I’m getting on now and maybe I should wind down but I just want to be active, get out and about. My mother was like that, she was left to bring up eight of us, my father died when he was 45. She never took a drink in her life and managed all us without a father. I felt so ashamed and guilty, the guilt was ripping me apart when I was sober. Coming to the group knowing you’re not the only one helps.

For my boys I just want everything to be perfect. But it just doesn’t go like that because I can’t live everybody else’s life for them. So now I’m just trying to be fine in myself and hope they follow my example. But hey now I’ve got a grandson and he’s 3 and I dote on him and I want to live my life and see them all get settled.

Now I’ve got a grandson and he’s 3 and I dote on him and I want to live my life

You can read other stories
of recovery from addictions at
www.storiesofrecovery.org.uk

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enough to share their stories for the greater good.

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