



Making recovery visible

In Sheffield we know that there are 100's if not 1000's of untold stories (often shared in closed groups) that the general population don't get to hear about. Sheffield Recovery Forum is STILL on a mission to change that.

Debbie Mason

What was life like for you before – what was happening at this time?

I drank quite a lot during my first marriage although the marriage wasn't perfect, my drinking definitely added to its dissolve, although looking back, I didn't see it and pushed my first husband away into someone else's arms.

Yeah okay, he wasn't perfect either, but it's taken me a long time to admit it was probably 70% my fault (that's hard to say)!

I met my present gorgeous hubby, Lee 15 years ago we were married only a year into the relationship, so he didn't really know how bad the problem was.

It still kills me to this day that I can't really remember our wedding in Jamaica!

Juggling step kids etc didn't help every weekend! My drinking got worse, I started hiding bottles everywhere thinking I was clever, he knew but never said anything for a while. I was okay wasn't I? I was working, functioning?.

But in 2012 My dad passed suddenly, my world fell apart giving me the perfect excuse to drink into oblivion every day, I was grieving, (wasn't I?) It numbed it!

What was the turning point for you and how did this come about?

In 2016, My mortgage was up on the house from my previous marriage and we couldn't get a mortgage to keep it, we were officially going to be homeless in 8 weeks!!! again, the drink numbed it but lee, my hubby started to notice cracks. In the previous months he had threatened to leave me on several occasions. Id tried to take my own life twice obviously not very successfully, thank god.

The next few weeks were hell, drunken arguments not coming in till all hours etc. I made his life hell, and my kids who were teenagers at the time. One day god was shining on us a house became available to rent, a perfect house for me as a beautician, with a salon room! (Up until then, I'd been renting a room would often secretly drink and sleep in there too)

Something inside me clicked and I decided new house ... new start.

What has helped in your recovery – agencies, peer groups etc?

First, I made a doctor's appointment she told me I would either end up with Korsikov dementia or dead within 5 years! My BAC (blood alcohol count) was through the roof! so I went to SASS meetings a few times. I was put on Thiamine, Vit B, Acamprosate for the cravings and iron tablets.

I really struggled at first in the new house but soon my friends realised my situation they were amazing and my family! I decided to go and see a hypnotist, who told me he didn't really take addicts of brain changing substances on due to the medical implications, but something told him to help me? I had three sessions with him. The rest is history!!! and is staying there!

What is life like now?

I have been sober now for 4 years on the 27th September this year 2020 and life is AMAZING. I've been abroad three times now and found alternative drinks. I am so very happily married to the same man.

I had bittersweet news during the COVID lockdown, I missed the birth of my first granddaughter and lost my beautiful mum the following day. I did consider a drink, but I managed to keep busy in the house cleaning baking etc and somehow I found the strength to stay abstinent

I just want to say to anyone who thinks they can't do it or there's no point, please read my story, I once NEVER thought I would find myself no longer dependant on Alcohol.

That poison screwed my head up for years but putting it down it is like waking up from a coma! I can actually smell the flowers, hear the birds... meditate and all that shit now, who'd have thought eh...

This is dedicated is for you my darling husband and my two children who I adore, and I couldn't have done it without you and for that I will be eternally grateful.

Love Debbie



Emily Harrison Born 7/4/20