



## ***Sheffield Recovery Month 2022***

**Susan Scott** loved regularly smoking, drinking and socialising with a close friend until he lost his life through addiction to alcohol, and she realised she was heading the same way. Now clean of alcohol, she has gained a master's degree specialising in nutrition, obesity and weight management and wants to help others to turn their lives around

'I did actually waste quite a bit of my life through drinking and smoking but at the same time I was always able to hold down a job'.

'I went to Firth Park school in Sheffield and had a good education there with plenty of hobbies. I liked running, going to church, getting involved and building healthy relationships'.

'As soon as I turned sixteen though, hey presto, my dad invited me to Crookes Working Men's Club' and I said Hallelujah, let's start drinking and that is where my drinking habits started'.

'I had a job as a glass collector for a couple of years at the club and my Nannan and Grandad lived just across the road from it, so I really enjoyed working there and I made a lot of friends'.

'I also joined the territorial army and was in there for six years, combining it with part time work as a croupier and later as a retail assistant at Tesco's and studying part-time, so I was very busy'.

'Tesco always had a motto to treat customers as first class and they'll treat you as first class and I began to build an idea for a business portfolio in my mind around nutrition, obesity and weight management, helping people to lose weight and eat more healthily.'

'I've also done motivational interviewing so I can help people to go from a negative pattern of behaviour such as addiction, eating unhealthy foods and to have a healthier better lifestyle and I've just recently qualified with a master's degree in nutrition, obesity and weight management'.

'Drinking became a part of my life from my early teens especially going away on weekends with the territorial army, it was the big thing going 'boozing' after exercises'.

'It started to get to the point where was drinking wine and lager regularly and I began thinking, oh I need a drink, I need a drink, I just need one more drink and I didn't realise until much later, when I lost a friend of mine through alcohol, that alcohol was so addictive'

'My friend Andrew lost his life in 2017, due to the slow onset of addiction caused by long periods of heavy drinking. He started off on strong lager, then he went onto the brandy'

'We were always drinking at his flat chilling out to music, having a whale of a time, but losing him was turning point and If I'd have continued, I don't think I would be here today'.

'Most of the time we were drinking together but there were times when I was drinking alone and starting to feel quite lonely, and my mum was telling that my drinking was getting the best of me'.

“I stopped drinking for two weeks after that, but I hit the alcohol again for a day or so, but I’d been working for two years on preparing myself for stopping drinking and smoking, but it wasn’t until November 21st, 2017, when I stopped drinking and stopped smoking completely’.

‘I remember going to the hospital a few times with Andrew and seeing his seizures and DT’s, but my drinking was never as bad as that and so I never had any kind of health impacts as the result of simply stopping. I just knew that one day I would stop and I just stopped’.

‘I’ve always been on my own so in order to prevent me from being tempted to drink, I joined a local gym and now attend every day where I listen to music on my tablet, go swimming and it’s helped me to meet new friends and build healthy non-alcohol related relationships with people’.

‘Alcohol is not part of my life anymore and I can trust myself to go into a pub and I’m not affected by the alcohol at all. There have been times during the last year whilst I’ve been doing my master’s where I have wanted a drink, but somehow, I’ve abstained from doing that. The triggers don’t bother me now’.

‘I’m now setting up my own business in partnership with Sheffield Hallam University enterprise team and Business Sheffield to help people overcome the negatives in their lives and build a positive lifestyle’.

‘I know that if I can do it other people can do it if they are willing to help themselves’.

**As told to Andy Kershaw**

**All interviewees have expressed their written consent to interview by print and broadcast media for Recovery Month (September 2022)**