

Ryan's story

Beginning of the End.....Chapter 1

It was January 5th 2013. I was sitting in the house after a brilliant Christmas and New Year when the phone went. It was Tracy from Turnaround. I panicked and thought my world was ending. I felt nervous, started sweating intensely. My partner answered the phone and saw it was the rehab. She glanced over and drew her eyes off me. When I spoke to Tracy, I agreed to come in. After putting the phone down, I felt I needed some valium to calm my nerves but as I never had any I smoked a joint. I wasn't ready to go, I had no money, no clothes washed, no toiletries or even tobacco. Me and my partner fell out and I went to my mum's with my eldest girl. I was over there and intended to leave for rehab from there. About 10pm that night I decided to go back home and try and make up as I was not going to be there for 6 weeks. I got home and there was a tense atmosphere. As usual, my youngest girl ran and hugged me.

As the night went on, my partner was still not taking to the idea that I was going away for 6 weeks. When the morning of the 6th January came I got up feeling anxious that I was going. The kids were up and sad, telling me how they loved me and that they would miss me. Well, that was that. I had been miserable and decided that I wasn't going. As the weeks and months went on, I was doing well on the outside but started getting the wee voice telling me I would be alright. I gave in and told myself that I was going to use. As I started using hash again I started to get selfish again, causing arguments and making excuses so I could fucking get away. I was feeling angry at myself and jealous because everyone else was puffing and I felt left out. As the days went on I got more and more miserable, started spending money on valium on the fly. I then met a couple of associates and started punting homemade valium and using at the same time, I thought I was invisible, untouchable. I secluded myself more and more away from my family. They knew but again I started lying and trying to cover my tracks with more lies. I eventually deserted everyone and ran with the associates I called friends, staying out for days on end. I got to the stage I didn't care about myself or anyone around me. I was miserable, my speech and thinking impaired, I felt unloved. I was stealing, trying to get money from anywhere. I even lost my so-called friends due to me being skint and having no valium.

I broke into my mum's neighbour's hut, stole a bike and got caught. I ended up being locked up all weekend. I was feeling scared, knowing I was looking at a big sentence due to my previous. When I got remanded, I got my probation officer to get in touch with Turnaround. I knew this was my last chance. When I got the phone call on June 3rd, I was over the fucking moon, this time nothing was getting in my way, no one would stop me. I left the house at 9:30 on the Tuesday the 4th. I was sad saying goodbye but kept telling myself I want this chance, I deserve it



for me. We got to Barrhead and I started sweating intensely, all these horrible thoughts going through my head. When John opened the front door I imagined going into a mad house, people dying around me. How wrong I was.

I was greeted by Brian and Morag and when they reassured me I would be ok I started to relax. Thank God.

As the days went on I started to make myself feel more at home. We went swimming which was awesome as I can't remember having as good a time as I did since I was a kid myself.

We attended CA and NA meetings but at first I felt really intimidated, not knowing if this was for me. It wasn't long before I started using the meetings and group work to my advantage. I met a lot of good people in the service and got on well with 1 or 2 of the boys. The staff were very helpful as I started to talk about things important to me in my recovery. They were very good listeners and any time I ever needed reassuring or needed advice, they were always there. About 3 weeks into the programme I had a situation where someone was trying to get drugs into the unit. I felt really annoyed, anxious and disappointed that someone would try and sabotage other boys' recovery, even mine. I spoke to the other boys about it and they felt the same. I wrote a letter and posted it under the staff office door and the situation got dealt with before someone got hurt and before drugs got into the establishment.

There was a very positive group of boys in the service and each person helped when things got tough. I done many workbooks during my stay and I felt they helped me during my early stages of recovery. I even started playing table tennis, a game I hated until entering Turnaround. I've made a lot of good friends in the staff and in service users and I have promised myself that I'm going to give this recovery every chance possible. I hope that when I leave Turnaround, other users will stay as positive as me and give the programme a chance, because it could save your life. When I leave the unit, I'm going back to work, becoming a better partner, son and father. During my time in Turnaround I have accepted that I can't change my past but can make my future better. I know I'm a better person without the drugs and drink and during my stay I have been given the tools to help me stay sober and to let me enjoy my life as I feel I deserve it. When I get out I will be going to my meetings and getting help from my sponsor.

Thanks for taking the time to read my letter.