



Stories of recovery  
from addiction:

*tarzan*

**I came in to this world innocent, clean and pure. Growing up was an adventure. I'd laugh at silly things and I lived in the moment. I loved life. However things were to take a sudden change due to a physical condition. This tested my character to the limit. I had to have a lot of surgery and I experienced unbelievable pain both physically and emotionally. I was in prison for years and was subjected to ridicule.**

By the time I left prison I had no ambition, goals or prospects. I was on free drugs from the NHS which numbed my pain and blinded my vision and ability to see the truth. My life was a mess. I hated the world and the world hated me.

I knew I had to stop using both prescribed and non-prescribed drugs. A moment of clarity came when some kids, fifteen or twenty years younger than me, gave me advice, suggesting I should go and get some help. This jolted me into realising I couldn't even think for myself. I should have been the one giving them advice.

Help: the word tempted me. But I was scared. I had visions of being dragged away to a mental hospital, arms and legs thrashing, never to be seen again. It couldn't be that bad, I thought, as I picked up the phone. I imagined the face at the other end of the line – stern with small glasses. I pushed this image aside and wrote down the address of the recovery centre.

I cried for the first hour at the centre. I signed up to a recovery programme and it was strange at first, but I kept my eyes on the prize of getting clean. Phase 1 was hard. I was paranoid. Stage 2 was better and I began to share my experiences with other people. We spoke about emotions and shared stories. Soon I began to feel more positive about the future.

I have now completed stage 3 in my recovery. Part of that involved writing my story. That was a real confidence booster, seeing it down on paper, how far I've come and how much I've achieved. I'm proud of myself. While writing, I even remembered a happy memory from my childhood which must mean I'm getting better. I couldn't remember anything while addicted to drugs. When I was seven years old, I found a pair of my ma's leopardskin knickers. I loved Tarzan, so I got a kitchen knife and went to my room where I took all my clothes off and put on the

knickers. I looked like Tarzan with the kitchen knife stuck down the waistband. I climbed up on to the wardrobe and dived on to the bed. The knife cut through the waistband and the knickers fell off. I looked down and I realised sadly that I wasn't Tarzan. Maybe if I continue to be positive and drug free, more happy memories will flood back. And if I keep in mind that everyone in life has a cross to bear then I know I will make a full recovery.

I plan to keep fit and healthy by going to boxing training three times a week. I've also stopped smoking. That's three months now. I can taste food, I have a sense of smell, and breathing fresh air feels great. I have more energy and I feel something spiritual is happening to me. I was so negative before: even I didn't like myself. Now I'm full of hope for the future. I would like to get married and settle down and have a family and I would like to help other people by sharing my experiences. I am where I am meant to be at this moment and it feels good.

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You can read other stories  
of recovery from addictions at  
**[www.storiesofrecovery.org.uk](http://www.storiesofrecovery.org.uk)**

Thank you to the participants who were kind  
enough to share their stories for the greater good.

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the project.



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**Jeśli chcesz uzyskać te informacje w innym języku skontaktuj się z:**

**Tel: 0141 201 4514**

**E-mail: [aad2@ggc.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:aad2@ggc.scot.nhs.uk)**

For free confidential information and advice call Know the Score on 0800 587 5879

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