

Kate's Story



Name: Kate

Age: 39

Problem: Alcohol

Recovery Time: 1 Year, 3 Months
(at time of publishing)

Name changed for confidentiality

When did you first start drinking?

I started drinking when I was about 15 or 16. It was a weekend thing with friends. My drinking stayed like this for years but following the traumatic birth of my son when I was 30, my relationship with alcohol changed.

When did it become a problem?

When my son was born, I began to use alcohol as a crutch. One or two glasses of wine in an evening developed into a bottle a night habit by the time I returned to work eight months later. This progressed over a couple of years to two bottles a night. Attempts to control my drinking by having a 'night off' led to me becoming secretive and hiding my alcohol consumption from my partner. By the time I was 34, I'd taken the morning drink but because I was still working and in my head keeping things together, I didn't really see that there was an issue. Eventually, cracks started to appear to my family and at their request, I visited Recovery Steps. All this did at the time was convince me that I could control it because I'd not had any of the physical withdrawal symptoms they talked about. My drinking carried on.

What made you get help?

I'd been drinking in the afternoon at work and shortly after I arrived home from picking my son up from school, the police came to my house. I was breathalysed, significantly over the limit and they arrested me. Spending a night in a police cell was something I never thought I'd experience. The next morning, I was so full of fear and dread, I thought I was going to lose my son. I was signposted to the Basement Recovery Project and turned up the next day. I started the Freedom Programme but I still couldn't stop drinking. I engaged on and off for just over a year before my final detox in July 2019. I'd been abstinent for six weeks before I was rushed to hospital with liver and kidney failure. My body had finally had enough. It was touch and go whether I'd make it through the night but hour by hour, I was still fighting. My stomach was drained to remove the toxins and excess fluid that had built up and I slowly started to physically recover. This is when I knew I'd finally had enough and that I wanted to live.



Why the Basement Recovery Project?

Even though I'd relapsed lots of times when I was attending the Basement in 2018, they never gave up on me and they supported me as I kept trying. I'd built up friendships and it was a safe place for me to go for six hours a day to learn about addiction with a clear head for the first time. I restarted the Freedom Programme and engaged with every group I could like SMART, Here & Now and Process Group. The fact that all the staff were clean, sober and living life was a big inspiration.

Where would you be now?

Without a doubt, I'd be dead. If not dead, I'd be completely alone. Miserable, ill and isolated.

How is life today?

Life really is beyond my wildest dreams today. My son's happy and I'm the best Mum I can be. We have a lovely home and life's manageable and uncomplicated. I get to spend lots of time with friends in recovery as well as my family and I have the opportunity to give back today, doing service at my mutual aid groups and volunteering at the Basement Project.

Kate