

# THE BASEMENT RECOVERY PROJECT

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

### WHEN DID YOU START ABUSING DRINK & DRUGS?

I was eight years old the first time I tried alcohol. By 13 I was smoking cannabis and taking poppers and sniffing glue and gas. By 15 years old I was taking anything with LSD in, and binge drinking. I stopped for a few years, from 15 to 17 years old, then started amphetamines and the drinking started again. By age 21 I was using crack and smoking heroin, which I'd tried at a party from a man I'd met when I was intoxicated.

### WHY DID YOU?

It seemed so grown up and I wanted to escape from my life. It was also a lot of fun. I went from someone so shy, I'd cross the road to avoid conversations with people in the street and someone who could not make eye contact with people, to someone who felt an equal to anyone, confident and fun and I had the confidence to party and socialise. I felt carefree and happy.

### WHAT MADE YOU GET HELP?

The confident nice feelings became less and less. I was paranoid and I isolated myself to drinking alone. I felt worthless. I was in and out of hospital on a regular basis. My engagement broke up after I miscarried my son through drinking, my daughter was taken away from me and I got told I would not be alive in two years if I did not stop. I wanted to be a mum to my daughter and be happy. My life was a living death.

### WHY THE BASEMENT RECOVERY PROJECT?

Within the first five minutes of walking in to the project I started learning I was not bad, just a person with a problem. I felt at ease, something unusual for me to feel. The pre-recovery and abstinence sessions made sense. I was starting to know me for the first time in 35 years. There were voluntary opportunities which I wanted so much, as no one else had given me a chance due to my past. I had the best support from my senior staff, which has been so important in my recovery.

### WHERE WOULD YOU BE NOW?

If it wasn't for The Basement Project I would be dead or brain damaged, as my brain was already being damaged. My heart and liver, also my kidneys, in fact, most of my body was getting damaged. I knew I would have a life no better than death if, by some miracle, I was still alive.

### HOW ARE YOU NOW?

My health has completely repaired apart from my eyesight, which I damaged. I have a good relationship with my daughter and family. I have made new friends and a new life. I go out and have fun. I work full time for The Basement Recovery Project. I am the happiest I have ever been and more importantly, I have the ability to handle the bad times, which, previously, I couldn't handle, especially the last two years, without damaging myself or others. I have peace and good balance. I have a good relationship with everyone in my life.

*Marie*