

Journeys

Please send us your stories of recovery to help pass the message of recovery on to those who need it.

Stories can be sent by post to Genie In The Gutter, 88 Rodney Street, Liverpool L1 9AR or email them to: carolynedwards@genieinthegutter.co.uk

George's Story

Pain, shame and solitude. Lost, alone and full of fear. A good person in a bad place. These are all phrases that best describe the truth of my life for most of my life. To the outside world I created a much different George: an image, a shield that would protect the boy inside. Ambitious, successful, determined, jack the lad, a free spirit who had his foot to the floor 24/7. With a ferocious appetite for everything, most of all "a large vodka and slim line tonic, no ice or lemon, and I'll pour the tonic."

Looking back, of course I was flash; I wanted to show the world that when I was back, I was really back. But each comeback became harder and each setback was tougher. In one hand I had the ability and all the tools to achieve whatever I wanted but in the other a self destruct button that I always seem to press. Just writing that line takes me right back, the confusion of not understanding "why" took me to so many dark and low places.

When you have one heavyweight problem or addiction, believe me, there'll be plenty of smaller ones around that support it. By the time I was 40 I was slipping away, literally. Back at the beginning, stuck on the bottle. To the outside world I had it all. To me I had nothing. Trapped in my own home, drinking myself to death. When you lose the will to live and you're spiritually bankrupt it's only a matter of time before someone close will find you dead.

There are always two sides to a story: the good and the bad; the happy and the sad; the highs and the lows. Life has it all. And life should be meant for living and not dying.

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I'm in a different place from all of that now, with a real sense of purpose and in my opinion that's the key to recovery. What did we learn from it all and how can we put it all to good use - positive building blocks to turn your life around? We can be creative because we have all that "real" content. We have all



Interview with George Williams from Inexcess and Carolyn Edwards from Genie In The Gutter

developed amazing survival strategies and if you're reading this then you're still surviving it all. Even in our darkest moments we can have a sense of humour and in losing everything, you may be surprised that you can still find yourself.

In my search for recovery with "Inexcess" I'm privileged to meet truly amazing people. Real people, with real lives, dealing with real issues. They make me laugh and cry. They inspire me and for sure they give me hope. Especially on the tough days, which never fail to tap me on the shoulder to remind me I'm on a journey and to test to see how well I'm doing.

Since we've started the shows I've seen people coming through the doors raw... Tony Bennet straight out of Walton and into Parkview... and in just a short space of time you can see how it's clicked. I find myself willing people to get it because we've struggled so hard in the past to find some "peace". I still laugh when Tony had found it in walking around galleries and museums and feeding the ducks. There's simplicity and beauty even for those who have travelled very tough and hard roads.

I'm passionate about recovery and strongly believe de-stigmatising it all would be a breakthrough to better understanding and awareness. We need to pass it on, our experience, share what we learn... as for me, well, I still have so many theories that need answers in my search for recovery, in my search of me.

www.inexcess.tv - For people with lifestyles living in excess.