

4 December 2012

PETER'S SOBER HAPPY CHRISTMAS

NAME: PETER; AGE: 44; OCCUPATION: SALES/ACCOUNT MANAGER; SOBRIETY: 7 MONTHS

Peter, a 44 year old from Glasgow, stopped drinking alcohol seven months ago and this will be a happy Christmas for him and his family. Peter tells us how alcohol ruined his life and how he is now happier than ever.

"Deep down, I knew I had a problem for a long time. I always drank more than other people at home and at nights out and always, somehow, managed keep access to alcohol not too far away. I often travel the country as part of my job and staying away overnight at hotels gave me the opportunity to consume as much as I wanted without anyone monitoring it. I also had the 'odd pint' on my way back from work, telling my wife I had a quick one or two, when in reality I had drunk five or six pints. All family shopping trips involved stocking up on booze – which I suppose it is socially acceptable – but they don't tell you at the supermarket that it's the most powerful drug in the world and can easily destroy families and lives."

"I never fully accepted my drink problem before the wonderful people at Abbeycare helped me get well. I put it down to stress, lifestyle, travelling, family etc. My drink at the end of the day was my way of dealing with 'my stress' it but it never did deal with it. My stress only increased over the weeks, months and years. I now know that to unwind and relax that alcohol isn't the solution – it's actually in me – how I deal with stress, how I manage my life, how I choose to live. Yes, of course booze works for that couple of hours but drinking as

much as I did cannot possibly relax me. I was inebriated most evenings. That isn't relaxing, it's anaesthetising. Booze makes us no more relaxed than a boxer is relaxing when he's knocked out on the canvas. I might have thought I was relaxing as I forgot about my worries when I drank. But all I did was delay dealing with my problems and I now know booze was the only one. It was the source of my hellish life. I now have a truly amazing life and booze has no part whatsoever in it."

Peter came to Abbeycare after his wife moved out because she couldn't get through to him that his stubborn ways, barking and constant grumpiness were making her ill too. This then gave Peter freedom to drink himself into oblivion and gave him all the excuses he needed to continue drinking and blaming other people for his predicament.

"I just couldn't see what alcohol was doing to me and everyone around me. At the time, I was working and travelling constantly and then when I came home to unwind and have a few drinks, I'd get moaned at. Other people telling me I drank too much and I was lazy. Inside me I was furious as I felt I only worked and then had all the family's problems when I came back. If I didn't feel under pressure then I felt apathy. It wasn't a good way to live. The booze ruled me without knowing. It made me lethargic, sick and irrational and I never slept very well. Worst of all, it made me treat my family very poorly. I was never there for my wife, children or friends. No



wonder everyone had had enough and left me to it. I can see that now with the clarity I have. Booze isolated me into my dining room or hotel room but more dangerously into a dark self."

Peter learned in Abbeycare that it's okay to get help for an alcohol problem and there's no shame in getting well and beating the booze. Shame - like all other feelings is inside of us - and, therefore, is only real to us. And, at Abbeycare that's what they do best – changing people's feelings about

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themselves. He also had sleep therapy, stress management, personal awareness and holistic therapies as well as his own double bedroom and ensuite – all part of Abbeycare's treatment to beat booze and live a happy life.

Peter said: "I could not have imagined how this would turn out, I just wish I had done it earlier. I was terrified to the point of insanity at the thought of stopping drinking, but all of that fear has gone. I am now the most relaxed I have ever been. In fact, I'm no doubt more relaxed than most people who don't drink. I don't have problems now – only small things I need to iron out. I have overcome alcohol, I can easily deal with anything else life can throw at me – I just had to learn how. Only the other day, my wife commented on how happy she is now compared to when I was drinking. That makes me feel so proud. Who needs booze when you're this happy?"