

# My REALITY

## About me

Hi, my name is Jon and this is my reality.

My son was 6 Months old when I stepped into a treatment centre on 17th May 2002, I was broken in many ways but most of all in my soul. I had behaved so badly around him (and many others) at the end of my drinking and using that I was full of guilt and shame. I had believed that having a child would be 'the reason' to sort my life out and step up to being a Dad. It was clear that by that time I couldn't even look after myself, I was homeless, jobless and broke! I had pushed everyone away from me through my behaviour. I was lost and afraid with no clue how to live life let alone be a parent.

Early on in my recovery it became evident that I had spent my life up to that point driven by fear and running from responsibility. Hand on heart I couldn't understand how I had become like that.

Thank God (literally) that a 12 step fellowship came into that treatment facility and carried with them a message of hope, I was desperate not to be the person I had become but had no idea how that would ever change. I was soon to be shown that this was possible.

I didn't see my son for weeks on end, I guess he was being protected from the mess I had created. As a father this added to the already overwhelming feeling of shame.

After 7 weeks I moved on to a dry house hostel where I started to see him a little more regularly, his mum was still working so I would be trusted with him for a day now and again. I have to admit I was both overjoyed and terrified at the same time, the responsibility was almost unbearable.

Through the 12 step fellowship I was only just starting to learn about who I was and how I became that way, navigating this new way of life that was very raw.

As I progressed in my recovery and started to find my feet the trust from his mum grew, it wasn't so much what I said but what I was doing, she could see that I was committed to recovery and working through the challenges. I did my best to be available and present for my son. By no means did I or do I get everything right, it feels at times that as he was growing up so was I.

My relationship with his mother was strained to say the least and its no wonder. We often had times when we disagreed and got very frustrated, I am so grateful that my recovery programme taught me how to look inward, own my own stuff and accept the things I cannot change (not always easy).

He is now 23, has done a plumbing and heating apprenticeship with me and qualified as a plumber running his own maintenance business. I am an open book with him and always said to him there is nothing he cant talk to me about and that I would never judge him, lets face it I don't have a leg to stand on anyway!!

For me it has been primarily about looking after myself spiritually, mentally and physically and I thank God for the gift of being a sober Dad.