

GS – Case Study

GS is a 56 old White British male. He grew up in wales where he experienced daily violent abuse in his family home by his father. Living in this environment was traumatic and GS grew up in constant fear. GS wasn't coping and rebelled against everyone and everything and his behaviour became problematic to all those around him. GS got into trouble with the police and as a result of the violence at home, would self harm to manage the pain he was feeling. GS father passed away when he was 18 and things got better when he meet his wife and they had children together. GS became a husband who worked 7 days a week to provide for his family and did for over 20 years. GS was happy with his life. GS came home from work one day and found his wife in bed with someone else and his life turned upside down.

GS found the anger and rage he had when he was growing up come back to the forefront. GS got arrested for harassing his wife and started drinking heavily after several warnings from the police to stay away. GS decided to isolate himself by living alone in the forest for 18 months. His drinking became dependant and he realised that he needed support and his health was deteriorating. GS ended up becoming homeless in Cardiff living behind Cardiff castle in a tent and eventually moved in to Ty Gobaith into the main centre.

GS was assessed for the Bridge Programme whilst in the main centre and was admitted into the project on the 16th June 2017. GS was drinking and would be very emotional when he is was under the influence and would internalise his anger with violent self harm, such as lashing himself with bike chains. GS had no contact with his children and would cry for the loss he was suffering with the family breakdown and childhood abuse. His health was becoming a huge worry due to his alcohol use.

GS recognised that his emotions were more heightened when he was drinking and the programme workded with him to get him to reduce his drinking and then detox in hospital. Once discharged from hospital GS anxiety was overwhelming so the team had to work carefully. GS built confidence and the team worked with techniques to reduce anxiety,. GS began to engage fully in all aspects of the programme including achieving many Open College Network Qualifications. GS engaged in 1-2-1 counselling for the first time started to understand his past trauma and resulting anger and substance use. This specialist counselling was vital for GS to move forward. GS learned that anger was his biggest trigger for drinking and his keyworker worked intensely with GS to help understand his flight or fight response and the root causes for his anger. Weekly CBT croup sessions to understand how his thoughts feelings and behaviours all impact one another strengthened this understanding. GS had an opportunity to learn new ways of thinking and responding to situations in a safe environment.

GS abstained from alcohol and completed preparation (stage of the programme) in 6 months. He moved over to aftercare for 6 months and whilst there he was waiting on his resettlement strategy for over 55 disabled accommodation.

During his time on the programme GS had had many physical health needs, however his anxiety meant he didn't want to face these and wanted to avoid any bad news. The team worked to help him meet appointments by going to all appointments with him. Also managing his thoughts of self harm if he

received any bad news. GS discovered his liver was significantly damaged when he moved on to the programme and through BBV testing with the nurse it was discovered he also had Hepatitis C. Due to us being able to evidence GS stability he was a suitable candidate for the newest Hep C treatment and the team supported him to undergo this whilst on the programme. At the end of his treatment a scan showed a lump on his liver which turned out to be cancer. The centre team worked closely with GS to manage this devastating news and not relapse. The team provided a higher level of monitoring and support as there was also a high risk of suicide so this would involve at points the night team conducting hourly checks. How GS worked through this period was admirable. After multiple hospital appointments, having lumps removed and laser treatment, GS received good news that they removed all the cancer. The team and all the residents were elated at the news (many happy tears shed that day) GS still has lots of pain in his knees and is waiting on knee replacements. GS diet and exercise is an important aspect in his life and he has had a complete turn around in lifestyle.

GS has now regained family ties with his children and he now sees them regularly, something he thought wouldn't happen again.

GS's was then offered a lovely over 55's disabled flat near Cardiff City Centre, the location is perfect to GS he is over the moon with this, the area and the fact the accommodation has a warden on site for support. Being in his own flat and having calm and independence has changed his life.

GS is still being supported by the Bridge programme outreach worker and continues to maintain abstinence. GS rings the programme regularly and pops in to speak to staff when he is passing. He is currently doing brilliantly and continues to maintain abstinence.