Wayne's story

The Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE) team supported Wayne in his recovery from drug and alcohol addiction. This is his story.

Wayne – My experience of psychotherapy.

"I first came into recovery from drug addiction in 2019. I had taken drugs and alcohol from the age of 13 and I was 45-years-old when I stopped using. I had taken substances to change the way that I felt for so long, I had no idea about the way I was going to feel when I stopped using.

"After using for most of my life, I could not forgive myself for the way my life had turned out, which made me just want to use to cope with life and I repeated that pattern for decades. When I eventually stopped using in 2019, I could not cope with the way I felt, I had been suicidal for a while.

"I had managed to get a few months clean in 2019 by doing a twelve-step program and going to a day care centre, but I was finding the suicidal thoughts overwhelming. I was having anxiety attacks and suffering from depression.

"I made an appointment with a GP and explained how I was feeling. Mental health medication was an option, but I worked so hard to get clean of substances and did not want to take more drugs if possible. My GP offered me the option of talking therapy, I was happy to try anything.

"The first few appointments were difficult; I had spent years telling myself that there was something wrong with me and I was a terrible person. I never looked at why my life had turned out the way it had or even thought about my childhood experience and how that had affected my life.

"Over time, I did get some acceptance that childhood abuse had been a big part in how my life turned out. I have slowly started to forgive myself for the things I have done in my life and why.

"I still find things difficult at times but have learnt cope with anxiety and stress by talking. I try not to internalise my thoughts and to be kind to myself, which I have learnt from therapy. Therapy has changed the way I look at myself and helps me forgive myself for the past. I do not get suicidal thoughts and I am starting to trust people, which I have never been able to do in the past".

Thank you, Wayne, for sharing your story. PIE is delivered by Bevan Healthcare. You can learn more about the PIE project in our RIC directory.