

the Difference

Reintegration



The European Association for the Treatment of Addictions is proud to announce our bimonthly publication, '*the Difference*'. This e-bulletin demonstrates how eATA member organisations are exhibiting best practice and achieving successful treatment outcomes. Our third issue entitled 'Reintegration' encompasses stories written by our member organisations, demonstrating how impactful treatment can be on individuals who recover and reintegrate back into normal life.

If your organisation wishes to contribute to our next publication, which will be titled 'Employment and Employability' or has suggestions for subsequent issue titles and themes, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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eATA
1 Regent Terrace
Rita Road
London
SW8 1AW

Tel: 0207 820 8130
Fax: 0207 820 0055
www.eata.org.uk
louise.walsh@eata.org.uk

Seventy4 Day Programme

The Seventy4 Day Programme incorporates a 12 step based model of treatment within a structured, part-time programme. This is, to our knowledge, a unique project in London that allows an individual the time and space to begin reintegrating in the community whilst still being in treatment.

Marcus came to us at the end of 2009, after a brief detox, suffering from a severe dependency to alcohol. By this time he had lost his marriage, relationship with his only daughter, work, and a place to live, which had forced him to move back with his mother.

Now in his early forties, Marcus had been drinking heavily for over ten years. However his alcohol use had recently escalated, especially after his divorce, and, as a consequence, his life had spiralled out of control.

In the early stages of his treatment, the goal was for Marcus to see how alcohol underlined all the different difficulties he was now facing, and to basically recognise that what had been at first a short-term solution, to cope with difficult feelings, was now destroying his life.

For example, whilst he was in treatment, he began to see that his obsession with drinking was interfering with his ability to concentrate at work, as he was always totally preoccupied with leaving early in order to have a drink. Together with his increasing absenteeism, this eventually led to his loss of employment.

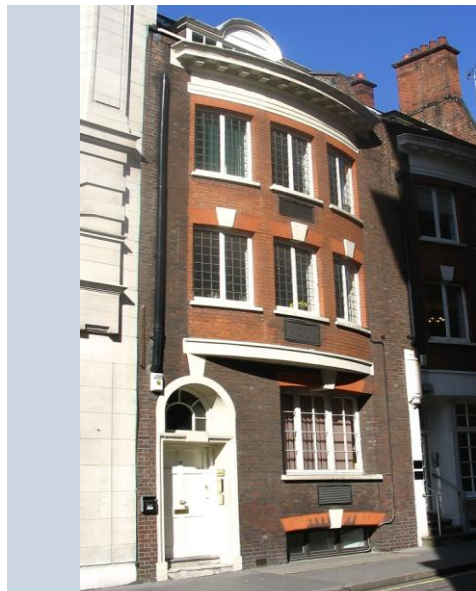
In addition, his teenage daughter was refusing any form of contact, which left him

feeling deeply guilty and ashamed for his past drinking behaviour. He was desperate that she would give him another chance to be a father, now that he was sober. In treatment he began to understand that quick fixes do not work and that she needed space and time to see if his attempt to change was for real and not just another broken promise.

Marcus attended the Seventy4 Day Programme for twelve weeks and then had an extension of six weeks of just individual counselling. In the meantime, he had also started to attend AA meetings in the community, as a source of extra support.

At present, Marcus reports that he has started his own business in painting and decorating and has his daughter back in his life. In fact, according to him, she apparently wants to move back with him, once he

finds suitable accommodation. He states that he is now confident that after all this time this is an achievable goal for both of them. Finally, he reports that his experience in Seventy4 has been crucial in helping him to successfully reintegrate into the community. ■



Marcus went through treatment at the Seventy4 Foundation, pictured above.

To learn more about the Seventy4 Day Programme, please visit <http://www.seventy4.org.uk/day-programme.aspx>
telephone: 020 7233 0400
email: info@seventy4.org.uk

Somewhere House

*"On Reintegration" Words From
Former Clients, Now in Recovery*

*"I am strong and confident enough
to choose to be me, every day, and
be ok with who I am. Today I can
make myself whole again."*

I have been asked to write a few words on the subject of reintegration. The dictionary defines reintegration as amalgamating or helping to amalgamate (a group) with an existing community. But yet it's also defined as the process of making or being made into a whole again. This made me think about how I felt about myself in active addiction; every morning I woke up and when I looked inside myself, I was greeted by a broken person; like looking at a shattered mirror, I saw many pieces but no congruent whole. And then there was the way I saw myself reflected in the eyes of others: my family, my friends and society. I felt guilt and shame about my choice of lifestyle and surely felt "less than". I never thought that I could be "normal" and the media's depiction of addicts only compounded that feeling. I thought that addiction was my lot and my destiny.

I came for treatment at Somewhere House some years ago and for the first time in years I was treated as an equal. I thought that treatment would break me down in order to build me back up. To my surprise, it turned out to be different. My negative behaviours were challenged but the positive aspects of me were respected and encouraged. Most of the therapeutic work was about who I am and how I feel about myself instead of what I do. It was about reintegrating all those different aspects of me, about finding and loving myself again.

After treatment I went to live in a move on house, where I was supported through college and encouraged to do voluntary work and, eventually, back into paid employment. Every step of the way I utilised the support available to explore how I felt

about myself and my place in the world. On occasion, I've encountered judgement and resistance because of my past but, through support, I learnt that ultimately what matters most is how I feel about myself and the choices that I make. And I think that these prejudices will only be changed by action, by demonstrating that addicts have something to give to society when given the opportunity to do so.

I am now father to two beautiful children and sometimes I observe my 2 year old daughter taking her early tentative steps into the big world and I notice how she comes back to me for reassurance. I provide her with the secure base she needs to develop into a healthy and happy person. I can see the similarities with my own journey in recovery and with that of others. We are all born the same but, through circumstances, I veered off the track and ended up lost in the wilderness. And perhaps there wasn't anyone to help me onto the right track before.

The treatment that was offered to me gave me the opportunity to go through that development again, to be re-parented, to look at the choices I made and why, and, finally, to feel strong and confident enough to choose to be me, every day, and be ok with who I am. Today I can make myself whole.■

To learn more about the Somewhere House, please visit www.somewherehouse.com

telephone: 0117 9671893.

Email: info@somewherehouse.com

Somewhere House Continued...



Integration from addiction treatment into a supported housing environment, and then finally into my own rented accommodation has been a mixed bag of trials and emotions for me.

Being of an honest disposition, I found that the boundaries and rules set by treatment and supported housing were not difficult to adhere to. Transitioning into my own place became more difficult when I disregarded any outside help I was offered, and, consequently, had a short, but very heavy, bout of drinking. I learned from that mistake and now utilise any help that is offered to me.

My voluntary work, which is anything from 18 to 36 hours per week, plays a big part of my integration into society. I've attended it since moving into supported housing, and it affords me structure and purpose.

I have formed a good network of friends and attend many social functions with them. Somewhere House's continuing supportive counselling allows me to deal with any dilemmas and problems I might be experiencing, and a combination of counselling and volunteer work form the backbone of my recovery from addiction. It enables me to make informed choices and decisions.■

Somewhere House Philosophy

"Somewhere House is a residential rehabilitation centre for those seeking help in addiction, we are monitored by the CQC for quality of care. We provide treatment and support for individuals who wish to make changes in their lives. Giving the individual the opportunity to look at all aspects of themselves on a holistic level, drawing on their physical, emotional and spiritual knowledge of themselves, within our therapeutic community. Alongside this, we offer clients who struggle with numeracy and literacy the opportunity to attend the local college and also offer support within Somewhere House. We will help every individual to work towards their own goals, within our capabilities as a team and source or sign post to other professionals when necessary..."

- Somewhere House Website

The Junction Project

Joe arrived with us in early 2010, having been in Prison and homeless in several major cities all over the UK. He initially came to The Junction with the intention of staying for just a short while. To begin with his goals, along with his self-belief were somewhat limited; getting everyone off of his back, gaining some weight and addressing some fairly minor medical and dental problems were Joe's priority.

It wasn't long though before he realised just how much his life was improving in every area, within a few short weeks, Joe's self belief had radically changed for the better, no longer was he happy to 'just get by' or go with the 'fingers crossed approach' as he put it. He decided to expand his support plan, add to his basic education, develop some medium and long term goals and to give himself some extra time with us in our 'move on' accommodation.

Here, he would be able to live in a drug and alcohol free environment with two others in recovery and have even more personal responsibility, the house was pretty much self-managed; professional support would just be a phone call away if and when it was needed. Along with rebuilding family relationships and refining his living skills, Joe played a big part in the local Narcotics Anonymous meetings in Bristol, helping newcomers in recovery.

Joe began an NVQ 3 in Health and Social care last September and he now works full time for one the major Drug agencies here in Bristol, making a significant contribution to the lives of so many others affected by addiction. He moved into a modest one bedroom flat in a nice part of town in May 2011. Although he has gained great insight into his own personality and addictive nature, he sees himself as a regular person that with

the help of mutual aid chooses to abstain from those things that had devastated his life for so many years.

Seeing the changes in Joe and for many others like him, from doubtful and fearful individuals to positive and forward looking ones is not just great for them but also for the staff here too, who regularly go above and beyond in their call of professional duty. Joe is now in a job he wants to do, living in an area he wants to live, sharing his life with people he wants to be with, we would call that a success in anyone's book.■



“The Junction project was started in 2004, providing accommodation and support to adults leaving Residential Rehab. Although we just missed the supporting people funding the previous year, we soon gained a great reputation with the referrals and support of local treatment centres, and we are the only new commissioned drug & alcohol service here in Bristol.”

To learn more about the Junction Project, please visit www.thejunctionproject.org.uk

telephone: 0117 9671893

email: info@thejunctionproject.org.uk