

The WORD

FREE
Issue 2
April '09

Raising awareness of recovery from addiction



Working towards

RECOVERY



TRIED AND TESTED

Gerry Linford talks to The Word of his longevity in the drug field



GOD ON TRIAL

Frank Cottrell-Boyce speaks to The Word



INTERVIEW WITH JUDGE DAVID FLETCHER

From Community Voice

The Park View Project

A 12 step residential treatment centre in Liverpool.

Our programme is run by people in long term recovery from addiction.

If you want help and are committed to change please contact Project Manager - Tom McCully for further information and/ or a referral.

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— GENIE —



IN THE GUTTER

Genie In The Gutter Film, Theatre & Media Productions offers creative opportunities and training to substance mis-users.

In addition to our partnerships with other drug and alcohol agencies in Liverpool we also have excellent links with well established film & theatre companies across the North West.

.....
"We're all in the gutter but some of us are looking at the stars" ~ Oscar Wilde
.....

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Editorial

The government and providers of tier 2 and 3 drug services are keen to inform us that service users must have a right to choose the most appropriate treatment for themselves, particularly in response to abstinence and tier 4 advocates who challenge MMT. Why is it then, that service users who present with severe class A dependency are almost invariably told that they must take up a stabilisation regime first if they want treatment? Anybody would think it was because the drug treatment system and its providers are being faithful to the patient choice agenda; that people presenting are choosing MMT, but research also tells us that this is not the case; that a large majority of people are actually asking for abstinence at the front door of the treatment system. Why are they asking for abstinence? Because in their heart of hearts and in their usually very long and bitter experience they know, they just *know*, that abstinence will be the only thing that will truly work. Abstinence is the only thing that will lead to a genuine exit from addiction and all of its related harms and negative behaviours. They know, as do independent researchers, that methadone does not reduce crime or health problems as much as its advocates would have us believe; harm reduction ideologists who can't extricate themselves from the very dangerous "safer" option, drugs workers who, many of them, appear half sedated themselves, behind glass screens, jaded and spiritless from never seeing the lights come back on in people's eyes. And, of course, the mathematicians from the Treasury who know as much about drugs as my cat.

Will any government ever initiate a recovery orientated drug treatment system? Probably not, because the true benefits of what would admittedly be much more expensive than the current state of affairs where they throw a fire blanket over the situation whilst they deal with more important vote winning issues, would not become apparent until the opposition was in power and could take the credit by citing lower crime figures.

What should we do about this, those of us in the margins of the drug treatment industry, working in a recovery orientated environment and more familiar with figures such as 65 %, leaving treatment drug free?(a tad better than 3%). The answer: more of the same and focus on ourselves, what we can do better, whilst continuing to be grateful for the privilege of seeing what we see all the time; the enslaved rise up to walk free again.

I would like to thank all of those people who have kindly contributed to this edition of The WORD.

Carl Edwards

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Park View graduate recently met the innovative Judge David Fletcher who oversees Liverpool's pioneering Community Justice Centre. Judge Fletcher had referred people to Park View by giving them a drug rehabilitation requirement instead of a custodial sentence. Denis asked Judge Fletcher about his role with The North Liverpool Community Justice Centre.

Judge Fletcher

Seeing the person not just the crime

What inspired you to take on the role with the North Liverpool Community Justice Centre?

I became a judge in June 2003. In 2004 I came across the application for this post. It was unlike anything I'd ever seen for a judicial post, and basically what it talks about is what we do [at the Criminal Justice Centre]: some interaction with your community; having some real understanding of the community that you're dealing with; having a very specific geographic area within which to work and with which to deal and being able to take a much more - what's now become known as - 'problem solving approach'.

So you are able to sentence at the point: when the person really needs it most; but also sentence appropriately at that point, as opposed to just saying we're going to sentence you and send you away. So, I saw all this on an application form and because I'd only been a judge then for just 12 months I didn't fill it in and it was on my kitchen table and I got home on a Friday evening, my wife had come home and read it and she said: "Have you applied for this job?" and I said no I'm not going to. I don't think I've got enough experience. And she basically said if ever there was a job with your name on it, this is it - in other words to do what you really want to do. So I then filled it in over that weekend and handed it in on the Monday which was the closing day.

Can you explain the drug or alcohol treatment requirements please?

The drug and alcohol treatment requirements are two of twelve potential requirements that you can attach to a community order and they are there in section 177 of the 2003 Criminal Justice Act, which created this - as I describe it - this menu for sentences.

I can certainly make drug rehabilitation requirements, there's no problem because that's been fully funded and the various courses/requirements are in place. You cannot say that for alcohol treatment requirements because although in law, it's there and it's available, it's not available to me in this part of Liverpool because there isn't the funding. Drug rehabilitation can take various guises and I'm guided by the people who actually assess people so we can have high level, medium level or they even call them

“ I believe that there is an ability in all of us to change ”

now - using this horrible term - drug rehabilitation LITE, which is far less intensive but nevertheless requires them to attend and deals with what seems to be their specific needs.

Assessments are made firstly by probation, and then, if they felt that this was a potential candidate for a drug rehabilitation requirement, they would be sent for a health assessment by one of the local agencies who deal with that. I could then make the order, and the length of the order is up to me within reason. I can out set



to them what I expect - and importantly on a drug rehabilitation requirement - a requirement can be included, and has to be included if it is more than twelve months, for them to be regularly reviewed by a court. That means they will always be reviewed by me. They're not going to be reviewed by anyone else, they're going to be reviewed by me. This afternoon I've got fifty-six reviews. I review all of my community orders which is not what any other court can do.

I know some people that have been before you as a judge who are now in Park View and they tell me that you've actually written to them when they were in prison.

Yes I do...at Park View there are people who have come to the situation where the ultimate has had to happen, you've tried all sorts of things and they've been sent into custody, often on the basis that - they're not quite standing there saying 'send me away', although some people have said that I have to say. But, they're almost resigned to the fact that the only way they're going to - in the very short term - deal with some of the issues of addiction that they've got, is to do that. And I think it's more than going to prison, I think it's much more to do with getting away from the immediate influences that there are upon them, either of circumstance or more particularly of actual people. And so I would then write to everyone who goes to prison straight away and say, 'look this is why you're there and this is what we're going to do and I will have somebody come and see you now very quickly and we will try and assess what might be required'. Bearing in mind that for anybody going to prison for less than 12 months, when they are released there's no license there's no probation support whatsoever. That's not how the system works that's only for the longer sentences the minority. So, they come out of prison - in my model here - you would hope having at least had the opportunity to speak to one of the workers here. And a number of those people have come straight out [of prison]

and gone straight to Park View because we have realised that Park View is a very positive and realistic option to them, we then contact Park View and arrange for someone to go and see them as well as, in prison. So that when they come out they're not met by their dealer, they're actually met by someone who can take them straight to a place where they can maintain what often is their drug-free status in terms of their physical addiction and then start to work on all the other stuff that goes with it.

If you could change anything about the criminal justice system, what would it be?

It would be to stop the constant restriction on judge's ability to be flexible with regard to sentences, and to deal with cases in a way that we feel is appropriate.

I accept that there's got to be maximum and minimums, that's what Parliament's for. So, I'd really like to see a halt to restricting the flexibility that judges had. That's what I'd ask for.

You touched on funding. Do you think there are any other areas that need addressing for the criminal justice system and the drug treatment system?

I think we should look at the person before us: we know that he has got fifty previous drug related acquisitive offences, we know he's been to prison twenty times and we know he hasn't stopped committing crime. By the same token, his crime has stayed at the same level. I think somebody has got to take the political initiative and say, we can build as many prisons as we like but we know, because evidence confirms it, that all you do by sending somebody to prison for four months is to literally keep them off the streets for two. And that's all you achieve. But, more negatively, they come out, and not only are they back to where they started, but it's worse than that because they've lost their accommodation, they're no longer in receipt of benefits, they might have lost contact with certain people on the outside who might have been positive and so it's little surprise to any of us that they then re-offend and they're back in court on the same old treadmill; conditional discharge, community order, breach, breach, breach...prison. And all that time it's costing us as a system – forgetting what it costs to bring them through court, just the cost of imprisonment - vast amounts of money, which can be spent on much more intelligent ways of dealing with people.

I remember when you visited Park View and you obviously know how rehab works and you've visited prisons too and know how the prison works. Would you say that rehab is a soft option?

No I would not, far from it. When I was at Park view – during a round circle meeting – I asked one of the people there who'd been in and out of prison a lot, 'tell me about it...tell me about what the prison experience is, what do you do? What do you talk about?' and he said 'We talk about, think about class a drug 24 7 and we get them.' It'd be a very naïve person indeed in my position who thought that by putting someone in prison, you're close off their ability to get drugs. We know that's not true. But what I do know is that if they're in Park View there's absolutely no way. They can't take drugs, they can't drink. They are constantly occupied. They're not sitting in a cell 23 hours a day. So I don't think it's an easy option at all. I really don't.

There used to be this idea that has got lost over the years, when debating crime and punishment: the idea that a person can reform.

Yes I do believe in that, and I think if we don't believe in that then what are we going to do? The only thing we're ever going to do is lock every single offender up and throw away the key. If we don't believe in the capability of someone to turn the corner, then any of the sentences that we're imposing – or at least most of them – it seems to me, are a waste of time. It's got to be underpinned by a belief that there is an ability in all of us to actually change and I'm sure there is.

Community Voice Service-Users Conference at Liverpool Anglican Cathedral

On the 21st January, in the Anglican Cathedral, service-users attended a Community Voice Conference for presentations and to offer insight into the recovery experience. The group had been brought together to share opinion based



on experience, in terms of substance misuse and dependency. The findings could be incorporated into decision-making at budgetary level in the future.

Richie Humphreys, an ex-officer with various drugs squads, now with the Drugs-Intervention-Programme (DIP), discussed 'assertive selling' of drugs services, or ways to appeal to people who could benefit from getting into services; the people he encounters through their involvement in crime. He was also keen to put the message across that parents who need to access services do not automatically risk losing their kids to the care system, that the notion is to keep the family unit together – not least for the financial cost – but also that separating children from the parents is not a default setting for authorities. The general point being made was one of the availability of person-specific care; of those in need coming out of the shadows of fear and back into the community; to rise out of the isolation of drugs and crime; to live happily and healthily, and that is entirely what these services are in place for.

Alongside presentations about drug use amongst differing members of society, we looked at the pursuit of humane ways of dealing with mental health issues. Understanding that drug related issues can be symptomatic of deeper problems is relevant in the treatment of individual's needs, as is removing the stigma and therefore dehumanisation of those with mental health and/or drug-related issues.

The afternoon took the form of group discussion, a way to consolidate the information and push through with new ideas. The conference took a real leap in energy here as volunteers took the floor.

"...People seen something in me that I couldn't see in myself... the change in me is unbelievable... since I've come into recovery my mind is open."

"Since I've been total abstinence - two years - I haven't wanted to commit a crime. I love my life today. Even though I haven't got a pot to piss in, I have a life! We've all got to open our minds and our hearts. The lie is dead. We do recover."

Everyone agreed that the day was a huge success and a real opportunity for peoples voices to be heard. Community Voice meetings are held every 2nd Wednesday of the month, 2pm - 4pm at 50-54 Mount Pleasant, Liverpool. The next meeting is on 8th April 2009. £5 expenses paid. For more information contact Sarah Evans - 07920 230 572 or Maggie White - 07807 051 511. Park View and Genie In The Gutter wish Community Voice and all of it's service users continued success for the future.

“ We've got the experience and strength to pass on to other people... we are treated equally... I don't want people to wait till they're fifty years old to get what I've got. ”
Community Voice Member

"Everyone Has the Potential to Recover"

Gerry Linford has worked in the drugs field for over 20 years. Perhaps his biggest impact to date has been the work he has done in creating The Spider Project. Since it was set up in April 2001 the project has helped hundreds of people realise their potential and help them to find a quality of life after addiction. My colleague Alex and I went along to ask Gerry about the project and his experience of working in the drugs field for so long.

It was a bright, windy Friday afternoon. My colleague Alex and I travelled by car to The Spider Project to meet up with its Director, Gerry Linford. The hustle and bustle and myriad of different people in the city centre was obvious but my recognition of it was not. Well it was Friday afternoon and my mind was jumping from one thing to the next: this magazine, that bill at home, the silly disagreement with my boyfriend this morning. Have we got the list of questions.... Are the batteries working in the Dictaphone? The list goes on... We parked in the Anglican Cathedral. As I got out of the car I saw the picturesque grounds of this magnificent building. A bird was singing in the distance; I looked up to a bright, clear blue sky and instantly felt more grounded, and less fractious. Lots of places in our city have this affect on me. Sefton Park on a Sunday afternoon, Otterspool prom in mid summer, the Pier Head lit up at night. You may wonder what any of this has to do with Gerry Linford and The Spider Project. Well not much really, it is more to do with the fact that we, well I, can sometimes go about daily life not noticing the finer things, the bird singing, the flowers in bloom and most importantly the people, their stories, their plights, their lives. It's all around us everywhere. People's experiences are etched around their eyes and across their faces as if sketched to specifics by a great artist.

We were welcomed into The Spider Project by a smiling Mr Linford who proceeded to enthusiastically introduce us to the man he was with. "This is Paul", he said cheerfully, as though he were a long lost friend he had just bumped into after too much time apart. "I've known Paul for years" Gerry continued, "He was a client of mine". Paul seemed a little tentative. We later found out he was on his 3rd day of a detox. He seemed really pleased to be in Gerry's company, like he felt safe and trusted him. For someone in the first throes of detox who has been living the chaotic life that addiction all too often brings: loss of family and friends, isolation, homelessness, prison, well it's a lot to display trust and faith in someone. I guess this says more than what I can about Gerry Linford's relationships with his client's. Gerry has known Paul on and off for many years and he has seen him in truly chaotic and desperate states. It was a couple of years ago when Gerry had last seen Paul. He bumped into him on Bold St. Paul was homeless and in the absolute grips of addiction. They chatted for a while. Gerry told him about The Spider Project and gave him his business card. That's how Paul arrived there today. Despite the chaotic life he had been leading in active addiction he managed to keep hold of Gerry's card and on the third day of his detox he called in to see him. So when we asked Gerry how he has maintained his commitment and interest as a drugs worker in a career that has spanned over 20 years then it's no surprise his response was "The clients". All completely evident when you see how Gerry interacted with Paul and vice versa. "Everyday you see miracles" Gerry continued, "my job is so rich and varied, I feel driven to change things and I am privileged to be able to make such a difference in people's lives. Gerry explained how in the eighties the emphasis was on harm reduction, safe drug taking practices and minimising HIV and how there's been a seismic shift since then towards recovery. "There will always be a place for harm reduction



Photography by John Lafferty

which is at the early stages of intervention but there's no doubt about it that the best form of harm reduction is not using and we should always be promoting abstinence. It's about having faith in our clients and empowering them that abstinence is an option rather than writing them off."

Before Gerry became a drugs worker he taught music in New York and was also a supply teacher in Chester. It was taking time to secure a f/t teaching position in a secondary school so he applied to Shadow For a job that involved teaching drug awareness in various Liverpool schools. To his own admittance he knew nothing of drugs but hoped it may bring him closer to the position he was seeking as an English teacher. Once he began seeing clients with drug and alcohol problems he said he found it really rewarding and gained great job satisfaction from making a positive impact. Gerry was part of the original through care team in the drugs department at Walton prison before setting up The Spider Project single handily in 2001 "People used to say that this type of job had a five year burnout" he remarked, "but here I am 23 years later".

He strongly believes that everyone has the potential to fully recover from addiction and said he sees a large body of client's now living drug free. "The potential for recovery needs to be unlocked by something or someone" he commented, "a realisation occurs in clients that they can't go on living this way. It's an awakening and it can be brought on by something as simple as an inspirational conversation to the other extreme where it may be born out of tragedy. A person has a moment where they have insight into the future and they feel hope. They then take the steps to whatever is going to facilitate their recovery." One of the main things that Gerry thinks holds people back is fear. Sometimes fear of themselves due to having to carve out a new identity. No longer can they identify themselves with the active addict and they are often scared of what's left. Once the barrier of fear is broken Gerry upholds that all clients can go on to achieve their absolute full potential.

I was with Gerry a few weeks ago at the Community Voice service-users conference and it was highlighted by workers and service users how fortunate we are in Liverpool in terms of services available here for substance misusers. Gerry agrees we have a good background for working together

The Grass Arena

by John Healy

Penguin Modern Classics

'Yeah, we're dying, Doc,' replied Hogan...
'And whose fault is it, eh?' [p. 107]

For me, there is always something about reading autobiographies that I find unsettling. I think it is that sensation of voyeuristic intrigue that can feel as though one is eavesdropping on a confessional in church.

There is a feeling that *The Grass Arena* is like an Act Of Contrition that would allow Healy access, if not to the kingdom of God, then to join humanity.

Healy doesn't spend much time introducing the reader to the numerous characters that littered his life. It is as if the urgency to tell the story is like the urgency to get that next drink. And so it is; because Healy is not so much describing *his* life as much as describing *the* life of an alcoholic.

The Grass Arena is no straight-forward narrative. At times the book seems to be a collection of diary entries and even reports. To someone familiar with the AA meetings it may make a lot of sense as the reader is moved from one incident to the next with no sense of continuity. In short, it reads like a collection of, what AAers would refer to as, *war stories*.

There is little point in attempting to convey the narrative of *The Grass Arena*, the reader will (and should) discover this for themselves. The alcoholic or addict reader will find a lot that is familiar. That this is perhaps the truest portrayal of that twilight world populated by, what Marxists referred to as, the *Lumpenproletariat*; for the reader who has not glimpsed it there nearest reference may be the Zombie movies of George A. Romero (films that played on middle-class dread of those that live outside of society).

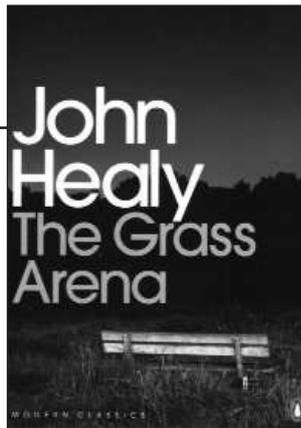
In the afterword Colin MacCabe states that 'The only book which even begins to evoke a real comparison in English is William Burroughs' *Junkie*...' To a certain extent that is true. But where Burroughs romanticised the life of the junkie, Healy just says it as it is without ornamentation.

There seems to have been little editing of the manuscript, though I felt that the beginning of the book, that deals with Healy's childhood, seemed to be written in the language of victimhood: The brutal father; the troubled schooling and the strange use of the word 'immigrant' to describe his family (I am Irish and I have never heard other Irish people in Britain describe themselves as 'immigrants'. That term is one that was given to them by sociologists and policy makers) all seem to explain Healy's alcoholism. Just as Healy's later obsession with chess seems to give a picture of an addictive personality. MacCabe seems to hint at this, but I feel that it is too simplistic. Individual people do not follow a set pattern (one of the main reasons why Sociology is such a weak discipline and why its 'findings' invariably lead to attempts at circumventing the individual and towards social control). For every Healy there are thousands of others who found sobriety along a different path.

But any shortcomings of *The Grass Arena* are outweighed by the fact that this is one of the greatest testaments to self-destruction (and belief in redemption) ever written.

It would be pointless to look for answers in this book. As Healy takes you to one possible explanation the next incident confounds it. In my experience there are no sociological or psychological 'reasons'. That a person is an alcoholic or an addict is something that is peculiar to them as individuals and as such the problem and its solution can only be that of a spiritual one.

Reading *The Grass Arena* has only reinforced that understanding for me.



Reviewed by Denis Joe

In My Skin

by Kate Holden

Canongate

Kate Holden is an Australian woman from a middle-class background. Her childhood home was full of love, books; it was safe and sound. Her memoir *In My Skin* charts her initial romance with heroin and consequent spiral into addiction and prostitution, all for another "taste".

Unflinchingly honest, the memoir has been an international bestseller. It is a sensuous account of the physical and psychological grasp of heroin.

"Heroin is like wading in the sea. The first fizz of water at your ankles is delicious, shocking... Then abruptly the sand drops beneath your next step, and you plunge into deeper water, and you can't feel the bottom anymore."

She describes her blurry recognition of the devastation her family feel as they come to terms with their powerlessness to help. She enters rehab, is sparkingly like her old self after one month. About to go to her welcome-home party with her family, she veers left instead.

"Just one. Just to say goodbye to it. Just as a reward. Just because I'd waited, and I was confident I'd changed. Because it was there."

The book has been marketed more for its sexual element. Holden first sought cash on the streets.

"Getting in another car, turning to another man's face, I concentrated on my relief that I had a job, there'd be money."

She finds her way to a brothel and is suddenly relieved to have a warm place to be, other women she can be amongst, though she keeps her drug use as private as possible; medicating to get through the shift; getting through the shift to medicate.

"The glamour girls showed me something to aspire to. I was nowhere near achieving that. My work was for my habit, and Robbie's. But when I heard these women speak of buying furniture, clothes, holidays and houses, I felt a little longing start up."

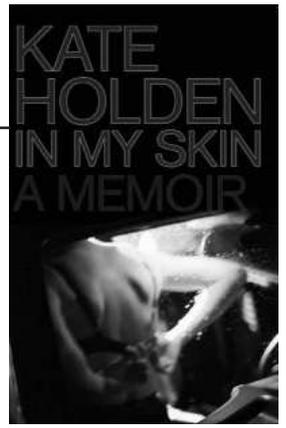
Though the tale is classically recognisable as the-heroin-story, her language is lyrical, poetic, and her enthusiasm for learning, for taking pride in her work makes it a refreshing take on the sex industry.

"My old fascination for the deliciousness of skin and flesh was fully indulged here. I caressed beautiful velvety youths, others plump as seals - every texture and silkiness."

Holden refuses to view herself as a victim, more as a woman dealing with the consequences of her own decisions.

"Men who'd grope and pluck at me, who had no rhythm, who scraped ... yanked me too abruptly into a new position, who thrust on and on for half an hour heedless of my fatigue and dripped sweat into my gasping mouth. Who grabbed me cruelly ... These were the testing times, when I felt my soul clench; when it was a matter of pride that I didn't protest or throw the man off. To me it still seemed a professional discipline to resist pain and discomfort. The man had paid for sex; it was up to me to deliver it."

The book is fully explicit: emotionally and physically; about addiction and prostitution, about dysfunctional love; about being alive and half-dead; and then thankfully, about recovery. *In My Skin* is an education. It does not rely on sensationalism. This is raw experience, eloquently voiced by a literary talent. Holden challenges the stereotype. For such reasons, this is an important book.



Reviewed by Deborah Morgan



Frank Cottrell-Boyce, award winning Liverpool writer speaks to the Word about his film 'God on Trial'

Frank Cottrell-Boyce is a BAFTA award winning Liverpool writer who has written episodes for Coronation St and Brookside. His high profile films include Welcome to Sarajevo, 24hr party people, Millions and more recently God on Trial.

The latter is about Jewish prisoners in Auschwitz who decide to put God on trial for breaking the Jewish Covenant. I recently met Frank at a screening of the film to mark the holocaust memorial. Genie In The Gutter strongly believes in creativity as relapse prevention so I approached Frank, as a total stranger, and asked if I could interview him. His response: 'I'd be delighted'.

It was a very busy working week and I arrived for the interview in a slightly hurried and hassled fashion. I was met by a calm, composed and almost ethereal figure of a man. I asked if there was anything in particular he would like us to highlight, maybe his next film or forthcoming book. Instead he chose to highlight the government's decision to close libraries. This, plus his readiness to do the interview and his generosity of time, says a lot more about him than I can. Frank Cottrell-Boyce; praised by critics as one of the few truly inventive modern day screenwriters, but more importantly good, decent and honest human being, kindly talks to The Word.

C: Frank, is there anything that you are currently involved with at the moment that you would like to discuss?

F: I'm involved in a campaign called 'The Book' and part of that is to prevent library closures. Confidence has been lost in books and we are constantly pushing technology onto kids. The library closures on the Wirral are particularly catastrophic because (a) its huge and their closing half the libraries and (b) The Wirral is probably the most socially paralysed corner of this country. You have unbelievably wealthy people on one side of the peninsula and really disadvantaged people on the other. We are running out of public spaces. People are scared in parks and on the streets and libraries are state public places that people can safely use. **From the???** report we know that reading creates social mobility and by closing the libraries they are shooting up the tunnel that leads from deprivation to prosperity. Library membership has increased 30% since September 08 and that's down to the recession. The establishment think they are being modern in closing them but as ever they are actually behind the can.

C: Another fantastic cultural community place at risk of closure is the Woolton Picture House where of 'God on Trial' screened as part of the holocaust memorial day. What inspired you to write it?

F: Well I've known that story since I was a teenager. One day I got talking to Mark

Redhead, the producer. He was talking about the Stephen Lawrence inquiry film that he produced and I said that the ultimate trial film to do would be the Trial of God. He had also wanted to do that for a long time so we just clicked really. At first I felt very hesitant about getting involved partly because I'm not Jewish. I spoke to a couple of high profile Rabbis and they told me to go for it. It was really hard work emotionally and physically. I literally read the Bible from beginning to end which I've never done in my life.

C: How did you feel writing about the holocaust?

F: I didn't find it hard when I was writing because the questions asked are very human questions not theological questions. Things like why is bad stuff happening to me? People ask themselves that all the time; so it was very close to my normal thinking. Writing about the holocaust was an intellectual process for me but once we started filming young actors in stripey pyjamas standing around freezing cold in the mud it made you think more vividly. It was hard.

C: I emailed you after watching 'God on Trial' and commented on a particular part that said to know God is to not only see the morning dew on a snowdrop but to also feel its warmth. To be illuminated by the vision you described, to me, is a part of God. What does the word God mean to you Frank?!!

F: Oh God (!!!!) What a huge question. It means loads of different things. I'm a practising Catholic and I love being connected to my community and my roots. God to me is my experience of being part of something bigger and my connection to the universe if you like. I loved what you said in your email. It reminded me of The Hogfather a character from a Terry Pratchett book. Some people believe in him and some don't. The book says if the Hogfather dies the sun won't come up but instead a large ball of incandescent gas will be seen as an object in the sky. This means it's not the sun if you don't believe in something; it's just a star; because if you don't believe in something the sun doesn't make sense. It's that kind of thing that helps me. If you know anything about the size of the universe you know you are a completely insignificant speck but you are also unbelievably important. I think religion is the only thing which has the double vision that says **you're nothing and you're huge, you're the centre and you're the edge.** Science tells you one thing and your ego tells you another and religion has that dialect between those two points of view. **Yes you're infinitely tiny and yes you're infinitely important because all the pieces matter.**

C: There is often a spiritual component or understanding at work when people recover from addiction. Do you have any thoughts as to why this is?

F: Consumerism tells us it's all about the individual; but actually no individual is able to do everything for themselves. What you find, and something I've always thought, is that **suffering is revelation.** When something really hurts you that's when you discover things. You find out that you are incredibly dependent on other people and on something else. **You find out you are not alone. It's powerful.** I did an amazing interview with Ann McGuire, one of The Birmingham six, who were locked away completely for years on no evidence. She said what kept her going was that God knew she was innocent. You think people would lose their faith when they are at their lowest ebb but that's usually when people find it because they find out that they are not alone.

C: What did you think of our Capital of Culture year Frank?

F: I had a great year mainly because I spent a lot of time in schools and with community projects. I felt re-connected to the city and for me that was the best thing. People in the city who do art and culture professionally felt re-connected to the city. You can lose that angle on things. I spend lots of time in London or on location and for me I have got to know Liverpool again. What was also great was seeing people step up their game. It's been great to see people on the ground doing stuff.

C: How do you think Liverpool can move on from having been the Capital of Culture?

F: We may not know the fruits of 08 for another 10 years. It's like what we said about reading to your kid's when they're lit-

tle, it stays with them. The **really important 08 stuff is how we connected to the kids in schools.** Hopefully in 10 years time we will see kids who think anything is possible because something great happened to them during 2008 that made them bolder and showed them the world is a bigger place.

C: When did you first start writing and what inspired you to do so?

F: It was in year 6 when I was 11. The teacher read out a piece of my work and got lots of laughs. I still think that if she had asked me to read it out I'd have grown up wanting to be a performer. I remember watching Morecambe and Wise that weekend and waiting for the credits to come up to see who wrote it. It was Eddie Braeburn and I thought, that's a funny guy and he doesn't even have to be on the telly. I liked that thing about not having to be in the limelight. It was a real moment for me. We are all moments in somebody else's life and that moment and the teacher reading out my work, well it changed me.

C: We find a lot of people who are recovering from substance mis-use have fantastic creative ability. Do you have any ideas as to why?

F: I think people feel the need to escape. With creativity you're making your own escape where with drugs you're buying an escape module off the shelf. With creativity you are building your own escape model.

C: Have you got any tips or advice that you can share for aspiring writers?

F: I'd recommend writing radio plays to anyone wanting to start out professionally. They do such a lot and it's done quickly. I also think keeping a diary is fantastic, especially if it's not about you but about things you have seen or heard. It makes you look out which is always a good thing. **Watching people, hearing people and looking out is good mentally and spiritually and also in terms of talent.**

C: How do you deal with being a writer given that it appears to be quite an isolated profession and do you ever get writers block?

F: Well I work from home and I've got 7 kids so I'm certainly not isolated! We home educate the kids so the house is really busy and I can't afford to get writer's block with all those mouths to feed! There's definitely times when you are less creative. Writing is like anything else; if you're a cook then not every meal is going to be a masterpiece but all the crap meals are part of the masterpiece because it's the mistakes that you have made that make it good.

C: What writers do you admire?

F: Nearly everybody. I absolutely love Stephen King but I also love Chekhov. I love an Irish writer called Frank O'Connor. I think he's a genius. And I love children's writers - E Nesbitt, C S Lewis. Everyone has something to give.

C: What's your favourite thing to write?

F: I love writing children's books. Carl Hunter and I have just done a little film about one of my children's books and that was really great.

C: Which of your works has had the biggest effect on you?

F: Millions changed me because it gave me a different, more challenging and rewarding audience. In film festivals people come up to you all the time and go 'love your work!' Millions went to schools and there were kids being bored or objecting to things and then also being really bowled over. It's much more important when you're talking to kids. Even the most serious and profound adult film is really just entertainment because adults don't change that much whereas if you write for children there still influx and your becoming part of the mix which is fantastic.

C: Have you got a favourite book that you read as a child or a book that changed you at all?

F: I loved the Moomins books which were about a family of trolls and other species that all live together. When new animals arrived the Mother would welcome them with no questions asked. It was that idea of hospitality and the idea that no matter how different people are you can still live under the same roof. It doesn't matter if you don't have a thing in common, you still have to eat and stuff and that matters. I've taken that from reading the moomins books. I absolutely loved them.



Jury scene from the film 'God On Trial'

C: What's on the horizon for you in terms of writing and film projects at the moment?

F: I'm making a film at the moment of **???**-my second children's book. I'm also working on more kids books. Carl Hunter and I have just done a film called *Accelerate about some of my short stories. It's all done with still photographs and stop frame animations. There's a recovery group on the Wirral who have been using it, it's therapeutic and I think it would strike a chord with you. I will definitely email you a copy.

** Accelerate is available to view on www.genieinthegutter.co.uk*

Recovery Oriented Integrated Systems

In the first of a Three-part interview, Mark Gilman at NTA North West introduces the ROIS initiative and his quest to make recovery the organising principle of drug treatment.



A: How do you think we've ended up in a situation where we think recovery is radical?

M: Because it's the next step really. An awful lot of people have come into treatment, they've got into treatment relatively quickly compared to previously, and we've managed to retain them in treatment for a minimum of 12 weeks; which is the minimum amount of time for treatment to take any kind of effect. But so what? So you've got 200,000 plus people in treatment in 2008? Where are they going next? Well, recovery is the place they're going to, they going to join the rest of us in society; going into work, looking after their children and all the things you would expect successful treatment to do.

A: What is a Recovery Oriented Integrated System (ROIS)?

M: Basically a ROIS is what it says on the tin. We want the whole idea of drug treatment in each of the local authority areas to be organised by the principle of Recovery. There are 22 local authorities in the North West, 149 nationally, and each has got a Drug Action Team (DAT). Currently, they're all in the process of constructing an architecture for a system. The ROIS is just a way of actually organising that architecture. So, 'Recovery Oriented' because that's what it's about, we want people to aspire towards recovery and they can define that recovery as they wish. The 'Integrated' bit means that everyone working in that treatment system - all the different providers - need to remind themselves pretty much everyday when they go to work, what they're going to work for, and, ultimately they're going to work to make people better; to facilitate recovery. They do that by working together with other service providers and referring people to other services. They don't do it by holding onto people, jealously thinking that they've got all the answers, because no one service has. So it's *recovery oriented*, it's *integrated* and it's a *system*. It's as simple as that really.

A: Where did they idea come from?

M: It actually comes from a guy called George De Leon, he was instrumental in establishing the first Phoenix house in New York in the Sixties or Seventies. It came from his team's learning experiences in therapeutic communities, when you could go to a therapeutic community and become a resident there for two years. We're trying to resurrect that but in a natural setting. It's been trialled to an extent in the correctional system in New York, in prisons, but this is the first time - that I'm aware of - that it's being tried in a real life community like Manchester or Liverpool. We're actually trying it with real people in real places. So I guess it's radical in that sense too, it's never been done in a natural setting.

A: What do you see as the main obstacle to a ROIS being adopted in a given DAT area?

M: One of the main obstacles is - and I understand exactly why, I used to run a Community Drug Team back in the day in Trafford and you do develop a rapport with people over the years - you can get a little bit paternalistic about them. They become like your kids really, and just as with your own kids, you're a bit cautious about who you leave them, well it's the same with this game really. If you've got someone who's been in Methadone maintenance treatment with you for Ten years, and then we come and set this ROIS thing up, and we say we want you to refer people to another serv-

ice in order that they can have another look at their addiction from another perspective, then providers are a bit wary and they get a bit protective. I mean in a good sense, it's understandable. Therefore, one of the main barriers to implementing a ROIS will be the lack of movement from one service to another. Particularly the lack of movement from the substitute prescribing services to more abstinence-oriented services.

A: Does a ROIS cost more? How realistic is the adoption of a ROIS by commissioners?

M: Once you've decided to establish a Recovery Oriented Integrated System in any given DAT area, you'd probably save money rather than it costing more. The first thing to say about organizing a ROIS in a given area is that it requires genuine commissioning. And by that I mean, you need somebody who's got the vision to create the ROIS. A Recovery Oriented Integrated System is not something you can buy 'off the peg', you can't just say 'we'll go and get a ROIS, you can get them from down there'. It means having a really good look at what you've currently got and then in some cases you may well save money because you might find that you've got services that are duplicating an effort; they're not referring to each other so they're setting up more and more services. Commissioning a ROIS needs someone with the vision, the leadership and the courage to actually set the vision out and say 'this is where we're going, this is where we are and therefore we've got to move from there to here'. It could be somebody in the Drug Action Team or it might be in another part of the partnership. It could be somebody in the Primary Care Trust (PCT), Public Health, Local Authority, Community Safety. It could be the chief exec of a local authority. The point is that if somebody can see it, once we've got a few up and running - and we're nearly there with a few now - then it'll be much more tangible. Once you've got the vision I think the next thing is to set about the design, it's the architecture that's going to be the difficult bit.

A: What are your thoughts about the idea of drug addiction as a chronic relapsing condition?

M: This is one of the more controversial areas of contemporary drug treatment. Is drug addiction a chronic relapsing condition? Well...probably. It's certainly chronic in as much as it lasts for a long time, or it *can* last for a long time. It's certainly characterised by relapse; relapse is the norm not the exception. It takes people quite a while to get into addiction and for most, quite a while to get out. Not many people in my experience - and I've been 25 years working in this game - not many people have woke up one morning and said 'I'm packing it in, I'm never doing it again' and from that day on they haven't. Most people make that decision and then through a series of trial and error, lapse and relapse, they finally get there. The problem with chronic relapsing condition as an *idea* is that it does have a tendency to breed pessimism, because it gives people the idea that they'll never be cured; because it's chronic, because it's relapsing it's with you for life and therefore it can only ever be managed. So then we start to move into a situation where we start to manage addiction as opposed to actually introducing recovery. So is it chronic?...Yes. Is it relapsing?...Yes. Does it mean you've got it for ever? Absolutely not! There are millions of people that have been in this position and are no longer.

In Part 2 Mark discusses the role of 12-step in a ROIS, Methadone Maintenance Treatment and the unorthodox research techniques that helped put drug users at the centre of Recovery Oriented Integrated Systems.

What part of 'Anonymous' do you not understand?

The handing down of a fifteen-month sentence to '80s pop star, Boy George, real name George O'Dowd, may seem to some to have been a bit harsh. Barry Egan, of the Irish Independent, put it: 'Cocaine-fuelled paranoia may have put the star in jail, but there have been dark times before' and if one as the songs from his 1995 album, 'Cheapness & Beauty' in which the diva threatens 'I could beat ya/I could teach ya', is any indication, Egan may well have a point.

The issue of the sentencing is another article altogether. What is an issue is the response of the favouritism that seems to have been shown to him in giving him a job in the kitchens (much sought after and seen as 'a cushy number' by inmates) so early on in his sentence.

What is more troubling, however, is some of the aspects of Mr O'Dowd's defence in court. His solicitor attempted to use Mr O'Dowd's attendance of Narcotics Anonymous meetings to show that his client was addressing his drug problems. Solicitors have a duty to do the best for their clients, which includes presenting a case for leniency when their clients have been found guilty.

George Dowd joins an ever expanding list of celebrities who attend 'Fellowship' (NA, AA, etc.) meetings in order to address their addictions. Sure! Because they are in the public limelight, celebrities will have greater difficulty keeping their fellowship membership private, but there is a growing tendency for celebs to use their attendance at meetings to mitigate their bad behaviour.

Perhaps the most infamous example is Michael Barrymore who seemed to use his connection with the fellowship as a means of countering the negative images of him and gain sympathy from the public.

In an interview with Bryan Appleyard, Mr Barrymore made much of his 'illness' in order to explain his behaviour. But as Appleyard correctly noted, 'AA insists on accepting responsibilities and that cannot mean absolving yourself of everything by saying you have a disease - or, if it does, it's meaningless.' [The Sunday Times, 16th March 2003].

It is one thing to be 'outed' for attending a fellowship meeting, but some, such as Michael Barrymore and George O'Dowd, seem to feel the need; (a need that seems to increase in desperation with the scale of trouble they find themselves in); to let the whole world know what good people they really are.

Anonymity is one of the founding principles of the AA and NA Fellowship. Initially it guarantees a safe harbour for alcoholics and drug addicts to address their issues without fear of losing their families or their jobs.

More importantly though is what anonymity means in the spiritual sense. The majority of those in the fellowship came to it because they had hit rock-bottom. They had created a living hell for themselves of which they could find no way out. Attending meetings is an admission that their drug of choice consumed every moment of their lives. Addressing the problem in such a way calls for humility that becomes essential to maintaining sobriety.

Shouting about how many meetings you do and how many months you've been sober, to the tabloids isn't exactly the epitome of a humble existence.

For millions of alcoholics and addicts, the spiritual path of the fellowship has been the mainstay of their sobriety and their continual life as self-fulfilled people. They had lived a life of hell in private and can now enjoy life without drink or drugs, in private.



Booze 'worse than drugs'

A Senior police officer spoke at the Cheshire Probation Area conference and echoed calls for an increase in the price of alcohol. The call followed worrying claims made at the conference by John Bache, Cheshire doctor magistrate, who said "The problems of alcohol are far worse than the problems of drugs. For every person I see admitted to A&E because of drugs I've seen far, far more because of alcohol. On a Friday or Saturday night between midnight and 6am I estimate that 85% of the patients we see in A&E are there because of drink". The conference also heard about the new strategy being implemented in Halton which could see offenders obliged to have counselling or partake in residential detox programmes. Alcohol Activity Requirement court orders have been piloted and are to be used country-wide.

The re-classification of cannabis from a class C to a class B drug suggests that the Home Office is in something of a quandary over the matter. The drug was only made class C in 2002. The reason the Home Office gave for this turnaround was that Skunk now accounts for 80% of cannabis available on our streets, compared to just 30% in 2002.

This means that if an adult is caught in possession of cannabis, as well as considering arrest and confiscating the drug, police are likely to:

give a cannabis warning for a first offence of possession; give a Penalty Notice for Disorder - this is an on-the-spot fine of £80 for a second offence or make an arrest if it is the third offence of having been caught with cannabis - this could lead to conviction and a criminal record.

2009/2010 Pooled Treatment Budget

The total Pooled Treatment Budget (PTB) for 2009/10 will be £406m, an £8m increase on 08/09. The adult PTB will be £381.3m, just over 2% increase compared to 08/09. This reflects the government's continuing commitment to ensure drug treatment is adequately resourced and is an endorsement of the benefits well delivered and effective treatment provide to service users. This is the second year of the three year process to introduce a fairer funding regime for drug treatment. The NTA remains confident that sufficient funds will be available to all partnerships during 2009/10 to meet their obligations to their communities and their service users.

Spirituality

by Denis Joe

Before a Beethoven symphony, Mozart's *Don Giovanni* or Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*, all human beings are equal. Daniel Barenboim

For me this quote sums up my understanding of spirituality. Barenboim is saying that through these masterpieces flows the very essence of humanity: its intellect; its imagination; the collective emotions and, as such, its vision of the world (both internally and externally) that mankind occupies.

I was brought up with an Irish background that paid homage to the Catholic Church. As children my siblings and I were forced to go to mass on Sunday. Our innate rebelliousness meant that we resented it and spent the money we had been given for the plate, on sweets. If it was a warm day we would go to the park. If it was cold we would sit at the back of the church eating our sweets.

Sundays was also the day that my Dad would play his records. Invariably this meant opera singers and there was a ritual of Jussi Bjoerling singing 'Oh Holy Night' played at Christmas and the Leoncavallo opera 'Cavaleria Rusticana' was played at Easter. These were intrusions into my world that disturbed my lie-in and it was only later, when I was older that I learned to appreciate such music.

The house was full of books and television watching was strictly limited to what my Dad was watching, so I read early and read a lot.

From an early age I was exposed to politics through my Dad's Trade Union and Socialist beliefs. I took these ideas on board as they held a germ of anti-establishment that suited my 'it's-not-fair' outlook of the world. Also I took to drinking alcohol for the same reason.

My understanding of the issues of the day: racism; sexism; war led me to understanding

things from a human perspective: a man or a woman, irrespective of colour, race or any other background, shared with me the fact that we are human and capable of molding our future as humanity had done in the past.

As I got older I began to appreciate all things human, but that did not mean that I accepted all things human. Wars and discrimination created a world that was at odds with the way I saw things. Like most left-wingers I was active in anti-war, anti-racist and other movements that were attempting to unite mankind in the quest to build a world free of inequality and discrimination.¹

That turmoil was reflected in the life that I was leading. As an alcoholic I created havoc wherever I went and created barriers between other people and myself: Some would say that I was hypocritical; I led a life that was diametrically at odds with my principles. As time went on and my life spiralled more and more out of control I became the very thing that I despised; I became less than human. The world offered so much and I spat it back in their face.

I never really understood my beliefs as *Spiritual*; to me that word reeked of religion and superstition.

It was not until I came across a quote from a letter that one of the founders of modern psychotherapy, Carl Jung had written to one of the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous, that things became clearer to me. In the letter Jung spoke of his understanding of the effect of alcoholism on a person's spiritualism and summed it up by stating: "*Spiritus Contra Spiritum*" pointing out that in Latin *Spirit* was used to describe the

"highest religious experience as well as the most depraving poison"².

For me spirits did destroy my spirit.

I had always made the effort to surround myself with great music and literature. I had a passion for the arts and would sometimes break into tears just listening to Shostakovich's Eighth Symphony. But my passions took second place to my drinking.

Today nothing (except money) stops me from fully appreciating the greatness that humanity has created and continues to create. I go to the galleries, concert halls. I listen to CDs, watch DVDs and read because this is the greatness of humanity.

Amongst the gloom and doom that dominates the world; science strives to give us a greater quality of life; people stand up to injustice, and like the people of Nepal, in 2006, are prepared to risk their lives by overthrowing tyranny. These are the things that provide me with something to believe in.

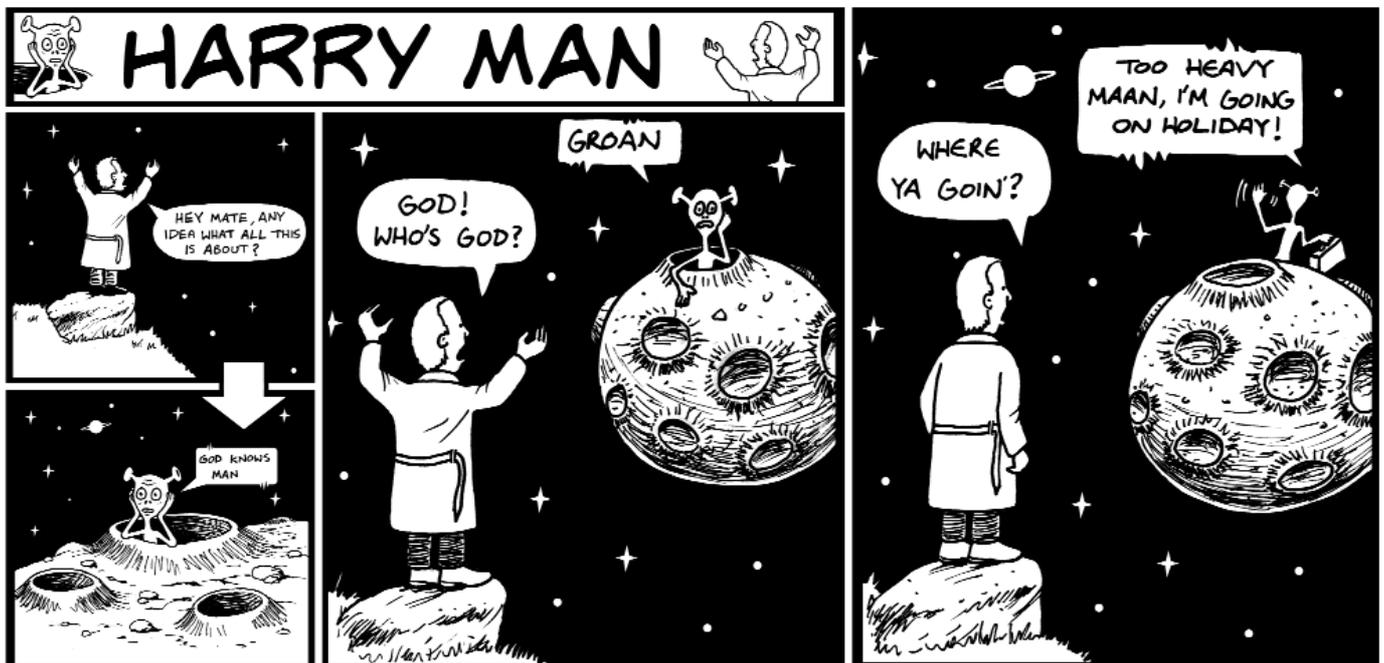
I value my friends more than ever. I have a greater understanding of my relationship with my family.

In short, I have everything that I did not have during the thirty years of my drinking.

I also have come to understand myself. My alcoholism is peculiar to me. I accept other people drinking and am pleased when they accept that I avoid alcohol.

I am not a 'good' person. Like everyone else I am prone to being resentful, bad tempered and capable of throwing the most childish tantrums. I do my best to make amends because in every case no one has been put in danger and whatever I took offense to is petty and not worth creating enemies for. Nine times out of ten, any slight that I feel is made against me is not intentional and to see it otherwise only contradicts my beliefs about my fellow man.

1: Frank Furedi states that "Human beings are not Angels and on a bad day we are capable of evil deeds. But the very fact we can designate some acts as evil indicates that we are capable of rectifying injustices." *Culture Of Fear*. Pub. Continuum. 2006. p. xxi
2: *The Language Of The heart*. Bill W's Grapevine Writings. The AA Grapevine Inc. 1980. p. 281



By Carl Paul

Spirituality as I see it

By Tom McGuiness

Quote: "If I have lost confidence in myself, I have the universe against me". Ralph Waldo Emerson

What's the difference between a loser and a winner?

The terms are used in recovery groups and are rarely fully understood because the meanings usually attributed are those of respect/disrespect, failure/ and success.

From my point of view a loser is someone who loses things he doesn't want to lose!

Have you ever lost your mind, your freedom, your job, your family, your dignity, your self respect, your values, your humanity? I did, and it was because of the negative power of my alcoholism but I didn't freely choose to lose them. At no time of my life did I ever plan, in advance, to lose any of the above. They happened anyway - I was very sick.

So what is a winner? A winner is someone who **CHOOSES TO LOSE** those things which prevents them living life to the full.

If you don't have the ability to freely choose, then you cannot be said to be responsible. If you are not responsible then you are, at least, immature. Your destiny should not be a matter of chance; it is a matter of choice. If you are an addict your choices are dictated entirely by your addictive nature and your neediness/immaturity. Until you find the power to help you exercise choice (of not

using/drinking). Until you find that power, you are not free and cannot choose your destiny. Instead you will most likely fulfill your very sad fate and die before you ever learned how to live.

SPIRITUALITY is the ability to live in the Real world, free from denial, delusion, rationalization and free from values which diminish my humanity. The present culture is full of such values and it takes the living of a spiritual life to find out where truth lies.

The spiritual principles of recovery open the doors to a world of choice and power. The 4th to the 7th steps tell you how to pursue your freedom, by discovering what you need to lose, and then asking for help to lose them; your attraction to selfishness, to self seeking, to dishonesty; to fear and to those character issues which keep us as needy infants and cause suffering to ourselves and those around us.

At the end of the 9th step, we have lost our fear of those we have harmed. We have lost our old ideas about ourselves, replacing them with a nobler version i.e. we are willing to go to any lengths. The remaining steps, called the 'Maintenance steps', only work because we have lost our fear of being ourselves, lost our fear of change and of other people, lost our poor self esteem, lost our identity as masters of our own universe, lost the opinion that we have nothing worth giving. We have the most important gift of all for others - the gift of hope - and the first thing we teach, by example, is that newcomers can lose their need to drink or use....

Spirituality by Kevin Anderson

— Park View Project service user —

Spirituality to me means Freedom, Choice and Giving.

It means an open door.

A pathway leading from the door can lead to almost anywhere my imagination wants
To go.

A new journey has begun now that the spiritual war appears to be over.

It is a journey home;

Home being a land of freedom.

On this journey I carry no more heavy baggage

Or, wreckage of the past. Yesterday is history.

Guilt and Shame have become regrets.

Regrets I can now more easily shoulder as I journey on.

I carry with me a lightweight, compact but essential toolbox; I call it fellowship.

Inside the toolbox are friends, names and faces; a book; a pen and mundane, but

Essential, a phone.

This box to be opened when troubles, pitfalls, challenges and opportunities lie in the

Pathway before me.

Or to be opened to share the beauty of the wonderful things found and appreciated along

The way.

Spirituality today means freedom

Freedom to choose LIFE

Freedom to love and be loved

Freedom to give and to receive

Freedom not only to go where a path may lead but to go also where there is no path

And leave a trail.

Working Towards Recovery

In December of last year the UK Drugs Policy Commission [UKDPC] issued their recommendations for getting Problem Drug Users into employment. The report; *Working Towards Recovery*, came about as a result of the publication of the green paper on welfare reform in July last year, *No One Written Off* which devoted a whole section to drug users on benefits, particularly those on Incapacity Benefit. It was these five pages of a document of 118 pages that caught the attention of the media and in particular the proposal to get addicts into rehabilitation with the threat of sanctioning their benefits.

Whilst the overall tone of *No One Written Off* is bellicose, the softer presentation of proposals, which concentrate on drug addicts, by the UKDPC is of no less concern to service users and providers within the drug rehabilitation sector.

It is estimated that there are 332,090 problem drug users (PDUs)¹ of working age in Britain, which is roughly 1% of the working age population [Hay & Bauld. p.17] outside of London the highest proportion of PDUs is in the North West (1.31%). It is further estimated that 6.1% of all claimants are identified as PDUs. The main benefits that are claimed by PDUs are Job Seekers Allowance [8.22% of total in receipt JSA claimants] and Incapacity Benefit [8.13% of total in receipt of IB]. The small proportion claiming benefits suggests that 90% of Problem Drug Users are not reliant on welfare benefits and are active within the economy. That under a tenth of those on Incapacity Benefit are classed as PDUs is hardly surprising when one thinks of the health issues that drug taking creates. It would seem that the targeting of Problem Drug Users is not simply an issue of cutting the costs of state provision of welfare benefits.

The thinking that drives government manoeuvring is that the individual is required to take responsibility. There has been a similar approach over health issues. The issue of lifestyles has been one of the major concerns of the government over the past 20 years or so. But unlike obesity or smoking, drug abuse is an illegal activity and the state's active engagement with it cannot simply be perceived as the act of a paternalistic government. It accounts for the largest section of the prison population who are repeat offenders [Bennett & Holloway]; suggesting that punitive measures have little impact. However, the drive to get those with drug problems into the employment market, it appears, will rely significantly on sanctions.

Local initiatives have been working successfully over the past few years. The Merseyside area has been at the forefront of helping those with drug problems get into work. Sefton Drug Action Team worked closely with Jobcentre Plus in setting up the 'Moving On' project, which helps to address some of the problems faced by people who were in treatment but felt themselves uncertain about entering the employment market. The project give support to people looking at housing and education as well as providing support in preventing relapse and helping with personal issues such as motivation.

On the Wirral, the Drug and Alcohol Action Team have been working with Jobcentre Plus where a team of professionals offer support to clients with drug problems in order to help them get treatment and further their move into employment.

Drug addicts face loss of welfare payments

Four-fold rise in drug addicts claiming disability benefits, say

In Liverpool, Jobcentre Plus is helping to train drug workers in dealing with employment issues as part of a relapse prevention programme.

Nationally there has been the Progress2work scheme which is benefitting 10,000 people who are in treatment; helping them to enter the labour market.

All these schemes are voluntary, but it is estimated that 100,000 claimants with drug problems are not in treatment and it is the aim of the government's drug strategy to address this issue by offering treatment to those with drug problems who are claiming benefits.

'Tax payers cannot be expected to support a drug dependent lifestyle, so where drug treatment is available and considered appropriate, then there should be an obligation that individuals will take it up' [No One Written Off sec. 2.33]

Although the UKDPC's report aims at addressing the concerns of employers, its recommendations have much to say on the role of government assistance in getting PDUs into the work.

Working Towards Recovery does recognise some of the problems that employers may face. Its emphasis is on cross-departmental action to address the issues that impact on the drug user. It recommends that claimants should have an action plan that addresses the health and housing needs of drug users, highlighting the need for a multi-agency approach.

It also recognises the discrimination against drug users and recommends that government might try to combat it using a similar campaign to 'Shift,' the anti-stigma campaign set up to combat prejudice of those with mental health problems.

One of the biggest barriers to employment for the drug user is disclosure of criminal offences. When CRB and ECRBs were introduced

BLESS DRUG ADDICTS WHO LIE GET BENEFITS SHOULD FACE JAIL WELFARE BLITZ

Daily Mail 20th July 2008

Using

The Guardian
27th February 2008

Life in addicts Responsibility Tories

Daily Telegraph
8th Feb 2009

it was felt that only a small area of employers in the service sector would be affected, but these days a CRB check for many jobs is common practice by employers. One of the recommendations of UKDPC is that the government adopt the suggestions on rehabilitation of offenders that is outlined in *Breaking the circle*, and consider lower taxation or National Insurance contributions as financial incentives. The overall approach recognises that employment is a crucial aspect of recovery as well as therapy.

However the report does not fully address the contentious issue of getting drug users into treatment, though it does concede that there '... are dangers (including relapse) associated with applying pressure on people to take part in employment programmes for which they are not ready' [UKDPC p.25]

The only research concerning compulsory treatment for drug users that has been produced is around the criminal justice system. Motivation to address a drug problem is identified as one of the most important factors in furthering successful outcomes. One study suggests that compelling an individual into treatment, as compared to an individual who volunteers, creates a greater chance that the coerced individual presents a greater danger than that individual will drop out of treatment. The authors noted in their study, that '[from] 1999 and onwards, those referred into treatment via the criminal justice system were significantly more likely to drop out of treatment (and conversely significantly less likely to be discharged drug free) than those who were referred through other routes' [Beynon, et al].

To cut or withdraw benefits from those individuals who do not participate in treatment could lead to other problems and further marginalise drug users. It could further lead to greater problems for service providers who may well be seen as 'sleeping with enemy' and damage their ability to be effective. It also raises ethical questions over treatment for many providers, especially those who provide a 12 step recovery programme as the first element of recovery

must be the need for the addict to recognise the need for change and be motivated to do something about it. Coercion takes that responsibility away from the addict.

In 2003 the then Home secretary, David Blunkett, backed the call for compulsory drug treatment, in a drive to cut crime. At the time Mark Littlewood, a spokesman for the civil liberties group Liberty, said: "Rehabilitation of drug users requires their active commitment. There is precious little evidence that forcing people into compulsory treatment will do anything other than further alienate them from the authorities and make the drug situation in Britain worse." [*The Independent* 22 January 2003]. On the other hand, experience tells us that there are significant numbers of people who go into treatment (or go to a 12 step fellowship) for reasons located outside of themselves; to get the wife of one's back, placate an employer or, as indicated, comply with the terms laid down by a judge, but being exposed to the benefits before them, a quality of life the individual often no longer thought possible, made gains regardless.

Problem drug use brings a plethora of problems for the individual as well as society at large. We take for granted that the times we live in are enlightened: society no longer sends single mothers into mental asylum; homosexuality is no longer seen as deviant behavior and in 1961 the Suicide Act decriminalised the taking of one's life as psychology provided a greater understanding and humane approach, for example. Yet in the 21st century problem drug users can still be demonised and treated as pariahs.

In Britain the judicial system can offer treatment to problem drug users (see interview with Judge Fletcher elsewhere in this issue) allowing for the person to choose whether to address their problem. Threatening to take away a person's primary source of income and coercion of people into treatment and may well raise important questions over human rights; echoing the criticism of 'Communist' countries and how they treated their citizens in the latter half of the 20th century.

If these measures are to go ahead there is a possibility that they will lead to a climate of mistrust amongst drug users, who may well see treatment as a punishment and the service providers as wardens without uniforms. With no source of income, problem drug users may well be forced into crime, not simply to maintain their habit, but to actually live, leading to further marginalisation.

Since the release of the Green Paper the world economy faces crisis and the job market is contracting. There may not be jobs available for PDUs, and those that are cannot offer security to an employee. To tackle an addiction, which has taken over the addict's life, requires offering hope of a better life if they are to address their problem. An approach that begins with coercion and leads to hopelessness is setting the addict up to fail. If this is not taken into account by the government, then they should consider that, as usual, knee-jerk solutions only end up costing a lot more money than gets saved.

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- *No One Written Off* - DWP Public Consultation Document July 2008
- *Working Towards Recovery* - UKDPC December 2008
- *Drug use and offending: summary results of the first two years of the NEW-ADAM programme.* Authors: Trevor Bennett & Katy Holloway. Home Office Findings 179
- *Breaking the Circle* - Home Office July 2002
- *Trends in drop out, drug free discharge and rates of re-presentation: a retrospective cohort study of drug treatment clients in the Northwest of England.* Authors: Caryl M Beynon, Mark A Bellis and Jim McVeigh BMC Public Health 2006, 6:205

1: PDU are those individuals using opiates, such as heroin or crack cocaine.



Are you a service user?
Have you been affected by drugs/alcohol?
Are you involved in the drug/alcohol field?

If so, here's a chance for you to have your say. **Your Voice, Your Say** is featured in every edition of **The WORD** and acts as a platform for service users and anyone involved with drug/alcohol work to have their voices heard. **LETTERS, POEMS, INFORMATION, FEEDBACK, ARTWORK, COMMENTS, REAL LIFE EXPERIENCES, YOU NAME IT, WE WANT IT!!!**

Information

Voluntary Programme at The Basement

The Basement, a homeless drop in centre and advisory service in Bolton St Liverpool have recently introduced an innovative Volunteers Programme. The courses run for 6 weeks at a time and consist of 6 classes:

- Week 1 - Homelessness Awareness
- Week 2 - Listening Skills
- Week 3 - Boundary Issues
- Week 4 - Drug Awareness
- Week 5 - Mental Health Awareness
- Week 6 - Managing Conflict

There will be an end of course theory and practical test.

If you are interested in participating or would like further information please contact Donna McDonald @ The Basement 0151 707 1515
www.basementdropin.org.uk

A New Home For The Spider Project

The Spider Project, who provides activities to substance misusers including creative writing, yoga, outward bounds and complementary therapies, have recently moved premises from 88 Rodney Street to 22 Pilgrim Street. The clients will benefit from a lot more space, changing rooms and new shower facilities. For clients on the Wirral The Spider Project also have additional new premises in Birkenhead at the park gates.

For further information please call 0151 709 4841 and speak to one of the team members, Gerry, Peter, Phil, PJ or Sandra.

New Smear Clinic and Smoking Cessation Clinic at The Lighthouse Project

83-93 Stonebridge Lane, Croxteth

The Lighthouse Project Croxteth provides a number of different services for substance misusers. They are introducing the following 2 sessions:

Smear Clinic - 2pm-5pm: By Appointment
Smoking Cessation Clinic every Wed 12pm - 2pm for 8 weeks.

Other sessions currently available are:

Ear Acupuncture: Mon, Wed & Fri 1.30pm
Elektro Stimulation Therapy: Tues and Thurs 11am
Indian Head Massage: By Appointment

For further information please call 0151 546 1141



TOGETHER WOMEN PROJECT

Our approach seeks to work for women on a holistic, needs lead, client centered approach. It is a female only service facilitated solely by women. We seek to divert women away from offending by identifying, appreciating and resolving the issues that some women face in society, issues like housing, drug/alcohol addiction, domestic violence, and financial problems. This is a NOMS funded service with service provision delivered by The Lighthouse Project. There have long been widespread concerns regarding the effectiveness of male oriented sentencing on a female population. Women are systematically disadvantaged by being 'shoe-horned' into a system that does not meet their needs or take into account different life advantages.

Case Studies

*"I was referred to the Together Women Project (TWP) by The Women's Direct in Liverpool. While at TWP I was dropped off & picked up for important appointments including court appearances. I found the staff at TWP really friendly and helpful and I also really enjoyed the complimentary activities that I joined in with especially the relaxation techniques. TWP referred me to Park View Project and I have been sober now for almost 5 months. I cannot believe how much my life has changed. I did not have a life before. I lived in a hostel with damp walls and a television for company and now I have so many people around me that care. It's fantastic." **Joyce Chapman 45***

*"The Together Women Project saved my life". They helped get me back on my feet after a tough time and they also signposted me to The Parkview Project were I am today, "I have been drug and alcohol free for 5 months." **Gemma Yates 25***

THE JACOB CUP

That time is here again. The Jacob Cup, our multi agency charity football tournament, is approaching its 3rd year. This year's tournament is very special to us as all proceeds raised will go to Mild May House in memory of **GARY SMITH**. Gary, a great friend and colleague of many people working in this field, and a Manager at Mild May House, sadly passed away unexpectedly in December 08. Gary has played in, and facilitated the Mild May House team, at both previous Jacob Cup tournaments.

Mild May House is currently trying to get a Memorial Book for Gary and the proceeds of this year's tournament will go towards this or another project that Mild May House choose in memory of Gary.

We would like to take this opportunity to offer Gary's family and friends our sincere condolences and we dedicate this year's event to Gary's memory.

The Jacob Cup is not just a football event; (although we take this side of it very seriously!); it is also an opportunity for over 20 agencies to have stalls and raise awareness of substance misuse and homelessness in the city.

**The tournament will take place
on Friday 29th May 09.**

For further details please contact Carolyn or Lindsey at Genie In The Gutter on 0151 228 9167 or email genieinthegutter@parkviewproject.co.uk

YOUR VOICE
YOUR SAY

Letters and Comments

We welcome your views/ comments.

Please email them to genieinthegutter@parkviewproject.co.uk.

In each edition of The WORD a prize will be given to the best letter.

What is Spirituality? A Response

What is spirituality indeed! Thanks to Carolyn for an informative and personal exploration of this question in the last issue. As both an academic researching "Spirituality and Addiction" for my PhD, and a recovering addict myself, this is a question that is of particular interest to me, and I find myself wearing two hats as I research this subject - the objective hat of the archetypal scholar - and the more personal hat of someone on a life-long journey of self-knowledge, understanding, and personal growth. Is that what spirituality is - a journey of personal growth and self-awareness? Well, some argue that "spirituality" is inextricably linked with Christian history, and that the concept of spirituality is a fundamentally Western, a Christian one. The idea of "spirituality" is rooted in the Hebrew word for "spirit" -ruah - meaning the breath or spirit of God. In the early Christian Church, a "spiritual" person was simply someone who lived their lives immersed in and guided by the spirit of God, whereas a "carnal" person was someone who attached themselves to worldly activities. What is interesting is that over the years, Christian theology has misinterpreted this original, holistic Biblical meaning of spirituality, and developed a rigid theological distinction between the body and the spirit - where the body becomes something "bad" - to be rejected, and the soul something "good" - to be embraced. As the world shrinks through globalization, coupled with the explosion in connective information technologies, Western societies have become increasingly exposed to the astonishingly diverse array of cultures and faith traditions that populate our world - and what we see in these other faith traditions is there is not always such a sharp distinction between body and spirit, mind and matter as has been presented by orthodox Christian theology through history. Indeed, many faith traditions regard the body itself as a locus, or source, of spiritual growth. One

only has to look at the phenomenal escalation in popularity of body-oriented spiritualities such as yoga or Tai-Chi to recognize that this division between the body and soul, mind and matter, which is so deeply embedded in the Western psyche, is a problematic, if not false dichotomy. There is a yearning to overcome this dualism - because we recognize that to be fully human - to be fully alive - is to embrace ALL the dimensions of our being - our bodies, our emotions, all the "blood and guts" of earthly life. And ironically, this is precisely how the early Christian communities approached spiritual life. I myself am a practicing Buddhist - and it is within the Tibetan Buddhist tradition of Yungdrung Bon that I have found my spiritual home. Others will find their own homes elsewhere - in different places, in different spiritual landscapes. We are privileged in the West because we have choice: unlike our parents and grandparents who were simply raised according to the religious traditions of their families and immediate social environments- WE have spiritual choices - choices that can be bewildering, exciting, confusing and complex - and we must be careful how we exercise our right to choose. It is vitally important that we are mindful and respectful of the specific cultural context from which each faith tradition has emerged. The world is not black and white - it is a beautiful tapestry of scintillating cultural colours - a garden of spiritual riches, wonder, and delight. As for the "blood and guts" of earthly life - who better than the addict to appreciate and understand this?

Best wishes, Stephen Bamber

Stephen been invited by the Genie in the Gutter team to explore the intersection of "Spirituality and Addiction" for us in more detail, and his first article on this subject will appear in the next issue.

Is Addiction a Disease?

It's twenty to seven on a Saturday night and I've finally reached breaking point. I've got that feeling. That sense of "My... brain... is... about... to... EXPLODE," after trawling the internet for hours, obsessively going from site to site, looking for that elusive... thing. That thing in this case is the answer to the question 'Is addiction a disease?'

Throughout the ages, doctors and philosophers have been striving to make sense of what causes a few unfortunates to compulsively seek destructive inebriation. From the wine drinker in the Biblical Songs of Solomon, to the heroin addicted Big Issue seller of today, firm resolve quickly crumbles away. Their only hope seemingly being the sanctuary of a premature death.

In the 1930s, an American Physician, Dr. William D. Silkworth, put forward the revolutionary idea that alcoholics and addicts were bodily different. This laid the foundation for the idea that these people were suffering from a disease. He had no evidence to substantiate his claim other than years working with those whose lives were being destroyed by their inability to abstain. This new way of thinking played an integral part in the formation of the 12 Step Programme of Alcoholics Anonymous and other 12 Step fellowships. His idea quickly gathered credibility and since then, studies and research have further developed the disease /abstinence based solution.

Every Yin has its inevitable Yang and just as Dr. Silkworth's theory has been supported by the medical fraternity; it does have its opposition. Some see addiction/alcoholism as a moral deficiency or a learned

behaviour. I do not have the knowledge or expertise to enter such an intellectual debate.

However I do have my own experience of using drugs and alcohol unsuccessfully for 15 years. I have been a member of a 12 Step fellowship for almost twenty years and have spent thirteen of those abstinent from drugs and alcohol. Those twenty years were punctuated by periods of relapse where I convinced myself that I didn't have a disease and didn't need to practice abstinence. The last time I told myself this, the consequence was almost fatal

Maybe I am wrong and am morally deficient, or am demonstrating a learned behaviour. Conversely, perhaps the disease lobbyists are right when they argue that the presence of Tetrahydroisoquinoline creates the craving and abnormal reaction in the body of the alcoholic/addict. There are times when a question can't be answered. There are occasions when a question in fact leads directly to another question; that question being 'Why do I need to know?'

Timecheck. It's now twenty to eight on the same aforementioned Saturday night and I still don't know whether or not addiction is a disease. What I do know is that I am a recovering addict who has found an answer to the question 'How do I stop destroying my life?' I have found the solution by subscribing to the disease/spiritual ethos of a 12 Step Programme which has given me a new life, successful and finally free from addiction.

YOUR SAY
YOUR VOICE

Literature/Short Stories/Poems

A New Face

Barry Alder was twenty eight years old and had lived on the council estate all his life. It was a rough area and most of his friends had been in trouble with the police; it was an expected part of estate life. Many had been in prison for serious offences; they spoke of their time in prison with pride, tales of defiance and ways of beating the system, gaining kudos for the length of time spent in the punishment cells and loss of remission. Barry had hoped he would never step into a prison, but he knew today that he would enter the local prison for the first time. He had tried to prepare himself mentally: trying to picture what it would be like; but on reflection he knew, that only by being there in person would he truly know. His choices and lifestyle had made this inevitable; he took a deep breath and stepped out of his house. The rest of the day was a blur. He was on auto pilot. Barry wasn't alone when the gates of the prison opened to admit them all. He went through the procedures of the prison, his nerves were stretched taut like a high wire walker, and one mistake would cost him dearly. In no time at all he found himself walking on to a wing in the prison. He stopped to take in his surroundings, before him the wing loomed large and spacious, it called to mind a cavern he had once walked through: high straight walls and a ceiling you had to bend your neck to view. He noticed how quiet it was; above him he could see prison officers walking along landings that jutted out from the walls one on top of each other like the tiers of a wedding cake. Slowly faces appeared looking over the landing rails like passengers on a cruise ship. the noise grew in volume, a cacophony of sound assaulting his ears, ricocheting from wall to wall, shouts and music blending into a noise that filled the space before him.

A prison officer shouted down to him from the landing above: "Hey you, where should you be?" His voice was harsh; demanding a response to any inquires he made. Barry swallowed hard, his voice cracking when he responded, "I don't know, no one has told me yet." To his own ears his voice sounded apologetic and regretful at not knowing where he should be. The prison officer's voice cut into his thoughts, "Where is the officer that brought you on to the wing"? He barked. Barry looked around quickly his eyes scanning the bodies in his line of vision; he could see the white shirt of the prison officer up ahead on the landing. "He is walking that way", he replied to the prison officer pointing in the direction of where the prison officer was. "Right wait there until he comes back" ordered the officer.

Barry stood with his back to the wall, watching with fascination as men began to walk down a set of metal stairs just to the left of him, as quickly as they stepped off the bottom step others above replaced them in a endless procession of movement. Some of the men sought eye contact with him, some looked hostile, and others amused, and most had a blank look. too preoccupied with where they were heading for to notice him. His meanderings were interrupted by the prison officer who had brought him on to the wing, "Hey come this way" his tone was friendly. Barry followed behind. To his left were cell doors that had been opened to allow the occupants to get their midday meal. He glanced into the first one, GOD! they look so small ("do two men share that space?") the inside of the cell looked no bigger than a small garden shed. The next cell he looked into was dark, something had been placed over the window to stop the light from coming into the cell. A pale face appeared out of the gloom, lips drawn back into a snarl, a hand pushed the door shut with a crash making him jump. His nerves jangled like the keys on the prison officer's belt in front of him. Barry swallowed hard all his fears came rushing to his mind, can I cope in here? will I fit in? will I be accepted? The prison officer in front of him had stopped and was talking to another officer. Barry noticed pips on this officer's epaulettes denoting a higher rank than the prison's officers. The second prison officer beckoned him over to them with a gesture of his hand, "Right you are new aren't you" not waiting for a reply he continued, "Right this is G wing, I'm Senior Officer Roberts. Welcome to Walton Prison, I hope you enjoy your new job as a prison officer.

We welcome poems from service users or anyone else working or linked up to drug and alcohol services. Please email your poetry to genieinthegutter@parkviewproject.co.uk

North Berwick

by Denis Joe (Dedicated to Carl & Joanne Edwards on the birth of their son Thomas)

Once again the sea
Infers itself, like tinnitus,

On me. The wet
Patch on my arse,

From the bench that I sat upon,
Gives no discomfort or remorse.

Acceptance; that overwhelming ness. And I
Am contented to let

The sea into me. And I
Could drown this life. And I

Could drown in this land and
In the seafaring tales that I am told.

Mother

by Ged Taylor (Mother)

I'm so sorry you had to witness all that s***
I always wondered what you done with it
Who you talked to, with no one there for you
I hate the fact I changed you that way
Injured your spirit, drove you away
It was only you that learnt from my mistakes
I just kept came back: Take, Take, Take
I made life rough, you made me grow tough
You wiped your hands; but I had other plans
I disappeared, without a care for your tears
You were always in my mind
But I know that was not enough (Mother)
My love to you I send, I know the past can't mend
But I hope the man I am today, in some way, can make some amends.
My Mother and my very dear friend.

He wishes for the cloths of heaven

by WB Yeats (Poem from The Canon)

Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and the half-light,
I would spread the cloths under your feet:
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your feet;
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

Each edition of The Word will feature this Move On section that gives you an insight into the progress of our clients, readers and friends. If you have any news you would like to share with us please email: genieinthegutter@parkviewproject.co.uk

A.C was referred to Transit for computers and engaged with service, had also accessed Progress 2 Work who were supporting him finding voluntary work. Towards the end of treatment program was also referred to Community Voice for voluntary work, and enrolled on a 10 week Basic Counselling course at an Adult Learning Centre.

During time at Park View Project, G.M accessed a number of services which facilitated his need to retrain and enter back into paid employment. He undertook a L2 Gym instructor course, First Aid and Swimming instructor course through Progress 2 Work who referred him to Steps Closer to work who actually funded the courses. G. M's Key worker supported him to apply to the Changing lives Award at CRISIS UK who granted him the funding for a HGV Class I driving course, which he completed while resident at the project.

P.A undertook a number of courses during her time at Park View, which would enable her to access either further training or employment. P.A was referred to Independence Initiatives, for English and Maths, Transit for Computers and Health Wise for a 1 day course in Crack cocaine awareness. P.A also attended a L2 Gym instructor course and began a B tech in Health and Social Care at a local DISC centre.

P.R was a resident at Park View for six months and during this time he was supported to access a number of outside services who facilitated his educational and training needs. P.R attended Transit for Computers and was working towards doing the ECDL qualification, they also referred him to Hugh Baird for a Weights and Measures course. For housing P.R was registered with the Liverpool Property Pool, Nugent Care DIP Bond Scheme and New Start.

While M.S was at Park View, he utilised the outside services available to him and attended Independence Initiatives for support with Maths and English. M.S was also referred to Progress 2 Work for employment support and Alternatives for accredited qualifications in IT. For rehousing, MS was registered with the Property pool, Nugent Care DIP Bond Scheme, Move on Move In and New Start.

S.H was at the project for around 12 weeks and during this time was referred to Summer Grove for supported accommodation. This enabled S.H to aim towards regaining custody of daughter and this service provides support with accessing education, training.

K.A has recently re-joined a degree access course. He will be enrolling on an Education degree later on this year at Hope University. He also attends Drama classes and has recently been involved in The PVP and Genie In The Gutter lanch at the Everyman Theatre.

Whilst at The PVP D.O was referred to The Spider Project where he joined a creative writing class. He has recently been published in this country and America, He has also been writing reviews for our monthly magazine THE WORD.

J.M a park view graduate has recently started voluntary work for The Social Partnership on the Wirral and he has recently signed up for the fixers programme.

L.G graduated from PVP in October 08. He has since been working on voluntary basis for The Big Issue in the North. He also volunteer's 2 days per week for Community Voice.

Whilst at The Parkview Project A.R was referred to The Independence Initiative for computer training and also enrolled on and completed a 10 week Basic Counselling course. She has recently had a beautiful baby boy. Congratulations!!!!

Whilst at the PVP L.S enrolled on a 10 week Basic Counselling Course and was doing voluntary work for Genie in the Gutter, she has recently took up a part time position as Outreach Co-ordinator and has recently joined up for the 20 week extended counselling course.

J.T a Parkview graduate and gifted writer has recently done some mentoring classes with Genie In The Gutter, and is looking to set up a creative writing class with our selves.

Park View Project Family Support Group



Is for any person who has a family member suffering from addiction.

The affects of addiction can have a devastating affect on those closest to the addict or alcoholic. The family support group is an informative friendly caring place where you can share your experiences with others. You will not only have support you may also find that you are not alone. You will also gain an understanding of addiction which will help you and your family move forward with your lives.

Every Wednesday evening 6.30-8.00p.m
Unity House, 47 Belmont Drive, Newsham Park,
Liverpool L6 7UW

Should you like to talk to someone in confidence please contact: Cathy Hilton 0151 263 8123 (Family group counsellor)

Clients perform with Pauline Daniels on the set of King Lear - the Everyman's Capital of Culture highlight

The Capital of Culture year is slowly fading but Liverpool seems to be buzzing with renewed self-confidence and vitality which looks like it will continue long into 09 and hopefully beyond. In our last edition of The Word Genie In The Gutter spoke to Rachel Littlewood, Community Outreach Manager for the Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse Theatres, about their flourishing, and now long standing, (or mutually beneficial?) working partnership. Since then we have seen the **launch of Genie In The Gutter and the Park View Project open day held at the Everyman Theatre with clients performing on the impressive set of King Lear** that starred Liverpool's own prestigious Pete Posthelthwaite.

People arrived at the Everyman in their droves. There were prison officers, drug and alcohol workers, and homeless agency staff with their clients; NTA commissioners, providers, LIPA drama students, musicians, and very many trusted friends from the North West's recovery community that has seen outstanding growth in the last decade. Following the Everyman's talk about the positive effect community theatre has on people's lives, Carolyn Edwards, Project Manager of Genie In The Gutter, was speaking about abstinence, and the mis-conceptions that surround it, when she was rudely interrupted by an audience member, a police officer, who made no misgivings in telling Carolyn that she 'was talking utter sh**!!' It soon unfolded that it was all part of the 5 act play that Genie In The Gutter performed on the esteemed King Lear set. The Director of Genie In The Gutter and The Park View Project, Mr Carl Edwards soon stumbled onto the stage playing an old drunk man, shortly followed by his stage wife, long established Liverpool actress and comedienne Pauline Daniels, who played an ageing, leopard print clad, good time girl.

Carolyn commented "We were honoured



to perform at The Everyman Theatre on the prestigious set of King Lear; and to have Pauline, not only acting with our clients, but also directing the play, was the icing on the cake. A few weeks before the launch the full 15 acts of the play were performed at Pauline's own theatre, The Actor's Studio, which is situated on Seel Street in Liverpool. Increased confidence and self esteem, both integral to a successful recovery, were instantly evident in the cast members; they were given a standing ovation by the audience." Carolyn continued "Marginalised groups have been accessed to make good theatre for years. Unprotected, a play about Liverpool sex worker/ drug addict was so successful that it won the Amnesty International Award. Their pre-production work involved extensive research and workshops with substance misusers and sex workers. Genie In The Gutter aims to expand on this by including clients in all aspects of our productions to achieve completely integrated professional shows. In our full production planned for 09/00 our clients will be working alongside some of the best in the business. A number of clients have already begun working on the set design with award winning stage designer Becs Andrews as their mentor. It is a groundbreaking project and if achieved it will be the first time theatre has seen such collaboration."

All of the cast at the launch, except for Pauline and Carl, were from the Genie In The Gutter *mixed client drama company; all are in recovery from addiction. Most are abstinent and some are on methadone and subutex reduction programmes. The clients who are still reducing were in the minority as this keeps the balance of people in recovery and people still recovering at a safe and effective level. All the prescription clients said that being around people who were abstinent from drugs was massively inspir-

ing and that they felt positively motivated and encouraged, using the tried and tested so called cliché, 'If they can do it so can I'. **Once again this is fiercely evident that there is no parallel of one addict helping another no matter what recovery model they have chosen.**

Pauline Daniels, who spoke greatly of Genie In The Gutter to Roger Phillips on Liverpool's Capital of Culture prime time TV, said "I have got to know the Genie In The Gutter clients really well over the last few months. When they first came to me most of them had never performed to an audience before, they enjoyed the weekly drama class but were unsure about being involved in a full production and scared of stepping onto the stage. Pauline continued, "Their fantastic performance today has been the culmination of extremely hard work from every single one of them, so much so, that I would have happily took 6 of the professional actors from a recent production I was working on and swapped them for 6 Genie In The Gutter actors. I am very, very proud of them. They have raw talent and are fighting to turn their lives around; they are what the real Capital of Culture has all been about."

Writer, Carl Edwards, who is also the Director of Genie In The Gutter and the Park View Project said "**Unfortunately, drug culture has been arguably more prevalent during the Capital of Culture than the culture of arts, and all of the associated harms of the former currently outweigh the advantages of the latter.** Park View Project and Genie In The Gutter will continue to make a real contribution along with our partners and stakeholders in the City to addressing drug and alcohol related harm and we will continue to support local communities by giving drug users the chance to really change their lives."



Soul Recovery

A Workshop at SHARP Liverpool

In recovery I have experienced radical spiritual, emotional, cognitive and material change. The reason I write this article is to encourage others to look beyond the substance misuse and to push the boundaries of possibility and change for recovering people.

I come from a family with an alcoholic mother and absent father. I have 4 sisters and 1 brother. Me and my older sister spent periods of our childhood in children's homes and with foster parents. My oldest sister is an active park bench drinker to this day and in a violent life threatening relationship. The rest of my siblings have had varying degrees of success compared to me and my older sister.

I started using at the age of 12. My childhood and my addiction left me with many wounds and beliefs about myself and the world which were anything but helpful and constructive.

In Downview prison I attended the RAPT program and became a peer supporter after successful completion. I also did a short episode of day treatment in London when I got out of prison and life and circumstances changed and everything seemed great on the outside.

However, the more meetings I did the worse I felt inside. I was successfully staying sober and clean but at the same time carrying unaddressed emotional issues. My internal world and negative beliefs about myself were ruling my life.

A counselor friend of mine suggested I begin experiential work to add value to all my fellowship work. I found parts of me I did not like and parts of me I am very pleased about. I uncovered what was not possible in the fellowship meetings or in early primary treatment. I was overwhelmed with remorse around leaving my sons to smoke crack for many years. I spent many days telling stories about my past and not really knowing who I was, it was now time to face up to myself.

I have now found a path in life which sits well with my soul. I have a functioning relationship which keeps growing. I am a Dad who is present and available for his sons. I have studied around the world with such teachers as Bert Hellinger (Family Constellations) and Leonard Orr (Integrated Breathwork/Re-Birthing.)

Nearly 3 years ago, through training with Duane O'Kane (a transpersonal psychotherapist in Vancouver, Canada) I met Jacquie Johnston-Lynch the Head of Service at SHARP Liverpool. She too was in a 12 step programme and continuing her personal and professional development with transpersonal and spiritual Leadership Training.

Jacquie says, "After getting to know Ronnie I could see his mode of facilitating and leading workshops really had something to offer the recovering community. We really wanted to bring his work to the treatment centre but we had to clearly weigh up the risks. The work can be anxiety raising in itself. It creates and uncovers the very feelings that clients had self soothed with heroin, alcohol, crack, cocaine, marijuana etc. We had to be sure that we weren't setting up a whole load of relapse triggers, when what in effect we were wanting to do was strengthen, deepen and increase capacity for change and growth in recovery. Eventually we came to an agreement that we would pilot a weekend called SOUL RECOVERY with clients who had graduated treatment and/or had at least 15 weeks clean and

sober. Each client who wanted to attend had to have a brief session with me so that I could make them aware of what it was they were putting themselves forward for. I would also liaise with their focal counsellor or the continuing care worker to ascertain how robust they were currently presenting as within the project.

As yet, we don't have empirical evidence to validate the efficacy of the work, but we are keeping on-going records and longer term evaluations. There has become a core group of clients who are clearly seen as 'stepping up' their recovery and having their emotional and spiritual development come in to alignment with their physical and cognitive well being. Some of the workshop participants have now got two or three years of 'cleantime' and are being supported to practically 'assist' on the workshops. Hellinger's work of Family Constellations calls for "representatives" and this is met through the work of the assistant's team."

Others too have participated in the workshop and commented on their experiences:

'Amazing! Privilege to have been a part of it all, the effects are long lasting in my life today' **Anthony**

'Very emotional, painful but rewarding. I felt very close and connected to everybody and more at peace with myself' **Jill**

'It was absolutely beautiful, inspiring and one of the greatest spiritual experiences I have ever had.' **Paul**

'Powerful, I got so much healing out of the weekend' **Andy**

By trusting the clients thirst for change and working at the level of willingness and strength they have, we have created a rich and powerful workshop which has brought many struggling addicts in early recovery to life again.

One such person living an extraordinary recovery is AW, a graduate of SHARP Liverpool.

AW commented, "I have done three workshops with Ronnie and thank God I had the courage to participate and take some healthy risks. The benefit for me has been to change the perspective on my family, which was really bitter and twisted and resentful. The workshops changed all that and today I can feel love for my parents and remember them with tenderness, compassion and respect."

I have been truly moved by the willingness, respect and courage of clients who have taken part in SOUL RECOVERY, the changes I have seen in people have been inspiring. I have enjoyed the sense of community and fun I feel when I visit SHARP in Liverpool. I am thankful to Action On Addiction for enabling us to pioneer this work in one of their treatment centres.

Ronnie Purslow

Drug / Alcohol Problem?

SHARP Liverpool is a 12-step, abstinence-based structured day programme based in Liverpool city centre. It is for men and women who need the intensity of structured treatment but do not require the intensity of an in-patient or residential setting.

For more information, or to make a referral please contact the admissions team.
T: 0151 703 0679 E: sharpliverpool@actiononaddiction.org.uk W: www.actiononaddiction.org.uk



History of the AA:

Part 2 - Gestation period

A four part series of the history of Alcoholics Anonymous

The beginning of the twentieth century saw an upsurge in temperance movements worldwide. It culminated with the ratification of the 18th amendment of the US constitution that "the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes." This was the 'Prohibition' period that led to enormous increases in crime in many of the States. This effectively destroyed the Washingtonians, who had allowed politicians and reformers to use the movement for their political ends. This was later recognised by the AA and alerted the founders to the dangers moving away from focussing on the individual alcoholic and becoming embroiled in wider social issues.¹

It was also something considered by The Oxford Group. Set up by Frank Buchman, a Lutheran Minister as *A First Century Christian Fellowship* in 1921 the group changed its name a decade later. The Oxford Group was not aligned to any established religious group but by seeing a need for a 'moral re-armament' the group endeavoured to lead a spiritual life under the guidance of God. The purpose of the group was to carry that message for others to do likewise.

The connection of the Group to the AA has been disputed, but one thing that is clear is that AA adopted much of the approaches.

Perhaps the strongest area of support, for the Oxford Group, around the mid-1930s was in the city of Akron, Ohio. A local businessman's son, an alcoholic, had been arrested for drunken behaviour. A friend of the businessman, an Oxford group supporter, was able to help the son with his drinking problem, guiding the young man to a spiritual path.

Dr Robert Smith (later known to AA members as 'Doctor Bob') ran a practice in the city. Himself a chronic alcoholic, he



had managed to hide his alcoholism from those he worked with, but as a family man he could not hide his behaviour from his wife. His wife, Anne, on hearing about The Oxford Group, managed to persuade the Doctor to attend meetings. He later said of those meetings that what attracted him was 'their seeming poise, health and happiness' [**Doctor Bob and the Good Oldtimers**. p. 55]. Convinced that this led to a path to sobriety, Dr. Bob began visiting the alcoholic ward in the city hospital to pass on the message to others who were in the same situation that he had been.

Businessman Bill Wilson ('Bill W.') from New York was also involved; he too was battling against alcoholism. A childhood friend, himself a recovering alcoholic had 'got religion' and invited Bill to attend meetings of the Oxford Group.

Bill fell under the spiritual guidance of one of the Oxford Group's prominent members, Sam Shoemaker. Amongst the



Dr Bob and Bill Wilson

many principles of the group Bill learned that by selflessly helping another he would help himself to stay sober. Having stayed 'dry' for 6 months, Bill became discouraged as he had not helped another alcoholic to the path of sobriety. However, as it was pointed out to him by Shoemaker that he had helped the 'most important person: himself' [B.D. and P.S. of Akron, quoted in **Richie** p.123]. Bill would later say that "Dr. Shoemaker's impact on us in those early days certainly registered, and the principles emphasized by the Oxford Group later lent themselves very readily to the formation of AA's 12 Steps and publication of our book *Alcoholics Anonymous*." [T. Willard Hunter, et. Al.]

His Job took Bill to Akron where he worked successfully until an incident turned it to failure and Bill felt the 'pull of the bottle. Instead of giving in to it he rang a few people at the local Oxford Group and was eventually introduced to Dr. Bob.

Both men understood the need to carry the message of sobriety to another alcoholic. It was in the alcoholic's ward of the Akron Central Hospital that they both met with a chronic alcoholic, in such a state as to be chained to his bed. Bill D. became the 'guinea pig' and would later go on to help Dr. Bob in passing on the message.²

On his return to New York Bill held meeting with alcoholic supporters of the Oxford group. Later this group broke away, in 1937.

In Akron, too a band of alcoholics broke from the Oxford group. They recognised that there was a need for an organisation that could meet the needs of alcoholics; especially those in recovery.

It was not the case that the Oxford Group was ineffective in meeting the needs of alcoholics but Buchman may have had little confidence in the type of specialist group that was envisaged for alcoholics. "I'm all for the alcoholics getting changed," he was quoted as saying, "but we have drunken nations on our hands as well." The energies of the Oxford Group were challenged into attempts to reconcile national leaders as world war was becoming apparent.

The work carried out by the Oxford Group relied on publicity. Practically, for the individual alcoholic, 'coming-out' was not something that they could counter. People had jobs and other relationships which could be threatened if anonymity could not be guaranteed.

And so the first steps in creating move-

ment that could offer practical support to the alcoholic and be the mainstay for those in recovery, were taken

In part 3 we will look at the creation of the AA and what became the guiding principles of a movement that was to become the most successful means of helping those with alcohol problems.

Notes:

1: *The experience of the Washingtonians helped to map out the principles of the AA. In the Twelve Traditions (Long form) it states in tradition 10 that 'No A.A. group or member should ever, in such a way as to implicate A.A., express any opinion on outside controversial issues-particularly those of politics, alcohol reform, or sectarian religion. The Alcoholics Anonymous groups oppose no one. Concerning such matters they can express no views whatever.'* [see *Alcoholics Anonymous. AA World Services. 2001 p.564*]
2: *The difficulty with the early 'history' of AA is that nothing was written down and most was committed to paper from memory after a few years. The difficulty with this is that what is remembered is not portrayed in the way it happened but in the way it is recalled by the narrator years later. Richie points out this difficulty as does Robinson, who explains the development of AA as a result of the peculiarity of the dominant ideology in the US at the time. This creates further problems of understanding the worldwide growth of the movement. As it is I have used the most contemporary sources to present the events and also*

where the telling of the story concurs with another.

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Big Vision for a Thriving City

Land mark events, such as the successful European Capital of Culture year, major regeneration projects in the city and improvements to education, training, social and healthcare provision are helping to reinstate Liverpool as a thriving international city.

City leaders and key decision makers in private, public and third sector organisations are working together to achieve the vision of Liverpool becoming a 'Thriving International City' by 2024, as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), which will be launched in March.

The vision is being driven by a modern and effective city partnership, Liverpool First, a coming together of over 50 leaders from a variety of organisations. Cllr Warren Bradley, Chair of Liverpool First and leader of the city council said:

"This vision looks forward to 2024 and the road map to achieving success over the next 15 years. It looks at increasing jobs and opportunities for businesses, improving the skills and qualifications of people in the city, making Liverpool an international gateway with great transport links, and a safe city where people prosper and families thrive."

The SCS, entitled 'Liverpool: a thriving international city 2024' is a working document which tells a story of the city and sets out Liverpool's plans for the future in five distinct areas: Competitiveness, Connectivity, Distinctive Sense of Place, Thriving Neighbourhoods and Health and Wellbeing.

All Liverpool First partners have contributed and signed up to the long-term vision set out in the city vision, which highlights key areas for change and outcomes that organisations are aiming to achieve through partnership working. All partners have strategies



and key plans which align to the outcomes and will aid the delivery of each one through monitoring and organisational planning.

Carol Perry, Director for Liverpool First works alongside many of the key members to help engage them in the partnership process. "We've come a long way since the partnership was set-up in 1999. Our membership has increased and people now come to the partnership with a real ambition to deliver effective cross-organisational working and to achieve the city vision."

Visit the website www.liverpoolfirst.org.uk for more information about the partnership and to download a copy of the SCS once it's launched on 26th March.

The WORD On...The Client

Supplied by **Kevin Manley** from **Wired In**

What do clients need from the treatment system?

'In my opinion, we don't ask clients enough what they want from the treatment system and how we can improve what we have on offer. I therefore asked Kevin Manley, a former long-term heroin and crack user, to write an article focusing on what he believes we should be offering clients.' David Clark, Director of Wired In

Initial Presentation

The very first time somebody with a substance use problem reaches out and asks for help is a pivotal moment. It denotes that they have come to understand they have a problem and have realised they need help to overcome it. They have opened up and placed their trust and hope in a 3rd party. A difficult task when trust, confidence and self-esteem are often rock-bottom. The initial response received from this call for help can greatly determine the outcome.

In my experience and the experiences of people I have spoken to the initial response towards clients is often negative. For example to be told that you are on a waiting list and there is nothing that can be done for you in the meantime can be difficult to tolerate. Workers have to remember how hard it is for a person to admit they have a problem and seek help. They see people with these problems every day but when you are the one experiencing them you feel extremely isolated; as though you have nowhere to turn to in the world. The response that I mentioned above can solidify your belief that you are beyond help.

Imagine you have a disease that is totally ruining your whole life. If you go to the doctor you do not expect to be told the only thing they can do is put you on a 12-month waiting list! I find it hard to believe that people presenting with any other disorder would be treated in a similar manner. I know workers have their hands tied - a waiting list is a waiting list, and there is not much they can do to influence that. I want people to think about it what options can be offered in ADDITION to the waiting list.

Imagine being told that you are on that waiting list AND here are the places that can help you in the meantime. Hand out a list of all the services in your area with a short description of what they offer! If this happened people will feel cared for and that they were given a good choice of what was available - from drop-in centre's, getting a key-worker, counselling, something to read to understand addiction etc. These things make all the difference between having hope and being full of despair. Clients need to maintain hope that they can address their problems. Workers need to make every effort to instill some degree of hope, however small, into what often feels like a hopeless situation. Just being given the name of one organisation, a support group or a helpline can make the difference between helping a client or losing them forever.

Addressing the client's immediate needs

It's all too easy to look at a client presenting with a substance use problem and focus all your time on helping them address their alcohol/drug use. What we need to remember, and what should be at the forefront of the worker's mind, is that addiction often impacts on every aspect of a client's life - housing, health, finance, relationships etc. And personal problems can lead to the addiction in the first place. A lot of time somebody presenting for help is doing so because they want something specific from you whatever that might be. The client may be 'playing the part' to get the result they want. They may not be

aware of this swing in their personalities so it is important to take time to peel back the layers and get to know the real person behind the addiction.

By taking your time and asking questions you can become aware of other issues in the client's life that are inter-linked with their addiction. It is important to take these into consideration when developing a care plan. By having a good knowledge of the services in your area workers stand a better chance of helping a client lay the solid foundations to their future. You do not have to do all the work yourself, or be a 'super-person', simply take advantage of the different services in your area, referring people to them as necessary. It is very important to spend time talking to and listening to your clients and building a relationship based on mutual trust. It is critical that workers do not make 'false promises'. It does not take much to break what is essentially a fragile relationship. Take things slowly, explain things to your client and together develop a way to tackle the issues in their life.

Longer term support

Once a client is receiving ongoing support the dynamic of what they need starts to change. It is now important for the worker-client relationship to deepen; this is all based around trust and can only go at the pace that the client allows. This pace, in turn, is influenced by how the client perceives what the worker thinks of them. A worker that highly involves their client in the support process, showing belief in the client's understanding of the issues faced, will quickly build a relationship with that client.

There is nothing worse for a client to be opening up to a worker who clearly doesn't want to be there and has no enthusiasm for the job; there can be no positive relationship in those circumstances. Even little things, like a harassed worker continually checking their notes and forgetting details of your treatment plan, are enough to distance a client from a service, and essentially from seeking help. I know case loads are getting bigger and bigger, but prior to meeting a client, take two minutes to remind yourself of where they are in their treatment plan. This can make all the difference. It portrays a far more personal approach that the client will respond to in kind.

After all, we are all human.

The Wired In online recovery community empowers people to tackle substance use problems. It benefits substance users, ex-users, family members, friends and those who work with substance misusers. The community gives hope that recovery is possible. In brief, this online community provides: 1. Information that helps people understand and use the options they have to overcome their problems. 2. An environment in which people can learn from each other and provide mutually beneficial support. 3. Role models who show that recovery is possible. 4. A powerful voice that helps improve treatment and other forms of support, and increases understanding of addiction and recovery in society. We urge our readers to make use of the Wired In website and in particular to share their experiences, thoughts, ideas and opinions. You never know, your words of wisdom may play a pivotal role in somebody's journey to recovery.
Visit: **WWW.WIREDIN.ORG.UK**



Liverpool Alcoholics Anonymous Meetings

Area	Address	Day	Time
L1	News from Nowhere, 96 Bold Street, L1 4HY	Sunday	14.30
L1	St Nicholas Church, Old Church Yard, Chapel Street	Monday & Tuesday	19.30
L3	The Crypt, RC Cathedral, Brownlow Hill	Wednesday	19.30
L3	The Basement, 36 Bolton Street, L3 5LX	Monday	10.00
L3	Old Road Methodist Church Hall, Altway	Friday	19.30
L3	All Souls Springwood Hall, Mather Avenue	Sunday	19.30
L3	St Luke's Centre, Princess Drive, Yew Tree Lane	Sunday	19.30
L3	Mazenod Court, Addison way, Liverpool	Thursday	12.00
L4	Church of Praise, Oakfield Road, Anfield, L4 0UF	Tuesday	13.00
L4	All Saint's RC Church Meeting Room, Oakfield Road	Tuesday	19.30
L5	St Paul's Church, Celia Street, Kirkdale	Tuesday	19.30
L6	All Saints Church, Anfield	Sunday	19.30
L7	St Anne's Church, Overbury Street, Wavertree, L7 3HJ	Saturday	12.30, 18.00, 19.30
L8	Our Lady & St Bernard's, Kingsley Road, Toxteth	Monday Friday	09.30 19.30
L8	Mildmay House, Blackburn Place, Liverpool City Centre	Wednesday	12.00
L9	Emmanuel Church, Longmoor Lane / Higher Lane, Fazakerley	Saturday	19.30
L10	Spike Resettlement Centre, Field Lane, Fazakerley	Sunday	19.30
L13	Salvation Army Hostel, Prescot Road, Old Swan	Sunday Thursday	19.30 19.30
L13	St Andrew's Church Hall, 176 Queens Drive	Friday	19.30
L14	All Saints Church Hall, Cunningham Road, Broadgreen Road	Saturday	19.30
L14	Holy Spirit Church Hall, East Prescot Road, Dovecot	Wednesday Friday	13.00 13.00
L15	Cross & Passion Convent, 33 North Road	Wednesday	19.30
L17	St Agnes Church Hall, Buckingham Avenue	Thursday	19.30
L17	St Charles of Borromeo Church, Aigburth Road	Saturday	19.30
L18	Methodist Church Hall, Elm Hall Drive / Penny Lane	Monday	19.45
L18	St Judes Church Hall, Round Hey, Cantril Farm	Tuesday	19.30
L25	St Andrews Presbytery, Portway, Hunts Cross	Monday	19.30
L25	St Marks Church Hall, Hartsbourne Avenue, Childwall Valley	Tuesday	19.30
L36	St Michaels Church Hall, Bluebell Lane, Huyton	Friday	19.30



Liverpool and the Wirral Narcotics Anonymous Meetings

Open meetings can also be attended with you by a friend or family member without a drug problem.

Area	Address	Day	Time
L1	1st Floor, St. Nicholas Chapel, Chapel Street	Friday (Open)	7.30pm
L1	SHARP, 17 Rodney Street	Tuesday (Women's Meeting) Thursday (Men's Meeting) Friday (Open) Sunday	7.45pm 7.30pm 6.00pm 3.00pm
L1	St Steven's Church, Crown Street	Saturday	7.30pm
L5	St Antony's Church Crypt, Scotland Road	Saturday	11.00am
L5	Community Justice Centre, Boundary Street	Monday	7.30pm
L6	All Saints Church, Walton Breck Road	Wednesday	7.30pm
L8	Mildmay Hostel, 6 Blackbourne Place	Sunday (Open Newcomer's Meeting)	1pm
L11	Good Shepherd, Lower Lane	Wednesday	7.30pm
L13	Stoneycroft Church, Lister Drive (off Green Lane)	Tuesday Thursday	7.30pm 7.30pm
L17	St. Annes Church, Aigburth Road	Sunday	7.30pm
L19	Reading Rooms, Wellington Road, Garston	Monday	7.30pm

CH43	The Power House, Beechwood Estate	Monday	7.30pm
CH49	Holy Cross Church, Woodchurch Estate	Friday	7.30pm
CH61	The Social Partnership, 12 St. Anne Street	Tuesday (Open) Saturday (Open)	7.30pm 7.30pm

St. Helens	Holy Trinity Church, Traverse Street	Saturday	6.00pm
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Merseyside Cocaine Anonymous Meetings

Area	Address	Day	Time
L1	SHARP, 17 Rodney Street, Liverpool	Monday (open) Saturday (Women's) Saturday (open)	7.30pm 10.30am 7.30pm
L7	St Anne's Church, Overbury Street,	Thursday (open)	7.30pm
L11	The Lighthouse Project, 83-93 Stonebridge Lane, Croxteth	Tuesday (open)	7.30pm
WA8	Birchgreen Community Centre, Skemersdale	Wednesday	7.30pm

Training directory

Adult Learning Services (ALS)

Tel: 0151 233 3026

Web: www.liverpool.gov.uk/learninginLiverpool

Liverpool Adult Learning Services are based across 36 sites around Liverpool. Adults can do a range of courses from taster to qualification standard. The courses are aimed at level L1 and Entry (beginners), L2 (have knowledge or completed L1) and L3 (advanced or completed L2). There is a wide range of course from keep fit, card making, and cake decoration through to Basic Counselling L1, Spanish, French and computers for the terrified etc.

Transit

Tel: 0151 258 6334

Email: transit@thesocialpartnership.co.uk

Transit is a project within the social partnership for substance mis-uses, who want improve and change their life. Individuals who attend the service are able to do accredited courses and the qualifications that can be gained include; ECDL, MOCN Computer Studies, MOCN Email and MOCN Drug Awareness. Learners who attend Transit are supported by a keyworker, in which they are given ongoing support and advice throughout their chosen courses.

Progress2Work / Link Up

Tel: 0151 258 6338

Email: P2w@thesocialpartnership.co.uk

Progress2Work and link up are projects also within the social partnership and they provide support for individuals who have or are experiencing problems with alcohol, drugs, and homelessness. The project provides guidance for people who lack self confidence and need direction to changing their life. These projects enable individuals to access education and training with the aim of gaining employment.

Routes Out of Sex Work

Tel: 0151 227 1893

Routes Out of Sex Work is another project located within the social partnership which is based in Liverpool. This service offers support to female Street Sex Workers by enabling women to access education and training opportunities with the aim of improving life style.

Alternatives

Tel: 0151 449 1929

Email: alternatives@lighthouseproject.co.uk

Alternatives is a structured day centre and the project is based in Huyton and is part of the Lighthouse project. This service offers positive alternative lifestyles; by providing the environments, guidance, training and personal support that encourage individuals to make positive lifestyle changes. Alternatives provide individuals with the opportunity to achieve a range of accredited qualifications.

Liverpool Community College DISC

Web: www.liv-coll.ac.uk/centres/Discs.asp

There are 5 main DISC centres in Liverpool and they are; Bankfield Rd (0151 252 3817), Vauxhall Rd (0151 252 4725), Clarence St (0151 252 3338), Duke St (0151 252 4529) and Mulberry St. (0151 252 4061). There are also 12 Neighbourhood D.I.S.C's (Drop In Study Centres) located right across the city. These centres offer Basic Skills and Fresh Start courses.

The Spider Project

Tel: 0151 709 484

Web: www.spiderproject.org

The Spider project is an organisation designed to prevent drug relapse, by using a programme of activities in which is aimed at substance mis-uses, with guidance to help change and recreate their lives. Spider provides a range holistic, creative, cultural and physical activities in different community based locations around Liverpool.

Independence Initiatives

Tel: 0151 284 1100

Email: info@independenceinitiative.co.uk

Independent Initiatives is a service whose mission statement is to encourage individuals to develop natural talents and support the learning of new skills with a view to finding employment. Independent Initiatives works with people who have a history of drug misuse whilst also supporting their families, in partner ship with other agencies and is accessed through referrals. The service provides different activities, training and support to each individual to help prevent relapse. The project is aimed to help over come barriers and recognising and controlling individuals needs.

Genie In The Gutter

Tel: 0151 228 9167

Email: Genieinthegutter@parkviewproject.co.uk

Genie in the Gutter is a media and film charity based service that works with individuals who have or are experiencing substance misuse issues. They run a weekly drama class and are also involved with outreach work and have run a set design course and have put on a play at the Everyman Theatre.

Useful Directory of Services in Liverpool

Service	Telephone	Description
Adulham	0151 220 4400	Supported housing and floating support service for ex offenders.
Alternatives	0151 449 1929	Training and education facility for stable and recovering substance misusers wanting to reintegrate back into the community.
Anne Conway House	0151 733 4746	Supported housing for young people.
Ann Fowler House	0151 207 3815	Direct access short term accommodation for single homeless women aged 18-65 years.
Arch Initiatives	0845 6011 500	Open Access co-ordinates all referrals for drug and alcohol related services in Halton.
Armistead Project	0151 222 1893	Sexual health and social care support service for gay, bisexual, transgender and sex workers, direct access service.
Basement	0151 707 1515	Night drop in for homeless and rough sleepers aged 16+ offering general and specialist support.
Big Issue in the North	0151 702 6931	Homeless service that produces a magazine for homeless to sell to earn an income. Also provides advice and signposting service.
Centre 56	0151 727 1355	Domestic violence service providing refuge to families fleeing domestic violence. Direct access and referral service.
C.A.B.	0151 287 8027	Citizen advice service helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free independent advice.
CIC	0151 707 8303	Liverpool addiction service provides assessments, advice, information and drug/alcohol abstinence program. Access by referral.
Drug Dependency Unit	0151 709 0516	Perscribing, counselling, support and advice service in Liverpool. Access by self referral or other agency.
CARATS HMP Altcourse	0151 522 2045	Prison service that offers advice about drug misuse and referrals to appropriate services.
CARATS HMP Foston Hall	1283584300	Prison service that offers advice about drug misuse and referrals to appropriate services.
CARATS HMP Styal	01625 553 000	Prison service that offers advice about drug misuse and referrals to appropriate services.
CARATS HMP Lancaster	01524 565 295	Prison service that offers advice about drug misuse and referrals to appropriate services.
CARATS HMP Liverpool	0151 530 4193	Prison service that offers advice about drug misuse and referrals to appropriate services.
CAB HMP Liverpool	0151 524 3043	Citizen advice service offering advice and based in HMP Liverpool.
Careline	0151 233 3039	Direct access presentation points for homeless families.
Genie In The Gutter	0151 228 9167	Provides film, theatre & media opportunities to substance misusers.
Homeground Hostel	151 286 6010/6016	29 Units of hostel accommodation providing support for single homeless people between 16-35. Access by referral only.
HOT	0151 794 8183	A statutory mental health service to single homeless people within Liverpool (Direct Access).
Irish Community Care	0101 707 4302/3	Provides support to Irish people or decent including support with drugs, benefits, floating support etc (Direct access and referral).
Independence Initiative	0151 284 1100	Sefton based relapse prevention service that deals with clients who are recovering from substance misuse. Access by referral.
Kevin White Unit	0151 330 8074	Offers residential detoxification programmes to clients from Liverpool and surrounding area's. Access by referral.
Lighthouse Project	0151 709 0074	Relapse prevention service for substance misusers in Merseyside. Open Access and referrals from appropriate agencies.
Lighthouse Project	0151 546 1141	Provides syringe exchange, stimulant service, structured counselling etc. Open access advice and information service.
Lifestyles Clinic	0151 706 3283	Specialist support for individuals with alcohol issues. Access by referrals from GP, A&E, Probation etc.
Loango Estates	0151 727 2461	Supported accomodation and hostel accomodation in Liverpool area. Access by self referal or other agencies.
Manor Lodge	0151 281 1776	24 hrs supported accomodation for men between 25 -70. Direct access.
MAS	0151 228 1327	Temporary accommodation, advice, support and counselling 25+. Access by referral only.
Men's Direct Access	0151 233 2545	24hr homelessness assessment with 21 units of temporary accomodation. Direct access.
Mildmay House	0151 709 1417	24hr supported hostel accomodation in Liverpool area. No direct access.
Move On and Move In	0151 207 8656	Resettlement service for single homeless, young people, ex-offenders and mental health service users. Access by referral.
Nacro Housing (The Elms)	0151 708 7064	Supported self-contained accomodation for young single homeless people in Liverpool (16-25) Referral needed.
Nacro Housing	0151 708 7064	Liverpool resettlement service providing temporary accomodation in the community for ex offenders (25-64) Referral needed.
New Bridge	0151 254 2558	Works with offenders who have local connection with Liverpool supporting access to accomodation (21+) Access by referral.
New Start	0151 280 2860	Shared housing and independent accomodation for those with history of homelessness. Access by referral only.
Nugent Care	0151 261 2047/57	Provides secure accomodation for single homeless through recruitment of private landlords. Access through referral to the DIP scheme.
NWPC Ltd	0151 289 9119	Temporary accommodation for people from probation background with substance misuse issues (18+) Access by referral only.
Oak Supported Scheme	0151 284 0202	Provides hostel accommodation for people aged 18+, offers support and advice. Access by referral only.
Paragon (Rodney Housing)	0151 236 0010	Provides resettlement service into permanent accomodation for female ex offenders. Direct access and via referral.
Park View Project Ltd	0151 228 9167	12 Step residential treatment centre for persons suffering from drug and or alcohol abuse. Access via self referral or other services.
Progress 2 Work/ Link Up	0151 258 1199	Support program delivered through The Social Partnership to enable socially excluded clients to access training and employment.
Sharp	0151 703 0679	Stuctured day treatment programme for men and women with drug and alcohol problems, (18+). Direct access and by referral.
The Spider Project	0151 709 4841	Offers a range of creative, cultural, physical and holistic activities to people who have become drug-free. Open access.
Single Mens Centre	0151 225 8702	Provides longer term accomodation and meals for single homeless men. Access via referal.
Summergrove (The Big Life)	0151 734 4465	Provides 24hr supported self contained accomodation for familes that are affected by parental substance misues. Multi access.
The Social Partnership Wirral	0151 649 9147	Offering education, training and employment opportunities to the socially excluded. Access by referral.
The Social Partnership St.Helens	01744 740 486	Offering education, training and employment opportunities to the socially excluded. Access by referral.
The Social Partnership L'pool	0151 285 1199	Offering education, training and employment opportunities to the socially excluded. Access by referral.
Together Women Project	0151 482 2788	One Stop Shop providing holistic services to women at risk of offending or with history of offending. Direct Access.
Whitechapel Centre	0151 207 7617	Homeless drop in centre offering general and specialised help and support around housing and homelessness. Direct access.
Womes Direct Access Centre	0101 233 1914	24hr homelessness assessment with 21 unit sof direct access temporary accomodation.
YMCA	0151 600 3530	Provides temporary homes as well as a staff team who can help with issues around substance misuse, mental health, welfare rights.
Young Addaction	08000 196 197	Community based service for young people in Liverpool, service provided in centre and in the community. Access by referral.
YPAS	0151 707 1025	Provides education, harm reduction and treatment needs for 10-25 yrs olds who have or at risk of substance mis-use issues.

AFFECTED BY DRUGS



Lighthouse Project offers a free and confidential service to anyone affected by drugs, this includes family and friends.

Give us a call or drop in to your local team:

City Centre:	27 Hope Street, Liverpool L1 9BQ	Tel: 0151 709 0074
Huyton:	Nulgrove Villa, Huyton L36 6CA	Tel: 0151 489 3005
Bootle:	87 Stanley Road, Bootle, L20 7DA	Tel: 0151 933 6411
Southport:	8 Church Street, Southport, PR9 0QT	Tel: 01704 534759
St Helens:	16 North Road, St Helens, WA10 2TL	Tel: 01744 755333

Tackling
Drugs as
a **Community.**



Lighthouse Project is a Registered Charity No. 211927



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info@liverpoolighthouse.com Tel: 0151 266 4192
Liverpool Lighthouse, Oakfield Road, Anfield L4 0UF

The Whitechapel Centre

Offering real solutions to housing & homelessness



...is Liverpool's largest homeless charity. For over 30 years we have worked to reduce the city's homeless population and support the vulnerably housed. We do this by providing services and opportunities to help individuals obtain and sustain temporary accommodation or a permanent home and to positively change their lives.

Wherever you have come from, no matter how you got there, the

Whitechapel Centre will help you if you are aged 16+ and at risk of becoming or are actually homeless. Maybe you need housing related support service? We can help.

The Whitechapel Centre
Langsdale Street, Everton
Liverpool L3 8DU
Tel: 0151 207 7617
Fax: 0151 207 4093
www.whitechapelcentre.co.uk

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"Inexcess enabled me to finally speak about issues which have affected me for many years. Now instead of thinking, "if I don't say them out loud, they are not real" I understand that they are, and that I need to start addressing them."

So thanks George and the Inexcess team, I wish you all the luck for the future!! - Harriett (Guest)

www.inexcess.tv

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