

# CHRIS' STORY

Bereaved at just 13, Chris learned early on that drugs offered a great escape from harsh realities. Chris eventually moved to England looking for work and was living in squats when a friend offered him heroin for the first time. Ending up dependent and unemployed, Chris likens heroin to a hangover and explains that though “you say never again, I kept going back”.

After three or four years of heroin dependence and a period of heavy use, Chris was ready to seek treatment but he struggled to get the information he needed. All he could find was “information about safety, safer injecting and stuff like that”. Not finding a treatment that suited him, Chris dropped out a number of times and went back to drug use. “It’s very hard to make that break, you’re stepping away from something that’s kind of everything that you know”.

Chris needed to fill the void left by heroin – which, he explains “becomes your life”. He now works with and helps other drug users, and feels that “giving something back, being more helpful to people” is what helped him overcome his dependence. Chris pays tribute to the counsellors who helped his recovery, “They give you the key to open the lock. You have to open it yourself of course, but they are a vital part of the process”.

Chris’ advice to people looking to start treatment is to “stick with it and get as much information as you can”. As well as being better informed, Chris believes in understanding what you are entitled to, “it is my right to be treated and not to feel ashamed”. Even when he was in a “dark place”, Chris always maintained a positive outlook, “think of a brighter future – there’s a way out of things, it’s not all doom and gloom”.

IT IS MY RIGHT  
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CHRIS  
UK

Everyone’s story is different.  
To know more about opioid dependence  
ask your healthcare provider for a  
My Recovery My Choice booklet or visit  
[www.myrecoverymychoice.co.uk](http://www.myrecoverymychoice.co.uk)

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## My Recovery My Choice

