

# THIS IS MY STORY

Liam - Service User, Dublin Simon Rehab

I arrived at the Dublin Simon on the 4th of February. I had literally nothing: the rags I stood up in. I was physically, mentally, and spiritually bankrupt. I had become a Skid Row bum. I hated myself because of what I had become. Because of the hostels I was staying in, it was extremely difficult to keep clean. Privacy was non-existent. Because of my lifestyle, my nerves were crippling me. My anxiety was the only thing that was well nourished. **Fear would not let me sleep with both eyes shut.**



I measured out my week in half bottles of vodka.

They became a necessary evil. I could not sign for my benefits, with the uncontrollable shakes, until I consumed at least one half bottle. I did not like most of the people who were using the hostels, because they were a reflection of what I had become.

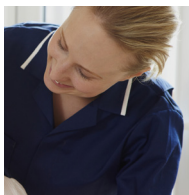
They say that prayer is the last refuge of a scoundrel. Well I can tell you. I prayed like every other time I was stuck between a rock and



a hard place. I resented the way I had become so much, that I became dangerously reckless. I wandered across roads at times and sometimes, subconsciously, **I hoped I'd be hit and all would be over in an instant.**

Then my prayers were answered, and the prayers of my family. My referral for Simon went through and I was told to present myself at 10:30 on the 4th of February 2010. I got here busted and broken but grateful.

For the first time in around twelve months I had a quiet room to myself, and I did not feel threatened. It was clean and warm. The nurse and staff smiled at me and reassured me that I would be OK. They arranged for me to see a doctor that day. I got a full check up. Not surprisingly, I had more ailments than you could shake a stick at. I was as sick as a small hospital. Appointments were made for me to have the necessary tests I needed, and a prescription filled for medication I needed straightaway. Straightaway I began to feel better.



After three weeks and a supervised detox on Librium, the shakes stopped, and I began to feel refreshed from the sound sleep. I was then offered a chance to do the Rehab. I remember thinking **'this is too good to be true; every day gets better and better.'**

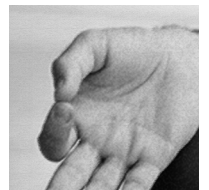
It has been my experience from detoxes and rehabs I have been in, in Limerick, Galway and Athy, that I stand a good chance of staying sober. For one, I am not forced to do anything I don't want to do. In the other rehabs I have been to, I could not concentrate on my recovery due to the fact that I was constantly tired, hungry and overwhelmed with resentments. In the Simon I was treated like an adult. The obvious rules applied, and if you followed the guidelines, problems would be kept to a minimum.

Through the groups and listening to staff and volunteers, I began to get back my self-esteem.

**They gave me the seeds and the tools needed to regain my dignity. They showed me another side to life that was beautiful.**



I had forgotten how good it was to go to the cinema and remember what the movie was about. Bowling, pitch 'n putt, museums, art galleries, quiz nights. The groups where we were taught ourselves to make short movies with Mia. The fun and feeling of achievement was amazing, something I never would have done without the help and experience freely shared with us by Mia. The yoga class on Thursday mornings with Fiona. The feeling of health and well-being is fantastic. To really discover the true meaning of being wealthy is to be healthy. Through the meditation on a Tuesday I have discovered the wonderful treasures that are within all of us. It's OK to stop searching: it was always within.



**I can feel euphoric with no adverse effects on my lungs, liver, or central nervous system.** If I continue on the path shown to me, then the optimism I feel is a wholesome euphoria. And the hinge that all of this swings on has to be the wonderful food prepared and cooked by Ann; her food is par excellence!



I fear I have gone on a bit. But most of all I want to thank all the volunteers and staff: Sarah, Shauna, Lana, Maureen, Majella, Fiona, Dolores, John, Matt, Joanna, Grace, David, Bart, Mia, Greer, and Barry. Through their example, they have made it possible for me to experience God in my life every day. We all need it: Good Orderly Direction!

Thank you and God Bless.

**Liam.**