

Denise's Story

I have now left Penumbra Youth Project and I am going to tell you of my journey through the Project and how I got to where I am now, a place where I honestly didn't think I would get to.

The first time I heard about Penumbra was when I was staying at a homeless hostel in Glenrothes. Two workers from Penumbra were coming in and having meetings with the staff and then they came and told the residents about the Project and what they had to offer.

In 2003 I started having 1:1s with a worker who came to me and then shortly after I started going to the Project to see her and attend the groups. However, after a while I stopped going as I felt like it wasn't for me at the time.

In 2005 I left the scatter flat at the homeless unit and got my own tenancy. By early 2006 I felt that I needed help and support so I went to Penumbra.

Now I am so glad I did. I got 1:1 sessions again then started going to the drop-in. At first I was extremely scared and nervous but I am sure that everyone is the same when they first come to the Project.

Penumbra has done a lot of groups that was hugely beneficial to me. I still felt extremely down and alone but slowly I started to put trust in my worker and realised that they did really want to help me.

Trust was a huge problem for me as I am sure it is for a lot of people. At the time there was a lot happening in my life. I was angry, upset and I pushed everyone away. But Penumbra didn't give up on me for which I am extremely grateful. I was able to talk about things that I had kept to myself for a very long time. I attended the anger management and self-esteem groups that were very helpful.

In 2009 I received 1:1 support from Louise that I really benefited from. Thank you so much Louise.

Penumbra did do a lot of social activities. The staff took us to the ice rink, cinema, Fordell Firs, bowling – all fantastic trips. Thank you Penumbra.

When I didn't want to be alone, I attended the drop-in and often I just sat there on my phone and read magazines.

Back in 2007 I started doing the Project's Newsletter with Lynda. I did this for two years. It helped me in more ways than I could ever have imagined. Working beside Lynda gave me confidence and I gained a lot of experience. How to edit things, add pieces into the Newsletter and interviewing all the staff members. It was fantastic. Thank you Lynda for allowing me to work beside you.

My confidence grew in talking to new people and welcoming new people in to the drop-in. At the time I didn't see it but it was another step forward in my recovery.

In September this year I was approached by my worker who wanted to meet with me. At that meeting she started saying how well I was doing and I wasn't coming in as much as I used to. She said I seemed to be coping a lot better and thought it was a good time to move on from the Project. Honestly, it came as a shock but I did agree. I left the Project on 9th October. I was worried but now I see there was nothing to worry about.

I want to take this moment to thank all the staff at the Project for all the help they have given me these last few years. Thank you for not giving up on me after all I threw at you. I wouldn't have got to where I am now without all your help.

So again, thank you so much. I will keep in touch.

Bye for now.

Denise