

Inadequacy, fear and dependency

A Drugline counsellor's account of his own terrifying journey from inadequacy and fear into dependency, his tough road back and how he now helps fellow sufferers.

Deep down I was miserable. I lacked confidence and often my thoughts gave way to despair. Feelings of anger, jealousy and depression – the buried resentments of an unhappy upbringing – welled up inside me. But above all there was fear.

I masked all of this by playing the macho man. I desperately needed to be accepted. At times my inadequacies and fears were so immense that I became almost suicidal.

Then I got lucky and discovered drink and drugs. They gave my life a whole new meaning. They changed the way I felt inside. When I felt fear, a stiff drink would fix it. When I felt inadequate, a joint would calm me down and boost my confidence.

Of course, it didn't last. All my despairs, frustrations and fears came flooding back, intensified many times over.

But now there were other feelings too. Shame, self-loathing, damaged pride and the dreaded feelings of guilt. Dependency hadn't worked. It was a living hell.

After 10 years of addiction I had reached the gutter. But this time fear saved me – the sheer fear of death.

My road to recovery wasn't easy. It began with Twelve Step meetings at AA and NA. Then I met a counsellor who accepted me for what I was and gradually won my friendship and trust, helping me to accept my feelings and understand them.

My recovery from addiction has been tough but through the work of Drugline, now my greatest reward is being able to help others to set out on the same journey from dependency to recovery – free from drugs and drink, and free from the inner fears they produce.