



Garry is in our Drug Rehabilitation Programme. He came to us directly from HMP Lancaster

I was born in Workington, in Cumbria, I've had a good life really, good parents. But my father started drinking and became an alcoholic. He used to come home from the pub and beat me and beat my mum, I had to go and live with my grandparents to get away from it all.

Because of that violence came naturally to me, I got expelled from school when I was 13 and no other school would have me because of my violence and aggression and I got put into an approved school. One of the carers there played rugby and I got interested and I turned out to be good at it, I was good at all sports but I took to rugby.

When I left there at 16 I signed professionally for Carlisle. I was there for 3 years then I signed for Salford, when I was 19 or 20. From there I moved to Halifax, and then I started taking cocaine after games. I used to be out whole weekends, days, weeks, even a month. My partner and kids weren't happy, and when she complained I'd use violence then go out and take more drugs. She couldn't take any more and we split up and my family knew I had a problem then, I just thought the world was against me, and I took more drugs and ended up in hospital. They tried to section me because they said I was a danger, they got a court order against me and I had injections every 2 weeks to calm me down. They didn't, I just got worse on drugs, my family tried to help but they were just talking to themselves because I wasn't listening I was too wrapped up in the drugs.

My mum went to families anonymous and a word kept popping up - tough love, it's been the best word I ever learned because they all turned their back on me. I had nowhere to go, but that didn't teach me a lesson because I ended up in jail, on assault charges. In jail I was on my own, nobody wanted to know and that's when I knew I had a problem, the problem was me.

I saw the carat workers at Durham and they said there was a 12 steps programme at Lancaster which is successful, but you have to put the work in, so I went to Lancaster Prison. I went because I had a drug problem so I couldn't understand what they were saying about behaviour and boundaries, after a while it started to sink in. They taught me there are patterns leading up to drug use, etc, it's the best thing I've ever done.

I came to THOMAS because I thought that it would be too much for me going straight from prison back into society and it is the best move I've made as I am moving gradually. Now I have choices, the only choice I had in the past is where I was going to get drugs from. Every one is happy now, my family and children have smiles back on their faces.

The worst time for me in my drug taking is when my family turned their backs on me I couldn't talk to anyone or eat with anyone, it was the best thing they could do because I was affecting their lives. My family threw me out and I moved from house to house. I went days and weeks without food and clothes as all my things were at my mum's and sister's and they wouldn't answer the door. When I went to jail my family said it was the best place for me, and looking back it was.

In the future there is talk of college courses, I want to better myself and I am more motivated in life.