

October 2022

Dear Reader,

I want to share my story about my journey and time spent in residential care with a very special My3 staff team because I want other people like me to have a chance ...

"YO .... I had to go into a mental hospital coz I wasn't well and couldn't live at home with my family that's why I went into care as it was too much at home. I just wanted to watch films and listen to music and play my guitar. I was just me init. I liked going to the music studio to record music and didn't really socialize much. I was overweight coz I just ate rubbish all the time my health was ok I would get tonsillitis sometimes. My education was ok like I was starting College. I didn't know what to expect moving into care coz you just don't know do you."

Over the years I had to overcome barriers. Go to finish college, become social, use transport independently, become independent so I could live alone and go to university. My goal was to become rich and a famous music producer.

The staff always encouraged me to do lots of things. First, they started small then the tasks got bigger. They would get me used to public transport and gradually reduce the support so I had to get there alone. They encouraged me to cook and clean. Even though I hate cleaning ...it's my mess in it? They would encourage me to be myself and explore the world. They encouraged and showed me how to pay bills and fill out forms online. I had support from the staff, parents, my mentor and I had someone at college who helped me with forms.

The best things that happened in my time at Mount St were that I finished College and passed my exams and then got into university. I became more social by asking people questions and made a group of friends. I even started going out with them to play Pool or to sit in my mate's house.

I have kept good relationships with the staff and still speak to them. Now they come to see me at university and have met my girlfriend who I met at an autistic event at the start of university. Having the same staff and always being there for me helped me.

Sometimes, if they were on holiday or were sick, I would be told so I was ok with this in it? I had a regular routine that we all followed. They gave me lots of independence right away getting me to look after my personal hygiene and go out and stuff.

Staff would teach me how to overcome and do things and help me with forms. They would get me to tidy my room even though in my opinion it was tidy and maybe their opinion was wrong!

Since being at Mount Street I will now take care of my own personal hygiene, I am social - everyone says I am social coz I just walk up to people and say hi what are you studying coz it's a lot easier to start a conversation at uni. I got tattoos that I designed, and I dye my hair I have lost weight and choose all of my own cloths I have found my own style. I can use all forms of public transport now on my own. I can even call a taxi even if I don't like doing it. I will cook and sometimes my friend cooks for me. My room isn't that tidy but its tidy to me. I pay my bills and I am fully independent. I have complete control of my meds and know how to be sensible about alcohol when going out with my mates.

Just before I came to university, I applied for a job, went for the interview, and got a job in a factory. I only left coz I was coming to uni.

I feel that I have achieved lots. I am fully independent. I have relationships and mates. I can look after myself. Sometimes I do get anxious, but I remember things the staff told me that help. I am also more understanding to people and how they feel coz we all feel different, and my opinion might not be right to them even if I think I am always right. When staff came down to visit me at university, I sent them the address of the café - that's how I find my way around I google it. I am completely independent now.

In the future I want to pass my course and then become a famous music producer and have a record label. Then buy a car - a pink one. I want to live independently with no support at all which is what I am kind of doing now at university.

Being a university student is good - yer, I go out and I have tried lots of new foods and my friend is a vegetarian. There are lots of clubs I have joined. I want to join the metal society which is what they are called - it's a society which is basically a club. People think its mad when I say I used to be in a mental hospital and now I am here.