



My Unconventional Journey

Susan Thornton, PCC Member since 2010

My middle name should have been Susan "Unconventional" Thornton....You may ask why?

I will briefly give you a potted history of that unconventional journey or path which I took.

I was found by Jools, yes, found, at the Leeds Addiction Unit drying out with a cast on my left arm and my head shaved to the bone. This bit gets a tad hazy to say the least as it was 7 years or more ago!.....

Up to this point I had been in full time work since the age of sixteen and only had time out to have my two boys.

I felt the Department of Work and Pensions though I was being a burden on society at the tender age of 42. The local Authority thought so too or that's what it felt like to me. I was thrown on the scrap heap and my employment service of nearly 20 years had ceased. I don't think the authorities knew how to handle me because I was feisty and could be unpredictable. But I had opinions and wasn't afraid to vocalise them, oh no. Perhaps "unconventional" Susan should have been seen and not heard.

The individual that had found me at the Leeds Addiction Unit all those years ago did one thing and one thing only – she LISTENED!

Through her commitment, trust and belief in me, I am now the person I am today. In control...with occasional signs of madness!!!

Gradually, over the years my confidence has grown and I have started to believe in myself again. I didn't think this was possible having been so out of control and then crushed, mind, body and soul by the system.

Well, here I am, living proof.