**Interviewer:** *Ok. Ehm awesome so so what was that like for you for you to like what did you think about this research when kind of when you were asked to participate what were your initial thoughts?*

Curious. No at the end of that day my curiosity know what I mean in as you said before but in being a voice but in for but in the recovery community. But in the thing about relapse is (.) I mean people think that relapse is part of recovery but in but its not. Its not it happens to be but in part of their recovery but its no [not] part of everyone’s recovery. Cause like I’ve seen people nut in that have been long term in recovery that haven’t relapsed. But in and when people do relapse but in they always get told but in its part of recovery but they forget to tell them it’s part of your recovery. Cause everybody’s recovery is different.

**Interviewer:** *Yeah (.) so would you say that for you relapse is kind of part of ehm so you kind of cause you keep it very separate from your recovery so its not something you look at that will just happen. Is that right is that how you see it or?*

Eh In (.) it doesny [doesn’t] it happens know what I mean unexpectedly. (inaudible) in the behaviour nut in, the pattern (.) I mean some people call it a dry relapse that you don’t realise until you’ve actually relapsed. Not in once you’ve come out of that relapse nut in and you can look back and say well I wasny [wasn’t] doing this and I wasny [wasn’t] doing that I can actually see why I relapsed

**Interviewer:** *Ok, yeah yeah yeah that’s interesting, em how ehm how would you define a relapse from your own kind of (.) experience or how would you define it?*

How I would define a relapse? Basically, a relapse for me is going back to my crutch, going back to my coping mechanism but in because I know but in that the drugs nut in temporality nut in take away my inner feelings and emotions that I’m feeling at that present time. My em they do some people say that there is a difference between a lapse and a relapse. But em to me em there is nae difference nut [no] a relapse is a relapse whether you take it once or everyday (.) I guess everybody’s got their own definition

**Interviewer:** *Ok that’s interesting yeah (.) yeah yeah yeah so em I’m curious so uhm you do you want to maybe share a little bit about your kind of uhm history of so you said you used eh opioids and cocaine is that correct ((yes)) and probably some more so uhm can you maybe just share a little bit about your your times in treatment or your relapses or you know how maybe when did you start using kind of your background a little bit.*

Yeah em I started using drugs when I was 9 year old (.) and that because I was in a children’s home nut in in with older kids who were teenagers but in because the social work department thought n that the older kids with be an influence (.) but and so I obviously I started dabbling in way in insolvents but and then onto cannabis (.) nut in and because I was young I started (.) started getting into crime but in and stealing out of shops but in and breaking into houses nut and as the as the crime started nut in the drug use escalated n I was I was sent to prison but for the first time when I was 15 years old (coughs)aye I was addicted to methadone nut in for 23 year and obviously I was using heroine, heroine and crack on top of that but in but I was institutionalised right ((ok)) I was caught in a revolving door but in getting caught doing a crime going to prison not in and then going to prison not in for two or three months not in then going back oot [out] not in as my as my sentence was finishing n I was full of good intentions always phoning my mum up saying mum I’m gonna to do it this time I’m gonna to try my hardest but as soon as I got out I was released for prison na end it after nut that the novelty of getting released wore of I went straight back to my crutch, which was heroine but in that was my coping mechanism it was more to do with, I was clinically allergic to responsibility I couldny [couldn’t] handle it (.) nut then in prison I didn’t have to be responsible I got everything done for me. My washing my cooking my cleaning I didn’t have to do nothing, n that plus know what I mean I felt safe in prison. No but em I was safe. But em em plus in prison nut in I was somebody. N I thought the bigger jail sentence I got the better it made me look but its only em now looking back I can realise nut in how much of an idiot I was n but I had to (.) I got told not in that I needed rehab nut but I didn’t believe it I thought was alright but and I can remember I come to treatment centre for an interview and nut I still didn’t l believed that I dinny [don’t] want to come here I dinny [don’t] need help I can do it own my own aye [yes] but I ended up I ended up arriving here but in a broken man ((yup)) and that was 6 years ago but in but as I went through the programme, treatment centre works in four phases but in in phase one and two is basically you’re living in a bubble and phase 3 is semi- independent living so as I went to phase three n where I was having to cook for myself and clean for myself, do everything for myself I went back to my crutch and I relapsed. ((oh right)) and in sort of time in not in treatment centre they have a zero zero zero drug policy and I got asked to leave but by rights I should’ve waited 28 days to reapply, but they broke that rule for me and asked me to come back within two weeks. And two weeks later I come back and when I relapsed at that lodge nut in some people would say a relapse were a mistake but that particular relapse, I didn’t see it as a mistake cause I learnt from that relapse. Naw [no] it sounds it sounds weird, but I did I realised that the reason why I relapsed was because I wasny [wasn’t] being honest with myself I wasny [wasn’t] being honest with my peers I wasny [wasn’t] being honest with anybody I wasny [wasn’t] talking (.) to them I was isolating just being myself and I couldn’t handle the way I was feeling (coughs) but n aye so that is a basically a bit of my journey

**Interviewer:** *Yeah, yeah. That’s incredible so to me that sounds like you almost kind of are taking something very important from it you’re saying this relapse somehow needed to happen.*

But in the reason it needed to happen was because but in all through but in the treatment (.) I was listening but I wasn’t listening because I thought I knew better but n I always got told not in that I should always remain teachable but I thought I couldn’t learn anything I thought I knew everything but n plus I never had any gratitude ((mmhh)) n now I not ehm I have a attitude of gratitude I’ve got to be grateful.

**Interviewer:** *Right (.) yeah yeah that’s oh that’s em that’s really interesting to hear how I mean you em you seem to have quite a story from you’re from from being a very young age and then in and out of prison uhm lots of experience uhm. So your personal item because I remember we talked about it and you kind of said that often you would you don’t you throw away stuff that reminds you of those experiences which uh I totally understand so was just wondering did you bring something for today?*

I found nothing, I was trying to find something that visualises my relapses but I couldn’t find anything but in but there is one thing that I’ve got that was in my office,((ok)) but in it’s a self-portrait of treatment centre basically the treatment centre I was in ((yeah yeah)) as a constant reminder that eh that **that’s where my life begun** and that’s where all my relapses led me to basically **admitting defeat**

**Interviewer:** *Yeah yes, so so (.) so would you say that uhm yeah so it holds some eh you really connect that with treatment centre so your experiences of relapse and ehm do you maybe just want to talk a little bit more about how you know was it something that kind of uhm like yeah is it something that kinds of comforted you through that time or kind of knowing ok I can come back here or would you like to just explain a bit more about it?*

Because it’s in my office do you know what I mean I see it everyday but in it’s a constant reminder that if I go back to the drugs but in it’s a possibility I could end up there again ((yeah)) but in plus the story behind it is but in that it saved my life but in eh it helped me but in basically but in I’m still on a self-discovery mission trying to discover who I am but in and that place has helped me. See I look at it every day know what I mean eh even though I work here (laughs) ((yeah)) looking at the picture is different to actually working here

**Interviewer:** *Yeah, so do can you tell me about that so how is that different?*

But in the dynamics are different but in because now that I’m a member of staff but in I don’t feel like I’ve done the programme its only when I look at the picture but in that’s when I realise that I was here but in because I don’t see myself as an ex-resident

**Interviewer:** *Ok so ehm I think now I would like to just ask you know maybe more personally about you how what did it feel like if you can remember maybe just one or two experiences back what did it feel like for you to relapse like was there what did it feel like maybe internally physically however you want to describe it.*

But in at first but in I didn’t realise it eh I wasn’t feeling there was no emotions but in as time went on I started realising but in how did this happen but in I would say focused well I thought I was focused I started feeling guilty I started feeling ashamed but in I felt as though I had let my family down I had let myself down again and because I was all the guilt and shame nut in that kept me but in using drugs (.) but in as time went on but in every time I relapsed it always got worse that what it was before ((ok)) but cause it was like just going straight back straight back into addiction even though I just used once nut in that was me I was gone I was addicted again and it was just but in stuck in that hole but in feeling cause I was ashamed I was feeling guilty but in I didny [didn’t] want to tell anyone I had relapsed it wasn’t until my behaviour but in that they basically understood but in I had relapsed but it was but in it just kept on getting worse and worse but it didny [didn’t] stop me. But it my relapse my last relapse but in eh it came out of nowhere it was unexpected but in as I said but in looking back but in I can but in I can identify but in but in I wasn’t really talking to people nut [no] I was meant to be in for someone’s birthday and because we were in treatment another resident said to me would you stick me in if I have a drink and straight away without thinking about it I said why would I I’m going to have one as well and that was me I was off. ((yeah)) but in I started feeling guilty but in because I had brought drugs back to the premises, I had put everybody who was in treatment I had put their eh their recovery in jeopardy because I was only thinking about myself (.) but in I started feeling shame I couldny [couldn’t] handle it but in as I said but in my relapse got worse and worse as what the last relapse did.

**Interviewer:** *Yeah, you know what’s interesting is that you say you felt ashamed and I’m thinking ehm like shame is such as strong feeling it’s so attached to who you are…*

Yeah aye but the reason I felt shame is because of the stigma but in that surrounded the addiction(.) but in I think that’s why I felt shame but in I felt dirty I felt but in (.) it was more guilt but in because I had let myself down I had let my family down

**Interviewer:** *Yes so that to me makes a lot of sense that is that guilt of that I’ve done something wrong ((yeah)) I’ve put people in jeopardy ((yeah)) ehm so can you tell me a little bit more about that shame so I guess I dunno where I’m going here but to me shame is more strong stronger than (.) guilt because its almost like tied to who you are as a person if like I ehm like I heard this before that shame is more about I am guilt is about I have done something wrong and shame is about I am wrong have you ever have you ever kind of I wonder if you can maybe kind of touch on that a little bit of of when you go through is it yeah I dunno am I making sense?*

(inaudible) the same it was more to do with the stigma that surrounds addiction but in because but in the stigma is that not in every drug addict know what I mean is lying in a doorway not in injecting drugs nut (no) and they dinny (don’t) realise that is there is all different definitions of addiction, you’ve got drug taking you’ve got drug abuse but and you’ve got drug addiction but in it was more to do with (inaudible) shame is quite a strong word and I think it’s a lot easier to say I felt shame, but in I felt guilty.

**Interviewer:** *Yeah ok ehm so can you do you maybe remember that that’s an emotional it was very emotional for you was there any kind of sensation in your body as well or was it like when you remember kind of how you know its almost like you said before its almost like it starts way before you actually do it in your head and with your emotions and then ehm yeah maybe you can walk me through of like how it feels then when you relapse and then when you use again and like what does that feel like for you or what did that feel like for you?*

This is this is going to sound stupid but in obviously but in my my last relapse but in the very tight second that I relapsed it felt good but in cause it was that release ((mmm)) but in it didn’t last long but in it only lasted offt maybe a hour but in and that’s when reality kicked in but in and then is started like what am I doing but in I started naw [no] I already started basically pressed the reset button do you know what I mean like I’ve already started I may as well continue.

**Interviewer:** *How long did it last for you do do you remember was it a couple days or weeks or how long did you use then for?*

My last relapse but in that was only a one off but in because I was still on the premises so I was still in that safe environment ((yeah)) but in but every time when I got released from prison and relapsed but in its been weeks but in until I went back to prison because I’m in that community I’m not in that safe bubble I’m not in that environment ((alright yes)) (inaudible) I think environment has a but in a good part to play in it.

**Interviewer:** *Yeah ok yeah so how do you feel about having relapsed multiple times I guess more than ten times ehm how do you feel about that?*

How do I feel but in (.) but in my multiple relapses but in have only happened because I never knew nothing about addiction but in I was blind but in to the support that was actually out the community but in in prison but in and things like but in that I didn’t realise what but in help that was out there but I I was naïve not in any rehab centres, smart recovery meetings, church groups but in it was just non-existent (.) but aye because I never got help but in I think that’s why I continued to release every time I got released from prison.

**Interviewer:** *Ok yeah, so its almost like there’s no blame on this because you kinda didn’t know how to deal with it and with your probably the first couple relapses and now…does that sound true? ls it more of like a rational like ‘well I didn’t know then so of course I would relapse’?*

Nut as I said I woudny (wouldn’t) say but in I didny (didn’t) realise but in I wasny (wasn’t) getting help but in for my drug addiction ((yeah)) cause I but in as far as I was concerned I didn’t have a problem. But as I said but in there wasn’t help out there.

**Interviewer:** *Yeah so ehm I I’m wondering has gone through multiple relapses shifted the way that you see yourself like how you view yourself obviously you’ve now said well you didn’t know then what addiction was or you were kind of blind and now you kind of know about it so has it kind of changed the way that you view yourself?*

Yeah but in I I think but in every relapse relapse that I’ve had in the past but in its always contributed to that but in self-learning, self-awareness

**Interviewer:** *Ok, yeah can you tell me a little bit about that so self-awareness about like who you are or addiction in general?*

Eh my its no self-awareness but in a very but in what I’m doing but in and why I’m doing it ((ok)) looking at my behaviour but in and why I’m behaving like that ((yeah)) just being aware of you know of my thoughts and feelings and actually being able to sit with my thoughts and feelings ((yes right)) which is uncomfortable.

**Interviewer:** *Yeah ehm what about your family or friends how do they view you has that has your relapse experience changed or have they seen a change in you since then?*

Well my mum has cause as I said before every time I was getting released from prison id always be on the phone but in promising I’m gonna do it this time but in I’m gonna prove you wrong but in I was like a broken record saying it over and over and over but in she my my mum ended up getting to the point where (.) she wasn’t interested in the boy who cried wolf and even when I decided not in to go to the doctors and start reducing my medication but in and coming to treatment she still didn’t believe me nut [no] it wasny [wasn’t] until I think it was the day before actually coming to treatment she she broke down in tears and started to believe I think this is it you’re going to do it this time.

But I still n I still phone her to this day and apologise and but in asking for her forgiveness but in for everything I’ve put her through but nut n she just tells me to shut up and says you’re doing, you’ve done something about it your past is your past but I still feel guilty.

**Interviewer:** *Yeah yeah so how is that for you to kind of be able to prove your mum wrong?*

Nut [no] its its no its not proving my mum wrong its more to do with looking back at my life but in and looking at the pain and torture I put my mum through but in just like but in every time the phone when she’d jump but in and every time the door went she’d jump but expecting it to be that phone call that I’m dead or back in prison but in and once I was in recovery but in I released but in now she can she doesn’t have to worry about me she knows I’m safe ((oh right)) she not got that worry on her shoulders anymore ((yes)) she just has to worry about herself ((mmm)) nut [no] and it makes me feel good knowing that shes happy and she doesn’t have to worry about me and same with my sister as well, they dinny [don’t] have to worry about me.

**Interviewer:** *Yeah, yeah. What about yourself do you do you ever kind of worry or how are you how are you feeling about yourself I guess would be a question?*

What right this precise minute ((mmm)) nut in I do I am worried I mean in a sense but in because I’m in recovery but in this whole covid pandemic but in has basically closed everything doon [down] ((yeah)) and im but in I usually go to inter fellow ship na but everything is getting done on zoom but in and im getting all zoomed out I’m bored of zoom and because the opposite of addiction is connection ((mm)) right (inaudible) like fair enough connecting to people through zoom but in but it’s better done face to face ((yeah)) cause you on zoom you can sort of hide but in but when you’re face to face but in you canny hide you’re your body language ((yes yup)) but aye so aye but in plus I just got married in August but aye so there is pressures of that like so I just moved in with my wife ((oh wow)) eh but in trying to get the balance between my professional life and my personal life know what I mean and I do to much at work but in the reason I do too much is because but in I know what it’s like ((yeah)) I’ll always go that extra mile but in because I have the capacity to go that extra mile but in but the difficulty is (.) if I dinny [don’t] if I’m no [not] careful, ill end up burning myself out but in and I will relapse.

**Interviewer:** *Right yeah so there’s a balance that you kind of have to find not doing too much and not doing too little.*

Aye aye and trying to find time for myself for self-care ((yeah)) self-care is important ((yeah yeah yeah)) know what I mean I neglect myself

**Interviewer:** *Yeah that’s amazing congratulations on your wedding that’s wonderful. Uhm so I have another question which is more direct about your experience with relapse and you kind of touched on it already with the feelings you had in your head and the question would be, do you remember kind of how you felt right before you were relapsing and then also right after? You said already that you kind of almost felt an instant relief for a little while uhm was that always the same or kind of uhm did that change from like time to time because you’ve had so many or was it always kind of almost this similar process what would you say?*

Eh not in every relapse at the beginning was always the same but in because it was always that instant gratification but in that release ((yeah)) but it was more to do with but in after that instant gratification was gone it was just a downhill spiral and (.) the more I relapsed but in the quicker I got into that pit and the quicker I felt helpless and the quicker I went into victim mode aw poor me

**Interviewer:** *Mmm yeah, how would you say how did that affect the way that you then started to seek out treatment again? Having had so many relapses, how did that make you feel going back to treatment (.) was there a difference in the first couple of times to the last couple of times?*

Ehh not in (.) there wasn’t any difference apart from the last one but in the last one where I relapsed and I come back to the main house but in and I came back to treatment it was people that I had already been in treatment with but in and it was more but in I was feeling bad but in because I started treatment before them but in and they were further along in their journey and it was more to do with pride ((yeah)) but in I had to swallow my pride, admit defeat and basically do what was expected of me

**Interviewer:** *Yeah, so there’s almost this kind of I’m sensing like a responsibility or accountability to your mates ((yup)) right to the people you’re in treatment with and ((yeah)) almost like that what are they gonna think about it is that kind of true?*

Yeah

**Interviewer:** *Yeah, so you said it felt like a downward spiral and like a hole or something right after relapse so how did you then seek out treatment? Was it an instant like ‘aw I need to go back to the house’?*

Nut in I was basically in denial but in cause I remember they come over nut and they drug tested the full lodge all the residents but in and I admitted it but in but I was making out I was happy but in cause I didny [didn’t] want to them I didny [didn’t] want them to think I was angry I was annoyed with myself but in I was making out but in I’m happy I’m going back to see my family which then I started thinking n started bringing all these feelings of emotions but in im going back to my family but in they’re going to find out I’ve failed again but in another relapse another fuck up ((mmm)) and then so the guilt kicked in again ((right yeah)) but (.) but in having to come back not in and face the music it brought on it felt uncomfortable but in but it felt right.

**Interviewer:** *Yeah (.)I’m interested in how you made that shift of being in denial and like you know whatever you’re going through and all of that resentment towards yourself and then how did you then get drawn into treatment back to say ‘ok I need to get this sorted out’ (.) Do you remember?*

It was basically but in me admitting defeat admitting that I canny (can’t) do this on my own ((ok yeah yeah yeah)) but in stop being stubborn, accept the help ((yeah)) but in all the staff and residents but in they’d always offer me a help and but in because me being stubborn and my pride I wouldn’t accept in ((yeah)) even though I’m struggling ((yeah)) and they could see I’m struggling and they’re trying to help but in but I kept on I pushing them away

**Interviewer:** *Yeah what effects do you think have had your numbers of relapses on your recovery? (.) So on for example your motivation for recovery did you feel uhm cause we are just on the subject now did you feel like the first couple of times obviously you you relapsed you didn’t really know much about recovery or addiction or treatment or you were you weren’t self-aware ((yeah)) and your last couple of relapses it shifted right you became you were part of treatment you became aware of it you learned about yourself so how did that kind of shift your motivation for recovery and and getting back on track and and that admitting that your defeated and you need help uhm how did that kind of I’m guessing that came about with the more you relapsed the more you kind of learned is that?*

Yeah but in but in as the relapses happened (.) but in I I wasny [wasn’t] bothered whether I lived or died cause basically every relapsed but in was basically a suicide mission (cough) but in towards the end but in it was more I didn’t want to die I wanted to live but in I’ve got thing to live for ((yeah)) but in ((mmm)) but in I do nut eh I release I was slowly committing suicide without actually committing suicide ((mmm)) but in cause that’s what I took It would’ve been that one hit but in that could’ve been me gone but in I wasny thinking about it ((yeah yeah)) I didn’t care. Plus but in because I had been through treatment and got a taste of recovery and figured out what recovery wanted but in that gave me the motivation to push through and grab it

**Interviewer:** *Mmm so it’s interesting that you kind of say you push through and grab it’s almost like its within your power right you are empowering yourself your saying I can push through and grab this like this…*

It’s literally but in believing in yourself but in believing that you can actually do it ((yeah)) obviously you can’t do it on your own ((phone rings)) sorry ((oh)) obviously you canny do it on your own do you know what I mean but you do believe you can do it but in there’ll be others ((yes yeah)) that what your motivation comes through

**Interviewer:** *Yeah if you had to describe what recovery means I feel like it just fits really well ehm after having after having gone through relapse what would you say so you kind of already said it’s almost like you choose life right you choose life?*

Recovery is basically (.) but in doing things but in in your life but in that you’re happy with basically doing things that you want to do but in i.e hobbies things like that ((mmm)) but in that you enjoy that much that you don’t want to go back to addiction. But in recovery is basically rebuilding your life trying to build back everything that you’ve lost i.e friends, family ((mmm)) basically recovering everything that you have lost.

**Interviewer:** *Yeah would you say that kind of understanding of recovery has changed with your relapses? Let’s say the last relapse that you had was it kind of the same understanding you had?*

Nah nut in cause I thought but in recovery was just being drug and alcohol free ((yeah ok)) but in that is part of but in but recovery but in is a whole change of your behaviour nut in a whole change of your outlook on life but in know what I mean recovery starts within but in true happiness and that is recovery, true happiness

**Interviewer:** *Yeah, yeah what would you say you’ve learned from relapsing is there anything that you would have done maybe differently if you would have known ehm back then?*

Eh but in the only thing I would’ve done differently is pick up the phone tell speak to somebody and tell them but in how I’m feeling because obviously nut in my thinking is twisted but in its always it’s always good to get somebody else’s perspective on your thinking ((yeah)) and then plus now that I know where relapse could lead but in so when I’m feeling uncomfortable nut in I play the tape forward but in this is what’s gonna happen so dinny [don’t] do it.

**Interviewer:** *Yes, right so it’s almost like having the perspective of actually what will happen if you do this rather than living in the moment you would actually like stop for a moment and be like what is actually going to happen if I push forward ((yeah)) yeah ok yeah that’s a very disciplined view ((laughs)) yeah anything else that you kind of you feel like you’ve learnt from it?*

But in what have I learned but in (.) I’ve learned but in (.) recovery but in is basically but in recovery is there’s basically four important elements but in which you need to build a solid recovery but in which I call but in my foundations but in which is accommodation but in so you feel safe and secure. employment but in so you’ve got but in employment for purpose but in which helps but in give you that motivation but also but in helps you with the bills but in friends in recovery plus friends out of recovery and so that’s what and that’s the four elements that I build in my recovery and that builds recovery network but in and having friends in recovery nut and they can actually see my behaviours cause but in before I see them and they will actually tell me in but in your behaving like this do you think there’s any need for that but in and obviously nah at first not in I’ll get annoyed but in because I’m not happy with them for telling me ((yeah)) but in then I’ll admit defeat and see nut in aye you’re right

**Interviewer:** *Mmm yeah so on a day to day basis now kind of how do you protect yourself from relapse how do you manage uhm that?*

Not in what what helps me is (.) nut in basically the job I’m doing (mm) that but in even before I started working here but in I used to always come up but in every every Monday but in and do a meeting ehh I was doing all the residents would say but in aww you’re doing brilliant your helping us but in but truth be told but in I wasny [wasn’t] helping them I was helping myself it was just a bonus I was helping them but in because I was coming up here but in for that connection ((right)) so basically but in in plus when I see people but in coming through for a detox it’s a reminder but in how I was when I first arrived at the door and how scared and petrified I was ((mmm)) but in so that helps me when aye (.) but in I do say but in if If a bomb was to hit this place but in tomorrow I’d be lost ((yeah yeah)) but in but lucky I’ve got a big enough support network that I wouldny [wouldn’t] be completely lost but in I’ve got quite a few people but in that I can go to with my problems cause you need more but in more than one person that you can go to with your problems cause if you go to that person but in and their not available they’re busy nut in you need to get somebody else that you can go to so you always need a few avenues of people ((right mhmm)) that you can trust to let all the demons in your head out

**Interviewer:** *Mmm can you tell me about that a little bit the demons in your head so is it kind like do the thoughts come back every now and then of like what could happen if or could you elaborate on that a little bit?*

But in when I say demons I mean just like if I’m walking down the street nn and someone with a can of beer I start thinking oh I could do with a can of beer but in it’ll only be the one can of beer or if a see somebody nut in stoned out their nut but in I start getting jealous ((ok)) only because but in (.) I can only see the good times in my drug addiction I’ve got to force myself to see the bad times ((mm)) know what I mean. In in the beginning the drugs and alcohol were good if they wereny [weren’t] good I wouldny [wouldn’t] be (inaudible) but in as time when on but in the consequences come in ((yeah)) so it it’s a constant reminder not in the thoughts are all in there but not its just a passing thought it will just jump in and jump oot [out] but in but I do believe but in that my addiction wants me dead (.) but in and if I give it that foot hole I’m done but in I I strongly believe that I’ve not got another relapse in me, if I relapse I’m dead (.) that’s’s what I believe (.) but in so I’ve got to keep things to maintain my recovery to make sure I dinny [don’t] relapse (.) right cause my old life it’s there waiting for me it’s there shouting for me but I’ve got to constantly choose to ignore it ((mmm)) to keep focusing on what I’ve got what I’ve got in my life right now and what I’m hoping to achieve

**Interviewer:** *yeah awesome uhm would you say that kind of the way that you now maintain your I guess or uhm protect yourself from relapse this uhm staying with your friends and your network uhm and working as a peer mentor which is amazing has that kind of changed with the numbers of relapses did you do something else before maybe when you first had relapsed or the first couple of times or was it always like ok going to meetings, staying with my friends in recovery having somebody to talk to. Was it something that gradually built with your relapse experiences or was it always there?*

Nah but in it was never there but in it was just but in since but in coming to treatment but in I got taught but in naw [no] basically guided but in this is what could help you but in this is gonna help you but in strive in recovery and this is what is this is what’s gonna help you prevent you from relapsing and basically just taking that on board ((yeah)) and listening and actually but in instead of listening actually doing it.

**Interviewer:** *Yeah yeah yeah yeah ok so ehm so yeah it sounds like you’ve been so if I just recap this so if you know you’ve been through numerous relapses the first couple bits where a bit more ehm like you were a bit more maybe blind to everything around you and it kind of it kept going and going and then there was a point where you kind of felt ok I admit that I’m defeated I need help I can’t do this this I bigger than me I need help and then you kind of started going into treatment and you came into treatment centre and you relapsed while you were there and it kind of they kind of jumped through hoops to get you back on track and help you and uhm initially you felt lots of uhm guilt and shame for having let down other people for how people are in recovery viewing you that you’ve been in treatment with and then uhm at the same time but also at the same time kind of fighting your way through and actually saying yeah I need to do this I need to choose life I need to focus on what I can gain and what I can achieve rather than what I will lose uhm so kind of kind kind of gradually learning about yourself how you tick what what you need what constitutes for you recovery so learning to open up to help asking for help opening up about your emotions and all of this uhm and then kind of getting to a point where you’re now actually uhm healthy and stable and giving back right so its its almost like a healthy cycle that you went through uhm would you say that that kind of did I miss anything? Is there anything else that you would like for me to know about your experiences with relapse?*

No of the top of my head nut [no] I don’t think so ((okay))

**Interviewer:** *Ok uhm is there anything else that you feel like is important to know for people in general about relapse?*

But in as I said before but in relapse happens but in relapse is part of some people journey but relapse is part of some people recovery some but in as I said but in I had to relapse to basically learn ((yeah)) and it just it just depends when people relapse how quick do they get out of that relapse ((yeah)) like it depends but in on the support they’ve got before they actually relapse and then depending on how quick they get out of that relapse ((yes)) cause relapse can go on for years.

**Interviewer:** *That’s right yeah yup yeah its really interesting for me to hear that from you that you don’t view relapse as actually part of recovery cause I know that a lot of people see it that way it’s just something that happens right?!*

Aye but the reason that I don’t see relapse as part of recovery cause if I believe that relapse is part of recovery that’s basically me giving myself the green light to go out and relapse ((yes)) to say oh part of recovery ((right)) it’s part of recovery its gonna happen and that’s bollocks (laughs)

**Interviewer:** *Yeah ok yeah so it yeah not giving yourself permission to relapse yeah it makes a lot of sense to me actually yeah.*