

FREE

Issue #10

RECOVERZINE

December • 2024

DUNDEE

Inside this issue

Poetry Corner

Recovery Stories

Art from the Bella Centre

Winter bird snacks

And more



recoverinedundee

Welcome to the 10th issue

This time of year can be one of the happiest but can also be one of the most difficult.

For many it's a time to relax, cosy in, spend time with friends and family, and generally hibernate until spring. But for others this can be one of the most challenging times of the year, with worries about heating costs, being stuck indoors, and navigating isolation while everyone around seems to be having festive fun.

For this issue of Recoverzine we hope to have captured a bit of both worlds. We haven't shied away from our usual stories of trauma, addiction, and the struggles of recovery but at the same time have included uplifting seasonal artwork, winter activities, and inspirational

stories.

As always we're delighted to welcome some new contributors to this issue, including Shannon Lana Beattie, Jodi Glass, and Hayley.

If you'd like to contribute to the Spring issue of Recoverzine please see pages 30-31 for details.

Scan for digital issue

Front cover by Starling

Back cover by Anon

Contents

| | | | |
|--|----|---|----|
| Feel Poem by Lisa Marie Diduca | 4 | The Colour of Life Art and story by Anon | 14 |
| Poem by Shannon Lana Beattie | 5 | Christmas scene Art by Wendy Macdougall | 16 |
| The Pen Slays Poem by Jodi Glass | 6 | Bird snack recipe by Starling | 18 |
| Rehabilitation Poem by John Hutton | 7 | Gaining Momentum Recovery story by Jayne | 20 |
| Tears Poem by Jayne | 8 | Turtle Art by Shannon Lana Beattie | 25 |
| The Little Robin Poem by Alexander Lafferty | 10 | Tears of Time by Hayley | 26 |
| Robin Art by Wendy Macdougall | 11 | Dear Obsession By Hayley | 27 |
| Prison Pain Poem by Hayley | 12 | Hate Recovery story & art by Jayne | 28 |
| Angel Poem by Shannon Lana Beattie | 13 | | |



Feel

Lisa Marie Diduca

Life's demanding with a lack of understanding
wanting to be free
By authentically being me
Trauma and addiction I'm leaving in my past
Wanting freedom not feeling like an outcast
Feeling all the feelings I was told was bad
Now feeling hurt angry and sad
Validating my feelings without judgement
And fear
My truth is coming out I'm so glad to hear
Compassion to my heart and mind
Counselling is helping me to find
There's no other way that I get my say
Injustice has shown me that karma is here to play
Not being an innocent small child anymore
Being in my power feels freeing to the core

I dont know the answer
or where to start to erase
the past or mend this heart
yes I feel Broken Stuck
In a cell my Soul is
torcherd Im living in hell
But I am a fighter With
an ocean deep heart & from
the begining is where I will
start, where will I end up
nobody knows Ill just follow
my heart & see where it
goes



Shannonlanabeattie
153242 ♡

The Pen Slays

Jodi Glass

its now october, u took my voice and my personilty 10 long months ago
now

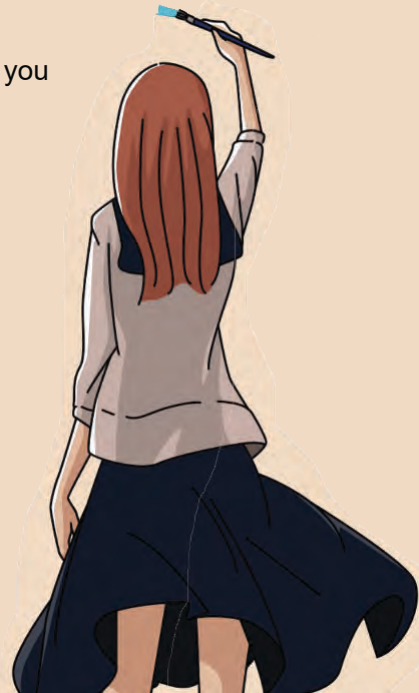
my brain is under seige, but in pen and paper I can retain control

u cant hide my pens, my many stores of paper or my laptop everyday
ur powers arent that strong, yet, I hope it doesn't come to that

if the pen is mightier than the sword, and I hold that pen tight
this pen will slay you today.

You took my voice, my whipsers and loud annoying voice
the silnce cant be broken other than stratching of pens on paper

in this way I win, I reclaimed my voice so duck you
and I will take the wins, no matter how small



Rehabilitation

John Hutton

I'm leaving, ah fuck I'm leaving.
Started drinking cus I was grieving,
Grieving turned into another addiction.
Addiction meant I have to do something.
So I'm leaving, o fuck I'm leaving,
I'm off to Rehab for a full year.
Excitement, anxiety, and full-on fear,
Of this thing that is unknown to me
But you have to suffer a little more if you want to be free
Rehab, it's run by God.
I'm not religious but I couldn't give a s---
Could do with all the help I can get
So if I have to let this man with a beard
Into my life for a year then that's what I'll do.
Time to try something new.
So it's off to Rehab for me,
Cus through the anxiety through the fear I can see
That there's a brand new life out there waiting for me.
I'm leaving, o fuck I'm leaving.
When I come back I'll be on top- winning,
Standing clean and grinning.
Finally I will break this addiction
And see what it means to be winning.

Tears

Jayne


On a chilly November afternoon,
When the heavy velvet curtains of rain
Are ruffled by the fearsome wind,
When the drowsy scent of lavender-
Disturbed by the weather- rises
Like a mist in the icy air,
On the tarmac outskirts
Of a concrete jungle, at a bus stop
In the middle of nowhere in particular,
Stands a solitary girl, cold and alone.

Her hair is a wind-ravaged tangled mane
Of dark soaking curls, dripping water
Onto her sodden clothes and the coat
She wraps tightly round her in vain.
Her skin is washed-out and sallow,
Like the dull watercolour clouds above,
And her eyes have a distant glazed-over look,
Like life has taken its toll on her once hopeful soul.
And it's not only tears from the sky
That roll down her ivory cheeks.

She is like a white rose that sits on a brittle stem,
Trying bitterly to endure the harsh winds and hard rains



That life so often throws at us.
She has tried so hard to stand up to the elements-
Weather-wise or otherwise- that scar her inside.
Many busses pass, but never hers,
And so she steps aside and looks down
As the people glide busily by- to and fro- through the hissing doors,
And they each one pass her by
Without a smile or a kind word.



It's always on a cold November afternoon,
When the heavy lashes of rain
Pelt the pavement and beat the rose bushes,
When the dreary days depress, and the weather
Only serves to remind one of lost chances
And lost loves, that at that lonely bus stop
Stands a once beautiful rose who has lost all her petals;
A sad broken creature whose life was over
Before it really began, waiting for a bus that may
Never come, and watching life pass her by.

Long passed are the busses to take her home,
And the ones to take her to work,
Long gone are the ones that took her to school,
And all of those places hurt.
But then what bus is she waiting for?
For the one that won't let her hurt any more;
For the wheels of happiness to turn the corner
And solve all of her problems for her.
And so this girl will always be waiting
Because of a life spent hesitating.

The Little Robin

Alexander Lafferty

Little Robin I see you daily
Life out there is very scary
This must make you very wary
But life out there is quite contrary

I love the red on your chest
Like a badge or a crest

Little robin standing tall
I never ever see you fall

I hope to keep seeing you daily
As you're like my little fairy

You bring a smile to my heart
You are a living piece of art

Now little robin I hope to keep seeing you daily
And keep on being my little fairy





Illustration by Wendy Macdougall

Prison Pain

Hayley

Prison is full of people who are criminals in pain

Prison is painful, more painful when you're in pain

Prison is filled with stillness which makes the pain louder

Prison is still which makes the process harder

Prison is full of still people dealing with loud pain

Prison is awash with criminals, not all bad, but all in pain

Prison is the place you can heal your pain if you choose

Prison is endless time on your mind to reminisce the pain

Prison can heal your pain if you let it in and let it go

Prison can be full of healed souls who've said bye to pain

Prison can be a sanctuary of the mind, as hard as that is

Prison however is still the place where actions from pain are so very misunderstood

Prison is full of people in pain

Angel

Shannon Lana Beattie

And angel came to visit and took me by surprise.
She didn't hide her wings or face and didn't wear a disguise.
She said she had a message, a message just for me,
To lift my head and listen, open my eyes and see.
She told me I was not alone and not to worry or fear,
Because I was always surrounded by angels and loved ones held dear.

Now I'm passing this message on to you, so that you can be aware,
That even in your darkest days the angels care.
Let them be your guiding light in any challenge you face,
Because an angel walks beside you with love, compassion and grace.
So in return all I ask is for you to do the same,
Share that love you have within your heart, it could ease someone's pain.



The Colour Of Life

Anon

I think for me I started with birds but have recently moved towards more exotic birds. And I'm not sure exactly why.

I feel like my personality has been lost recently, probably before I came into prison and maybe even before that. I think with these drawings I'm maybe trying to pull the colours back into my life. I used to be the life and soul of the party and I feel that's been a wee bit lost. I think I'm trying, through my drawings, to get back a bit of that personality.

[Community Custody Unit] I can just totally immerse myself because there are no other distractions. I couldn't do that in Polmont. What I'm able to do now is on a different level, just from being in such a different environment.

You've got the time here so you might as well use it positively. For me I just get the pencils out and start drawing.

At first it sometimes appears as a chaotic mess that I have to come back to, rub out, and start bits again but somehow it all comes together in the end.



In here [the Bella Centre







Bird snacks On strings

By Starling

During winter time, where days are colder and murkier, most of the animals are asleep. But some of them are still awake, hunting for food in an adverse environment.

What we, in Recoverzine, decided is to take an action and battle our own winter fatigue by being active and also help birds in nature by creating home-made bird snacks with a few ingredients from shops.

The recipe is very nutritious, delicious and healthy for our feathery friends who are on a restrained diet on chilly days.

What you will need:

- 1 ½ cups bird seed and/or dead bugs
- ½ cup 100% peanut butter (no additives, it has to be natural!)
- cookie cutters
- tray
- baking paper
- a plastic snack bag
- thicker string
- toothpick, straws



1. In a large bowl, mix the seeds/dead bugs and peanut butter until well combined.

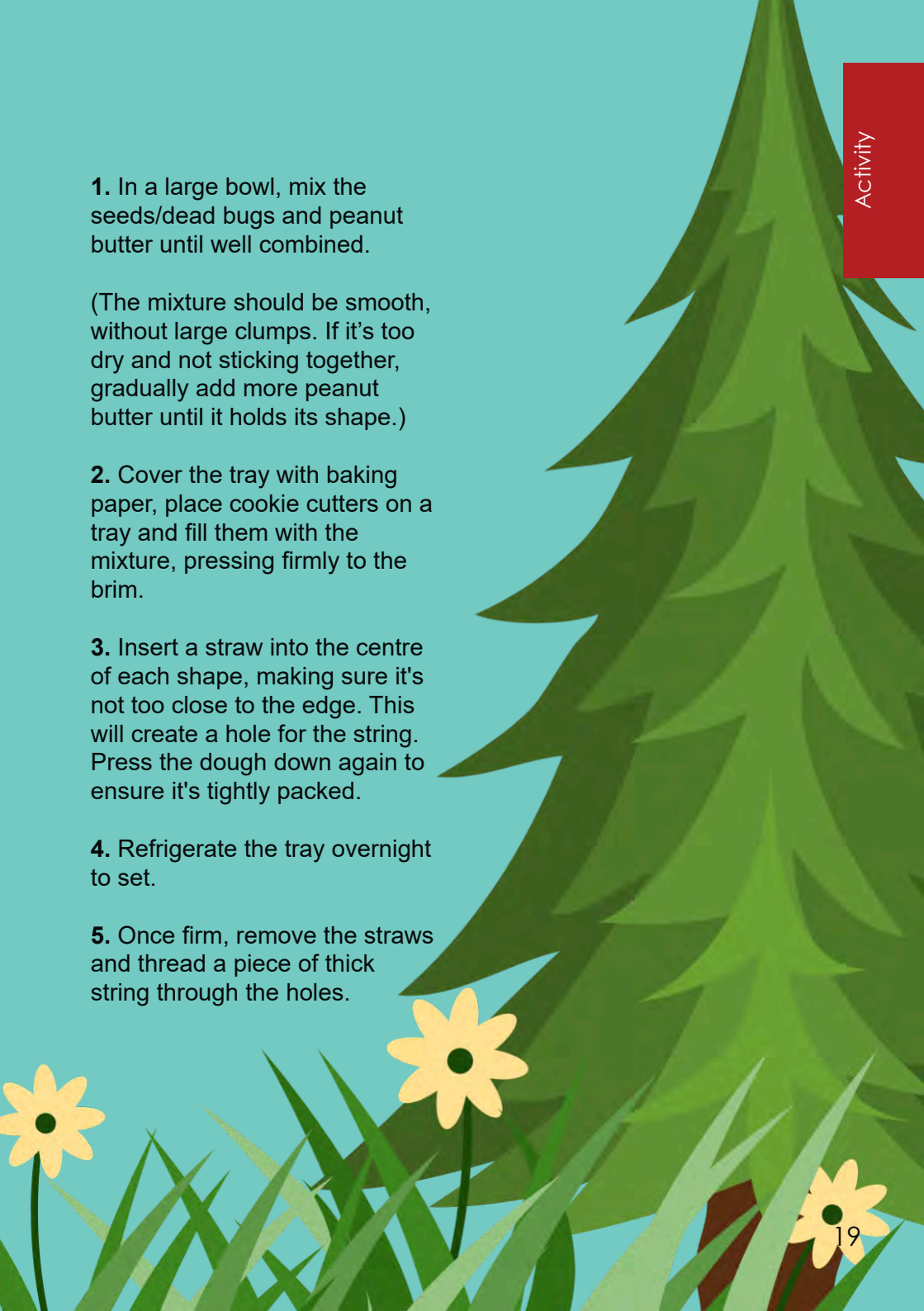
(The mixture should be smooth, without large clumps. If it's too dry and not sticking together, gradually add more peanut butter until it holds its shape.)

2. Cover the tray with baking paper, place cookie cutters on a tray and fill them with the mixture, pressing firmly to the brim.

3. Insert a straw into the centre of each shape, making sure it's not too close to the edge. This will create a hole for the string. Press the dough down again to ensure it's tightly packed.

4. Refrigerate the tray overnight to set.

5. Once firm, remove the straws and thread a piece of thick string through the holes.



Gaining Momentum

Jayne

Part 2 (see issue 9 for part 1)

For the third week I had to try and come up with distractions in order to "surf my urges": enjoyable activities that would keep me away from food.

As if I hadn't tried that, I thought.

But I came to realise there's a difference between a distraction to keep you from your cravings and prevent a binge (a rare all-consuming "total distraction", that I was dubious about) and a distraction that will simply keep you busy for a couple hours between meals (what I called a "time sink").

I had plenty of time sinks: I could watch a comfort show, I could play a video game, I could call somebody up and

have a good long chat, anything that would just keep me out of the kitchen for a while.

Coupled with eating regularly, time sinks were easy. But a total distraction when I had a craving? Now that cravings were more sparse and had reasons behind them, I could think a little more clearly about it rather than throw up my hands and call it impossible.

I tried to think of anything I could pour my complete and slightly unhinged focus into, the kinds of things where you can't take your eyes off of it, where you don't even want to move to go pee or sleep.

Usually that's not the kinds of things you get into on purpose,

they're mistakes you make late at night when you have work in the morning, but fight fire with fire I guess: a really good book, a movie you haven't seen before (especially at the cinema where you can't escape), a big build in Minecraft, planning your dream holiday, an engaging new arts and crafts project; whatever works!

Week four taught problem solving skills and encouraged using them in all aspects of life, with the idea to becoming an overall better problem solver.

I was encouraged to be vigilant and look out for potential problems, as spotting them early makes them easier to deal with (for example, identifying when I am stressed or upset, and that this might make me want to binge later).

I should then come up with as many solutions as I can, and decide how effective they each might be, ultimately putting the best one

into effect and seeing if it worked, and if not then moving on to the second best etc.

Finally, I should review these steps and see if I could do anything better next time, such as seeing the problem coming sooner, or thinking up more possible solutions to try. Coming up with one solution and it happening to work is fine, but it doesn't build problem solving skills.

Week five was about taking stock of my progress, and addressing any barriers to change that had arisen. I had gone one week without any binges which thrilled me, but stepping on the scales and seeing an extra half stone nearly sent me back into strict dieting.

I skipped my snacks for the day and had to force myself to eat any meals at all. I still felt



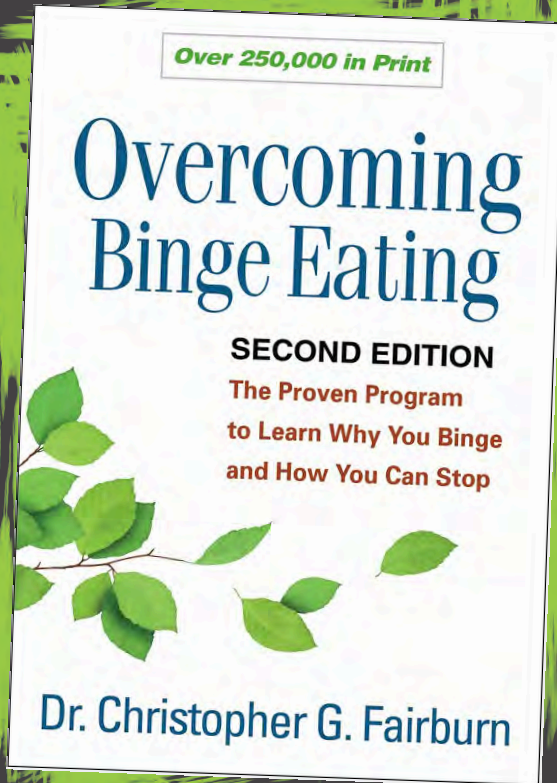
strangely proud to think of how few calories I had consumed. Some people's barriers might be life stresses or poor relationships that cause them to keep bingeing, but my issue still seemed to be that gaining any weight was such a horror that I would do anything to remedy it, even going back to the unhealthy restrictive diets that were contributing to my binges.

And so, I moved on to reading about overcoming strict dieting and body image issues.

Strict dieting contributes to bingeing by giving us a preoccupation with food and calorie counting, causes our bodies to crave food by restricting it, and gives us anxiety about certain foods through avoiding them.

By eating regular small portions and introducing occasional snacks I had previously avoided due to their calories, I had pretty much nullified my cravings.

I still wanted to ultimately lose weight because of the physical discomfort it caused- excess sweating and skin irritation, pressure I could feel on my hips and knees- but the book warned that eating much less than 1500 calories a day was likely to cause



cravings and therefore binges. Instead of restricting myself to ridiculously low calorie counts, it would be better to eat normally and seek out some sort of strength building exercises or cardio.

Restricting myself was the only way I had ever lost weight in the past, and I wasn't sure I could keep myself from trying it again, but I also felt better equipped to deal with the consequences: I would know it's the fault of my strict diet if I binged and not some failure on my part, I would know to eat regularly instead of avoiding food for long periods, and I would know that labelling foods as "bad" or "forbidden" only makes them more tempting.

But looking in the mirror was still difficult, and I read on about body image: How you look shouldn't feel more important than everything else about you.

Your family and friends, your hobbies, your work, your talents and skills, should feel just as or more important than your shape or weight. But I didn't feel like I had much important going on. I was

proud of my support network- my partner and friends- but illness and fatigue had left me struggling to find work I could tolerate.

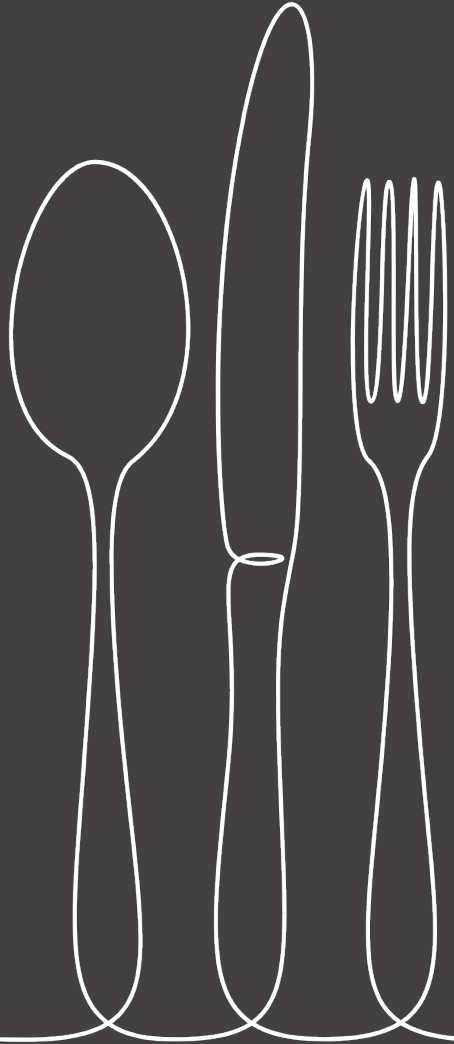
That wasn't something I could fix overnight. It was an ongoing process of fighting my doctors for appointments and sitting on long waiting lists while my life passed me by. A tragic thought occurred: at least when I'm losing weight, my family has something to be proud of me for. And sitting at home alone feeling sorry for yourself is a great recipe for senselessly eating your emotions.

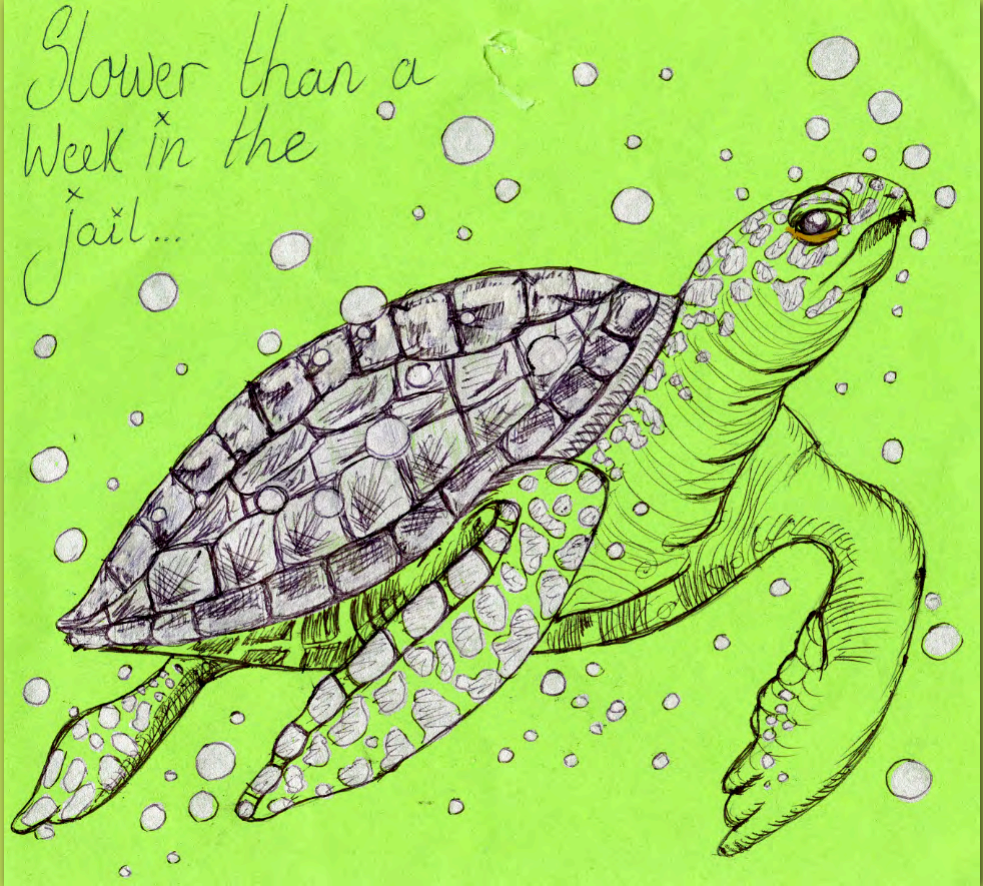
Food had been the greatest joy in my life before Momentum, but the joy came from satisfying cravings, from satiating hunger, from bingeing. With eating regularly eliminating hunger and cravings, it had all but eliminated the joy of food. True, the related frustration and shame were gone as well, but it all left me in a rather desolate emotional landscape. Is this what everyone else feels? Is this what normal is? Just, not caring about food? I wasn't sure I liked it. And I wasn't sure what could replace food to bring me future happiness.

Happiness might be on hold for me until I go to physiotherapy and get a hold of a neurologist, but I haven't binged in two weeks.

The programme works. There wasn't any one cure or answer, it was a bunch of little changes: Small regular meals, not enforcing strict dieting rules on myself, appreciating and working on other things in life that bring joy, building my problem solving skills, loving myself for more than just what shape I can starve my body into.

It'll be an ongoing struggle I'm sure, but for the first time, I believe it's possible to stop binge eating.





The tears I've cried in prison have never been happy ones. The ability to feel sheer joy is an emotion that doesn't have much room to sprout in this environment.

Maybe if I try I could find a mere clump of soil to plant a little seed of elation. The days when someone is told they're going home,

be it on early release, successful appeals, or on their liberation date there are tears of joy, possibly relief too. I've seen it and I'm excited to feel it. The anticipation of letting that wave of release and relief wash over me, like a cold salty splash of sobering sea water, taking all the toxins from my soul. I thirst for that day and hunger for freedom, the freedom to feel happy again, letting that joy fill me up like a mug of warm Earl Grey tea.

That time feels so far away, but reality is that it could come sooner. Waiting feels difficult, painful, so slow it leaves me powerless, accepting defeat against the clock. It never goes fast, it never goes slow, just always a constant, a constant wait.

The only comfort is that it always goes forward and not back.

I've cried tears of shock, tears of sadness, tears of loneliness, tears of sorrow, tears of regret, tears of remorse, tears of guilt, tears of upset, and tears of anxiety. None of them are tears of relief, none of them pleasant tears. But one day soon, I'll be crying tears of joy that my time here is complete.

To: Anywhere I could spend money
Unhappy Road
Guilt Valley

FAO: My spending problems with money \$£

Dear Obsession,

Oh how we met was fun. I'd use you to make me feel better. I needed you to please people so they liked me. I thought giving people valuable, sometimes very expensive, gifts bought me happiness through others. Oh how I was wrong – so very wrong. I spent to heal my pain. I spent to heal others' pain. That pain remains.

I felt good when I'd use you to treat everyone who I felt I owed something to, probably so I wouldn't have any moral debt with them, nor owe them anything. I used you to excess when I shouldn't have and I stole from my mum to keep spending. Even though much of it was on her, other requests, and on her grandchildren (as well as on me). I used you when I should have self-soothed with other coping mechanisms. I also now see how you were my parents' addictions, as well as their alcohol, gambling and addiction to drama – often leading to toxic outcomes.

Well we've parted before I came to realise the depth of destruction that you have caused, however please take this letter as official resignation of your post. I am enough. I don't need to give people things to be loved. I don't need to give expensive, over the top items to be considered a friend. I choose to put the tangible, materialistic items aside, needing only the basics.

I choose my partner and children first.

Yours aye,
Hayley

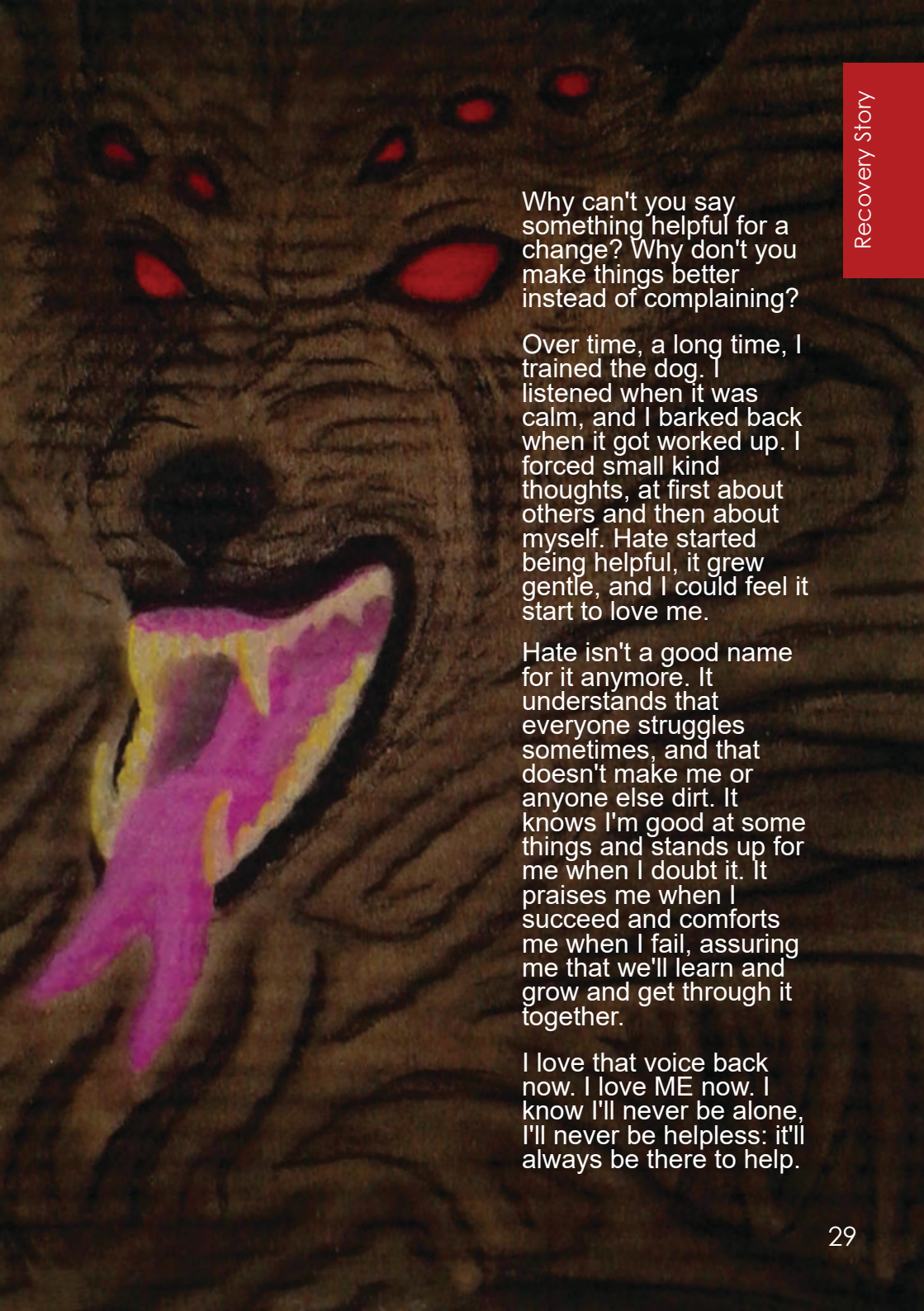
The word "HATE" is written in large, bold, red, block letters, arranged vertically from top to bottom. The letters are set against a dark, textured background that resembles wood grain.

**Recovery story & artwork
by Jayne**

I was so angry as a teen, but outwardly you'd never know it: I was shy, quiet, bullied. Inside I felt a rage bubbling in me that had no outlet, no where to go. I would imagine it as a big black dog with lots of red eyes, trying to claw its way out of my chest to attack my enemies, slicing my flesh and crunching my bones. Even then, I knew the anger hurt me as much as it could hurt others.

After a while that dog started to talk. I named it Hate. It would grumble about injustices, it would snap at other people's flaws, but it would also turn on me: That voice in my head saw me as rock bottom, as dirt, and it was furious when anyone else made a mistake because that meant they were lesser than dirt. They're supposed to be better than me! They're just not trying hard enough! What lazy scum they all are...

I hated myself and everyone around me. But the longer anger burns the more fuel it takes out of you. At some point I was exhausted by Hate. I remember its voice rambling on and on, and I just couldn't feel angry anymore. I felt cold and empty. There was nothing left to give. It was my turn to snap at that voice: Shut up!

A close-up, dark-toned photograph of a tiger's face. The tiger's eyes are glowing red, and its mouth is open, revealing a large, pink and yellow tongue. The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly the tiger's fur or a wall.

Why can't you say something helpful for a change? Why don't you make things better instead of complaining?

Over time, a long time, I trained the dog. I listened when it was calm, and I barked back when it got worked up. I forced small kind thoughts, at first about others and then about myself. Hate started being helpful, it grew gentle, and I could feel it start to love me.

Hate isn't a good name for it anymore. It understands that everyone struggles sometimes, and that doesn't make me or anyone else dirt. It knows I'm good at some things and stands up for me when I doubt it. It praises me when I succeed and comforts me when I fail, assuring me that we'll learn and grow and get through it together.

I love that voice back now. I love ME now. I know I'll never be alone, I'll never be helpless: it'll always be there to help.

General Disclosure:

The views expressed in Recoverzine Dundee are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of DVVA, its staff, or partners.

The articles in this magazine do not constitute advice and are offered as suggestions and personal experiences only.

If you require specific advice on any topic, you should contact an expert or an appropriate professional in the relevant field.

This magazine is distributed for free. Please do not copy the content without prior permission.

Selling this magazine for commercial purposes is not permitted.



We are keen to hear from anyone with lived experience of recovery. This could relate to your own journey or the journey of someone you know.

Please send any submissions for the next issue of Recoverzine Dundee to rossbull@dvva.scot before 21st February 2025.

Please also get in touch if you would like support with your submission or just want to discuss your ideas over a cuppa.

If you would like to see your work featured in the next issue of Recoverzine please send it in no later than **21st February 2025.**



If you would like some support before submitting please let us know. Some of the articles featured in Recoverzine are entirely written by the author. For those less confident with writing one of our Engagement Workers can have a chat with you and turn the recording of the conversation into an article that you're happy with.



Poetry
Recovery Stories
Features
Reports
Visual Art

To submit your work or to discuss support please contact
rossbull@dvva.scot

