

# 'Be kind to yourself'

Advice and testimonies from service users of maintaining recovery through lockdown

"I think watching the sunrise or sunset reinforces that although it feels like the world has come to a standstill, it hasn't.

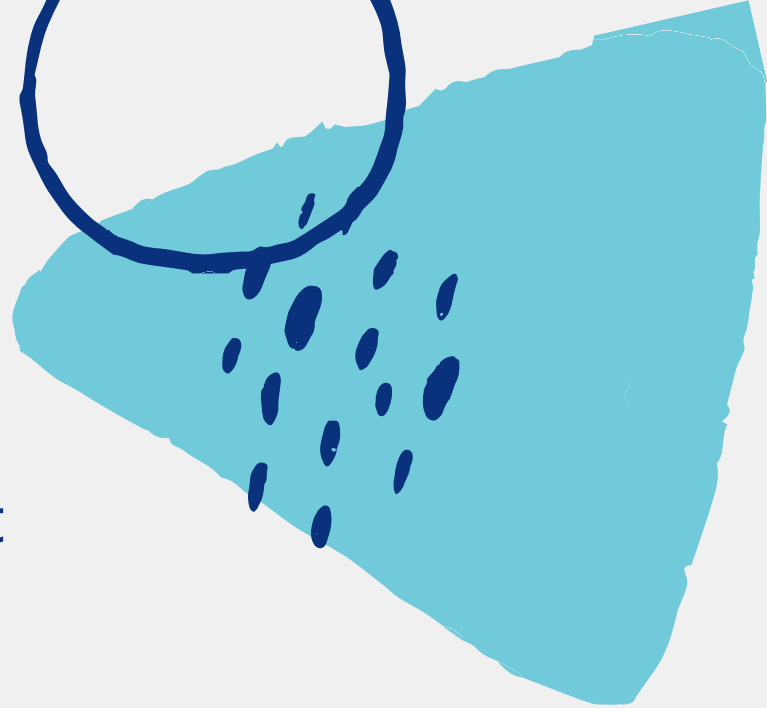
Reading, baking or calling a friend are good distractions and take your full attention even for a little while when it comes to either dark thoughts or substance cravings. I think it's especially important to keep in contact with friends, family or support during this time. Any human interaction can help."

Annalise,  
MA Student in illustration and Swansea Barod  
Service User

"I'm lucky, I have a solid support network, and I'm keeping my mind occupied with my guitar and my weights.

I want people to know support is still available. Yes, services might look a little different in lockdown, but I'd encourage people to reach out."

Tim Morgan, Cyfle Cymru Gwent Peer Mentor and GDAS Volunteer



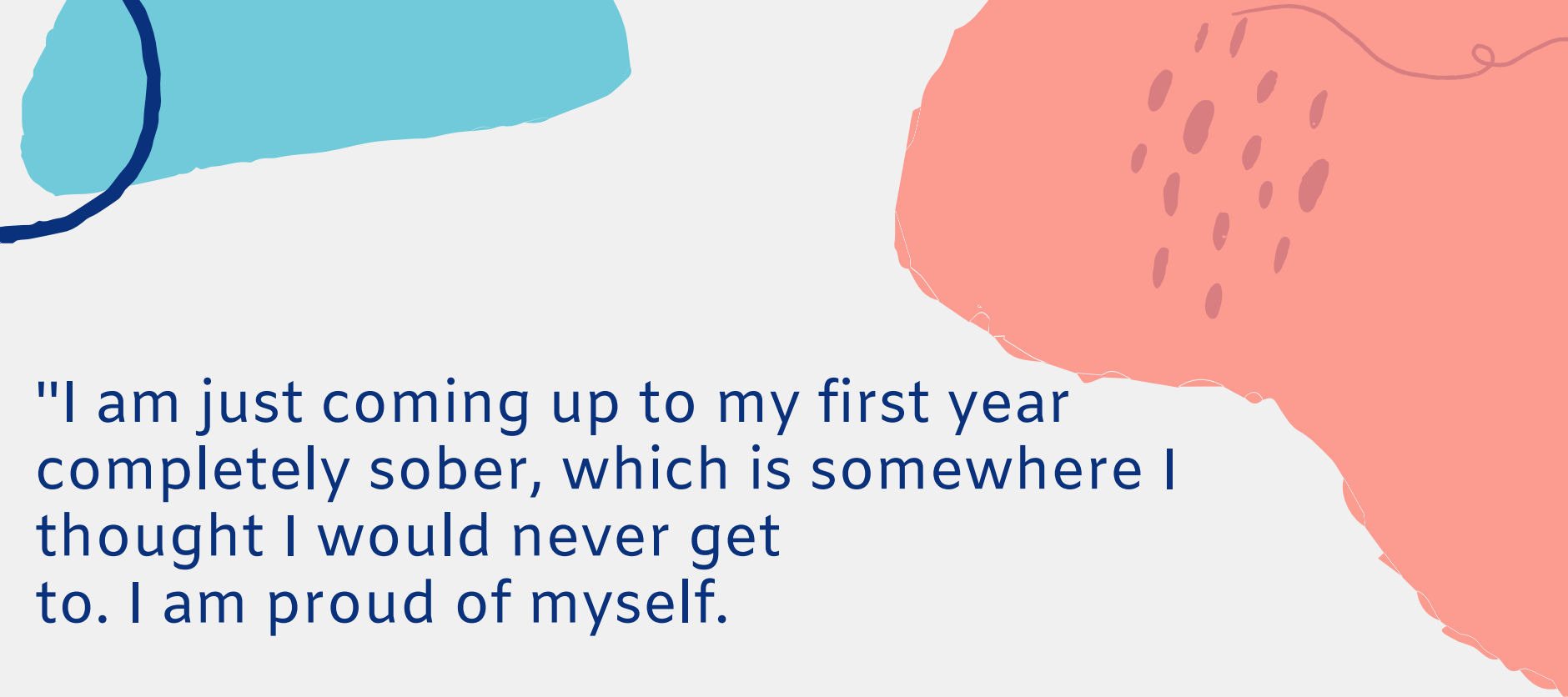
"When I have taken the dog for a walk in the morning, I've got the whole day left.



There's two ways to think about this. Either, what am I going to do [for the whole day]? Or the way I think about it is, the pressure is off and I can put my feet up."

Steve, Barod Service User and chair of the Swansea Service User Representative Group, VOICES





"I am just coming up to my first year completely sober, which is somewhere I thought I would never get to. I am proud of myself.

If I can get through this situation [the lockdown], then hopefully I am going to win this battle that's been a big one for me"


Emma, Cwm Taf Barod Service User

"I find a routine helps. Getting up and getting dressed. Just little things if this is all you can manage.

I am also very lucky to have supportive family and friends that check in on me and I am in a few group chats but if it becomes overwhelming, I do not feel guilty if I just have a little chill."

Cath, Cwm Taf Barod Service User





"I'm trying to do as I always used to do [before the lock down]. It's important for me to have a fixed routine.

I will listen to music every morning. It is good for the soul and lifts my spirits.

Through my recovery programme, it teaches me to see the positives. Eating properly, sleeping well and keeping hydrated are all really important. But most of all, be kind to yourself"

Cath, Swansea Barod Service User

**#TimeToBrew**



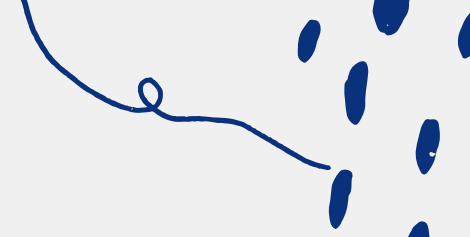

"Reading has been a massive part of my recovery. I used to love reading when I was younger but it fell by the wayside.

But early on in my recovery I got back into it and has since become a great pleasure of mine again"

Steve, Barod Service User and chair of the Swansea Service User Representative Group, VOICES



#TimeToBrew



"I am using this time to reflect on my life and even though I've made mistakes in the past. I have a bright future, I take it just a day at a time. You never know what is just around the corner.

I'm happy now, don't get me wrong I still struggle some days but I feel now I am living the life the life I always should have.

I would say that if your struggling now, don't give up, never give up and never stop trying."

Cath, Cwm Taf Barod Service User


#TimeToBrew



"One of my worries about the lock down is putting on weight. This affects not just my physical health, but also my mental health too.

However, if you are struggling, there are lots of resources online such as exercise apps for zumba and yoga which can be surprisingly really fun to do"

Anonymous, Barod Service User



"I am really grateful for the support network I have found [in Barod]. I am grateful that all those I love in the world are well [during the coronavirus situation]. I am grateful the sun is shining and I can go out for our daily walk.

I didn't think I would get to where I am now [one year alcohol-free], but it's a lovely feeling and I would recommend it to anyone. Just keep going, keep trying and reach out"

Emma, Cwm Taf Barod Service User




"Mutual aid like SMART Recovery was something I never thought would be for me, but it became an essential part of my recovery."

It got me back out socialising and it is what I structure my week around - even now during the lock down with their online meetings. The anxiety and depression groups I usually attend are also being done online. The mutual aid setting is such a powerful tool"

Anonymous, Barod Service User





"I've been in a far lower, worse situation than I am in right now. This time last year, I was drinking, hiding and nearly lost my little girl.

I feel for anyone who is battling their addiction right now. I just want to give them a bit of light at the end of the tunnel. YOU CAN DO THIS!

You've got to keep going. Sometimes it's just half an hour at a time. Sometimes it's 5 minutes at a time. If you are having a wobble, take a breath and find something positive"

Emma, Cwm Taf Barod Service User