

## Just The Way You Are

In 1979 the heroin epidemic swept through our community, the inner city of Dublin, and all the young people were hooked on it. I had two brothers that became addicts and after seeing the devastation it brought into our home and into their lives, **I made a vow that I would never be addicted to anything.**

When I was 18, however, I started hanging out with a young man named Mick and we started smoking marijuana together. Over the next four years I became addicted. I had become just like my brothers. I started to dislike myself and everything I was doing.

In 1989, Mick came to see me after being away for some time. He was carrying a Bible in his hand saying "Jesus Christ can change your life."

With friends, it was easy to jeer and laugh at him, but when I was on my own, **I knew he had something that I needed in my life.** There was a peace in Mick's face that I had never seen. I invited him up to my flat to smoke some marijuana for old time's sake. He came up, but instead of doing drugs, he told me about the love of God.

"If I did believe there was a God he sure wouldn't come down to the flats and have anything to do with all of us," I said, secretly hoping that was not true.

I kept saying to Mick, "What do I have to give him? Do I have to give God my drugs and my money?"

But Mick said, "No, he loves you just the way you are. But he also loves you enough to change you from the way you are."

Eventually, I committed my life to Christ. I knew my sins were forgiven. When I go to bed at night, I have a peace in my heart. I have peace in my mind. **I can put my head down to sleep and know that I will wake up in the morning with no shame, guilt, or sin.**

I gave up drugs for ever. I have had the privilege of leading many drug addicts and other hurting people to a personal relationship with Jesus. For me this demonstrates the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ to change lives.

**Take a look at your life. How would you describe it?** Contented? Rushed? Exciting? Stressful? Moving forward? Holding back? For many of us it's all of the above at times. There are things we dream of doing one day, there are things we wish we could forget. In the Bible, it says that Jesus came to make all things new. **What would your life look like if you could start over with a clean slate?**

**Credit – Noel Kenny**