

Craig's Story

[Video clip: Craig and Chrissie Wilson sitting on sofa in living room]

Craig Wilson: I used to go out on a weekend and my mam used to have the kids and... I used to use drugs and... I just didn't come home one weekend and so... I did neglect them of course I did.

[Video clip: Craig sitting reading a book outside]

If you'd have hooked me up to a lie detector

[Video clip: Returns to Craig and Chrissie Wilson sitting on sofa in living room]

I'd have been telling the truth saying I want my kids and I love my kids but when I start using drugs all bets are off

[Video clip: Craig playing football outside with one of his children]

and I was under the delusion that I was going to get them back. I really believed it

[Video clip: Returns to Craig and Chrissie Wilson sitting on sofa in living room]

and I was trying... and I kept off drugs for 14 weeks to get a hair strand test. I even asked the man who was giving us the test how long the test goes back, because I always had it in the back of my head I was going to use drugs again eventually anyway

[Video clip: Craig sitting reading a book outside]

but the results come back and

[Video clip: Returns to Craig and Chrissie Wilson sitting on sofa in living room]

there was a trace of it anyway because I'd been a chronic user for years, I'd used large amounts so I couldn't stop even though I wanted to I couldn't stop using drugs I could stop but I couldn't stay stopped.

[Video clip: Chrissie sitting on the sofa reading a letter]

Chrissie Wilson: He used to come to my house

[Video clip: Returns to Craig and Chrissie Wilson sitting on sofa in living room]

and things used to go missing and that and I never put them together that he was taking things out the house stealing from us and that asking us for money which you do as a mam yes you know here's some money and that but he was just wasting it, it was all going on drugs. And then the penny dropped and I thought no.

Craig: I was very good at manipulating you know to get my own way you know put the sob story on or I think all lads can with their mams they know how to pull on the heartstrings and I was, I was a master at that.

[Video clip: Craig and Chrissie Wilson sitting reading a letter together on the sofa]

My mam thought I was going to die she even wished us dead

[Video clip: Returns to Craig and Chrissie Wilson sitting on sofa in living room]

at some point because she was sick of seeing us she was sick of seeing us drooling or in pain and just waiting for that phone call that something's going to happen because that's where I was heading. I was always in either locked up or fighting or just putting myself in dangerous situations and I robbed my mam of her peace of mind you know

[Video clip: Chrissie sitting on the sofa reading a letter]

she couldn't relax probably has aged my mam loads.

[Video clip: Returns to Craig and Chrissie Wilson sitting on sofa in living room]

One of my friends who I hadn't spoken to for about a year reached out to us and this friend he used drugs like me he was an industrial user and hadn't spoken to him for about a year and I seen him and he looked really well and healthy and there was something about his eyes he was like on fire and he told us to come to this meeting and I had nothing to lose so I went to this meeting and I met people who spoke like me who acted like me who felt like me and who used drugs like me but they were clean and sober and I, I got the greatest gift one addict could ever give another and that's hope.

[Video clip: Craig wraps his arms around two of his sons and ruffles their hair, outside on the grass]

I used to blame my mam you know how dare you and be in collision with her

[Video clip: Returns to Craig and Chrissie Wilson sitting on sofa in living room]

and things like that you know my mam was the one who phoned social services, she was working and I left my kids I was meant to come back on the Sunday and I didn't you know I was off me [inaudible] she had a job to go to and she'd done the right thing it is the right thing looking back it's the best thing that's happened but at the time I blamed her it's all your fault how dare you do this to the great me.

[Video clip: Craig and Chrissie are joined by the four children and the dog and they all sit chatting and laughing on the sofa in living room]

If I'm being honest she... I'm so lucky she was there

[Video clip: Returns to Craig and Chrissie Wilson sitting on sofa in living room]

and they didn't get adopted I wasn't in a fit enough state to have them at the time I wasn't. At the time I was deluded and I used to tell everyone I was but now looking back

[Video clip: Craig and Chrissie are joined by the four children and they all sit chatting and laughing on the sofa in living room]

I can be honest and humble I wasn't.

Chrissie: Why we're getting along so well,

[Video clip: Returns to Craig and Chrissie Wilson sitting on sofa in living room]

I mean obviously I love him he's, it's unconditional love, is when I've set up this kinship group up a lot of it there's a lot of hatred around drugs and alcohol so I'm talking to nannas and granddads aunts and uncles who's took the children on

[Video clip: Craig gives high fives to his two young boys as they play outside]

and we all have stories and the stories it's all about like

[Video clip: Returns to Craig and Chrissie Wilson sitting on sofa in living room]

I hate them they're using drugs they're doing this they're doing that we want to break the barriers down from his point of view and my point of view it it's an illness what he had yes I've got his I've ended up with his children

[Video clip: Chrissie helps her two young grandsons to do their homework at the dining room table]

but we need to be working together to try and

[Video clip: Returns to Craig and Chrissie Wilson sitting on sofa in living room]

do something about it

[Video clip: Craig races his two eldest sons on the grass outside]

and I'm so proud of our Craig from where he's come from absolutely

[Video clip: Returns to Craig and Chrissie Wilson sitting on sofa in living room]

because I didn't think he was going to make it I thought we were going to end up burying him.

[Video clip: The whole family walk together outside, chatting and smiling as they walk along]

But he has he's made it so I'm dead chuffed.

[Text and logo: For information on how we support our kinship carers visit [our kinship webpages](#) shows Durham County Council logo]