

NEWS

nottinghampost.com



@Nottingham_Post



TheNottinghamPost

CORRECTIONS & COMPLAINTS

If we have published anything that is factually inaccurate, please contact the editor, Mike Sassi, on 0115 9482000, via email at katrina.harris@nottinghampost.com...

The Post newspaper is published by Nottingham Post Media Group, a subsidiary company of Trinity Mirror PLC, which is a member of IPSO, the Independent Press Standards Organisation...

If you have a complaint concerning a potential breach of the Code Of Practice, we will deal with your complaint directly or IPSO can refer your complaint to us. Please go to www.trinitymirror.com/howtocomplain...

How shopaholic turned her life around after racking up £50,000 debt

By LYNETTE PINCHESSE lynette.pinchess@nottinghampost.com

SHARON Bull tried to buy happiness with lavish holidays and designer clothes, racking up a crippling £50,000 debt. But after hitting rock bottom and starting afresh, it is now the simple, free things in life that give her the most pleasure.

Like a drug addict, the former sales manager couldn't wait to get her next fix. But despite a decent salary, Sharon was living way beyond her means and the highs of spending were soon followed by a shameful comedown.



Sharon's book.



Sutton-in-Ashfield with her mother, is a reformed shopaholic. Looking back on her spending habit, she can't quite believe her actions. She said: "I had a favourite boutique in Meadowhall and I would go in and try on three designer dresses. But rather than walk out with one like most people, I'd buy the three. It was senseless. I'd probably wear a dress once and then I'd want to go out and buy something else."

visited the high street every single day so it didn't help. It wasn't just for myself. I'd buy presents for people and my friends' children. Even food shopping, if there were two tins of beans I'd go for the most expensive. I don't understand my mindset. Sharon, who is in her mid-fifties, believes her spending frenzy stemmed from a 30-year problem with depression and low self-esteem which began after she left school with no qualifications.

As a teenager, she saw a psychiatrist for the first and only time to talk about her mental health. But the problem was never fully addressed and she left in tears. "I got a career even though I had no qualifications. Going from a factory girl to a sales exec took 18 years. I was constantly wanting to better myself, wanting to look better, to dress in different things," she said.

Even food shopping, if there were two tins of beans I'd go for the most expensive Sharon Bull

amounts over time. But two years later, a shock redundancy left she in another financial crisis. Struggling to meet the repayments, she hit rock bottom and came close to taking her life with an overdose of drink and anti-depressants. "Thankfully I passed out," said Sharon, who then did what she should have done a long time ago.



Sharon Bull says she would rather go for a walk than go shopping for clothes after curbing her spending addiction.

"I told my mum everything. She was so understanding. I didn't want to tell her as she was on her own and I didn't want to burden her with it but she knew there was something dreadfully wrong. Moving into her mum's bungalow was the first stage of her recovery. It was at this point, she realised what made her truly happy.

Instead of material things, she discovered a new-found happiness from life's simple pleasures - country walks, wildlife and animals. She cleared her wardrobe of glitzy dresses by donating them to charity shops or selling them on eBay.

These days she's happier knocking around in jeans and volunteering at an animal sanctuary, instead of living a champagne lifestyle.

"If you're not contented with yourself, you're not going to find it in other people or purchasing things. Happiness comes from within," said Sharon. "It wasn't easy. I don't want for much any more. I am quite happy in my own skin."

Sharon, who has paid off a sizeable chunk of the debt, bares her soul in the book and will be sharing her story with viewers on ITV's This Morning on Tuesday.

it and feel down in the dumps. "I don't regret the experiences, as if I hadn't done what I did, I wouldn't be doing what I'm doing now," she said. "I would never condemn anyone for buying anything if they can afford it but far too often people are doing it for the wrong reasons, either to make themselves feel better, or they feel pressured to live up to a certain standard.

"I'm such an outgoing person and I was able to cover things up so well. A lot of the time with mental health issues it's what goes on behind closed doors. I was so ashamed, so I didn't talk to anybody about it. I thought it was probably only me with a debt problem but when you start to open up there's a hell of a lot more people."

For anyone in the same position, Sharon has this message: "The first thing I would advise anyone to do is to talk to somebody. It doesn't help anybody having sleepless nights and worrying about it and keeping it to yourself. Secondly, don't bury your head in the sand. Face up to it."

Sharon now fills her time as an inspirational speaker and author. And shopping? "It doesn't bother me that much any more. I'm just not interested. I'd rather go for a walk. It's true."

Stripped Bare is out on August 28, priced £9.99.

John found a way back to work after losing home... and sleeping in cemetery

By SARAH BRYAN sarah.bryan@nottinghampost.com

JOHN Crew ended up homeless and sleeping in a cemetery after losing his home.

But after being picked up by homelessness charity Framework, he has found a new job and has managed to get his life back on track.

John, from St Ann's, lost his home in January after falling behind with his bills. He ended up spending his nights sleeping in one of Nottingham's cemeteries.

Looking back, the 51-year-old knew his drinking problem was to blame. He said: "It was alcohol. Instead of paying the bills I would go out and spend all my money on drink."

"I started getting behind with my bills and I eventually lost my home. It was only then I realised my habit had gone too far."

While sleeping rough John was approached by Framework volunteers - and says that moment is when his life began to turn around.

John was given a place to sleep and food to eat at the charity's night shelter, and later secured shared accommodation.

But John said that despite everything, he was determined to get back into work.

CT Skills, which delivers apprenticeships and qualifications across the UK, was recommended to him and he took his first step back onto the career ladder in June. He had previously



worked in construction, so started a three week-long academy course to get the right qualifications for the industry he loved so much. He said: "My course was very informal and my tutor was so laid-back - it was more like a friendship. I think that's a good way of getting people to learn because it made you want to go."

In a short space of time, John has been promoted to foreman while helping to build 438 new student apartments in the city centre.

His former tutor at CT Skills, Wes Douce, is delighted for him. He said: "I'm so proud of John for actually getting off his backside and doing something. There's many out there that get the opportunity and then just throw it away at the end."

"He seemed a very positive individual - he always wanted to get employment and he always had that drive in him."

John believes his story sends a message to anyone who has fallen on hard times: that there is a way back to leading a successful life.

Weather Around Britain

Table with weather forecasts for various UK cities including Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Carlisle, Exeter, Gloucester, Leeds, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, and Swansea.

Around the World

Table with weather forecasts for international cities including Amsterdam, Beijing, Corfu, Majorca, Mexico City, Moscow, New Delhi, New York, Paris, Rio, Rome, Sydney, and Tokyo.

Today's Weather

The area will have mainly overcast skies with rain likely today. A few thunderstorms will be possible, as well. Westerly winds will be gentle. Highs should range from 15 to 19C.



Sun & Moon

Sunrise 5:34 a.m., Sunset 8:52 p.m., Moonrise 7:25 p.m., Moonset 3:17 a.m. Includes moon phase icons for Aug. 7 Full, Aug. 14 Last, Aug. 21 New, and Aug. 29 First.

Almanac

Table with weather data for Birmingham, Cambridge, Derby, Nottingham, Burton-on-Trent, Coventry, Leicester, and Stoke-on-Trent, including high/low temperatures and precipitation.

For more information go to weather.co.uk



Four-Day Outlook

Table with 4-day weather outlook for Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, including temperature ranges and chance of rain.

River Levels

Table with current river levels for various rivers including River Trent, River Leen, River Soar, River Derwent, River Cole, River Tame, and River Don.

DFS Nottingham advertisement for summer savings on sofas. Features a large sofa, a man in a suit, and text: 'summer SAVINGS', 'EARLYBIRD £1099', 'FINAL DAYS TO SAVE on selected sofas', '£22.89 a month for 4 years', 'No deposit and no interest - ever!'.

Come down to your local DFS Nottingham today. DFS Nottingham, Castle Meadow Retail Park, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG7 1GX. Tel: 0333 9999761. Stores also at Derby, Grantham, Darley Dale and Measham.

Allure large sofa, two free scatter cushions included. Credit subject to acceptance. Credit is provided by external finance companies as determined by DFS. 4 years interest free credit from date of delivery. Delivery charges apply. Extra Earlybird savings of £100 applies until 14.08.17. After event price applies from 12.09.17 - see in-store or online for details. DFS is a division of DFS Trading Ltd. Registered in England and Wales No 01735950. Redhouse Interchange, Doncaster, DN6 7NA.