

# COMING CLEAN

**KEN** (not his real name), now aged 20, shares his side of the story as a former drug abuser and what motivated him to stave off drugs. He revisits his darkest days in the hope that youths will get the help they need and say no to drugs.



## How did you stumble into drugs?

I was 14 when I made friends with a group of older schoolmates and was invited to hang out at one of their homes. While I was there, his friends were inhaling fumes from something that looked like a test-tube. I didn't know what it was, but I don't think my friends were out to harm since everyone was doing it. I didn't want to feel like a loser by turning them down. Never would I expect that 'it' was actually 'Ice' (methamphetamine).



## Did your addiction affect you and your loved ones?

I never thought it would, but it did. 'Ice' was expensive and whenever I was desperately in need of the drug, I would steal money from my parents and siblings. Eventually, my parents caught me stealing and found out about my addiction. They were angry and devastated. I can never forget the shocked and blank look on Ma's face. Ma took the blame to herself and gradually fell into depression. My drug addiction has torn my family apart and I found myself distancing from them.



## When did you realise you needed help?

It was the moment when I experienced near-death, literally. One moment I recalled that I was at a house party; the next moment, I felt my heart race as though it was about to explode within me. I was struggling, sweating profusely and my body was soon out of my control. I blacked out. The doctor told me I OD-ed (overdosed) on 'Ice' and my body went into overdrive and into a state of shock. If not for immediate medical attention, I would have lost my life. The tears from Ma, which fell on my right cheek, had convinced me that I had never once lost my family. It was me who thought that I lost them. I decided to come clean and accepted rehab.



## How long have you been clean?

I've been clean for about 5 years now, and I owe this to my family. If not for their undying love and support, I wouldn't have lived a second time.



## Does your past still affect you?

Yes, it does. I always wonder why I had tried something that I did not know. Why did my friends introduce me to 'Ice'? Are they really my friends? It made me more sceptical about people and things. I can only imagine the amount of pain that I brought to my parents. That being said, I am glad that I still have a chance to make amends to them. Some abusers, unfortunately, don't.



## What advice would you give youths?

Make wise choices; do not try things that you do not know – drugs in this case. Life can be wonderful without drugs.

