

Chris West-Russell

# THE STAINED GLASS WIDOW

Broken and useless, the grace of  
God rebuilds to shine in His glory.



# Addiction

**does not discriminate and has no boundaries, it can not see:**

- **Colour**
- **Nationality**
- **Age**
- **Sex**
- **Status**

Chris' life story has been recorded, as with many other recovering addicts stories, to be used on an addiction recovery program called "THE RECOVERY COURSE". A course that is changing lives and a passion of Chris' to reach as many active addicts as possible and give hope that change is possible.

Chris has been a recovering addict for 36 years and has seen his life change from complete loss to a successful businessman in South Africa.

Born into a privileged lifestyle, Chris had all the things most people could not afford. He was the only son of a criminal Judge and the son his mother had dreamed of having. Privileged, spoilt, untouchable, indestructible, well that is what he thought.

In his story he talks about the pattern of his upbringing, behaviour and unforeseen challenges that he had to face as a child.

Chris was dyslexic at a time when it was not understood, and so labelled lazy. This came with severe punishment. He was sent to the very best boarding schools, aged seven, that could not cater for a pupil with his so called learning disability. Because he was seen as stupid, he was ridiculed by the other children and usually was on his own. He became vulnerable and had no self confidence and became a target for a paedophile teacher, again not something that was recognised at the time, and was regularly sexually abused. Chris was moved to a special school in Scotland for children with learning disabilities, where we were "out of sight, out of mind". A sadistic headmaster enjoyed beating boys for any reason with the heel of his shoe. The headmaster enjoyed administering the beatings and the assistant headmaster was a paedophile.





**Addiction begins with the hope that something "out there" can instantly fill up the emptiness inside.**



His father was rarely at home because of his work, and when he was, he would be mainly in his study.

His mother was very controlling and protective, which meant Chris did not make any decisions for himself. Sadly, the class distinction was ever important to his mother too. Although his mother meant well, it resulted in a warped perspective on life and what happiness and love meant.

Chris failed at school and left with no real qualification to speak of. He was sent to Australia to work on a cattle and sheep farm as a Jackaroo. He worked his passage over by a container ship for six weeks to be dropped off in Sydney and catch a bus to the farm, 600 miles west of Sydney.

A year later Chris returned to the UK a very different man than the boy that left. Rebellious, no self-esteem, no identity, loved being with the misfits, the perfect mixture for a disaster. He was on a search for an identity, and he found that in the drug world.

And so his story of drugs, alcohol, sex begins.

Chris ends up in an all-night cinema in Leicester Square, London, with all the other addicts and tramps watching Kung Fu movies while using their drug of choice, heroin, every half hour. He was broken and useless and finally ended up in a rehabilitation centre. Here God, unknown to him, was about to turn his brokenness into wholeness and through His grace, use Chris to show His love and all His glory, that will shine not only in Chris but many others.