

The Undateables: Almost one-in-three reveal they would not consider a romantic relationship with a recovered drug addict

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Dating and addiction are two words you don't often hear together and sadly, it seems the perception 'once an addict, always an addict' still rings true, with just under a third of the UK population (29%) saying they would not consider a relationship with a recovered drug addict.

Help and addiction service Port of Call carried out a survey to find out more about the UK's attitudes to addiction, including how people feel about getting romantically involved with a former addict.

Interestingly, 50% of 16-24-year-olds had no qualms about being charmed by someone post drug addiction, however, more than 57% of those aged 45+ were opposed to the idea; suggesting that despite the lingering taboo, the younger generation is much more understanding and sympathetic towards addiction as an illness.

The survey did reveal that for a very small number of UK females (16%), dating a former addict is very much on the cards, answering that they would be happy to date someone who had overcome their vices.

But which type of addiction is the hardest to look past?

Although not a stark difference, amongst all five age groups questioned, it seemed that dating someone who had overcome a drug-specific addiction was more of a concern than getting involved with a recovering alcoholic, for example...

26% of men would not date someone recovering from drug addiction, compared to 24% who would not date someone recovering from an alcohol addiction

34% of people 55+ would date someone post drug addiction, compared to 39% that would date someone post alcohol addiction

For the women, 38% would date an alcohol addiction recoveree, compared to 36% that would be happy to date a recovered drug addict

Overall 44% of people would date a recovered alcoholic, in comparison to 42% who said they would date a recovered drug addict

Founder of Port of Call Martin Preston commented on the survey's findings: "It may well be the legalities around drugs that are the off put for many, however, it could also be the fact that alcohol is so readily available that alcoholism has almost become commonplace and is, therefore, more understood than a drug addiction.

"It is, however, great to see that young people have more of an understanding that addiction happens and it is something you can recover from. It shows that perceptions are changing! Perhaps this will lead to people coming to treatment sooner?

"With all the awareness around mental health, counselling is much more acceptable now and maybe we are now seeing the level of understanding around addiction and rehab rise too.

“When it comes to dating someone who has recovered from an addiction, it’s worth considering that having gone through rehab probably makes them a better partner – more emotionally literate, in touch with their feelings and good at listening as a result of the self-evaluation process they’ve been through.”

Port of Call’s report “Attitudes to Addiction in 2019” can be accessed in full by clicking here - <https://portofcall.com/information-guides/addiction-support/attitudes-to-addiction-in-2019/>

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Notes to Editors

- Supporting imagery and data visualisations are available
- Further expert comment and quotes available upon request

Company Background

- Port of Call is a website and helpline for anyone affected by addiction, as well as independent advisors on treatment services within the UK
- The Port of Call team refers people to the treatment services that it knows work, using vast knowledge of treatment professionals, support groups, counsellors, detox clinics and rehab centres and tailoring recommendations to individual circumstances and needs.