

Nicole, 36

Mother-of-two, Clinical Support Officer & recovering addict, *Tweed Heads, NSW*

Mother-of-two, Clinical Support Officer and recovering addict, Nicole, 36, Tweed Heads was tinkering with illicit drugs and alcohol during early adolescence. At 13 years of age she has smoked marijuana, and by 14 years of age, was comfortable “having a drink”.

Nicole first dabbled with amphetamines at 18 years of age, and following her first hit, was hooked, using speed every weekend, which soon catapulted into more regular use throughout the week.

Yet, despite her consistent drug use, Nicole continued to work full-time, only to stop using drugs when falling pregnant or post-birth, when breast feeding.

Over time, Nicole became cogniscent of her spiralling drug use, whose grip she was unable to escape. After separating from the father of her children in 2013, Nicole re-located to Tweed Heads in order to start afresh. However, she soon found herself mixing with a similar crowd and once again, enmeshed in a spiral of addiction.

Nicole eventually reached out to Asia’s premier destination for addiction treatment, DARA Rahabilitation Clinic in Thailand in order to address her devastating addiction.

On December 28, 2014, she departed Brisbane airport for the shores of Thailand, to undergo treatment at DARA’s Chantaburi clinic.

This is Nicole’s story.

“Addiction is something that exists in my family,” said Nicole.

“I started drinking when I was only 14, and even earlier than that, at 13, I was smoking a bit of marijuana.

“When I first tried amphetamines, I was sold on them, and following my first hit, I started using every weekend. Then before I knew it, I was using amphetamines during the week as well,” Nicole said.

Nicole consciously stopped using amphetamines only on four occasions during her life – during both of her pregnancies and when she was breast-feeding. Yet throughout her pregnancies, she still craved the drugs.

“Most women when pregnant, crave certain foods or chocolate.

“All that I wanted was a line of speed, a cigarette and a glass of wine,” said Nicole.

In 2013, Nicole began to feel like she was “going under”. In an attempt to combat this feeling, and to move on from a problematic relationship, Nicole gathered her children and relocated.

“I left my kids’ dad in 2013 for a whole range of reasons. But my addiction was definitely part of the problem,” Nicole said.



“When I tried the geographical move, my drug use increased and I became enslaved to my addiction.”

For the ensuing few months, Nicole battled her addiction, and in August 2014 decided to check herself into rehab.

Vigorous research led Nicole to world-class drug and alcohol addiction rehabilitation clinic, DARA Thailand.

Nicole was unable to get time off from work to travel to Thailand until late December 2013. So, on December 28, 2014, she boarded a plane from Brisbane airport to Bangkok, from which she was subsequently transported to DARA’s Chantaburi clinic. She arrived at the rehab clinic on December 29, 2014.

“I felt complete and utter relief immediately when arriving at DARA,” said Nicole.

“I was desperately wanting to escape my addiction cycle. So when I arrived at DARA, knowing I was in safe hands, I felt completely relieved.

“I was sick of being an addict, and DARA was the destination that could help me beat my addiction,” Nicole said.

While staying at DARA Chantaburi, Nicole underwent the clinic’s **12 Steps to Recovery and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy** treatment programs.

Each day at DARA Chantaburi involved morning exercise, a wholesome breakfast, a process group, including group work, followed by some free time or one-on-one counseling, personal training sessions, a massage, and a game of badminton with the clinic’s counsellors before dinner. Dinner was followed by either an Alcoholics Anonymous or a Narcotics Anonymous meeting, depending on the client’s history and preference, and in bed by 8pm.

“I recall a client telling the counselors that we were given too much free time,” said Nicole.

“The counselor’s response to the client struck a chord with me, citing they had to learn what to do when they were bored, and this made perfect sense to me, because I had to learn what to do with my spare time too.

“The counselors at DARA, most of whom are recovering addicts, were so good at reading us. They were completely on-the-ball, able to identify my weaknesses, and to push me about them. They understood my struggle,” Nicole said.

“DARA saved my life.

“It was an unbelievable experience, and I would urge anyone with a problem of addiction, to contact DARA,” said Nicole.

“I couldn’t speak more highly of the place.

“I had originally booked in for the four-week treatment course, but I extended it to six-weeks when I was there, and I can honestly say, the life skills I learned in those six-weeks were more beneficial than anything I ever learned in school,” Nicole said.

For more information, or to coordinate an interview with Nicole, please contact Kirsten Bruce or Mark Henderson from VIVA! Communications on + 61 (0)401 717 566 / + 61 (0)431 465 004.