

Funerals: drug overdose

This is the beginning of a funeral for someone who died from a drug overdose. The details have been changed.



As you know Peter Scott died on Thursday 21 June. Peter John Scott. He was 33 years old. A charming, charismatic, sensitive, perhaps rather roguish young man. Peter has only lived in our town for two years. Your presence here—the presence of so many friends made in that short time—is testimony to the kind of man he was. Peter died peacefully, in his sleep. It is tempting to leave what happened right there—Peter died peacefully in his sleep. But the truth is that when someone young and in good health dies without warning, we need explanations. It shocks us too much. We have a need to talk about it. That is healthy.

We will never know the full truth of Peter's death, but we're not going to pretend here. We're not going to have secrets. We all know that Peter was someone who lived life with passion, who lived life on the edge. Most of us know he played with party drugs. He really liked his "rinse"—his GHB. And in recent weeks he'd been experimenting with morphine sulphate.

Things were coming together for Peter when he died. He was really pleased with a new job he was about to start. This was the end of a difficult few months.

He'd had some trouble with the Police, and it had looked for a time as if Peter might face big trouble. But in the day or so before he died that had all been sorted out. It was a huge relief.

So that day before his death was a party day for Peter. Now I know that Peter liked to turn almost every day into party day, but this was a really big-time celebration.

Later on the family will be able to get a pathologists report on just what things were happening in Peter's bloodstream when he died. But it looks like he'd taken the partying just a bit too far.

And so he's dead.

And those who are left behind are shocked, and sad. And there are other emotions, too. Some of us are angry with Peter, for making this mistake. Some of us feel guilty, for not being able to care for Peter. Some of us are blaming—feeling that if people had done things differently it would not have happened.

Those emotions are to be expected. But in fact it seems that there are no real grounds for guilt or blame.

And Peter, it seems, was being Peter—living life on the edge. We are very sad that he has died, and shocked, but perhaps we also feel if it had to happen it was a death that fitted Peter's life.

Peter was important to each of you in different and very special ways. And today you have come here with your love, and your care, and your respect....

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