

Former victim became NSPCC fundraiser

# Abuse robbed me of my self-respect

In the second of Metro's series on the emotional cost of child sex abuse – and the need for more professional therapy – **FRED ATTEWILL** talks to one former victim who is determined to give today's children the support he never had as a ten-year-old



Adventurer: David Tait during his ascent of Mount Everest in 2009

SITTING in his plush City office, David Tait's success as an investment banker looks effortless.

But the 49-year-old struggled for decades to overcome the trauma of sexual abuse by a relative when he was just ten.

Like many young victims at the time, Mr Tait had no professional support and was too ashamed to tell his parents.

The perpetrator died shortly afterwards but his actions had a cancerous effect on David's family life, alienating him from his parents.

'As a teenager I didn't fully comprehend what had happened.



But, as it started to dawn on me, I started to blame people and I started to blame myself as well,' he said.

Until he was 28, Mr Tait was estranged from his parents, which led to his mother's suicide.

He reconciled with his father, who died of cancer shortly afterwards.

Suicidal from the death of his parents and the collapse of his marriage, he was stopped from jumping off Beachy Head in East Sussex by two policemen in 1996.

But, 30 years after the abuse, he found the courage to reveal his traumatic childhood to his second wife.

He began fundraising for the NSPCC and, in 2007, he finally told friends and family what he had been through in an email.

Since then, Mr Tait has climbed Mount Everest four times and raised more than £650,000 for the charity.

'It's like a virus. Someone who's been abused needs to know they have nothing to be ashamed of,' he said.

'You suffer an incredible loss of self-respect – it's like a bucket with holes in. With me the holes have finally been closed.'

To help the NSPCC protect vulnerable children text METRO to 70744 and donate £4 or, to find out more, visit [www.nspcc.org.uk/metro](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/metro)

To support Mr Tait's fundraising visit [www.davidtait.com](http://www.davidtait.com)

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