

[Home](#) / [Blog](#) / Recovery Spotlight Robert Downey Jr

Recovery Spotlight: Robert Downey Jr.

Written by: [Susan Linney](#) Updated Feb 22, 2022

1 min read · 2 sections

[🕒 Same Day Admission](#)[🏠 Evidence-Based Care](#)[👤 Expert Staff](#)

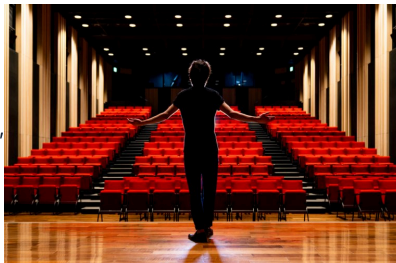
Jump to Section



Thanks to the success of Marvel's *Iron Man* franchise, Robert Downey Jr. has become one of the most well-known (and highest-paid) actors in America. But the 55-year-old Oscar nominee—who's been acting since he was a teen—almost became a statistic instead of a Hollywood heavyweight. A profound example of the power of addiction, his battle with substance abuse made headlines throughout the late '90s and early 2000s, as the actor continued to relapse despite mounting personal and legal problems.

Now sober for more than 15 years, Downey says his path to long-term recovery started with something simple—asking for help. "For me, I just happened to be in a situation the very last time and I said, 'You know what? I don't think I can continue doing this,'" [he told Oprah Winfrey in](#)

[2014](#). "And I reached out for help and I ran with it, you know?"



The Price of Early Fame

For Robert Downey Jr., the party started at a young age. When he was in his early 20s, the actor was a cast member on *Saturday Night Live* and starred in a string of '80s movies, including *Weird Science*, *Back to School*, and *The Pick-Up Artist*. He also received critical acclaim for his role in the 1987 film adaptation of the Bret Easton Ellis novel *Less Than Zero*, in which he played a troubled young drug addict. Just 22 years old at the time, Downey says that role marked a distinct shift in his relationship with drugs and alcohol.

"Until that movie, I took my drugs after work and on the weekends," told [The Guardian in 2003](#). "That changed on *Less Than Zero*. I was playing this junkie and, for me, the role was like the ghost of Christmas future. The character was an exaggeration of myself. Then things changed and, in some ways, I became an exaggeration of the character."

As Downey's star continued to rise (most notably, he received an Oscar nomination for his portrayal of Charlie Chaplin in the 1992 film, *Chaplin*) so did his addiction. In and out of rehab, he faced multiple arrests and ended up serving a 12-month prison sentence for [violating](#)



Get in Touch With us via Text Support. Prefer texting to talking? We've got you covered 24/7. Receive 24/7 text support right away and at your convenience through our addiction text line.

[Sign up for Text Support](#)

Robert Downey Jr. Finds Recovery

In respecting the 12-step principle of anonymity, Downey has not publicly disclosed his sobriety date. However, it appears from interviews and other sources that [he's been serious about his recovery since 2003](#). The star worked hard to regain the trust of his friends, fellow actors, and other Hollywood colleagues, and his efforts paid off. In 2008, he landed the iconic role of Tony Stark and has since starred in two *Iron Man* sequels and other Marvel Universe hits like *The Avengers* and *The Incredible Hulk*.

While it may have taken him some time to get there, Robert Downey Jr.'s inspiring journey to recovery proves that it's never too late to get help—all you have to do is be willing to ask for it.

Find Drug & Alcohol Rehab Treatment Near You



AmericanAddictionCenters

Facilities that specialize in addiction treatment

Click on a pin to learn more information on a specific facility location.

[View All Facilities](#) →

 [Orange County, California](#)

 [Las Vegas, Nevada](#)

 [Dallas, Texas](#)

 [Etta, Mississippi](#)

 [Riverview, Florida](#)

 [Hollywood, Florida](#)

 [Worcester, Massachusetts](#)

 [North Kingstown, Greenville and Warwick, Rhode Island](#)



Check Your Insurance



Get Text Support



Yes

No

Share



About The Contributor



Susan Linney

Author, American Addiction Centers

Susan Linney is a freelance writer and editor with more than 15 years' experience. She is especially passionate about using her voice to help people ... [Read More](#)

[Read Our Editorial Policy](#)

Related Tags

[RECOVERY](#)[RECOVERY SPOTLIGHT](#)

Last Updated on Feb 22, 2022

NEXT STEPS



American Addiction Centers

1. About Us

[Our approach to care](#)

[Accreditations, Reviews & Ratings](#)

2. Treatment with AAC

[What to expect](#)

[Our treatment locations](#)

3. Start the treatment process

[Payment options](#)

[Admissions](#)

[Contact us today](#)

Prefer texting to talking?

Receive text support right away and at your convenience through our addiction text line.

[Sign up for text support](#)

Are you covered for addiction treatment? Find your insurance.

[Check My Insurance](#)

More Resources

01

Substance Abuse Assessment

Learn about the severity of your or a loved one's potential substance addiction.

[Take Our Self-Assessment](#)**02**

Rehab Success Stories

Stories from people who have attended an American Addiction Centers (AAC) facility.

[View Our Success Stories](#)**03**

Our Reviews

Meet and read the reviews of the American Addiction Centers (AAC) alumni.

[Read Our Reviews](#)



Need more info?



Take the first step
towards recovery.

[\(888\) 306-3136](tel:(888)306-3136)



Make the process simple. Ensure your benefits cover treatment.

[Check Insurance Online](#)



Explore American Addiction Centers locations nationwide.

[View Our Treatment Centers](#)

TREATMENT LOCATIONS

California

- Laguna Treatment Hospital

Nevada

- Desert Hope Treatment Center

Texas

- Greenhouse Treatment Center

Florida

- River Oaks Treatment Center

Massachusetts

- AdCare Hospital
- AdCare Hospital Outpatient

Rhode Island

- AdCare Rhode Island
- AdCare Rhode Island Outpatient

Locations Nationwide

- Resolutions - Recovery Residences

GUIDES & RESOURCES

- Substance Abuse Assessment
- How to Find a State-Funded Rehab Center
- How to Deal With a Spouse with Addiction
- Free Drug Rehab & Detox Centers
- Alcohol and Drug Addiction Hotlines
- Public Assistance for Rehab Centers
- Drug Rehab Centers for Couples
- VA Benefits & Rehab Coverage
- [View All Guides](#)
- [View All Rehab Centers](#)

INSURANCE & PAYMENT OPTIONS

- Does Your Health Insurance Cover Treatment?
- [Verify Your Benefits](#)
- [Payment Options](#)

ABOUT US

- [Contact Us](#)
- [Our 90-Day Promise](#)
- [The AAC Difference: Why Choose Us](#)
- [Explore Careers](#)
- [Industry Accreditations, Reviews & Ratings](#)
- [Academic Scholarship](#)



Mississippi

Oxford Treatment Center



American Addiction Centers

200 Powell Pl Brentwood, TN 37027

(888) 987-1784

[All Addresses](#)



© 2024 American Addiction Centers | [Notice of Privacy Practices](#) | [Online Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Use](#)

Your Transformation Awaits

