

Service User Testimonial

“A Step into Normality” by J Wood, Clear service user

My journey with mental health started 26 years ago with the death of my eldest daughter. Depression, anxiety... I felt like life was all a big joke. Meds seemed to cover the symptoms but never get rid of them completely.

A few years ago my dad passed away, I really hit rock bottom then and I blamed myself for his death. It all got too much to cope with and I started self harming to release the pressure in my head and had several suicide attempts.

At last I got help from my Community Psychiatric Nurse and I started attending various workshops. At the start it felt like starting the first day of school, I had no idea what to expect but the staff were very caring and non-judgemental.

I started a workshop for anger, anxiety and mood swings. I was going in and out of mood swings but the staff helped me with one to one meetings. All this helped with my journey.

I have been with the Clear service for two years now. I feel the work they have done is amazing. I don't rely on the service like before. I wanted to be in every session and group that was going on because this meant I could get out of the house but the course structure helped me to move away from this, helping me find other things to do and I feel like I can fly the nest in a way. The relationship with my daughter is stronger, we are more open and talk much more than before and she is there for me when I need someone.

My life has changed a great deal. I now have my own section of an art studio and through this I have made more friends and this fills a lot of my time. To help myself move forward I have now been weaning myself from groups, attending less and venturing outside of Community Links to other services and interests. What helps with this is the one to one support planning, the staff because it was useful to know that someone is there when I need to talk and get things out of my head.

I am proud of all the changes that I have made, of reaching the old me again. So many changes have been made – I still have bad days but I'm having more good days and I can manage the bad days better due to the work the staff have done with me, and the changes I have made for myself. Most times I feel like the old me.