

RETHINKING PAIN

CASE STUDY – PAM



Reason for referral to Rethinking Pain:

Pam lives in Bradford and is in her early sixties. She has lived with daily pain for several years and has a diagnosis of transverse myelitis and osteoarthritis. Pam told her Rethinking Pain health coach that she often suffers with spine pain and unpleasant tingling sensations in her back. Her pain has significantly affected her emotional health, relationships and quality of life. Pam is also caring for her husband who is recovering from his second cancer diagnosis. His cancer has made Pam feel stressed and worried, which she says, exacerbates her pain.

What Rethinking pain did, together with Pam:

Pam was referred to the Rethinking Pain Service by her doctor. Her assigned health coach was in touch within a couple of weeks and Pam told them, "I'm so happy you phoned, I've not known which way to turn". Pam was keen to get any holistic, local support Rethinking Pain could introduce that could improve her self-care and experience of persistent pain.

Pam takes pain relief medicines everyday (Gabapentin and Co-Codamol) but she told her health coach "I'd like to become less dependent on my pain tablets", saying "They aren't working like they used to and I know they can't be good for me".

The Rethinking Pain health coach signposted Pam to online support, social groups and a nearby exercise class. She was initially anxious about physical activity but with gentle encouragement she came to a point where she accepted and understood that moving more could be beneficial to gain strength and ease her pain.

Pam attended the 'Movement Matters' exercise class, which Rethinking Pain initiated. The reason Pam felt safe to try to restart exercise was that the class was for people with long-term pain and associated health conditions. She said, "I trust it because the tutor knows we all have aches and pains, that we might not be able to do it all... and the people going, they don't judge me, they understand cause we're in the same boat".

Outcomes for Pam, to date:

Pam is now attending the Movement Matters exercise group every week and has noticed an improvement in her pain and mental wellbeing. She also feels less isolated and is pleased to have an opportunity to talk to other pain sufferers.

"My heads a bit straighter from going, and it definitely helps my back... I'm getting to know some more people".

"Thanks [RP HC] for your encouragement, honestly I feel a million times better."

Future avenues Pam identified she'd like to explore:

- Local social groups
- Reduce use of pain medications
- Continue 'Movement Matters' exercise class

**RETHINKING
PAIN**
COMMUNITY-BASED
PAIN SUPPORT