



## Health & Wellbeing Coaching Patient Stories

(Accessible via GP-referral or through self-referral if registered with local GP)

The following are a few of the many stories shared with the permission of patients from a 3.5-year NHS Primary Care health coaching service in East Sussex. They are grouped under different health conditions to show some of the ways that people have used health coaching to manage the common conditions such as Diabetes, COPD, Stress/Anxiety/Depression, Hypertension as well as other conditions, lifestyle issues, or even life situations such as bereavement that may be impacting on their health and wellbeing. Most of the patients have a combination of health conditions so they have been listed under the condition most relevant to what they used the coaching for.

The health coaching is a holistic and personalised service and people can use it to achieve whatever it is that's important to them in terms of their health and wellbeing. Although this means that all the stories are different, there are common themes that emerge too. We hope that sharing these stories will help GPs and other healthcare professionals gain a sense of the role that health coaching plays and when it may be helpful to refer patients for health coaching, or Health and Wellbeing Coaching as it has become known in the NHS.

### COPD

#### Improved lung function through exercise & working on stamina

Attended with COPD & heart condition.

Set the goal to review consumption & activity. Over time made changes to diet by cutting down, checking portion sizes & increasing exercise regime now looking to lose 1kg pw & maintain stamina work.

Found the service helpful & motivational as gave time to think, realised need to be more proactive with health care. Hadn't really thought about it before but now proven to self if don't do stamina work in the gym then finds hills more difficult. Saw the direct correlation between exercise & lung function. Has got further motivation as had improved lung function at last COPD review.

## **Building lung capacity; developing coping strategies for stress and anxiety**

COPD. Depression & anxiety. Arthritis

Goal to Increase exercise to build lung capacity also discussed coping strategies.

Fantastic progress in every avenue, feels more confident, more productive at work having addressed issues effectively. Calmer, dealing better with everyday situations & emergencies.

Felt the Live Well Feel Better service was brilliant from the first session - almost annoyed that hadn't changed like this years ago! Hadn't know what to expect, thought might be told what to do so pleasantly surprised to be able to talk really openly with Health Coach & got on well with. Found the sessions very effective providing things to think about that wouldn't have occurred to patient. A different person now.

Even happy if not anonymised.

## **Adopting a different attitude and approach to managing life with health conditions**

Living with COPD & Heart condition.

Goals: To pace self & think about diet.

Found the Live Well Feel Better service provided the time to talk openly about issues. This led to the realisation that the health problems are not that debilitating as you can always find ways round things so still able to enjoy life. In fact has found having a chronic condition is quite empowering as can make own decisions as nothing will be worse than the condition. Has now stopped worrying which was itself debilitating and pointless. Also has learnt to say no, so looking after self for a change, resting as needed and planning paced work in the garden

## **Finding the motivation to take control of COPD**

COPD & BP.

Goal: Pacing. Exercise to build lung function. Join a local group/charity. Determined to live life to the full, chest infections meant not been to the gym.

Found the Live Well Feel Better service terrific. It's been helpful to talk about personal situation and that was only possible as made to feel comfortable by Health coach who was easy to talk to. As a result able to sort out in own mind what needs to do & found the motivation to move forward.

## **Taking control in managing COPD, Diabetes and Anxiety**

COPD. Diabetic. Anxiety.

Goal: Be kinder to self. Ongoing.

Found the Live Well Feel Better Service 'Absolutely bloody marvellous'

Would not have known what to do without the interventions of this service and the Respiratory Team. It was good to have the chance to talk to someone I didn't know, who understood and listened. I had never spoken to anyone about 'me' before, it was really helpful to be able to disclose in total confidence what was going on for me and to sort out in my own mind the way forward.

Once dumped everything I was then able to concentrate on improving health conditions with some success. Now I feel in control, calmer and happier with life.

### **Managing COPD and the emotional impact to good effect**

X has COPD and his goal was to understand what if anything else can be done about his cough which he felt very self-conscious about.

X found the health coaching provided the opportunity to explore the realities and the impact of the condition and as a result he has found a way to accept the condition and live more effectively with it.

On reflection, X sees what we worked on as common sense. He had been distressed by the breathlessness and cough and unsure what to do about it, but is now feeling more in control and confident.

He is pleased to still be cycling regularly as this helps alleviate his symptoms and he reported that at his latest check-up his lung function had improved.

### **Giving up smoking**

Attended coaching as wanted to finally give up smoking completely due to COPD & debilitating infections. Had failed several times in the past. Coaching helped find the motivation to take action. Initially cut down with the help of electric cigarettes with the express goal to stop altogether in 3 weeks.

### **Taking control of COPD**

Attended with COPD

Goal to do step ups regularly to build lung function-increased as knees allow.

Felt the Health Coaching experience was good. It was helpful talking about the situation and understanding what can help improve condition. Learnt to ask questions and take control rather than the condition control her.

## **DIABETES**

### **Going back to basics to get on top of managing diet**

X suffers with Diabetes and Crohn's disease. She was struggling with what to eat as she wanted to lose some weight. On talking with X it became clear that she needed to get back to basics so her first goal was to research foods that were compatible to each condition and from there devise a list of foods that she could eat that were ok. She explained that although she actually knew these things, over the years she had become complacent, some things had changed and it had been a really good exercise in revisiting this subject. X feels that she has also got other answers regarding her health and is much happier now that she is managing her health in a more constructive, positive way.

### **Getting Diabetes under control**

X had no physical symptoms but a strong family history of type 2 Diabetes when he was given a diagnosis by chance while booming and busting with weight and exercise. He generally felt his life style was okay although not the best for his condition. The coaching gave X a chance to reflect on what could do that might help and time to discuss if and when it wasn't working. He said: "I now feel more confident with better self-awareness as to what works for me.

"Crucially the coaching was at times difficult and challenging particularly when things weren't improving but the space given by an independent professional provided time to reflect on disappointments, to plan new things to work on and acknowledge we're human so compassion and empathy underlined difficult conversations - all to my benefit as I'm fitter, have lost weight and am certainly more confident going for my next Diabetes review."

### **Getting on top of issues around managing diabetes**

X presented with issues around diabetes and used the service to problem-solve. As a result, she started swimming regularly, is learning to use an iPad and is planning to join a walking group. She found being listened to really helpful while she worked things out.

### **Improved sugar levels; improved health; reduced weight; more exercise**

This person was obese as not adjusted diet & exercise in line with reduced manual labour. Talking about what was important and what could improve the situation was difficult to engage with at first. Able to talk easily with the coach & after keeping diaries was able to acknowledge the actions needed to improve health. Once engaged, weight started to come down even when pain meant exercise was difficult to maintain which led to the best sugar levels to date which pleased both the patient & the GP.

### **Identifying how to move forward with managing health conditions**

Attended Health coaching as diabetic & overweight but other conditions made it difficult to focus on this. Able to talk about all difficult issues in confidence without feeling rushed this then helped source and ask for relevant help. Now has a referral to a specialist & feeling positive that now getting somewhere.

### **Getting blood sugar levels under control**

This person has overcome huge challenges with regards to her blood sugar levels. Since changing her medication she has completely stabilised her blood sugar, lost weight, and has even been to have her eyes tested as the lenses have changed due to new medication. She says "Coaching has benefited me by putting me on the right track and made me realise that little achievements can create big changes."

### **Finding the motivation to make changes to diet and exercise to reverse pre-diabetes**

X wanted to make some changes to her diet and exercise regime. She had been informed that she was pre-diabetic and wanted to do everything she could to reverse the process. X explored her relationship to food and her motivation to change shifted to a much more useful, internal motive. She has been doing more walking and eaten more healthily. As a result, X has lost a significant amount of weight.

## **STRESS/DEPRESSION/ANXIETY**

### **Overcoming stress which had felt overwhelming; now aiming to reduce medication and lose weight**

Living with Diabetes. Asthma. Work-related stress.

Goals: Think about doing activities for self that would enjoy to relieve stress and build up fitness.

Found the Live Well Feel Better service really helpful as it was good to have someone independent to talk to about own personal situation. Realises now had been too emotional & needed help to get things into perspective. The service was available at just the right time. Now feels whole again rather than crazy! At the time of the referral in December did not know what was wrong but was overwhelmed with the stresses of life. With the help of the health coaching now feels calmer & in control. Hoping to be able to reduce medication at review in March. Having got back on track & enjoying life once again next goal will be to gradually lose weight.

### **Developing good self-care strategies; reducing stress and anxiety; losing weight**

X came as she was suffering with stress and anxiety.

She is in a difficult position at work whereby she can see what is needed but has no power or resources to implement it.

X's children are growing up and so need her less and X is in a period of transition. Rather than the needs of work or her children we worked on her needs. Over the months X came up with strategies of pleasurable things she could do for herself, including both outdoor, indoor and creative activities. By seeing these activities as her 'treats' she no longer used food to 'reward' herself and over the months lost 2 stone. X said how useful it was to explore and try out different strategies with someone whom she knew would maintain confidentiality was non-judgmental and empathetic. X feels that she has some good self-care strategies in place and has a useful positive vision of her goals and her overall health.

### **Coping with life; avoiding crisis; obtaining work; reducing benefits; supporting family;**

A recovering addict facing another crisis was referred for Health Coaching due to high state of anxiety. The coaching sessions helped them see the bigger picture, understand what's important to them and identify where they wanted to go. While not completely solving the situation all at once, this helped X to manage it by setting small goals for each step of the way. Now they are feeling stronger and more resilient with the belief that they can cope with life. Meanwhile they're making progress by obtaining work, being less dependent on benefits and successfully supporting their child through exams.

### **Managing anxiety, reducing fear and increasing confidence**

X was suffering with anxiety, particularly about public speaking. This was making his work life very difficult. X made fantastic changes during our sessions. In a very short space of time, his confidence grew and he had some very important conversations with managers at work and easily overcame his fear of speaking once he recognised his capabilities. During our last session, X reported feeling confident, happy and optimistic about his future. By the time of his follow-up appointment, he'd been given a promotion.

### **Making positive changes, experiencing fewer health problems, managing stress**

X had high blood pressure, asthma, kidney failure and severe headaches, all of which have abated since health coaching as she used the support to make some changes in her life: she started yoga, increased walking and changed to a healthier diet. She says "it's changed my life" as she now feels well for the first time in years and more able to cope with a stressful job.

### **Gaining assertiveness to manage life and reduce anxiety and depression**

X was suffering with anxiety and depression. She had extra sessions as she was making great progress but needed extra support with regard to assertiveness when requesting that her medication be reduced. We ended the sessions with X feeling much more able to assert

herself. Other areas of her life greatly improved during the process and X was much more confident in her ability to manage her life.

### **Changing experience of life to reduce anxiety and depression**

X had been experiencing anxiety and depression and he wanted to focus on feeling more peaceful and calm. X was very pro-active and self-aware and engaged in the coaching process wholeheartedly. As a result, he reported experiencing life very differently by the end of his sessions. He said his relationships had improved and he was very positive about his future.

### **Working out how to manage life with health conditions in a more sustainable and positive way**

Living with Stress & Anxiety, Diabetes, Additional conditions.

Goals: Around being kinder to self, learning to say no and managing stress through pursuing artistic hobbies & socialising.

Found the Live Well Feel Better service really useful as it was good to have an independent person to talk to about all own personal issues. The sessions were helpful as they provided a space to talk & decide how to manage situation in a more sustainable way. Very grateful for the help & support especially as now able to see the positives in own life.

### **Taking steps to manage health conditions and stress on a sustainable basis, even during times of stress**

X came with several health issues and was under a lot of stress which was further impacting her health. X said that she found it extremely helpful to be able to talk through everything that was going on and see it in a new perspective. Over the weeks X made and achieved several goals. These goals were mainly about how she could take time to look after herself as well as her family, and what she would do for herself on a daily and weekly basis. Together we also explored what sort of coping strategies and techniques she could use when feeling stressed. Overall X felt that she was in a much better place than when she first came and that she is now better able to manage her stress and keep herself physically well too. X managed to take on board all these skills during a particularly stressful period at work .

### **Finding ways to overcome depression and isolation**

This person has severe back problems as well as depression which has worsened since her husband's death six years ago. She had isolated herself and wasn't really doing a great deal that would bring her pleasure. As a result of the sessions however, she started painting again (something that was previously very important to her) as well as spending more time with her family. She reported feeling generally much better.

### **Building confidence to re-engage with life**

"At the start of my coaching I couldn't get out, I had no confidence with walking around my home the pathway etc. and I couldn't use the train. My confidence gained by pushing myself with my coach's help means now I am virtually back to myself and I feel I could tackle anything. Without that extra support I would still be stuck indoors"

### **Moving through stress and depression**

This person had been dealing with some extremely difficult life circumstances when our sessions began. She was suffering with severe stress and depression as a result of these issues. During our time together, she began to trust that she could feel more calm about certain aspects of her situation as well as feeling stronger and more able to stand up for herself where necessary. By the end of the sessions, her moods seemed to be far lighter and she had made quite a few changes to her life. She was engaging with friends more and doing more activities that she enjoyed, which in turn caused her to feel more able to cope with the challenges she was dealing with.

### **Overcoming depression and anxiety; building confidence to manage life**

This person was suffering with severe depression and anxiety when our sessions first began. Over the course of the sessions, she became calmer and more empowered. She recognised the areas where she could effect change and made some good changes in her life, which impacted on her home, work and overall wellbeing. By the end of the sessions she was much calmer and more confident in her ability to run her own life in a way that worked well for her.

### **Reduced anxiety**

This person came into the coaching service experiencing anxiety. Through coaching she began to understand the connection between her thinking and her anxiety. She learned some helpful strategies such as visualisation, thought-challenging and positive self-talk which gave her, for the first time, a sense that she could be in control of her anxiety rather than it controlling her. As a result of coaching, she was able to give a presentation at college and attend a party, both events she would have previously avoided due to her anxiety. She worked hard during our coaching sessions and is keen to consolidate her learning in the months ahead.

### **Reducing anxiety**

This person experienced anxiety in a number of situations and found that his tendency to ruminate was impacting on several areas of his life. Using simple but targeted cognitive strategies, he was able to gradually reduce the amount of time he spent worrying over events. Additionally, he learned some mindfulness techniques which enabled him to focus more successfully on the 'here and now', thereby reducing his anxiety.



## **DIVERTICULITIS**

### **Regaining lost confidence; taking control; improving diet**

Diabetic, Diverticulitis, mobility limited due to breathing, allergic to medications & skin cancer.

Goal to research appropriate foods & consider dieticians advice.

Found the Live Well Feel Better service made patient think differently so now determined to take control and to eat more, put weight on so regains healthy weight & energy. Had lost confidence but got that back through having time & space to talk through conflicting issues. Extremely grateful had the service.

## **IBS**

### **Reducing stress; managing IBS; losing weight; improving health**

X came feeling really stressed with life, weight and IBS issues.

Over the weeks she feels she has become less stressed, and more confident (which led her to go and find some voluntary work). X has also started to lose weight and her IBS is more manageable. She commented that she now has both more belief and a more positive attitude towards being able to improve her health herself.

## **HYPERTENSION**

### **Putting appropriate diet and exercise in place to manage BP**

High BP

Goal: to lose weight through diet & exercise

Lost weight will continue till gets to healthy weight, nearly there.

Found the Health coaching helped get on track. It gave her time to think about losing weight then once decided course of action provided encouragement. The sessions were beneficial as gave a chance to think about how to put into practice the knowledge already has on appropriate diet & exercise.

### **Managing high blood pressure by reducing stress, increasing exercise and losing weight**

X was apprehensive when referred for coaching due to high blood pressure but found he only had to make small adjustments to help his situation. He found it helpful to have a

sounding board and someone to talk to about things he hadn't even discussed with his wife. In the end there was greater self-awareness and the ability to use different strategies to manage stress at work so as not to get angry. Along with this he changed a number of habits and maintained exercise so lost weight and says he will continue with this until he reaches a healthy weight.

### **Gaining drive and focus to manage high blood pressure and gastric conditions**

X came to coaching with high blood pressure and managing gastric conditions. At the end of coaching he said: "The coaching identified what I needed to do to make the necessary changes to improve my health. The sessions gave me the drive and focus to put in place things I'd thought about but had not done. I will now continue with the exercise I enjoy and watch my diet whilst still living life to the full. The coaching provided a target to focus on and I'm pleased with the results."

### **Making sustained lifestyle changes to manage high blood pressure and gout**

X attended due to high blood pressure and episodes of gout. He found the health coaching helped to explore lifestyle changes that could help improve the situation. As he was overweight, he decided to change eating habits and build up exercise. X lost over 3 stone over the course of a year, feels better, more confident and fitter and will continue as prefers how he is now.

### **Improving exercise and diet and planning for the future**

Presented saying that he had a heart condition and high blood pressure. In the initial session discussed his history and on-going grief at the death of his wife and how this left uncertainty regarding his future and the choices he had. He outlined many issues regarding his relationships. Client identified stress as a major factor in comfort eating and inability to make decisions. He worked at setting goals to manage stress and enable him to make life choices. Exercise, diet and active future planning were his objectives. Working on each a step at a time over the period we met. He is now able to manage his time, say 'no', exercise and has lost weight. He described that he was feeling positive about the next stage of his life

### **Weight loss; lowered blood pressure; reduced sugar levels; increased exercise; increased feelings of wellbeing;**

Over 3 sessions, I lost a total of 10lbs in weight. My blood pressure has reduced as well as my sugar levels. I do more regular walking and this has contributed to my overall wellbeing.

### **Losing weight; increasing activity; lowering blood pressure**

This person came wanting to lose weight, lower his blood pressure and to take regular exercise more often.

Over a couple of months he lost a stone, was doing 8-mile walks with a group, had taken up swimming again and had good blood test results. His blood pressure remained a little bit high but his motivation to keep going with the fitness and weight loss is also high so he hopes that will still reduce further.

### **Putting appropriate diet and exercise in place to manage BP**

High BP

Goal: to lose weight through diet & exercise

Lost weight will continue till gets to healthy weight, nearly there.

Found the Health coaching helped get on track. It gave her time to think about losing weight then once decided course of action provided encouragement. The sessions were beneficial as gave a chance to think about how to put into practice the knowledge already has on appropriate diet & exercise.

## **WEIGHT MANAGEMENT**

### **Persevering with losing weight to improve health**

X wanted to lose some weight for health reasons. She opted to join a slimming club and has now reached her first target of 2 stone. She also goes swimming most weeks and is now ready to get a gym referral from her G.P.. Her journey has been up and down but she keeps at it and is now reaping the rewards.

### **Making sustainable changes to manage weight and healthy eating**

X wanted to focus on healthy eating and weight management. She was very focused and on board from the first session. However, during the process, X realised that she must make some changes within her family if healthy eating habits were to be sustainable. This included setting firmer boundaries with certain people and putting herself first more of the time. By the end of her sessions X was very much more engaged in self-care and healthy eating and found the coaching overall an extremely positive experience.

### **Taking steps to avoid diabetes; losing weight; improving living conditions for support and social connection**

X has asthma, bad back pain and is heading toward diabetes. Found the health coaching enabled discussion into all his issues and led to the motivation to lose weight. No longer obese and will continue until reaches a healthy weight. He thinks the service is excellent and enjoyed the sessions. He has also put in place a future plan to explore a move into 'extra care' housing for the care and company it would provide.

### **Changing mind-set and improving both health and happiness**

X had BP, depression and was obese. Her goal was to lose weight. She found the coaching enjoyable and challenging: “It changed my mind-set; I’m now feeling healthier and happier so I’m pleased with the outcome”. X says they will now continue with the various changes including increased exercise and making better choices such as reduced alcohol intake.

### **Weight loss; feeling in better health; motivated to find solutions;**

This person signed up to the coaching service for help and support in managing her health condition. She has auto-immune and thyroiditis which was causing her to feel inconsistent emotionally and physically. Coaching enabled her to be able to research into her own solution for balancing her health condition and managing her weight. Following 5 sessions of Health Coaching, she has lost 2 stone in weight and is feeling better in personal health. She said that it was useful to talk over concerns with someone as this motivated her to want to find her own solution to managing her health condition and the result has been invaluable. She would recommend Health Coaching to other people who can relate to her story.

### **Persevering with losing weight to improve health**

X wanted to lose some weight for health reasons. She opted to join a slimming club and has now reached her first target of 2 stone. She also goes swimming most weeks and is now ready to get a gym referral from her G.P. Her journey has been up and down but she keeps at it and is now reaping the rewards.

## **ME/FIBROMYALGIA**

### **Taking steps to manage stress and fibromyalgia**

X suffers from fibromyalgia. She achieved most of her goals which were to join Head Space, work out some activities to do with her young child, and address stress-related habits she’d had since a young age. After 5 sessions, X was regularly using the Head Space, she said she found herself more able to be aware of her patterns and was able to focus instead on positive ones and this enabled her to start to make the changes she was aiming for.

### **Taking charge and working out how to move forward**

X has suffered with ME/Fibromyalgia for many years. Her response to emotional challenges in her childhood led her to become an extreme high-achiever. This eventually impacted on her physical wellbeing as she overworked in the hope of alleviating difficult emotions. X has taken up some new activities she really enjoys and feels this has greatly improved her overall health. Her attitude toward her disability benefits has shifted from one of deep fear (she would spend months dreading the prospect of every review she had to complete) to one of gratitude. She has begun to look at ways in which she can slowly build her ability to

earn her own living, in a realistic way, regarding her health. She still has symptoms on a daily basis, but they no longer dictate her life in such a profound way. During our final session she said "In the 30 years that I have been seeing therapists, etc, nobody has ever helped me as much as you have".

## **PAIN MANAGEMENT**

### **Regaining sense of self and strength to get back to good health;**

X has severe back pain and came to coaching because she wanted to lose weight as she thought this might help ease the pain. As we talked X became aware of how the events of the last 18 months had affected her and her health. She did lose weight during the sessions but, more importantly to her, she described how by talking to the coach she had been able to work through things and felt that as a result she had found her old self and strength again. For this X said she was very grateful. She said she felt motivated to take better care of herself and get back to as best health as possible.

### **Reducing pain, reducing frustration; engaging proactively with health professionals**

X presented with his main health issue being how the chronic pain he was experiencing was impacting on the quality of his life. He expressed frustration at the lack of understanding and did not feel listened to by medical professionals and felt he was not being treated effectively.

During our sessions we discussed the self-management model and how this applied to him. X set goals to monitor his health and record his symptoms, research choices and work with resources he had access to with the aim of increasing his involvement in decisions. X then decided to seek a private consultation with his doctor, who considered the client's input and assessment of the pain he was experiencing, ran some tests and gave the client some choices on next steps. X chose to have treatment from a Radiologist and physiotherapist and do the prescribed exercises. He said the result has been that he is 70% improved and feeling very positive about the future and being able to engage proactively with health professionals to seek solutions for improving the quality of his life.

### **Pain management**

Osteoarthritis-in a lot of pain with little relief.

Discussed various strategies that might help with pain management-has no pain when visiting family overseas!

Found the health coaching a useful process, has explored options & now feels more optimistic as in control of pain medication, sleeping better and got a daily routine from the physio.

## Using exercise to manage weight and pain

Osteoarthritis, Respiratory and heart conditions plus muscular problem which is debilitating. Found the Health coaching useful as it was good to talk issues through and determine next steps. Found exercise helps to manage weight & pain so plans to continue to do that as much as possible.

## CARDIO

### Making better use of Cardio-Rehab course to improve fitness

X is managing a heart condition. His goal was to increase exercise and he succeeded in this. He found the health coaching helpful. He said it was good to have someone to listen properly to the impact of conditions on the body and to discuss health concerns. He had previously been on a Cardio-Rehab course and while he felt it was very good and it had helped while he was on it, he said he didn't do the exercises in between sessions nor following the course. Through his coaching sessions, he decided it may help to go back on the Cardio-Rehab course but this time focus more on building his confidence to continue exercising between sessions and after the end of the course so that he can continue to exercise in a more sustainable and beneficial way. By the end of the coaching sessions, he was managing to do this, felt more confident, brighter, and more able to cope with his health condition.

## STROKE

### Regaining control of life after a stroke

X had a stroke, which was life changing. She found the Health coaching a worthwhile experience as it was useful to carefully consider her own situation and she felt it gave time to reflect on life and what she wanted from it. Something she felt we rarely have an opportunity to do. She said: "The sessions provided the time to think about how to cope better and also then I found the motivation to attend exercise classes specifically for people who are recovering from strokes which are good."

X is now living a busy life with frequent holidays, outings and family events as she appreciates you have to do these things for yourself otherwise you would be very isolated.

## **BEREAVEMENT**

### **Improving confidence; getting on with life; improving social life**

X was bereaved after many years of marriage. This left a huge gap and X's disabilities made socialising more difficult. She said "the coaching was a very positive experience and helped a lot mentally". She now feels happier with life and moving forward and is more confident in going out and making arrangements with people.

### **Overcoming grief; reversing downward spiral of depression; getting rid of obsessive behaviours; looking to the future; increasing exercise and losing weight;**

When the coach first met X, he had experienced a number of bereavements in the space of a few years which led to quite severe depression. Along with many health conditions including Diabetes, high blood pressure, a heart condition, and arthritis - to name a few - this depression manifested into weight gain and obsessive behaviours. X decided that what he wanted from coaching was to change his mind-set and improve his wellbeing. Walking his dogs twice a day to cover the "wellbeing" part of his goal, X set his other goals around changing his mind-set. This included saying goodbye to the past to be able to enjoy the future. X sorted through a vast range of possessions and boxed many of them up to sell or donate. He had written letters through his depression and he decided to now bury these, giving him a sense of closure on the past and the guilt he was feeling. X has now lost a stone and 3/4 and is starting to feel like his old self again.

### **Coming to terms with bereavement**

X attended due to diabetes and the stress of a close bereavement. He found talking to an independent person who understood the situation really beneficial in normalising how he felt. It's not possible to have such conversations with family or friends as they're emotionally attached. The coaching has helped take back control and feel stronger. Now living life again whilst holding on to the memories.

### **Gaining sense of independence and confidence following bereavement**

Still extremely upset at passing of husband-married for many years.

Found being able to talk to Health coach helpful as able to open up & discuss things that wouldn't be comfortable to share with friends or family.

Persistent cough finally diagnosed due to small hernia so feels back in control.

In discussing issues now feels more independent, better able to cope with being older & confident to make own decisions.

### **Finding strength to cope and take back control**

Osteoporosis in back, eye condition & managing loss.

Found the Health coaching provided an opportunity to talk things out, has had a difficult time dealing with the aftermath of family loss on top of health conditions.

Has now found the strength to take back control and decide to maintain own standards which remain important. Now knows can get through as more able to cope.

## **IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE WITH HEALTH CHALLENGES**

### **Making positive changes, experiencing fewer health problems, managing stress**

X had high blood pressure, asthma, kidney failure and severe headaches, all of which have abated since health coaching as she used the support to make some changes in her life: she started yoga, increased walking and changed to a healthier diet. She says “it's changed my life” as she now feels well for the first time in years and more able to cope with a stressful job.

### **Building confidence to make positive changes**

X is dealing with numerous conditions including Cerebral Palsy, stress, anxiety and OCD. During the course of our sessions, X's mother sadly passed away. He was very close to her and spent much of his time with her, so we spent many of our sessions focusing on ways in which he could create more opportunities to socialise. X worked so hard to find ways to ensure that he was getting all of the support he needs and is extremely resourceful, managing to remain positive and complete any goals that he set during his sessions. By our last session, X was socialising more and his confidence to make things happen for himself was growing rapidly.

### **Taking charge and reversing downward spiral caused by debilitating health conditions**

X has several debilitating conditions that mean she is unable to walk far. Medication, lack of exercise and poor eating habits have all contributed to weight gain and this exacerbates the various conditions. The coaching gave X a safe place to discuss all the issues and decide on a way forward to make life easier. Soon her confidence grew, conversations were had with relevant people and a new exercise regime introduced. Using an exercise machine daily has helped X to feel better and improved her mobility and she is now motivated to improve her diet whilst still enjoying life. Also, now that she is feeling a lot better, X has got back into a creative hobby she used to enjoy, which she is also finding rewarding.



### **Reducing financial, family and social stresses**

This person has multiple health issues, mostly dating back to a serious accident he had as a young man. In later life, his concerns have been more stress-related. We initially looked at how he could reduce his financial worries as he was aware that the stress of this was heavily impacting on his well-being. With the assistance of his support worker and community manager, he began to be more organised (both financially and within his home) and managed to reduce a great deal of stress in his life. He then focused on other matters including family and social factors. He reported feeling much better by the end of our sessions.