



My Journey from isolation to companionship

Step in to Wellness | Sue's Story

9th April 2025

Sue, a 45-year-old resident of West Cornwall, reached out to the Kernow Community Gateway several months ago. In a state of distress, she revealed her battles with low self-esteem, agoraphobia, and overwhelming anxiety. To her, her home was a sanctuary, a fortress where she felt safe and secure, venturing outside only once or twice a week for essential appointments or shopping. Mobility proved to be a daunting challenge, and she harbored deep worries about her overall health and well-being.

Not knowing where to turn, Sue agreed to an initial conversation with Age UK Cornwall's Step into Wellness (SiW) lead.

Feeling trapped

During the initial conversation, Sue explained that she was desperate to get out more, increase her confidence levels, and make a connection with someone. With a heavy heart, she lamented, 'I am alone! I feel trapped in my own cage, slowly suffocating.' Jan listened to Sue's concerns and provided an overview of the SiW course, explaining the group dynamic, goal-setting, and how the sessions would focus on 'what matters to you'—Sue was also relieved that she could take a step back if everything got too much for her.

Although anxious, Sue signed up for the SiW course but was reluctant to give any guarantees; doing this seemed a step too far. Following a couple of 'gentle' encouraging phone calls, wonderfully, Sue came along to the first session.

"I am alone and isolated. I often feel trapped in my cage, anxious to leave the safety and comfort of my own home. I am slowly suffocating" Sue



Facing challenges head on

During the first session, Sue quickly realised that many people attending had similar challenges and things going on in their lives which were also affecting their well-being. As the first session unfolded, she began to feel more relaxed knowing that she was not the only one who was dealing with difficult situations.

With each passing week, Sue's confidence blossomed, as she shared her experiences and forged genuine connections. **By the close of the fourth week, with a heart full of tentative hope, she joined a craft group led by one of her fellow course participants, who steadfastly supported her throughout her journey.** By the end of the sessions, Sue seriously assessed her diet—embracing pivotal transformations to align with her goals. Impressively, Sue even stopped drinking her sugary sports drinks; at one point, she was drinking 10 a day. Sue has substituted these drinks for flavored water, noticing a big difference in her mood and her weight loss aims. Sue is also being more mindful of what she eats and has taken up walking to improve her strength, health, and general well-being.

Joining communities

Step into Wellness has woven a tapestry of positivity in Sue's life. She has cultivated new friendships, as the group continues to gather weekly over coffee and lunch, and has joined a local craft circle to nurture her well-being. Sue has also become more attuned to how our food choices can influence our mood and health. Sue is planning an exercise program, which aims to slowly increase her energy levels.

Sue has improved confidence, higher self-esteem, and is feeling fitter and healthier, ready to take on the world outside.



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