



## A journey towards better Wellness – Caroline's Story

September, 2026

**Caroline, a 58-year-old resident of North Cornwall, and has recently left a difficult relationship. Caroline reached out to the Community Gateway in early March, feeling as though her life was *"falling apart at the seams."* With courage, she shared her deep concerns about her financial situation, challenges in her relationship, and issues regarding her health and overall wellbeing. Caroline was experiencing low mood, anxiety, and a general lack of confidence.**

The Community Gateway listened attentively to Caroline's struggles and introduced her to the Step into Wellness program. Eager to explore this opportunity, Caroline met with a local facilitator (Jess). She shared her desire for support that differed from traditional counseling—something more holistic that addressed a variety of topics and allowed her to learn alongside others. The group format particularly appealed to her, as she *"didn't want the focus to be purely on me."*

### How did we help Caroline?

The Step Into Wellness groups provided Caroline a small, supportive group environment where she could explore different aspects of wellbeing, share experiences and reflect on her own strengths and abilities. One activity that particularly stayed with her involved listing past achievements and things she was proud of or liked about herself. Caroline said this exercise had *"given me more confidence & trust in myself and my abilities."*

The intimate size of the group made her feel secure and genuinely heard, while Jess's facilitative style allowed her to engage at her own rhythm. Caroline described Jess as **"very patient with each person"** and noted that she seemed to understand **"just how much time to give us, individually, when we spoke."** This meant that participants could share their thoughts without feeling rushed or constrained. Additionally, Caroline appreciated Jess's friendly, inclusive, and empathetic demeanor, stating that she **"happily put herself on an equal footing with everyone else in the room,"** acknowledging that all individuals face emotions, confusion, and vulnerabilities.



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*"The programme has given me inspiration, confidence & empowerment." "For the first time in my life I went away, and stayed on my own for 3 nights!"* **Caroline**

## No more seeking permission

Caroline shared that the program had given her **"inspiration, confidence & empowerment."** She spoke of the significant changes in her daily life. Embracing newfound independence, she goes out more often and exercises to help rebuild her strength. She has realised she no longer needs to justify her choices, recognising she once sought **"permission"** for her desires. One of her proudest achievements was spending three nights away on her own – something she had never done before: feeling empowered and determined to try new things, she will go away on her own again.

**Since completing the program, she has taken an online 21-day course and is eager to join more activities that interest her, both online and offline.**

Caroline's journey illustrates how the Step into Wellness group has empowered her to cultivate greater confidence, independence, and self-trust. The transformations she describes reach beyond the sessions, influencing her approach to daily life and the decisions she makes for herself. Reflecting on her accomplishments enabled her to identify strengths she could build upon, while the encouraging group atmosphere instilled the confidence to share her stories and embrace new experiences.

A notable example of this transformation is her three-night solo stay, which symbolises a significant milestone in her journey towards self-care and greater wellbeing – a journey she once believed was beyond her reach.

**Caroline understands that support is just a phone call away, yet she feels more assured about her future and is eager to establish further foundations that nurture and support her emotional and physical wellbeing.**

