

## **John Hurley interview about Bournemouth Pain Management Programme – summer 2014**

### **How were you managing your pain before you attended Pain Management?**

I wasn't! I was in and out of hospital like there was no tomorrow. Depressed, very depressed. And so was my wife and I was causing that.

### **What did you come hoping for?**

The biggest thing I came for was to improve my relationship with my wife because she was really depressed about me.

### **Did you have any doubts or concerns about attending the group programme?**

That it might not work. Tried to keep an open mind, though quite difficult.

### **Were there any practical issues you needed to overcome?**

Yeah loads. Mainly not going out because of the seizures. Didn't go out to restaurants. Hid myself away really.

### **What was your experience of attending?**

At first, interest, because it wasn't just me. There were other people there, some who had been in a longer circle of sickness than me. So started to realise I wasn't the only one. As the time went on I learnt so much from the patients themselves about coping with life and symptoms. And then people telling us how to use ourselves to train ourselves to cope with our conditions.

### **What were the main things that you learnt?**

The main thing was planning, e.g. with recent injury to hand. I knew a seizure was due, and if I'd left it a week it wouldn't have happened.  
Pacing.

The hot cross bun. I was annoyed it came in at the end. It would have been better to have it from the beginning. As the programme went on, all the parts of the programme, helped me to understand more and understand my pain. With the hot cross bun, you can visually see things. As soon as we did the hot cross bun I understood everything the psychologist was going on about. Everything fell into place.

I still do my own therapies and my own meditations every night. I look back at my folder every so often. I looked at it this morning before going to physio – planning; my whole life, going out more. More get up and go. More control over my medication. I keep wanting to push myself but with pacing I know you can't rush it.

You set your targets so high based on normality. Through the programme realise you're not going to normality, but you're going to improve.

Why have I moved forward so much compared to others on my programme. I think its because I was in a worse condition so had more to gain. But don't take it that I've improved better than others, cause they have improved themselves.

We're planning to meet up again, become more of a social thing. Meet up and see how we're getting on. Talking with another person, she is gaining confidence from talking with me.

**What advice would you give to others thinking of going on a programme?**

You might have doubts. Until you try it you just don't know. I would push anyone to go on it, even if you only gain 1%. If that was your target, you've reached 100% of it. Even just one change to medication. It's only when you look back that you realise how much you have changed.

**You had a recent trip to London, can you tell me about that; how did you prepare for it?**

The main thing was I knew we were going to have to go on underground.

Went to Bmth 2 weeks before, 3 days a week with wife, and daily on my own. I went to stores looking for escalators. That gave me the confidence so when I went to London it helped, and we were able to travel around London. We went to quite a few different places.

Now getting buses and not having to think about it. In past used to have to keep getting off the bus and wait for the next one because of the pain. I would get embarrassed and have to get off. Last week I got the bus and stayed on for whole journey. A lot of that was psychological, embarrassment. People looking at you and you reacting to that. Now it doesn't bother me. You don't realise how much psychology comes into it.