



## CHRONIC DISEASE SELF MANAGEMENT *Feedback*

‘At the end of her course one young woman announced that after living for years with her abusive boyfriend she had finally thrown him out. As, thanks to the course she had come to learn that she was not useless and with help was quite capable of looking after myself.’

‘As a result of this training I am now learning to pace myself without feeling a failure.’

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‘Each lesson consisted of a mixture of facts or instructions given Together with prepared or spontaneous illustration on flip chart or OHP. There were no long, boring talks or heavy instructions to do this or that. We always started from where we were, not from where we should have been. That the target was self-management was clear from the outset, and there was much concentration on how to manage what are often painful and always chronic diseases. It was made clear that there were often limits to what could be achieved, but that these limits should not be too easily accepted. The accent was on the practical rather than the theoretical.’

Despite all this, there was no lack of fun: it was not a deadly serious business, and we all enjoyed the variety and sincerity of the contributions, as we did the breaks for Tea, which were really a form of socialization.’

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‘The topics covered were handled with care and consideration, so as not to offend anyone but to ‘gently coax’ us as to how to get the best out of ourselves not only for the duration of the course but also for our long-term futures.’

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‘I will continue the healthy eating plan, the exercise and relaxation techniques learned on the course. So glad I came on it.’

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‘Self management has given me the tools to manage my life with Diabetes and arthritis.’

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‘Although my chronic condition i.e. diabetes and arthritis remain I feel that I can now (most of the time) take control over the conditions rather than the conditions control me.’



‘I found the course to be very uplifting and positive feedback shared allowed us to feel that we were not alone in fighting our conditions. My one and only regret is that I found out about the course so late on I would have appreciated the information 20 years ago.’

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‘The tone was set right from the start. An inclusive non-threatening atmosphere was created and all contributions, whatever their intrinsic value, were listened to. Empathy was a keyword and it encouraged even the least talkative to make their own contributions to whatever was being discussed.’

‘diet has changed and also more focused on exercise.’

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‘It made me feel less isolated and gave me some self-help strategies.’

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‘It taught me to take time out for myself. To do my best to relax etc, also to walk if possible every day.’

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‘Since completing the course I am now a trained Tutor and have applied for a full time place at college. I would never have done any of these things before the course as I had nothing to offer.’

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‘I feel more confident in my abilities and less embarrassed by what I cannot do, and am now doing part time voluntary work.’

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‘I now feel as though I am in partnership with my health team, that although there are no miracle cures by working together - and that includes me doing my bit - I feel more in control.’

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‘When I first started the course I was on painkillers for my knee, by the end of the course I had bought myself a bike.’