



My Best Friend Harry

I waited 9 months for my first full time wheelchair. Before that I only used one when I left the house. I remember being very excited about it, that was until it arrived. All of a sudden, I had this new wheelchair, but within a couple of days, I hated it. I hated my lack of mobility. I kept hitting the doors and walls in my home, that made me even angrier. Fortunately, in time I realised how much my new chair would improve my life. My chair was to become my legs but I knew I had to change my life and my attitude. I knew that giving in was not an option for me. Prior to having the wheelchair measurements had to be taken and a discussion with an expert about my needs. I needed an electric one to be able to self-propel rather than depend on others to move me around. I also needed a table, somewhere I could use for crafting, writing or anything I wanted to use it for from day one, so it had to be useful. That table changed everything for me as every day I paint, make jewellery, write, draw-anything to keep my hands and mind busy. I needed a couple of driving tests as the Wheelchair Service supplied my wheelchair -one indoor and one outdoor for use on the pavement, not the road. I got through them, so can you-do not panic! Just remember, you are NOT in a race. It was necessary for me to have a hoist in the back of the car which would make it easier to load and unload the car. I was able to do this myself to start with, now my husband needs to load and unload it for me. You need to be able to ask for help when you need it, being stubborn just annoys the people around you and stops you from being comfortable. You can keep a lot of your independence, while at the same time, receive the help you need.

When I was out and about I used to think I was in the way of other people and I would drive around Bury St Edmunds repeatedly saying sorry every time I saw someone close to me. This is normal to feel this way. People are very patient, in the years I have been in a wheelchair, only two women were 'unkind' to me. They were in the wrong.

Being in a wheelchair is not the ending of your life as you know it, it is the start of a new life which can be just as much fun as you want. Try and learn something new, something with your hands, if that is not possible, look at yourself and find that inner you. You need to find something that interests you, something that will while away the hours. Remember you only get out of life, what you put in.

Diary Dates: Positively Crafty Thursday 7th July 1.30-4pm at Southgate
Coffee Morning at Dobbies on Monday 11th July from 10.30am
CPSG speaker meeting Thursday 21st July at 2pm at Southgate

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