



Exeter Community Initiatives (ECI) celebrates its 30th anniversary this summer. As part of our celebrations we're sharing people's stories and memories of ECI.

Here's Nigel's story...

Exeter Community Initiatives came into Nigel's life when he was at an all-time low. He'd been suffering from psychosis, delusions and paranoia for two years during Covid. As a result his marriage ended and his feelings of isolation and loneliness worsened.

Nigel's GP referred him to Exeter Community Initiatives' Transitions project which provides workshops on the practical and emotional challenges people encounter on a daily basis such as managing anxiety, budgeting and decluttering.

Nigel attended three Transitions workshops - Just the Job, Hope and Connection Reflection.

Initially Nigel didn't think he'd get much out of the workshops but he found them inspiring. The social interaction and support from the Transitions staff and fellow course participants was a life line. It helped lift his mood and made him realise other people were going through tough times and he wasn't alone.

It didn't happen overnight, but Nigel's mental health has gradually improved. He still gets his low days but Transitions has given him the tools he needs to manage his anxiety.

He said: "ECI's Transitions project lifted me out of the doldrums. It's given me purpose and meaning - something I haven't had for almost three years. I'll definitely recommend Transitions to other people. The workshops offer a step-by-step guide to getting well again."

Nigel is still in contact with his fellow workshop participants and organises regular get-togethers which has helped reduce his feelings of isolation and loneliness.

He has now met a new partner and volunteers at Transitions as helper to the workshop facilitators. He is also studying towards his one-to-one coaching certificate with the ultimate aim of securing paid employment as a life coach or wellbeing tutor.

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