

This story was filmed and recorded during early February 2006 for ‘Hear all about it!’

This campaign is a wonderful selection of inspiring adult learning stories told by the learners themselves. The highlights from Marina interview which can be watched and read; this is the transcript of the whole interview. The on-line learning champions would be delighted if Her stories were used to promote learning in your organisation, college or charity. You can link you webpage to the West Midlands Learning Directory – Hear all about it! page www.wmld.org/pages/hear_all_about_it/.



Marina's story –

“At present I'm not really doing anything but in September I will be going back to education, I'm going back to training mainly because eventually I'd like to qualify for NSAN, special education needs.

Well, when I left school I left with CSE. I then got married, started having children. It was about 7 years ago, I went back to adult learners education. Going back to English and Maths. Tried for a GCSE English, but I didn't carry on. I failed the Maths one. I was also doing Psychology at home, but I couldn't keep that up either.

Why do I want to get back into learning? Well, mainly because eventually I would like to go to work and work with special needs children. I need to get my GCSE English and also to do childcare NVQs.

I did go back earlier this year to do English, but personal problems came up with the children, so obviously I had to stop. But when I was doing it, it brought confidence out in me, because I was one of these people who, well I couldn't even talk to people, like I'm talking to you now really. And it gave me more confidence to help my own children with things like English. I can help them out with Maths to a certain extent – but after that I'm lost!

I'd like to eventually qualify for a SENCO. It's because I've got a son, who's 16 now, who's just been diagnosed with ADHD, and he's also got high functioning autism. And seeing how he's struggled, and I think it's just going from there basically.

I'd like to be in a position to help children like my own son, who also have learning difficulties. I mean, I have 2 younger children now who are on SEN at school and I want to be able to help them. And, you know, try to help them not to struggle, because that's basically what they're doing at the moment, they are struggling.

Friends I haven't really got, because I keep myself to myself, but my family, I think they'd like me to achieve what I'm heading for. I mean, for 2 years I walked past the sign for Adult Learners Education and when I first walked in and saw younger students than myself, I thought 'no'. But once I started going, you know, it just all comes in to a pattern.

I feel different, I feel more confident. I've been in newspapers, I've been on TV and yes, I do feel proud of myself. The fact that I had the courage and I'd

encourage other adults who have the same problems as myself, to go there and do it and don't be embarrassed about it."

This project was managed by jo.knight@niace.org.uk - who can be contracted for more information. She works for NIACE (National Institute of Adult Continuing Education). Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council funded the project.

