



Learning to Change

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Karen

My name is Karen Edwards. I live locally. I've lived...I have been married for thirty-five years. I have twin sons. I work for Stourbridge Social Services and I have done for almost twenty-five years, in different roles and currently I am working as a social worker for the District team.

Shehnaz

My name is Shehnaz. I have three children and I live in Blackburn. I work as a teaching and learning assistant. Basically...children with special needs: I help them with their work and also help them in their understanding of what's going on in the classroom.

Levene

My name is Levene...Levene Bruce. I live in Dudley. I am married and we have two grown up children. I work for a local community organisation delivering services to older people.

Voiceover

In this course resource we look at the learning journey of three people who've changed their lives through learning, not only through formal education, but by a continuous process of lifelong learning.

Karen

I left school when I was fifteen and I started work the day after. My qualifications, basically, were nil. I had no GCSE's. No 'A' Levels. I immediately got myself a job in an office as an office assistant when I left school. Three pounds ten shillings a week was my wage then. My first job was filing clerk and I actually realised that I didn't know my alphabet properly so I actually found a file and I stuck it on the wall. My manager asked me what I was doing at that time and I admitted I was getting a little bit confused. And he said 'Well carry on, that's a good idea.' Oh – 'I would rather have the files in the correct order rather than have them wrong!'

Levene

I left school at the age of sixteen with three basic qualifications – CSE qualifications, as they were then known.

Shehnaz

I was studying A Levels which I weren't up to because I got married. I was supposed to carry on with my studying but I didn't because my mother in law was ill and so I ended up looking after her. And then we moved away and we moved to America for two years. We lived there so that is why I had to have a break in my studies. And in between that I had my children. And because I was so young I didn't want to leave them and go back to university. So while they were younger I used to child mind at home with them.

Voiceover

After working in an office and then as a home help and care assistant Karen decided to find out whether continuing education was right for her.

Karen

I knew there was training opportunities, they were coming up then but I honestly felt that my drawback would be my age. But I spoke to my supervisor then and she was very interesting, she was very positive and I enrolled for the first year and I supported myself within that year because I was thoroughly enjoying the course. The realisation came when I became office based and I was assistant care co-ordinator that I needed to expand on my knowledge base.

Voiceover:

Levene used to work for an electrical contractor.

Levene

I was made redundant in 2002. I was part of the management of a community organisation and I was asked to manage, or care-take, this particular project for a number of months which meant I had to come off the management board to do that because of conflict of interest obviously. So after a period of months the management decided that since I had been doing...they say I had been doing a good job why not take it and run with it? So I did that for twelve months and in that period of time I was interfacing with social...social services and people from that particular discipline and I found it...that I was...there was some difficulty in terms of me understanding certain things that they talked about and I didn't understand because I'm coming from the private sector, an engineering contracting background so it was important for me to grasp and talk the talk if you will and walk the walk in terms of social work. So I made a decision to embark on a course of study.

Voiceover

As her children got older Shehnaz decided to consider her career and educational options.

Shehnaz

When my daughter and son started school I went back to do further studies, it kind of turned me around and made me realise that this was what I wanted to do. I wanted to further my education in order to improve my goals in life, my prospects for getting a job.