



## Client Success Story: Richard Mental Health Employment Service

Richard was referred to Enable from the Improved Access to Psychological Therapy service (IAPT) as part of the DWP Pilot which ran from June 2014 - December 2014.

The main barriers that Richard faced in terms of finding employment included a long standing issue of anxiety and depression going back over a period of 10 years, low self-esteem and lack of confidence, poor physical health and long term unemployment over six years.

In preparation for employment Richard and his Employment Officer, Paul, looked at his personal strengths and needs in relation to returning to the workplace - taking into account his physical health and his ability to carry out any paid employment. Richard had previously been self-employed running two businesses; one as a successful restaurateur in Hereford and the other business as a self-employed builder. Richard's trigger for his decline in his mental health was the sudden and unexpected death of his son. This impacted on his business, which eventually meant he had to give up work. In preparing Richard's CV, he and

Paul looked at his skills and strengths from his previous self-employment. What came across strongly was that his business's had directly provided a service to the public - this was where it was possible to lay the foundations in preparing Richard's CV.

Richard was anxious about coming off benefits completely if and when he secured paid employment. Richard felt that he was capable of undertaking paid work, however, this would have to be balanced with his physical health condition of COPD which meant that he could get very breathless and tired through physical exertion. Paul discussed with Richard the permitted work rules - working under 16 hours a week - which he felt he would be able to manage. Richard said he had an interest and good knowledge of Antiques - he had been brought up in this sector as his Mother and Father had been Antique dealers.

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Once his CV had been completed, Richard and Paul jointly agreed that his knowledge and interest in Antiques might be of interest to potential employers in this field. The pair agreed that they would target Antique dealers in Shrewsbury as they felt this offered a higher degree of success. Paul called into Angel Antiques in Shrewsbury and introduced himself, presenting a copy of Richard's CV. The Business is jointly owned and run by Sarah and Martin. The pair said that they were interested in meeting with Richard and they agreed a date and time for Richard and Paul to go along for an informal chat about possible paid employment.

The meeting went very well and rather than it being a formal interview it ended being a good discussion of the Antiques trade and Richard knew some of the contacts that Martin had made through running the business. Richard was very open about his mental health and explained what had caused his mental health to deteriorate. It was agreed that Richard could work 12 hours a week 10-4 Tuesday and Thursday, which worked out well below the permitted work rules of 16 hours a week, it also gave Richard a full day break between each working day so he

could manage the work on a physical level.

Richard's confidence and his mental health have improved significantly over the period he has been employed - now eighteen months. Richard enjoys the work and likes his employers which is reciprocated by them. Richard has moved onto supported permitted work, now that his initial 12 month permitted work period has come to an end.

Richard is still supported by Enable both face to face and telephone contact, as well as liaising with other agencies as and when required. Angel Antiques are very happy with Richard and regard him as a valuable and reliable employee.

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