

Ulcerative Colitis and Anxiety

Hopefully you know from my website, that I suffer from Ulcerative Colitis (UC) as well as Anxiety and Depression.

I have been thinking more about the link between my Ulcerative Colitis and my Anxiety:

For me the main challenge of Ulcerative Colitis, other than the discomfort, 10 plus visits to the loo every day and during an attack, bleeding, bloating, tiredness and back ache, is lack of bowel control.

When I was working I stupidly didn't tell my employer I had UC, because I was embarrassed.

My bowel control is at its worst in the mornings* I thought I managed, or should I say coped with this, by driving to work and being able to turn around and go home if I had an accident, which I did once or twice a month. I always had to dash to the loo as soon as I got to work and managed slight accidents with my UC 'kit'

But then, my employer relocated to central London, so I had to use the train to get to work, I think this just proved to much to manage, as I was no longer in control. So I did 9 months and then along came my mental breakdown. I am not saying UC was the only factor, I know money, children and bullying at work were also issues that contributed to my breakdown in 2009.

But and I think this is the important point, I think the 'damage' of coping with UC and work is now feeding my anxiety.

Why?

Well today I was up early as usual (5am) and thought 'right I am going to walk down and buy a paper today on my own', admittedly it was dark and I thought there wont be many people about, but I have to start somewhere. I had been to the loo and was feeling slightly constipated, got coat and hat on, got to gate, then had to return to go to the loo again. Then I set of on my desensitisation task.

Just before getting to newsagents I got the feeling in my bowels, stopped, calmed myself, then walked on. Then I bought my newspaper and was feeling proud that I had done the task in terms of my anxiety.

Then on my way home my bowel feelings got stronger, I stopped, breathed etc, but after all that I still ended up soiling myself slightly before getting home and then having to rush to the loo once I was in.

So I think I have got to tackle my issues around bowel control, if I am going to crack this anxiety malarkey.....

Therefore, I have joined Crohns and Colitis UK (NACC) and am going to see my GP about some form of protection pads.

So lessons learnt:

- ✔ Always tell your employer, NACC have some great fact sheets on this.
- ✔ Join NACC - £12 per year
- ✔ Don't be ashamed – talk to people about it.

I'll keep you posted on my progress, one for my next Brief Therapy Session to I think.

* As an aside, when I talked to my Consultant's Registrar about problems with bowel control in the mornings, his advice was to get up earlier! I didn't find that very helpful as it is the same process irrespective of when I get up.



www.myanxiety.co.uk

4th December 2012