

Margaret's Journey.

I had just celebrated my 60th birthday and everything was wonderful, when one Saturday morning I woke up with ringing in my left ear. I had occasionally had the odd ringing occur and it had always gone away, but this time it didn't. I battled with the noise for a week or so then it started to get to me so I decided to go to my Doctor as I wasn't sleeping, because all I was doing was listening to the noise and as I had to hold down a fulltime job needed to get some sleep. He listened to my tale of woe and at my insistence prescribed me a sleeping tablet. I only took half a tablet a night but this was enough for me to be able to keep functioning and get my much needed rest. I also had an anti depressant tablet and used a pillow speaker to listen to music at night and this was a help but never made the noise go away - as if it would!!

He sent me to an Ear Nose & Throat Specialist who conducted tests to see what was happening. After being examined and having a hearing test in a sound proof booth, which was frightening, as all I could hear was the noise which was even louder in the booth, he informed me that I did have Tinnitus.

I also went to see Ross Dineen & Mirriam Westcott to get a 2nd opinion, which turned out to be exactly the same diagnosis.

I was pretty devastated and although I thought I had been coping, I went on a downward spiral and so began a difficult journey of anxiety, depression, not eating, sleeping, concentrating and all the time having to work.

I tried many different things including acupuncture, and I also went and had counselling from a Psychologist and found this was a wonderful help.

It had been recommended to me that I make contact with the Tinnitus Association and after a couple of phone calls I decided to go along to their Seminar. The best move I could have made.

I was greeted with warmth and kindness and attended many Seminars and for most of them sat up the back and cried my way through them, always feeling better once I had been there.

After spending many hours being supported and counselled by Ross, Ian and Lois, who always made themselves available to me when I most needed them and being told that I would eventually habituate, although it may take time as everyone is different. I suppose I really wanted to believe them but with the noise ringing in my ear I wasn't really able to.

I made a conscious decision that after nine months I would try and go off every medication I was on. On a Friday night - I remember it well - I went to bed and decided enough was enough and I wasn't going to let this Tinnitus get to me anymore. It wasn't an easy night's sleep but somehow I did manage to get through and one night turned into many more, some good some not.

I felt terrible, but was determined not to turn back and with much support from my wonderful husband and family I slowly succeeded, not overnight, but gradually I was able to regain my life back again, under my control not Tinnitus's.

I want everyone to know that I feel fabulous, I can read a book for hours, concentrate on my new job, enjoy going to concerts, restaurants and have a wonderful life once again.

Yes, my Tinnitus is always with me but it doesn't control me ANYMORE.