

Character Profile:

Name-*alias* Mary

Age- Mary is years xx old

Birth date- born on the 26 December 19XX

Gender- Female

Background-Mary has an Australian background although an Italian Heritage.

Work experience- Works in Administration and Bookkeeping

Interests-Mary enjoys reading, cooking, netball, community volunteer.

Description (characteristics and qualities)- Mary has 3 children, all teenagers and she has a loving husband. Mary has brown hair, and green eyes. She is quite tall and is very loving towards her children and everyone that she meets. Mary has a good sense of humour although is serious when intended.

Role and impact of adversity on health

Define the difficulty or adversity that was to be overcome:

"In July of 2009, I was diagnosed with hypertension, requiring medication to regulate my blood pressure. I was classified as obese and at my heaviest weighed 113 kilograms.

Shortly after following some routine blood tests I was diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes".

Characterise the adversity, how has it impacted your lifestyle?

"At the time of the diagnosis, I was in poor health. My symptoms were, feeling tired and thirsty, urinating frequently. I was not active and led a sedentary lifestyle".

Have you taken this adversity into a positive or negative fashion? Use examples.

"I think my family would say I have completely turned my life around in a positive way.

I tackled the problem head on and changed my lifestyle immediately.

The first thing to change was my diet. I basically stopped eating bread, rice, pasta, potatoes, sweet biscuits, highly refined foods and sugar.

I changed everything. Without counting calories and kilojoules, which can drive you crazy at the best of times, I reduced my portions, ate lots of salads and vegetables, grilled fish, chicken and beef. Only low fat dairy foods such as diet yogurts and skim milk, and limited fruit. Nuts and Seeds Limited Cereals. I also drank lots and lots of water, and still do.

A general description of the Mary's background and characteristics

A description of specific strategies that they were introduced to deal with life challenges

At one stage I tried the "xxxx diet" also known as the xxxx Diet which was a challenge that drove my family nuts, but was an eye opener, as it brought me back to basics.

I have since lost over 27 Kilos and workout daily. I would probably be classified as a "gym junkie" and am totally hooked. I attend xxxx gym 5 days a week for a variety of classes and Personal Training sessions. In addition I try to run/walk 12 Kilometres on a Sunday, in preparation for my second City to Surf in 2012".

Brief reference to overcoming an adverse circumstance

On the website 'Diabetes Australia' states that the symptoms of having type 2 diabetes are "

- Feeling dizzy
- Mood swings
- Itching skin infections
- Always feeling hungry
- Gradually putting on weight
- Headaches"

Have you experienced any of these symptoms or more? If so, explain.

"I experienced most of these symptoms, Happy to report they have all but disappeared.

I still suffer from eczema, but this has gradually improved overtime".

Did past relatives have the same type of adversity to you? If so, do you consider it has a link to you?

"Unfortunately there is type 2 diabetes in our family history. My father was diagnosed in his forties, and my mother in law was diagnosed in her sixties. Also, I had gestational diabetes during one of my pregnancies, which pre disposed me to this condition".

Links to the physical challenges facing people with diabetes

Access to and use of support people, services and strategies to manage health

How has your condition affected your life? Discuss the economic, emotional, and physical areas of this adversity.

"At first it was difficult to come to terms with the diagnosis, but I have now accepted it.

I try to focus on the positive rather than the negative. The good endorphins that you get from frequent and vigorous exercise, also keep you feeling invigorated and positive.

The Economic impact is mainly the extra costs associated with medication.

Gym memberships are a choice but often covered by medical insurance funds.

Highlights the positive impact on Mary's mental wellbeing

Foods such as fresh fruit and vegetables and lean meats and fish, can also be expensive, however, the health benefits are more important".

What was the treatment or support that was undergone? And how active

was this process?

"At first my doctor was my main support. I consulted a dietician and did lots of reading".

Do you feel as if you have overcome your adversity? If so, in what way/s?

"I feel as if I have overcome my adversity in many ways, i.e.: improved health, improved diet, improved outlook on life in general with lots of fun activities, which I couldn't/wouldn't participate in previously.

I will always have diabetes, it is not curable, but it can be managed.

I have already halved my original medication dosage, and hope to eliminate it".

Identify the organisation that was used to cope. Take account of the services they provided (and if so, continue to provide) and talk about the optimistic and undesirable aspects of these facilities.

"I mainly consulted with my doctor who provided me with advice and encouragement.

I was also supported by my husband who encouraged me throughout".

Social and cultural influences on the way the person approaches life challenges

What were the social influences on your illness/conditions?

"The main Social and Cultural changes I experienced were associated with friendships and food choices. Friendships and relationships with family members changed due to my change in lifestyle, some positive some negative".

Did the culture around you change? If so, in what way/s?

"The culture in my own home changed drastically. My Husband dropped unwanted kilos and improved his diet, via the meals I was preparing for the entire family. We limited high sugary snacks like biscuits and ice-cream, and tried to stick to healthy food choices.

My teenage children also improved their diets, with a focus on high protein, low carb diets, and daily exercise".

What could have been another method to overcome your adversity if any?

"Recognising the symptoms and losing the weight earlier would have been beneficial".

Refers to the importance of physical, mental and social health when dealing with adversity

Describes support networks that assist in overcoming this type of challenge

Clear description of how this adversity had an impact on them

Reflection:

The impact that this case study has had on me, personally, would have to be the message that shows clearly within the story itself. Life may come with its moments where you think you have come to be at the point where you can't move on from the past, although with a little encouragement, it's a very easy thing to do. Although I knew the story of this case study before hand, I didn't understand it in depth until I interviewed *Mary*. The type of adversity really got me thinking on how to make better life choices, on how to eat healthier and exercise more, daily, and *Mary* continues to be my role model throughout each day of my life.

Detailed reflection of how the Mary's adversity has impacted on their physical and mental wellbeing

As *Mary* explained, there is the Type 2 Diabetes in the family history which had been carried out from her mother and father and now down to her. As I am related to this person, it has impacted me most greatly and is leading me into the right direction to eating healthy and exercising as I don't want the genetic factor being passed down to me.

"I try to focus on the positive rather than the negative. The good endorphins that you get from frequent and vigorous exercise, also keep you feeling invigorated and positive". This statement helps me have the mind set to; doing exercise creates a better life, and makes you focus more on the positive rather than the negative in life.

Reference: (Please note these links have not been verified and may not work)

Internet sites:

ARS,2011, Type 2 diabetes, Diabetes Australia, accessed 19th February 2012,
<http://diabetesaustralia.com.au/Understanding-Diabetes/What-is-Diabetes/Type-2-Diabetes>

Fernwood, 2012, Fernwood Fitness, accessed 19th February 2012
<http://www.Fernwoodfitness.com.au>

Quick Colorado, 2012, about, The xxxx diet, accessed 19th February
<http://thexxxdiet.com/about>

Grade Commentary

Rylee demonstrates a thorough understanding of the activity. The response clearly describes how a physical condition can impact on life and present a range of adversities and challenges with Type 2 diabetes. The reflection refers to physical and mental well being, and the interrelationships between the two aspects of health. This work sample demonstrates characteristics of work typically produced by a student performing at a grade B standard.