



I was born in Gateshead in the north east of England, part of a large family; we all live **close to each other**.

I am on Enteral Nutrition, meaning that I am fed through a Percutaneous Endoscopy Gastrostomy tube (PEG), which is situated directly in my stomach through my abdominal wall.

Over a period of eleven years **I tried many 'normal' treatments** which proved to be unsuccessful. I was recovering from Anorexia Nervosa so it was decided that I would be enterally fed. It was the only way for me to regain weight to a safe level and maintain it without the need for further hospital admissions. More importantly it allowed me to try and continue with my **degree in Food and Human Nutrition**, I had a quarter of the degree left



Now I'm Living

Steve 



to complete. No one really expected this would be **the beginning of a new lease of life** for me. After three years of being on enteral nutrition my weight was actually at a healthier point, sufficient for me to go back to university and finish my undergrad degree. I went further, I went on to do post graduate studies in public health. It was at this point that something unexpected happened - I actually started to live; not something I had really done for the previous fourteen years. I always said "when malnourished I was merely alive, **now that my body is nourished I am living**".



Life on home artificial nutrition (HAN): I now work full-time and although it may not seem much to others it's something I am proud of. It's the best thing ever; I love it and it gives me enormous pride and satisfaction.



Speaking of good things, I am able to watch my **two gorgeous nieces** grow up and discover the big wide world, which gives me great pleasure. I get to be the fun uncle who spoils them rotten and lets them do all the things that my sisters won't let them do!



I am now **engaged to a great guy, Ian**. He came into my life three-and-a-half years ago and accepted me along with the extra bits. There were no questions nor any hesitations. **I never really thought I would find someone** who would put up with me and all the medical bits, but Ian says that it's never been that big of a deal for him, as when we met I took it all in my stride and never made it an issue, so why should he.



I have been asked a lot about what **the turning point** was for me and I always tell people that there were three things: My family, who have stuck by me throughout and never given up on me; my doctors and nurses who gave me the best chance at life, and finally PINNT. The latter came into my life when I was really **struggling to accept** that I would have a place in the world. In essence the doctors had given me my health back but it was PINNT who gave me my life back! I can never repay PINNT people for their support, nurturing me into the person that I am today; always being that reassuring voice of understanding and empathy when it is needed most.

My **hope for the future** is to continue to enjoy my career. I look forward to seeing where Ian and I will travel to in the future and I will continue to spoil my nieces before they grow up and find Uncle Steven an embarrassment!

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