

Supporting Carers

The Cared-for Person

Narrator: 25 years ago Linda Rounds was hit by a car. The accident left her with a fractured spine, dislocated hip and broken elbow and ankle.

Linda Rounds' Story

Linda Rounds: I thought once I had learnt to walk again that I would be fine, I'd be just like I was before and it was quite a shock when I realised that it wasn't going to be like that.

Narrator: As Linda's health has deteriorated, so the amount of help she needs has increased to make matters worse her husband Peter is also in failing health, which has meant her two children have had to step in.

Linda Rounds: So it is quite upsetting sometimes because I can't do the things that I'd really like to do. So, I'm quite unsteady on my feet so it does mean a lot of the family have got to help me quite a lot and that's upsetting in itself because I think you know the kids shouldn't have to do ... Sorry.

Narrator: The demands placed on her children have taken their toll especially on her teenage daughter, Lucy.

Lucy Rounds' Story

Lucy Rounds: I used to hold it in a lot and then I used to go into school and this teacher would tell me to do something and I'd just start stressing at the teacher or my brother would ask me something and I'd stress at him. Like I used to hold it in for so long and then at the end I used to just let it out in big bunches, just screaming, shouting and throwing things, stuff like that.

Linda Rounds: I didn't realise how bad it was actually, her day to day living was quite hard, if Peter never used to go anywhere he would never leave me, because he was frightened to leave me. So, if I needed just little things like I needed to go to the toilet, he would be here to help me. If I needed to go to the kitchen, he'd either do it for me or he would help me do it. But it was really difficult because it just, I used to end up in so much pain just getting out of the chair, I was in pain.

Discussion:

Lucy Rounds: There are some more Parent Power leaflets for the road.

Linda Rounds: Oh what for the school projects.

Narrator: Linda felt guilty about her children having to care for her and she began to feel very depressed but in June of 2009, she was visited by a social worker who turned her world around.

Linda Rounds: I had a social worker come in and she was absolutely fantastic and she told me everything that I was entitled to get that I should be able to get and it was through her helping me so much that I managed to get the direct payments because I didn't even know I was entitled to them. I'd never heard of them before. So, when she told me about direct payments it was like "Wow".

Narrator: Linda was reluctant to have help from a care work that she didn't know.

Linda Rounds: I just thought I don't want someone I don't know, helping me in the shower, to get in and out of the shower, because that's quite a personal thing to do. I mean if I'm having a really bad day and I know it's not very nice to say but just little things like I might need help to get off the toilet because I can't do it myself. You don't want someone you don't know to come in and do those things.

Narrator: Direct Payments gave Linda the opportunity to employ a personal assistant of her choice. She approached two friends Kelly and Denise to see if they were interested.

Kellyann Butcher

Kellyann Butcher: I laughed at her to start with, I thought she was joking. But then I thought about it and I thought we get on well, you know because the one thing I didn't want to happen is for anything to come between our friendship that we had and I needed to make sure I felt comfortable with Linda on a more personal basis than just a friendship basis and vice versa but yeah no I felt okay. I thought we would get on well and we have.

Narrator: Kelly works for four hours a day, she helps Linda with household tasks as well as her personal needs. For Linda, the daily visits have made a huge difference.

Discussion:

Kellyann Butcher: It's a shame you couldn't have a nice soak in the bath. I bet you think we're not getting you out.

Linda Rounds: No, you might get me in there but it would take you and three others to get me out again. I would like to keep my dignity so, no. Stick to the showers love.

Linda Rounds: You know if I'm feeling really bad I never like to talk to the kids and Peter about it because they worry about me as it is so I never wanted to admit that I was having a really bad day and you know some mornings Kelly would come round and it's just a case I could sit here for two or three hours just talking and crying and saying I feel like really, really bad I don't want to play this game no more I just want to give up on this game, it's not fair and we'd end up laughing and things would be a lot brighter by the time she left.

Narrator: Knowing that her mum is being cared for has also helped Lucy.

Lucy Rounds: I was getting so stressed out at the fact that I had to do everything and it was just too much on my shoulders and then she come in and it just helped so much.

It gave me more of a chance to settle down and do my homework and my coursework, studying for my G.C.S.Es that I've got this year. Just gave me more chance to go out with my friends like my mum was getting really upset because she just saw me in the house all the time and I never really used to go out but now I'm going out a lot more.

I think like I can go to college I can get my education properly because I don't have to worry about my mum because she's got Kelly and Denise coming.

Linda Rounds: It's made my life different, it's made the whole family's life different, it's just opened our world up you know my kids can be kids again, my husband can have his friends again and do his things without having to worry about me because I've got somebody here to help me and it makes a big, big difference, it really does.

End of Recording]