

This Girl Can Suffolk Getting Active With A Disability

RUTH CHEESLEY

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A woman with short blonde hair and glasses is sitting in a wheelchair in a paved square. She is wearing a grey cardigan over a pink and white striped dress. In the background, there is a large, ornate stone building with many windows and arches, likely a cathedral. Other people are walking around in the square.

14 years in 2 minutes!

A whistle-stop tour of how I came to be where I am today.

2008



Diagnosed with EDS two years previous, but largely asymptomatic. Playing hockey for a local team, teaching expedition and adventure training in DofE Award, and generally doing OK.

Serious health crash, signed off work for a month and unable to get back to work full time. Severe pain and crippling fatigue.



2010

2012



Health continuing to deteriorate, stuck in a constant cycle of boom and bust. Ever increasing amounts of pain medication just to function. Had to stop hockey, hill walking, just about everything I loved doing.

Started to use a wheelchair in an attempt to break the boom and bust cycle. Needed to strengthen my upper body, so a bodybuilder friend offered to coach me over Skype/YouTube videos. My first coach!

2016

Found a trainer who worked with people who had disabilities. Gradually built my confidence, fitness and strength.

Ran my first 5k and 10k, and joined the Vegan Runners running club.

2020

2022

BEST YEAR YET!

Training for my first ultra marathon at Endure24 Reading in June. Focusing on strength training to support my joints and body. Working more positively with mental states.

2014

Recovering from a minor car accident, started intensive physio with AHP Suffolk. Graduated through all the classes, into their open gym. Gave me confidence that I could train safely without flaring/injuring myself.

2018

Continued to grow in confidence. Followed My Peak Challenge and started to really get into strength and conditioning training, which seemed to have very positive impact on EDS-related problems.

THIS
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CAN

Active
Suffolk



TAKE THE FIRST STEP START WHERE YOU ARE

- * What am I capable of right now?
- * What do I want to be able to do that I can't do right now?
- * What conditions do I need to put in place for that to happen?
- * What one thing could I do today that will help me to move forward toward my goals?



FIND YOUR PEOPLE GET SUPPORT

- * Who can I be accountable to on this journey?
- * How can I modify to meet my ability?
- * Who will walk this path beside me?
- * Who else has gone before me, what can they teach me?



ALL IS MIND-MADE
**WORK WITH YOUR
MENTAL STATES**

- * How do my thoughts about my condition hold me back?
- * How do I face failure and disappointment?
- * What am I doing to bring about positivity in my life?

BE A PART OF SOMEONE ELSE'S JOURNEY

SHARE YOUR JOURNEY

- * Find your safe space / your people
- * Share and celebrate your successes
- * Also share your challenges - we all have them!

THIS GIRL CAN SUFFOLK AMBASSADOR

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What questions can I answer?

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noti.st/rcneesley for slides, recording, links and
resources.



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