

## **Laura:**

Laura works in the public sector as a client advisor. She meets people in their own environment face to face for in-depth information collection and advice provision. This is considered essential to the service as clients would be unwilling to travel to Laura's office and because the organisation believes it is crucial in order to establish a good relationship which will lead to positive ongoing interactions.

Laura has severe anxiety due to a traumatic incident in her private life and over the years she has lost confidence in her own ability to deliver excellent advice, even though she has passed assessments and examinations in order to become fully qualified in her professional area. She feels sick with anxiety going into work every day, worries about it every evening and all weekend and sleeps badly. She constantly fears her advice will be questioned and found inadequate.

Laura also finds travel to her office very stressful. She lives over an hour's drive away and affordable car parking is very difficult to get, therefore she has to leave home by 6.30am to be guaranteed a parking space. In the winter months this is particularly challenging as it means parking in the dark, with few people around, something she finds very frightening. The closest affordable car park is approximately a ten-minute walk from her office, however, there is a multi-story car park close to her office, just a two-minute walk, but parking there is too expensive for her.

After taking advice from a disability organisation she realises that she needs a number of adjustments to help her cope with work. She is very nervous about raising these matters and uses the disability organisation's advocacy service to broach the subject with her employer and as an ongoing support at subsequent meetings to discuss her adjustment requirements:

Following discussions with HR and her manager, they agree the following adjustments:

- She can work one day a week from home and transfer for four days a week to another office where parking is in the office complex. Therefore, she no longer has to leave so early, worry about finding a car parking space, or arrive in the dark and walk ten minutes in deserted streets. This is a huge relief to her.
- A colleague is aware of her diary and checks in via text before and after each client meeting to ensure she is feeling safe and secure. It is anticipated that the need for this will diminish and be phased out as her confidence increases so it will be kept under review.
- She will have a weekly debrief with her manager in the main office and she is happy to pay for the multi-story car park near the office as it is only for one meeting per week, to review how work has gone and the advice she has offered clients.
- At a six-month review she reported back that not only can she cope better with work but she has begun to enjoy it. She is feeling so much more confident due to the regular debrief meetings, which are now taking place fortnightly rather than weekly at Laura's request. The one-to-one client meetings can still be daunting but as she is no longer dreading work, she is

sleeping better and subsequently able to manage her anxiety better. If she is feeling particularly anxious she will ask a colleague to text before and after her client meetings which are in the client's own workplace, but there are many days when she does not feel the need to ask for this.

- She has begun CBT sessions which has given her insight and tools to help her cope better. She realises she will probably never be totally without anxiety but she can live with it much better than before.