

Kieran's story



I was born twenty seven years ago and my first couple of years at primary school were very difficult as I couldn't do the cutting and arty things you do at that age. Strangely enough I had good balance, although little ball control skills! At four I could ride a pedal bike without stabilisers or help and at six my dad bought me a motorbike and I became Yorkshire Grasstrack Champion at the age of 7 and repeated the feat the following year.

In 1995 when I was 8 we moved to Berkshire and I continued to ride a motorbike and take part in grasstrack racing, which continued until I was 12 years old and I was also South of England champion on three occasions. I was always quietly determined and my parents tell me that when I was young and asked for some trainers with flashing lights in the soles they said only if I could tie laces and I had learned by the end of the afternoon.

School was always a bit difficult though as I wasn't ever able to follow sequences very easily and so much of school work was a real challenge but fortunately my mum and dad had fought for me to have support in mainstream schooling rather than attend a boarding school, which we did look at when I was around 11.

I achieved GCSE passes in maths and science at 16 by which time I had discovered the gym as a way of keeping fit with my mum and I still go regularly as well as my kick boxing, mainly training, and other sports and I have run in the London 10K for the Dyspraxia Foundation for the past 10 years, achieving a personal best of under 40 minutes as well as regularly taking part in local half marathons and for the past three years I have done the 'Hell Down South' run, which is torture and fun at the same time and I enjoy the run through mud and water , even if it is always at the cold end of the year!

I was first diagnosed as dyspraxic at the age of 8 ½ by the legendary (in Berkshire) Peggy Larkin in Reading and it was the start of my life knowing that there was a reason why I could not do some things or only if I had much more time and prompting. I also took fish oil capsules for the Omega 3/6 benefits at around the same time and I found they worked for me and I developed a real sense of humour and more understanding of interaction with people.

At sixteen I went to Reading College and at 18 I started work for a supermarket and then I tried working in a pub kitchen but that was not suited to my dyspraxia and so I found myself at Morrisons Supermarket, where I have been for 7 years. I also passed my driving test at the fifth attempt, but that just shows that I was not going to let it beat me and now I enjoy driving and the freedom it gives me, I have even done a Skidpan, although I did manage to wreck a BMW radiator on a rather large cone, still fun though!

I was a member of the dyspraxia Foundation through my parents from 1996 and the Berkshire branch had a very active childrens, then teenagers and now adults section, of which I am a part and so I have grown up with many friends with dyspraxia. In my twenties I drifted away a bit but then in 2012 I went to a Young Adults group get together where I met Becky, who also has dyspraxia. The next month I arranged to meet her for lunch on Valentines Day and even refused to eat some samosas the night before to avoid curry breath!



We were married in June 2013, with a fantastic wedding day, and an unforgettable (by others!) stag night before and we live together in our own flat in Wokingham, which is near enough to both our parents' houses without us being too dependent. I still work full time at Morrisons and Becky is a nursery nurse and part time at a local hotel/restaurant.

I feel I have always had a 'Can Do' attitude and that where I can I should take the opportunities that present themselves and I was honoured and over the moon to be chosen to be one of the runners with the Olympic Torch in 2012, running my leg at Theale in Berkshire with thousands of people cheering me, it was just so amazing and so good that I could give publicity to dyspraxia. I was fortunate to be able to keep the torch as a lasting reminder and my mum managed not to be arrested for running at me whilst I ran past, although she was nearly tackled by the security that accompanied me!

