



## Already a Success

### British Columbia • March 2007

"I had lost everything. I now had no home, no job, no money, and no support. I did not know how I was going to continue." When Jason was referred to Triumph, rheumatoid arthritis had robbed him of everything he held dear.

In his late thirties, Jason had it all – a family, a house, a solid education and a career he enjoyed as a theatre technician. Then, out of the blue, he was devastated by the effects of his disease. "In the summer of 1999, my girlfriend and I bought a house in Langley. In the summer of 2000 we were married...By the spring of 2001 I developed some unexplainable pains in my body. A couple of months later, I was completely disabled by rheumatoid arthritis. I lost 25 pounds of muscle from my athletic frame and could not work. My wife had to support me and her two children."

Jason was still reeling from the drastic changes that had taken place in his life, including the dissolution of his marriage, when he first met with his Vocational Coach Margaret. He had unrealistic ideas of how to get his life back on track and was still in denial about his illness. "One of the hardest things that I faced was actually to admit that I have a disability. I tried to hide it from myself in order to work and be a provider for my family. All that accomplished was to aggravate my symptoms and to create turmoil in myself." Margaret's direct and honest approach helped Jason to reevaluate his strengths and abilities and determine an appropriate career path.

Margaret recommended a Psycho-Vocational assessment to assist Jason with identifying skills, interests and potential careers. She also suggested that Jason conduct informational interviews, which he found particularly helpful: "Not only did I find out about what career I wanted to train for, but I also felt a sense of accomplishment and achievement as I was being proactive about my future."

Jason also received support to apply for retraining funds, a process that helped him to accept himself as an able person with a disability. Today, Jason is studying to become a professional writer and says, "I have regained control of my life...I would not have considered writing as an option if I had not received the guidance and support from Triumph."

The future now looks bright for Jason: **"...I feel I am already a success. I have gone from someone with no goals, no job, no training, and no focus to someone who is now completely in control of his life. I have options, choices and a foreseeable future that is positive."**

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