



A4e's little book of success!

got a good feeling
about this

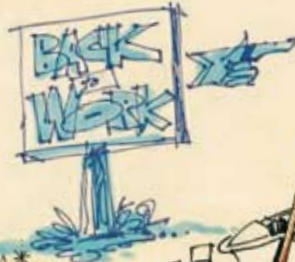
WORK



FULL-TIME
CAREER



YES!! I've got the job and
I start on Monday!



I'm loving it!

Turning the corner
Personal success stories by:
Sarah, Geoff and Aida



Sarah's story

Although Sarah had been given a clean bill of health for nine years, her criminal record was preventing her from getting into her chosen career as a carer.
Phil Mason, Learning Coach for A4e's Alongside Project, that aids female ex-offenders at risk, worked with Sarah and discovered that she could care for animals without any problems. She now has a career path and is getting funding for a distance learning Diploma in Veterinary Care.

14th May
My criminal record is always going against me. I'm feeling so down because I can't get a carers job with my record.



19th July
* Meeting Phil Mason from A4e today *

26th July
Phil is looking into some similar jobs that will not require me to tell them about my past. I can't believe there is an organisation out there that gives you such a personal service.



Tip!

15th August

Phil has got funding for me to do a distance learning course in animal care. I am so pleased that there is a caring profession where my past does not matter so much.

16th August
I love the work on this course, it is really interesting and I have just submitted my first assignment. Feel this is something I can be passionate about and get a career in.



23rd October

Absolutely loving my course. I've even got some work experience coming up. So excited about the future!!!!

Congratulations!



Gemma - My first patient!!!!



Geoff's story

Significant health problems had left 51-year-old Geoff, unable to gain employment and contributed to putting him in a large amount of debt.

When Geoff contacted Julie Cliffe, Welfare, Benefits and Debt advisor for Stoke, bailiffs were trying to take his possessions and he was being threatened with a CCG.

Julie discovered Geoff had been placed on the wrong benefits. She arranged for him to claim the assistance he deserved and organised a payment schedule Geoff could manage. She even helped Geoff claim for Motability, giving him an independence he thought he had lost for good.

24th April

Just had to give up work. The problems with my legs have just made it impossible to carry on.

15th May

Just been to the Job centre and couldn't find anything that I can do with my disability. Got my first JSA payment this morning. How do people live on this!!!



29th July

Spent the day filling out the forms for Disability Living Allowance. Surely I'm entitled to something?

15th Aug

DIDN'T GET IT!!



14th Jan

Had the worst Christmas, feeling so low. To make matters worse a bailiff called chasing cash.

28th Jan

So many red bills are coming through the door. So many people are wanting money. Just tried again to get some Disability Living allowance.

15th Feb

Got turned down AGAIN!!

13th April

Got a meeting with a lady called Julie from Advice for Stoke today. Hopefully she can help me out.

14th April

Met with BRILLIANT!!! She promised to sort out manageable repayments. She felt that I should get Disability Living Allowance and that I may have just been filling the forms in wrong. I could even be entitled to Motability!

29th April

Just been given Disability Living Allowance! It's even been backdated a year!! Can't quite believe it!



13th May

I'm cock-a-hoop! Julie has just got me a car! At last I can get around. I've got my freedom back! Just bought her a massive bunch of flowers, I couldn't thank her enough.



Aida's story



Aida grew up in a village in East Jerusalem, the only daughter of the 'Mukhtar' - the village leader. Unfortunately after a failed marriage society demanded that she returned to her father's home with her two children. To support her family she studied Hebrew and subsequently found work as a translator in the Welfare Office in Jerusalem.

She felt secure and happy but then she was made redundant. At first, Aida was sure that with her education, skills and experience she would find another job easily. However after four years of failed interviews and unemployment she was unsure of her future and had become demoralised. Her confidence and self esteem had gone.

5 April

Yet another failed interview today, how demoralising. I'm puzzled, I could not believe that my diplomas and experience counted for nothing. I've always entered interviews strong and sure of myself, but now I'm unsure.



14 May

I am very nervous about going to the Aqe-Amin Centre tomorrow, but I am determined to show them that I am strong and that I will only accept a job that matches my skills and qualifications, it took me long enough to get them. I will not let them see that I am scared. I need to get my "self" back and for this I need a job.



15 May

The caseworker is really helping me build my confidence. Tomorrow I'm starting a refresher course and a workshop to help enhance my skills, it's all very exciting!!

6 July

It took a long time and much tenacity for Osama, my Case Manager, to make me feel as if I had a chance and a purpose. Osama believes in me every step of the way, he will not let me give up.



Osama my case manager



9 October

After the last job didn't really work out for me I'm back in the Aqe-Amin programme. They are already suggesting a work placement. I hope it helps me back into work again.

3rd January

After two months I've completed my placement. Great news! I now have a job as a professional Arabic/Hebrew translator for the State Medical Commission. I am once again strong and proud to be able to support my family.



16th January

Now I love my job. I have found my true self. I am good at what I do, I find myself helping people all the time and I can't stop smiling.

A new direction
How we changed our lives by:

Jonathan, Helen,
Christa and Rebecca





Jonathan's story

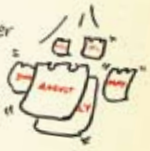
Seriously assaulted in 2008, Jonathan spent two years recovering. But an eye test revealed a disorder that would lead to total sight loss. Worse still, in 2004 Jonathan developed pneumonia and nearly died with multiple organ failure. His new disability made it harder to get a job and earn money, resulting in his family becoming homeless.

However, while doing voluntary work for the RNIB, he made an application with A4e. He moved to Abergavenny, as a Pathways Adviser at A4e.

Outside of his job, Jonathan has a highly successful amateur sports career. He joins the Great British Blind Soccer Team in Beijing to represent his country in the 2008 Paralympics.

August 23rd

I recovered from the pneumonia after intensive dialysis treatment and convalesced for seven months. It has been hard learning to walk again.



November 5th

Went back to work today but I am really struggling with it. I'm not sure I can do this.



December 19th

I lost my job today. Feel really worried about the future and how to support the family.



January 10th
Have managed to sort out incapacity benefits. I'm really worried that we can't stay where we are - must ring my parents, see if we can move in with them.



April 2nd

John told me about this place called Ate Pathways. I must go down there and talk to them. It looks like they might be able to help me.



May 16th

I met with a bloke called Peter today who really thought he would be able to help me. He didn't seem to think my disability would be a problem.

June 1st

I can't believe it, they have offered me a job as a Pathways Adviser - I'm really chuffed to bits. I start the job next week.

I know what people have to go through in order to get over their disability but there are many people and employers out there that really want to help. I didn't let my disability get the better of me. Instead, I have used it at A4e to help others.



ICING ON THE CAKE
selected to play at the paralympics this September!!!

Helen's story



Helen grew up the child of Algerian immigrants, living in the development town of Dimona in the South of Israel. Helen suffered physical, mental and sexual abuse in her childhood and after marrying into an abusive relationship found the strength to take her children and leave the situation.

Helen had worked in a bread factory previously, a role she had loved and was very spirt and having to leave when she was made redundant. However her lack of education proved a barrier and she had also struggled with debts.

After four years out of employment, Helen went to A4e and they helped her find an admin job. As she did so well, A4e then found her a position as a security guard working at their Employment Centre, which she continues to hold.

June 3

How much more bad luck can one person take, I can't even be bothered to get up and get the kids to school. It's been 4 years now since I was made redundant from the bread factory, how am I going to pay the bills? I don't think I have ever been so down, will it ever change?



September 25

I'm sick of living on social benefits and I can't seem to pay the bills - I can't live like this any longer. This is not what I want for myself or the kids.



February 8

I am really apprehensive about going to A4e-Amin. I can't believe that they will be able to find me a job when everyone else has failed. It's probably just going to be more people telling me what I should be doing and not helping me to do it...



February 9

Well it was completely different to what I expected. After everything being explained I sat with my Case Manager and everyone's enthusiasm and belief that I could change my life and turn it around was infectious - I think it can work.



March 4
I started with a Computer Course for beginners today, and I now know how to send emails. I am so pleased with myself. I even sent my first e-mail to my son. I miss him so much, I hope he comes back from India soon.



May 13

I went to A4e today and they helped me practice for the interview I've got on Friday.



May 30

I've got the job as a security guard - I feel so much more confident. A4e said they could also help provide some money so the children can go to summer camp in July and I can carry on working.

Here at work I feel appreciated every day. For the first time in my life I have been promoted, now I look forward to my life with excitement. A4e-Amin are helping me find a course as a private investigator, this will mean I can earn more money and move up the career ladder. Today I can smile, I have a future. I have a job and I love it! What a change from a year ago.



GET A JOB and my life changed!

ME AT WORK!



Christa & Rebecca's story

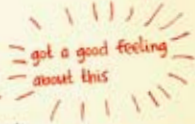
Experiences are better when they are shared - at least that is what Christa, 43, and her daughter Rebecca, 19, believe.

They were in the very first group that took A4e's pioneering Work First Family Programme, launched in Gelsenkirchen, Germany.

The programme is specially designed to help families where at least two adults and young people in the household are unemployed.

July 8th
Really excited about tomorrow, it's my chance to learn something new. I've always thought I'd never find a new job, that's just the way things are. Rebecca is looking forward to the session as well.

July 9th
It was great today. Rebecca and I both learnt so much, especially about how to prepare a job application.
A4e help make it clear and simple, taking it step by step.



July 10th
I never believed I would be able to apply for a job. But the consultants showed me a variety of job advertisements right from the very beginning, so today we just sent the companies my CV, I got all my fingers crossed for a reply.



July 11th
I hope Rebecca will be able to find work. It's difficult here in Gelsenkirchen, a lot of people are unemployed. I've always set an example and found some kind of work, even if I was just cleaning for €160 per month.



16th August
I'm over the moon! Rebecca started professional training as a physician's assistant today, working in a dermatologist's practice in Essen. She's getting up at 9.30am, but she loves it and wants to work.



24th August
Had a coffee with Rebecca today, she loves her new job so much, I think the Family Programme is a tremendous idea. Everything came together. A4e worked very closely with us both and gave Rebecca and I the skills we desperately needed. We both were able to find jobs which is fantastic! It worked!



The road to success
Journeys made by:
Anissa, Charlie + Claire





Anissa's story

Anissa was just about at her lowest ebb when she came to Pathways A4e Newport in January 2008. She had been on incapacity benefits for 22 years. She had been on a life-threatening blood condition. She had been prescribed anti-depressants and was feeling very low about her life. Anissa has two children.

At 50, Anissa had no recent work experience and little hope of finding a job, but Pathways A4e managed to show her how to turn her valuable life experience into qualities that would attract prospective employers. Anissa has become employed as a full-time carer and has even started as a voluntary worker for the NSPCC, something not one, but both of her dreams.

Wednesday 15th March

Went to the job centre today for an appointment to help get me back to work, but once again I've come away feeling deflated. I don't know what work I can do, because I've no experience. Is this what the rest of my life is going to be about? I want something better for me and my children."



Thursday 23rd March
Tomorrow is my interview at Pathways A4e (Newport), I feel like bursting into tears. Here we go, I'm sure I'm going to be put on show and made to feel a useless waste of time and a scrounger.



Friday 24th March

I GOT IT WKND!! I couldn't believe how friendly and understanding Jan and John at A4e were when I said I wanted to care for the elderly at work with animals. I can't believe someone has actually taken me SERIOUSLY!



Monday 27th March
Pathways A4e made me realise that I might not have work experience, but I had life experience as a carer for my disabled son. I feel there's finally hope for a better future.

Thursday 15th June

I am now a qualified carer. I'm so happy and proud of myself. Even my son is proud of me. He asked me if we could go on holiday next year. It felt lovely to say 'why not?' instead of 'where are we going to get the money?'



R.S.P.C.A.

Tuesday 20th June

Pathways has given me so much more confidence. I have just raised £350 for charity by doing fancy dress and now I am speaking to new clients at A4e to tell them how it has helped me and what a difference it can make. The RSPCA are really pleased with the work I have done for them and have trained me up on conducting and assessing home visits for animals to be placed in.



Charlie's story

With 11 O' Levels, 3 A' Levels and a BA in English, Charlie McVey thought it would be easy to get another job replacing his previous one for a much-needed hip replacement.

But Charlie spent four years unemployed before getting on the A4e New Deal programme. After gaining valuable skills in a number of placements an A4e member managed to get him on a three-week placement with an international car racing team! Charlie unfortunately suffered another setback when he was involved in a road traffic accident but he had impressed the team so much that as soon as he was well, he was offered a permanent position.

With Jan

It's taken three and a half years to fully recover from my hip operation and I thought I would walk straight back into a job I have now been off work for 4 years and I still can't find anything, help me out.

With Jan

The A4e meeting was great! They have not only helped me in finding a job, they really helped on a personal level too.

1st Feb

Today I started a placement to become a fork lift truck driver at Jenson's. It was so good to get out the house and focus on doing something with my life.



9th Feb

Although the placement is going really well, I don't think that they will have a place for me long term. A4e are doing a brilliant job in looking for something more permanent.



24th Feb

My A4e personal advisor's husband works in a car racing team and she's organised an interview with them for a permanent job.

YES!! I've got the job and I start on Monday!



I'm loving it!

29th Feb

I've spent the past three days in hospital, I can't believe my luck. On Monday my first day a motorcycle knocked me down. It could have been worse but I am so gutted about the job, hope I haven't lost it.

1st Mar

I received a call today from the team and they are keeping my position open for ME!!! I think I will be out of here in a couple of days and hope to be back at work by the end of the month.



I can't thank A4e enough, their support has been phenomenal!!!!

Claire's story

Claire is a lone parent and has spent 20 years raising her family. Apart from functioning as an unpaid carer, she had no recent experience of employment. Once her three older children were in further education, Claire suddenly realised she needed to start thinking about her own future. She decided she had to get a job, but she was very worried about childcare for her five year old daughter.

March 8

Sick of people asking me what I do for a living, I don't want to say I'm unemployed.

Wish I had a job.



September 8

My eldest are at university and my other daughter is starting college today. I'm so proud of them, but I feel like I'm being left behind. I haven't done any real work apart from being a mother for 20 years!!!!

September 20

Went to Job Centre Plus and got an appointment with Jean. She asked me what I was looking for and I told her 'I'm not bothered, get me anything! She recommended me to get some work experience on the Elevate Programme.



September 28

Met Allison, the Elevate tutor today! She was lovely - very nice lady, very easy to talk to and put us all at our ease! There's ten of us all single parents together!

November 15

Gosh, can't believe it. The last 6 weeks have flown by. I've learnt so much and everybody's been so supportive. Allison's even helped me sort out childcare. Tax credits pay for it so barrier gone instantly! I start my work placement today.

elevate programme



December 10

I've got a real job! Got on the bus this morning to go to work, and I thought: I'm working! I'm so proud. I just love it! I've got my 'back to work bonus,' my benefit run on and so neat to pay for the first month: that was £150. I've never seen that sort of money before!



December 25

Christmas feels like a real Christmas! I got loads of presents for the kids and even bought a new tree. Instead of having to make do with a thread bare one! We're going to celebrate properly.

I could kick myself for staying on benefits through fear. It's only the Elevate course and A4e that removed the barriers. I feel so confident in my new job. I'm somebody now. I feel part of society, not just Mrs So and So from the council estate with four kids on benefit.



Unemployed

ICING ON THE CAKE

selected to play at the paralympics this September!!!



Congratulations!



Skill = Job



tip!



debt





thanks A4e!