



# Let's Face It Support Network

Registered Charity No: 1043461

Every year there are a large number of people who suffer irrevocable damage to their faces. Today technology can save people who otherwise might have died. It can rehabilitate their looks with microsurgery and life like spare parts called prostheses. These "Miracles of Science" are patched up and launched back into the world again to carry on with their lives. It is at this point of apparent success that a whole new set of problems begin.

However the face is damaged, the pain and distress caused to the person concerned and the disturbing effect it can have upon families and friends is incalculable. The shock of not being able to communicate in the way we used to, of not being able to eat or drink, of losing the ability to express our emotions is something that none of us can prepare for, or even understand until it happens to us – or someone we love.

The resulting feeling of isolation and rejection can cause serious psychological problems, not helped by the continuing demand of treatment and the daily strain of contact with other people. With their confidence shaken they tend to shut themselves away, remaining cut off from society.

Christine Piff suffered a rare facial cancer and had to sacrifice half her face, including her left eye and surrounding area, to save her life. She wears an intra oral prosthesis in her cheek, an obturator in her mouth to form an artificial palate with artificial teeth attached to it. A prosthesis with an artificial eye which covers her exposed orbit, forming her face. Christine would have appreciated someone to share her experience with whilst she was undergoing surgery, but there was nobody there.

In January 1984, Christine took part in a television programme made for Channel 4. During that programme Christine launched Let's Face It – a Support Network for the facially disfigured to enable them to share experiences and support and help one another by passing on information and advice on ways to cope with individual problems. The response to the programme was overwhelming and the Network has now reached international stature, with the support of professionals in this field. Friends are linked via letter, telephone or e-mail/internet, through regional meetings, Annual Garden Parties where friends can meet and relax in a comfortable surrounding, especially the children in Junior Let's Face It. Four-monthly Newsletters, fundraising events, social gatherings and lots more, including an annual AGM and Luncheon. Families, friends and professionals are encouraged to participate in regular group meetings to learn to share and understand many of the problems living with a changed face can bring.

For further information please contact: Christine Piff or Julia Wallace at 72 Victoria Avenue, Westgate-on-Sea, Kent CT8 8BH Tel: 01843 833724  
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