



Jane* turned to Relate on the recommendation of her doctor. Her story shows that Relate Family counselling can help with a wide range of family relationships, even if they have been troubled for many years...

Where I started

My two sons were born during a most disastrous marriage to an appallingly violent and cruel first husband. I divorced in 1969 and became a single mum and brought up the children as best I could, having to juggle all sorts of jobs.

I remarried in 1978 and the whole family was due to move to Northamptonshire in 1979. My younger son refused to move, choosing instead to remain in London with his father. He didn't settle to his studies or in a job and started accusing us of causing his troubles by 'abandoning' him at a crucial time of his school life. I have apologised to him many times that he felt this, but from then on, he continued to blame and get angry with me, until in the last year or two before my approach to Relate we lost contact. I was heartbroken.

Seeking help

I first came to Relate on a recommendation from my GP. I was suffering from chest pains, stomach problems and breathing difficulties whenever I talked about my son and knew I needed help.

While I was very anxious about counselling, my first meeting at Relate was much easier than I ever imagined. I felt an immediate rapport with my counsellor and felt I was in safe hands.

The help I received enabled me to hear the thoughts that had been in my head for so many years and to begin to listen to myself. The feedback from counselling enabled me to reflect and I was given homework which helped too.

Jane's name and photo have been changed to protect her confidentiality.

Where I am now

The difference counselling made for me was realising that while mistakes were made (I had already admitted as much to my son years before), I had done the best I could under the circumstances, and even if my son couldn't or wouldn't move on, it was time for me to do so.

This is where I am now. I re-established contact with my son initially by texting, and eventually I felt more confident to speak with him. Now we meet regularly for Sunday lunch in London where he lives. My new approach to the relationship seems to have rubbed off on him too, as he now avoids talking about anything negative about the past. Suffice to say I am very grateful that I was directed to Relate and am very grateful to my particular counsellor.