

3: CREATING YOUR OWN SPECAL TEAM

In July 2007, following an MRI scan, the Consultant Doctor said that my wife had Alzheimer's. At first it was a fantastic relief to have a diagnosis and a medical plan, after three years of real difficulties. However, some days later my lack of knowledge about the illness, and snippets I picked up from the internet, made me seriously panicky.

Fortunately the Gloucestershire Carers Project connected me to SPECAL in Burford and I went to their introductory course which almost magically showed me their positive way forward to deal with this serious illness. I was eager to know more and attended the Follow-on course which I found very demanding and emotionally draining.

I completed the course, and then arranged for a group of fifteen interested people – members of my family, our friends and key professionals – to attend a special seminar on the Photograph Album so that they could be better informed and able to help in small but important ways.

SPECAL offers a positive and very helpful way forward for carers and families with someone with Alzheimer's. I would recommend SPECAL without any reservation.