



Step by Step

Zora went through a traumatic experience back in Pakistan where she witnessed her husband's death. All alone and not in good mental health, her daughter invited her over to England. With the shock of sudden loss of her husband, a new country and lack of social network, she fell into deep depression.

Her daughter found out about DOSTI group (friendship group run by GOAL at a local children centre) from a friend and rang GOAL to ask if she could bring her mum along, so she could meet other people.

On her first visit to the centre she was instantly comforted by DOSTI ladies. She felt so much at home that she started to share her story with other DOSTI ladies. She loved to crochet. She started to open up by sharing and learning her skill with other ladies.

She always attended the centre accompanied by her daughter who she would not let out of her sight but by week 3 she had settled into her peer group, allowing her daughter who was craving for respite and also wanted to learn, but she herself had a daughter that was very ill which meant she didn't have any time for herself.

By week 3, Zora's daughter shared her delight with volunteers, about being able to finally do computers sessions supported by GOAL whilst her mother joined the DOSTI ladies. It heart-warming to hear, "I haven't seen my mum smile / laugh for such a long time".

Technology was an alien concept to Zora and over the next 6 months, she refused to even use a phone that her family had bought for her, despite it being a very simple device. She would always say, "What am I going to do, learning these things at my age!"

Zora continued to blossom in terms of taking part in different arts & craft activities. Come rain or shine (and the bitter cold weather last December) she and her daughter would walk 45 minutes to get to the centre, bright and early, every Tuesday for the DOSTI session.

As the lockdown came into force in March, Zora started to feel anxious once more. With no access to technology, her health issues and age, put her in a vulnerable category, leaving her feeling isolated.

When she received her welfare call from GOAL as part of their R.I.S.E project, her daughter shared her concerns at her mother's mental health. Zora was selected to receive a tablet, courtesy of Good Things Foundation & BT, through project titled DevicesDotNow setup by FutureDotNow.

Zora used WhatsApp on her tablet to communicate with her extended family here and abroad. This helped to ease her isolation and gave her something to do when she felt depressed.

Recently she has tried using YouTube app to find crochet designs and has started to follow the step by step guide to make amazing new designs. Zora is extremely grateful for the tablet. She believes it has helped her to get through these difficult times, opening a window to a whole new world.

Zora used to enjoy armchair exercises during her DOSTI sessions. She is putting the tablet to good use by continuing with her exercises via YouTube. It is something she never imagined she would be doing.

Zora is looking forward to everything going back to normal one day, so she can continue with her weekly sessions. Despite catching up DOSTI group via zoom on weekly basis, she can't wait to see them all back at the centre where she can show everyone her new crochet designs.