# **Transcript – Marli Kelly: Sharing her new life**

[Marli Kelly]

Well, I noticed changes for eighteen months, and I kept hearing this voice say, go to the doctors, go to the doctors. And in the end, I swear I was at a traffic light, and it was like somebody was sitting beside me screaming, Go to the doctor. And I was like, okay, yeah. All right.

As a kid, I was always, you know, fossicking for rocks or pretty things in nature. I've had many faces like constantly evolving now, like started out at 18, went down to Melbourne to uni, wanted to change the world, did behavioural science, ended up in public relations and media. And I don't think my body particularly liked the chaotic ness.

I noticed tingling feet and it was coming up my leg and I told a friend who has some neurological stuff, and she goes, Marli, that's not normal. So, I went to my GP, and he ordered an MRI and I think this is when I grieved the most because it came back and it was lit up like fairy lights.

I don't think I've ever felt comfortable in my skin, and I've had to get comfortable, through a lot of pain, a lot of tears. And I had a million doctor’s letters to say what impacts it was that I had, and it started to progress quite quick. And then I just was like, Well, the NDIS is there for people like me because I think a lot of people don't feel you don't feel worthy. “I’d love heaps more of them because there, they fill them out, but they're lacey”, “Yeah, okay”.

I have been on the NDIS for three years and diagnosed in 2008 with progressive MS. Live in rural Victoria in Tatura and Love Life where I live. I've got ramps, I've got the bathrooms fitted out. The bed was a huge thing. The exercise physiology support, which has been huge, and then you get support coordination for everyday living.

So that's when people become my arms and legs. So, I have Steph who helps me do a whole range of stuff. So, these people become such a personal extension of you, and I get emotional about them because they're literally my little angels and they like, they give me my dignity too, which is really, really important.

“Hi, moo moos, they’re good for little wreaths”.

I've always been naturally creative, always had a project on and I just started collecting bits of stuff and putting them in jars and I thought, Oh, that looks really pretty.

And I've always dived into that creative side.

“Okay, so welcome everyone to our mini wreath party. I'm so blessed to be able to have Steph as my arms and legs to be able to do this, which just naturally evolved”.

But yeah, and it just took off. And there's something really special about bringing women together. I think this is something really primal about.

And then I just love listening to the laughter in the room. Yeah, but honestly, I was going to write to the NDIS and just say, Look, I'm a success story because you've given me back my life, I'm able to, you know, now go and do something that I didn't know I love.

I can tell you that people that have gone through stuff, they're strong they may not look like they're strong, but they've had to dig deep. Yeah. My biggest thing I'd probably want people to know is that your journey is really valid and ask questions. But, you know, just if it doesn't look like anyone else's, that doesn't matter.

So, if you had said that to me at the start, I would have said, there's no way X amount of, you know, three or four years down the track that Marli would be smiling and saying how blessed I feel. No way.

“Okay. Smiling everybody, beautiful”.