

# QUOTES IV

## ABOUT CROSS STITCHING

Since Stitchlinks began we have received some amazing emails and letters. We won't add any more comment on them. Just enjoy the experience of reading them. We hope they will inspire people to come and join us to get even more out of it!

This document and all subsequent documents on the same subject have been compiled directly from letters and emails that have been sent to us at Stitchlinks.

Names have of course been omitted to preserve anonymity.

They are not presented in any particular order because they are all inspirational.

Very significantly, we receive them from people across ALL age ranges. In fact, the mid-point of ages of our correspondents seems to be about 35 years of age.

We strongly urge you just to dip in at random.

You are not alone.

May 2007

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I still smile to myself when I think how I changed from a middle aged woman who was stressed out to a child in a sweet shop.

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What a change from the pent up person I was previously who was dependant on drink and simply didn't know how to relax!

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My tapestry and cross stitch are my life-savers at the moment and keep me sane as well as bringing me great joy - what a wonderfully therapeutic effect needlework has...I go into a little world of my own - very peaceful and contented ....and that has just got to be good.

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I become so absorbed that all else is forgotten, and my happiest and most contented time is when I am cross stitching.

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I like to make a "picture" with the stitches of the sewing, and find it occupies my mind and prevents me from worrying and being anxious when I am concentrating on the sewing.

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I joined Alcoholics Anonymous over four years ago and with the help of the Fellowship and knitting and then cross stitching I haven't had a drink since! I am not saying that stitching help me solely - but it definately gave me something to think about instead of alcohol and it also gave me pride in achieving a small piece of 'art'.

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Cross stitching helps on those continuous grey days when there is no sun and I get very down in the dumps. It helps especially when there is concern/anxiety about family for any reason. It helps me to forget the aches and pains of arthritis and headaches.

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Found an old cross stitch kit i'd started before daughter was born and found that by concentrating on this i could find some relief from pain. Started stitching to give as presents to friends and family and found it gave me back a feeling of self worth.

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I had a car accident almost ten years ago and as a result suffered a bout of depression, I cross stitched to stop my self from thinking about everything that had happened. The repetition was soothing and I felt like I was achieving something. The results were instant and only needed my approval. My husband bought me cross stitches during this time and I felt that it was his way of dealing with how I was feeling, it was an acknowledgment of the depression.

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I used sewing as a way of feeling valuable. My mind needed something but nothing which required rational thinking.

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Firstly, the concentration required to follow a design and to count stitches accurately meant that I had to focus totally on what I was working on. Who could spend time worrying when there was the possibility of making a mistake and having to start again? Secondly, I had great pleasure in working with lovely colours and fabrics - I found it soothing and relaxing and so my stress was relieved. Life is now better, but my love of stitching has continued and I am always looking for new challenges

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Stitching stopped me from going over to somewhere that I may not have returned from, I don't really understand why but the focus of each cross stitch and the repetition of each stitch back and forward across the canvas rocked and soothed my soul.



As I have got better over the past two years my stitching has become integral to my recovery. Whether I am physically tired or feeling mental strain my stitching has not once failed to improve my situation. I have tried to list below all the ways in which I feel my stitching has benefitted me:  
Confidence & Achievement - from feeling hopeless and helpless (when I physical could not do and when my self-esteem was at a low) stitching reminds me of what I can do.  
Enjoyment - the dangerous thing about illness especially mental is that you start to get used to feeling bad you forget what it's like to enjoy yourself or it just feels so far away from where you are. Stitching brings me so much enjoyment that at one point I thought I'd never feel. I keep my stitching things out in full view to remind me to do some and have some fun.  
Calm - there is something really special about the time when your hands are busy but your head isn't - for an anxious depressive still working through her therapy my stitching was a Godsend. The rest of the time you're worrying, catastrophising, mulling over every bad thing you can think of but when stitching it's as if that part is switched off. The calm feeling also lasts beyond my stitching time - it



gets rid of the nastiness that can fly round in your mind so you can just be yourself. I think anything that helps a me be the best version of me and the happiest is pretty good! Stimuli - this might sound odd and this was more obvious when I was very ill but I definitely want to mention it. I use dtdo find the colours and the textures of my stitching really enchanting it would always make me smile. When you suffer from depression the whole world - your life - is dull and upsetting when you go through therapy and the problems causing your depression are worked on you start to see the world like you never have - I became more attentive more interested since I was no longer weighed down or enslaved by problems. When I started to get better I noticed that this "colour" or "outlook" I was seeing everywhere I had seen in my stitching. Whatever it was that provided me with fresh eyes and a better perspective in therapy my stitching had also helped me gain earlier on - on a smaller scale but whilst life wasn't so good my stitching became sanctuary. Aside from prayer I have yet to find anything that has such positive effects on my mental health. I try to do some each day to provide my mind with a break.

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Stitching has helped me in many ways. It has helped with concentration and also re-focusing negative thoughts to more constructive ones. It has also helped get my world back in balance after being upside-down and rather terrifying.

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“Cross stitching helped me to focus and concentrate on something else and I stopped brooding and worrying about things. Time that had hung heavily for me before just seemed to fly by“.

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“Cross stitching gave me a sense of control – I felt I had little control over other aspects of my life. With cross stitching I could plan and choose how projects would turn out“.

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“Stitching may not solve my problems, but somehow I seem more able to tackle the problem and I suspect more efficiently and effectively too“.

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“I only wish I’d found cross stitching earlier and there were more hours in a day – it’s literally saved my life“.

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