

THE PATIENCE OF A (SAINT) DIABETES EDUCATOR

MONDAY MORNING DIABETES CLINIC

- Good morning Mrs Ball. I am Jane your diabetes educator. I spoke to you on the phone last week, please come in.
- Thank you Jane, I am really keen to get this sorted out, and please call me Trixie.

30 minutes later:

- Well that's the end of our first session Trixie. I would like you to check your blood glucose levels each day at the times we discussed and write them in your record book, and we will meet next week to see how you're going and check the results.
- Lovely, thank you Jane, you've been just wonderful. Toodles.

A WEEK LATER

(Jane greets Trixie with a confident, welcoming smile)

- Good morning Trixie, please come in, I hope you've had a good week. Let's have a look at your record book.....pause.....pause....hhmmm. Trixie, your record book is still blank. Did you manage to check your blood glucose levels?
- Well, sort of, but it's just such a bother. Sometimes I'd forget and then when I remembered, I couldn't find my meter, and then I lost the book, and then I lost the piece of paper I wrote them down on, and then when I found the piece of paper, I realised I hadn't written any dates or times next to the results. I tried, I really did.
- Trixie, it sounds like you did try hard and I realise that this is all new to you, so I have some ideas which may help. Firstly, how about starting off

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by checking your blood glucose level just once each day, the very first thing in the morning, for the next week and see how you go. And secondly, perhaps you could put the meter and your record book on your bedside table so it's handy for you when you wake up.

- Very well, I'm sure I should be able to manage that, although my bedside table is a bit cluttered – you know, lamp, teeth, glasses, books, clock, Polident, tissues, hearing aids, condoms, he he , just in case, he he, only kidding, iPad, phone, night cream, Laxettes, Serepax.....
- Well, see how you go, have a good week and I will see you next Monday. (Jane's smile now has just a hint of a grimace as she 'gently guides' Trixie out the door))

THE NEXT MONDAY

- Good morning Trixie (Jane's smile now with a touch of uncertainty as well as just a hint of a grimace....). How did you go with those blood glucose readings? May I have a look at your record book please?pause.....pause....hhmmmsigh..... Trixie, there is only one result recorded in your book. Did you find it a bit of battle getting some readings?
- Well, yes, well sort of, well actually, putting the meter on the bedside table wasn't such a good idea. You see usually when I wake up I head straight for the kitchen for that first, lovely, cuppa of the day - so I wouldn't think about testing until well after morning tea; then it fell down the back of the bedside table which meant I forgot all about it for a few more days; then I remembered that I hadn't checked and had to go looking for that blasted meter. In one way it was actually a good thing you suggested putting it on the bedside table because when I found it, it was nestled on the floor at the back of the bedside table with a favourite earring I thought I had lost, a \$20 note, some hearing aid batteries, a rather dried up scone, and some condoms, he he, only kidding. Anyway,

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there was the meter, safe and sound, just needed a bit of dusting off – cat fur gets everywhere doesn't it! And I am \$20 richer! And I have my earring back! And.....

- Trixie, sorry for interrupting, but we are running out of time and we need to get a few more regular blood glucose levels, otherwise you will have to postpone your appointment with the endocrinologist. I have another idea which may be helpful. Since you seem to look forward to your morning cuppa, do you think you get some sticky tape and stick the test strip container to your tea caddy? That way it won't fall down the back of your bedside table and you certainly won't be able to miss it. (Jane desperately tries to hide her gritted teeth)
- Oh Jane, that's a simply marvellous idea. I'll take care of that as soon as I get home. See you next week after my appointment with the endocrinologist. Toodles.

THE FOLLOWING WEEK AFTER ENDOCRINOLOGIST'S APPOINTMENT

(Jane greets Trixie with an attempt at a smile but it's actually Jane trying to ward off impending panic attack.)

- Good morning Trixie, how did you get on **this** week???
- Just take a look at my book!
- Oh Trixie, well done, a whole week of blood glucose readings. The endocrinologist was really pleased. I have an email here from her with your management plan which we will discuss today.

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30 minutes later:

- Thank you so much Jane, I think I'm finally off and running and Oh Jane, I just **have** to mention that the endocrinologist congratulated me on my consistent BGL checks! I told her about all the trouble I had getting into a routine - of course, not mentioning the dried up scone or the cat fur or the condoms he he only kidding. But when I told her about sticking the test strip container to the tea caddy, she thought the idea was **so** clever that she is going to suggest it to other clients! Before I left her office she gave me a big pat on the back and congratulated me for being **so** imaginative **and** she even gave it a name: "Trixie's testing trick". She also said I should mention it to you so you can suggest it to other clients as well. He he. Toodle.....