



Beyond the Numbers - The Price of Holding on

One of the privileges of leading The Spiers Centre is working alongside extraordinary people who bring deep empathy for the people we support, often shaped by their own life experiences.

Each month I usually write this blog myself. This month, however, we have an opportunity to do something a little different.

One of our team members recently shared a deeply personal reflection with me. When I read it, I was reminded why financial hardship can never be understood by looking at a bank balance or an overdue account alone. Behind almost every financial challenge is a human story, one that often involves grief, illness, trauma, relationship breakdown or simply life's unexpected turns.

With her permission, I wanted to share her story. I believe the message is one worth hearing.

I hope it encourages us all to look beyond the numbers and remember the person behind them.

When people think about someone falling behind on a storage unit, it's easy to imagine carelessness or poor planning.

The reality is often very different.

After losing my mum, I found myself responsible for rebuilding a life I hadn't planned to rebuild. I was grieving while trying to secure a rental home, waiting for an estate to be finalised, managing significant medical conditions, and adjusting to a completely different financial reality.

The storage unit wasn't full of forgotten possessions. It held the pieces of a life that had once been my family home.

Every box represented another decision I wasn't emotionally or physically ready to make.

Recovering from a broken ankle and finger meant lifting, sorting and moving everything wasn't something I could simply do over a weekend.

Financially, every dollar had to stretch between rent, food, petrol, medication

and the countless costs that come with starting again.

When money became tight, I didn't disappear.

I contacted the company and I explained my circumstances honestly.

I asked for time.

I accepted responsibility for what I owed.

I wasn't asking for the debt to disappear. I was asking for a solution that recognised my circumstances while allowing me to meet my basic needs.

What surprised me most wasn't the amount owing.

It was how quickly conversations became focused on deadlines instead of understanding. Daily reminders and rigid expectations can unintentionally add enormous pressure to someone who is already carrying more than most people realise.

From the outside, it may have looked like someone delaying payment.

From the inside, it felt like trying to choose between paying for storage or buying groceries, putting fuel in the car, paying rent, and keeping enough emotional strength to face another day.

Financial hardship rarely happens in isolation. We see that so often at The Spiers Centre.

It is often tangled with grief, illness, caring responsibilities, housing insecurity, relationship breakdown, or unexpected life events.

Most people don't want special treatment. They simply want to be treated as human beings.

The greatest act of customer service isn't a discount. It's much simpler and more powerful than that. It's taking the time to listen, recognising the person behind the account number, and working together toward a realistic solution.

Because behind every overdue payment may be someone doing everything they can just to keep moving forward.

Their story deserves to be seen before it is judged.

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