

# Nutrition has *changed my life*



**Amie Charraudeau is a Nutritional Therapist Graduate from CNM (College of Naturopathic Medicine)**

*Having used diet, supplements and exercise to address polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), I had a long-term interest in natural therapies, so I decided to turn my passion into a career*

which was flexible and far more interesting. Before that, I studied languages, then moved into media intelligence after working in IT.

My first GP visit for problematic menses was at 14. A PCOS diagnosis at 19 was followed by numerous visits to GPs, gynaecologists and endocrinologists. I was variously prescribed the contraceptive pill, metformin, the coil, antidepressants and many painkillers for painful periods. No nutritional or lifestyle advice was offered. I gained a lot of weight, my periods stopped, I developed acne, mood and liver problems, which worsened through poor dietary choices at university. Eventually, a gynaecologist told me after an ovarian scan that I was unlikely to ever conceive naturally.

My mum inspired me to try natural therapies. She persevered even when I told her I wasn't interested, and the GP told her not to put 'faddy diet ideas' into my head.

She took the time, bought me all the books – I remember her taking me into Waterstones to choose. It's entirely thanks to her I found the solution to my PCOS. After years of living in denial, I decided I was the only person who could make these changes and started researching the effects of diet and exercise. I didn't want to feel miserable anymore. Marilyn Glenville's books were a real turning point.

Having a lot of weight to lose, I removed all refined sugars and carbohydrates and added plenty of vegetables to my diet. I exercised at the campus gym daily. Within four months I'd lost two stone. I added herbal

supplements, became adventurous with healthy meals and began to really listen to my body. My periods returned, my skin and energy improved, the weight kept coming off and my body shape changed completely, motivating me further to manage my own health.

I've kept my weight to optimal levels, which is key to my hormonal balance. I've had three children without any issues, something I never would've imagined all those years ago when the gynaecologist told me it wouldn't be possible!

What attracted me to CNM was the flexibility of weekend study and exciting course content. Although we hardly touched on nutrition in the first year, I loved the thorough biochemistry, anatomy and physiology foundation. The 200 hours of clinical experience were fascinating and a hugely important part of moving into practice. The transformation between year one and year three in knowledge, confidence and ability was

amazing. I was in a great year group for sharing this unique experience of revisiting education later in life.

The support and friendships had an incredibly positive impact during my time at CNM and continue, even after graduating. My time at CNM has been rewarding, inspiring and fascinating and my qualification has opened up a whole new world to me. I feel part of a big community where there's so much cooperation and sharing, and so many great events, webinars

and learning opportunities, that it never feels like a chore and it benefits our clients and everyone learning from us! I have also embarked on an MSc in nutrition science.

My company, based in Guildford, Surrey Nutrition focuses on women's health. To be able to really listen to my clients, when they've so often felt unheard, to educate and support them to use the tools which helped me so profoundly, and to see the change in them is a real privilege. The sense of empowerment they



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gain reminds me of myself once I'd learnt how to manage my health. It's the reason I became a nutritional therapist.

“ I never thought it'd be possible to study again and make such a huge life change once I'd had children. The course structure at CNM allowed me back into education and the career I wish I'd always had. I qualified in the same week as having my third child! Being able to fit education and career around my family makes it all the more enjoyable. They've been on the journey with me and they're certainly benefitting from my knowledge.”

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