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NDIS participant Donny is scooting his way towards achieving his goals.

With his confidence soaring thanks in part to a new mobility scooter funded by the NDIS, the Corinda local, who has a quadriplegia level spinal cord injury, is now finding ways to do the things he loves.

Donny, who was previously apprehensive about getting out and about, is now picking up 10-year-old son Draeton from school and accessing the community or favourite spots with ease.

“I never walked anywhere, and I was sad my son was missing out,” Donny said.

“Now I can go for a walk with my son, go to the shops and to the local creek with the scooter.

“I can also go to the supermarket without having to wait for my wife to finish work, and I can pick up my son from school with my scooter.

“My scooter is the best thing that has happened to me; I’m really happy and I just can’t stop smiling.”

Donny said his beaming smile and confidence cuts a strong contrast to prolonged periods of lost hope after breaking his neck in a pool accident eight years ago.

A former storeman who loved working and being busy, the father of four said years of isolation at home had seen his mental health deteriorate.

“I was actually on my honeymoon on the Gold Coast; I was playing with my daughter in the pool, when I dived in and hit my head on the bottom,” Donny said.

“I spent months in the spinal unit and was told I may never walk again. I was scared, but really positive and threw myself fully into physiotherapy and strengthening work at the gym.

“But I got to a point where I wasn’t making any more progress and then I had a lot of ups and downs.

“I didn’t want to go out anymore and I was cranky and always just thinking the worst.

“I look back now and wonder why it was like that, but I’d been very active all my life, so it all just really got to me and I lost hope.”

After not wanting to engage with the NDIS for years in believing he didn’t need or deserve it, Donny made the decision to apply through support from his social worker.

Beginning his NDIS plan in February last year, Donny is working towards his goals of becoming happier and healthier, and is getting out in the community more by accessing a support worker who takes him to the gym, swimming and to his physiotherapist.

“Every few days I go to the gym and do weights for my legs, and afterwards I go for a swim at the pool as it helps relax my muscles in the water,” he said.

“I am always looking at anything that could help me; everything I have access to is what I need for now, but I am always asking my physio if there is any more extensive exercise.”

Donny is now engaged in social interaction through his local Men’s Shed, and not putting a cap on what he can achieve, his long-term goal would be looking at returning to work in some form.

“I have daily goals and have seen myself continue to get better as a person,” Donny said.

“I’d love to go and do one or two days’ work. It would be a lot better for my mind as I want to be busy and not have that time to dwell on things.

“I still have my good and bad days, but I get along really well with my support workers, and the NDIS has changed my life.

“It’s been really good for me and I’m really happy.”

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