



Speaking from Experience *Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)*

Transcript for chapter 11 of 11: Words of wisdom

Graham, 69: When you've overcome these problems with frustration and anger and all this sort of thing, there is light at the other side of the tunnel. You can resume a normal life. Maybe it's slower, more relaxed... but it... it is achievable if you work at it.

Julie, 58: You can manage it in a way that enables you to live life to the full. You can have a really good life living with COPD. You don't have to be consumed by the fear of the title of it – because it is, it's a... a weighty title.

Chris & Reg, 83: You've got the option of sitting in the corner and feeling sorry for yourself, or getting out there and doing something about it. And to do something about it means learning all you can about it, learning management skills. And these days there's so much there.

Colette, 45: Contact the Lung Foundation, first and foremost, because their information is accurate and it's relevant to Australian society, to Australian climatic conditions and Australian-based medications.

Ruth, 72: If you can use a computer, go straight to the computer and look up as much as you can about the disease and where to go for support groups. Inform your family. Make sure they understand. And have a good rapport with the doctor, be it a GP – and it usually is a GP...

Julie, 58: It's about understanding your disease. Understanding how it affects you, and what you can do differently to help you manage it. So, yeah, I...the...The exercise, I couldn't believe how valuable that is. And the diet and keeping your mental health, you know, on a positive frame. And having a good laugh at yourself – that helps.

Roy, 53: I know what's done is done, and it will deteriorate – slowly, I hope. If I hadn't done something about it, it would have deteriorated at a greater pace. I'm over 50. I'm on the downhill run. Now it's like going to Aspen. As long as you do a bit of swivels on the downhill run, you won't hit a tree. Now, I'm monitoring it. Monitoring it, don't smoke and exercise. Now, I do a lot more exercise than most people over 50 – about 20-25km a week, and I'm going to fit in softball, and the odd game of cards and a few beers. But, you know, I've not stopped living.

Ruth, 72: The advice that I would give to somebody, both who's just been newly diagnosed and somebody who actually has COPD, you're really looking at somebody who is a living example of having been given a fairly limited amount of time and has extended that enormously – three times the amount of time that I was given. And the fat lady hasn't sung yet. I'm not ready to go anywhere. Nobody's told me it's any good anywhere else, so I will keep trying to stay here as long as possible. And if you have a positive attitude, you understand the disease, and you try, to the best of your ability, not to be depressed about it and look at the best side of the fact that you can still converse, you can still see people even if they have to come to your home and you don't go out, breathing's pretty good. You want to



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keep doing it, I think. So if you look on the positive side of most things, you'll find that you'll have a big gain out of that. You'll live longer, and you'll live a better life just by the very factor that you'll want to be here and that you've got a positive attitude. So I'd say to someone, don't be frightened about it, fight it.