

## Speaking from Experience

### Stroke in Midlife USA

#### Transcript for Chapter 7 of 9: Support

##### **Colin & Caroline –**

I would say, I mean, Colin has definitely been my biggest supporter but we have a very, very good group of friends who really have been absolutely fantastic throughout the whole process and if Colin's not here, I've got several people I can just pick the phone up and call and as long as they're not in the middle of something that they can't stop, they'll come round and help me.

##### **Trish –**

I go to 3 support groups. Talk about issues, advice and community support.

##### **Colin & Caroline –**

Everyone's got similar ailments and everyone is looking for those clever tips & tricks to get by more easily and you always come home with clever ideas that you wouldn't have necessarily generated on your own and hopefully you impart as many if not more to the same people.

##### **Cynthia –**

I think my friendship with stroke survivors has been huge in my recovery. Huge. Because we all have this commonality of experience in recovery that even though our strokes are different and even though our recovery paths are different the connection that we make, at least from my point of view, is huge. I can't tell you...2 or 3 times a week I talk to a different person in my life who's had a stroke. I must have 2 or 3 dozen friends from this peer to peer support. And the connection... I mean, after the phone call, I feel better. I hope they feel better, I'm pretty sure they do, but ya know, we just know that we connect with each other in that way, in each other's recovery.

##### **Colin & Caroline –**

I have a fantastic general practitioner who, when I was handed off to... after the doctors at the hospital were all done with me... really took it on. And he actually is... he's not just a general practitioner; he does a little bit more than that. And I actually sometimes reckon that when I go in his waiting room I'm probably the only person under 75 in there but consequently, he used to dealing with an awful lot of problems that you probably wouldn't look at with someone who's slightly younger. And he sends me off for all sorts of tests, just to check everything's okay and insists on seeing me every 3 months and just sits down and chats with me and invariably things come up that you normally wouldn't think about just going to the doctor about just because I'm sitting chatting to him. You also have a tremendous therapist. I do have a fantastic physical therapist and that has really been amazing and I still work with him. He comes and works with me once every 2 weeks now and just checks that I'm doing things properly because it's very easy to pick up bad habits with walking and just general movement. He'll notice something I haven't noticed I'm doing and he'll say, "Okay, you need to more of this exercise or that exercise."

##### **Cynthia –**

Psychologically, if your relationship with a professional is good, you'll work harder. Ya know...put a smile there first. They're always such kind, wonderful people. If they see that you're even slightly trying, they're very happy so the positive loop is wonderful. I've met so many wonderful therapists. To go into the profession, I think they have to be very generous and giving.

##### **Carmel –**

I feel very lucky to have met those people in my life because I truly remember them and they are very special to me for what they've helped me overcome. And they also were cheerleaders to help me keep going and I did. And I still haven't stopped my therapy. I'm 11 years post-stroke now and I still go to physical therapy.

##### **Dave –**

I've always had a pretty close relationship with my family but it was more than I could have dreamed for. It was just a

wonderful thing.

**Trish –**

My dad helped me to rearrange my life. Example...you...shoot. Example, put in the rail on the stairs and helped me to find healthcare.

**Sachi –**

I think what's important to me is they are there to... like cheerleaders. Yes, there are so many cheerleaders. Not visible, but I know they are there. And I wanted to tell them that... yes, thank you for your cheers and that helps my day to day life.