



Speaking from Experience Bipolar Disorder

Transcript for chapter 9 of 9: Closing thoughts

Richard (18 years since diagnosis): I think it's very important to make sure you're doing something each week that you really enjoy doing. It doesn't have to be something that involves you doing it with other people. And I think you have got to find a couple of friends or a couple of people in your family who are willing to be there as a support network.

David and Donné (2 years since Donné's diagnosis): Join groups, look on the internet, read the books. Probably one of the best books we have is actually an Australian publication that was written by a woman with Bipolar. There's a wealth of information out there. I mean, you have to be discerning too.

Bill (6 years since diagnosis): By all means, get into a good support group, because you find friendship in a good support group. Nobody thinks down on you, and you're all trying to build each other up and you're sharing.

David and Donné: Talk to people, seek out people, who have got experience in this... people who - I'm talking about laypeople, not professionals necessarily, but certainly professionals as well.

Carole (21 years since diagnosis): Initially it is overwhelming. I would certainly say to them that there is life, and good life, after Bipolar. Bipolar disease has been known to be one of the better illnesses of mental illness.

Richard: Don't think that it's a life sentence, that's one thing that's very important. If a doctor prescribes certain medication for you, well, listen to what they're saying and don't think that it's a weakness to take it. And make sure you take it. Even if you have a high or you're on an even cure for a while, and the doctor has said, "No, I still think you should take it" - well, listen to them.

Eva (6 years since diagnosis): You have to remember that it is an illness like any other, like Epilepsy or Diabetes. It's biochemical. You're not crazy. I just think one key thing is to really trust the people around you and your doctors.

Carole: There are so many myths about mental illness that you need to get on the right track. And I think that you should take it a day at a time. Look, I have just about left this world. I live happily now in my own house. I've actually bought a house. One of my children lives with me. And I have my dog, I have beautiful park lands near me, and there's nothing else I want in life except my health.

Eva: To the carers of people with Bipolar, I think all I can say, and it's very hard, you just need to be patient. It's very hard to understand why your loved one is behaving the way that they do. But they don't mean to hurt you - it hurts them just as much. And if you can just stick by them, they need you and they can get through it with your help.