



# Speaking from Experience

## *Families & Mental Illness*

### **Transcript for chapter 1 of 4: Background**

**Kris (cares for his brother)** - I care for my brother, who's had a mental illness 20 years.

**Jo (cares for her son, Miles) and Miles** - The most recent diagnosis is bipolar disorder. He was originally diagnosed with clinical depression. In the last couple of year it's changed to depression.

**Janelle and Ian (cares for Janelle)** - Well, she's diagnosed with bipolar disorder, which is basically manic-depression. She has a lot of mood swings. What some people might cycle weekly or fortnightly, she cycles hourly. The weather could change and she could start to go down. It could be anything.

**Liz (cares for her son)** - My son is 35 now. He developed schizophrenia when he was 19 and he was diagnosed when he'd just turned 20.

**Jo and Miles** - After I had stopped the drinking and the drugging, with the help of twelve-step programmes and self-help groups, it became obvious that there was a lot of depression and anxiety there.

**Janelle and Ian** - I guess our relationship has always been part of a journey with my illness. I was diagnosed 4 days after we started dating. We had to learn together, because neither of us really understood it. So, it's been interesting.

**Liz** - I got a book out at the library. Somebody had gone through the book and it was the only book on mental illness, 'Surviving Schizophrenia', and somebody had gone through with pen and underlined all the things that were happening to my son. And I thought, well that's what my son's got. He's got schizophrenia. It was probably months later that he was given his diagnosis, at his hospitalisation. It was a great relief, because now I know what it is I can fix it. But I couldn't, But I thought I could.