



Speaking from Experience *Families & Mental Illness*

Transcript for chapter 2 of 4: What about me?

Kris (cares for his brother) - It's a balancing act, because sometimes I can be so overawed by my brother, who is mentally ill, that sometimes I feel like we're worse off than he is, in many regards. He can be so overpowering and so exhausting. You've got to be careful to look after your own mental health.

Liz (cares for her son) - Driving into the driveway, every night I would think, 'what do I have to face?' It's as if I'm always on edge for the next crisis; the next phone call; the next disaster. It's hard to let go of it. I jump and startle very easily. I think it's very common amongst carers.

Jo (cares for her son, Miles) and Miles - Carers can suffer burn out and suffer depression. They can suffer sleep deprivation.

Ian (cares for Janelle) - I would regularly do 100 hours a week. So, I can be pretty tired sometimes. That can make it harder in itself.

Kris - You have to be very careful, because you can become quite depressed by it all. Then I might have some of the symptoms that my brother has without realising it. You know, social phobias, not wanting to be with anyone, keeping myself away from society. All those kinds of things lock you into a bad place.

Ian - I don't know if I'd be at the point where I've got issues like Janelle, but I may have been a bit depressed over things.

Jo - It's extremely important to find something. Unfortunately for carers, it's very hard for them to go outside the house to find something. So, you need to use a bit of initiative to work out something you'd like to do, without leaving the house.

Ian - I do use my guitar as an outlet. That's probably my biggest stress release.

Jo - You can create a balance by pouring the emotions into a channel. Into writing, or even if you can a family member to come in once a week and go to the gym or do something like that.

Liz - The time out that I give myself is really to keep myself going and it's rejuvenating. Massage is such a huge part of that. I've got a caravan that I head off to on my own. It's so nice being there on my own, with my books and I go for walks along the beach. It's beaut.

Jo - When he went to the monastery, he really loved it there. That was a couple of days that I had the whole house to myself and I could do whatever I wanted.

Ian - When Janelle is really down, it can be quite hard on the kids. So, just getting away for those few hours, it helps a lot.



Kris - I put my life on hold to find out what it was and to find out how to help him. By the time you've actually come to terms with it and found clinicians and doctors and nurses that understand what you're going through, years have gone past. You're always trying to play catch up with your own life.

Jo - What I do is I write things down in a journal. I pour the emotions down in a journal and then I start to write some creative work around them. Then I had a book published based on what was originally just journal writing, with research. So, I suppose that's the best way that I can say I deal with it. Survive it and then write it all down.

Kris - Life goes on. You can't just drop everything and wait for the next crisis to happen, or the next episode.

Liz - It's opened up friendships that are deeper and my path has beckoned in other directions that I wouldn't have even thought of.

Kris (cares for his brother) - It's a balancing act, because sometimes I can be so overawed by my brother, who is mentally ill, that sometimes I feel like we're worse off than he is, in many regards. He can be so overpowering and so exhausting. You've got to be careful to look after your own mental health.

Liz (cares for her son) - Driving into the driveway, every night I would think, 'what do I have to face?' It's as if I'm always on edge for the next crisis; the next phone call; the next disaster. It's hard to let go of it. I jump and startle very easily. I think it's very common amongst carers.

Jo (cares for her son, Miles) and Miles - Carers can suffer burn out and suffer depression. They can suffer sleep deprivation.

Ian (cares for Janelle) - I would regularly do 100 hours a week. So, I can be pretty tired sometimes. That can make it harder in itself.

Kris - You have to be very careful, because you can become quite depressed by it all. Then I might have some of the symptoms that my brother has without realising it. You know, social phobias, not wanting to be with anyone, keeping myself away from society. All those kinds of things lock you into a bad place.

Ian - I don't know if I'd be at the point where I've got issues like Janelle, but I may have been a bit depressed over things.

Jo - It's extremely important to find something. Unfortunately for carers, it's very hard for them to go outside the house to find something. So, you need to use a bit of initiative to work out something you'd like to do, without leaving the house.

Ian - I do use my guitar as an outlet. That's probably my biggest stress release.

Jo - You can create a balance by pouring the emotions into a channel. Into writing, or even if you can a family member to come in once a week and go to the gym or do something like that.



Liz - The time out that I give myself is really to keep myself going and it's rejuvenating. Massage is such a huge part of that. I've got a caravan that I head off to on my own. It's so nice being there on my own, with my books and I go for walks along the beach. It's beaut.

Jo - When he went to the monastery, he really loved it there. That was a couple of days that I had the whole house to myself and I could do whatever I wanted.

Ian - When Janelle is really down, it can be quite hard on the kids. So, just getting away for those few hours, it helps a lot.

Kris - I put my life on hold to find out what it was and to find out how to help him. By the time you've actually come to terms with it and found clinicians and doctors and nurses that understand what you're going through, years have gone past. You're always trying to play catch up with your own life.

Jo - What I do is I write things down in a journal. I pour the emotions down in a journal and then I start to write some creative work around them. Then I had a book published based on what was originally just journal writing, with research. So, I suppose that's the best way that I can say I deal with it. Survive it and then write it all down.

Kris - Life goes on. You can't just drop everything and wait for the next crisis to happen, or the next episode.

Liz - It's opened up friendships that are deeper and my path has beckoned in other directions that i wouldn't have even thought of.

Kris (cares for his brother) - It's a balancing act, because sometimes I can be so overawed by my brother, who is mentally ill, that sometimes I feel like we're worse off than he is, in many regards. He can be so overpowering and so exhausting. You've got to be careful to look after your own mental health.

Liz (cares for her son) - Driving into the driveway, every night I would think, 'what do I have to face?' It's as if I'm always on edge for the next crisis; the next phone call; the next disaster. It's hard to let go of it. I jump and startle very easily. I think it's very common amongst carers.

Jo (cares for her son, Miles) and Miles - Carers can suffer burn out and suffer depression. They can suffer sleep deprivation.

Ian (cares for Janelle) - I would regularly do 100 hours a week. So, I can be pretty tired sometimes. That can make it harder in itself.

Kris - You have to be very careful, because you can become quite depressed by it all. Then I might have some of the symptoms that my brother has without realising it. You know, social phobias, not wanting to be with anyone, keeping myself away from society. All those kinds of things lock you into a bad place.

Ian - I don't know if I'd be at the point where I've got issues like Janelle, but I may have been a bit depressed over things.



Jo - It's extremely important to find something. Unfortunately for carers, it's very hard for them to go outside the house to find something. So, you need to use a bit of initiative to work out something you'd like to do, without leaving the house.

Ian - I do use my guitar as an outlet. That's probably my biggest stress release.

Jo - You can create a balance by pouring the emotions into a channel. Into writing, or even if you can a family member to come in once a week and go to the gym or do something like that.

Liz - The time out that I give myself is really to keep myself going and it's rejuvenating. Massage is such a huge part of that. I've got a caravan that I head off to on my own. It's so nice being there on my own, with my books and I go for walks along the beach. It's beaut.

Jo - When he went to the monastery, he really loved it there. That was a couple of days that I had the whole house to myself and I could do whatever I wanted.

Ian - When Janelle is really down, it can be quite hard on the kids. So, just getting away for those few hours, it helps a lot.

Kris - I put my life on hold to find out what it was and to find out how to help him. By the time you've actually come to terms with it and found clinicians and doctors and nurses that understand what you're going through, years have gone past. You're always trying to play catch up with your own life.

Jo - What I do is I write things down in a journal. I pour the emotions down in a journal and then I start to write some creative work around them. Then I had a book published based on what was originally just journal writing, with research. So, I suppose that's the best way that I can say I deal with it. Survive it and then write it all down.

Kris - Life goes on. You can't just drop everything and wait for the next crisis to happen, or the next episode.

Liz - It's opened up friendships that are deeper and my path has beckoned in other directions that i wouldn't have even thought of.