



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

Transcript for chapter 9 of 11: Challenges

Graham, 69: If I pull up my car in a disabled parking lot... And people look at me to say, "Nothing wrong with him. He's a big chap. Looks great. Why is he parking there?" And that is embarrassing at times.

Ruth, 72: One of the stigmas that you actually feel yourself - you don't know... but one of the things that I've found actually talking to other people who've got it, is you get a very hacking cough. Now, it doesn't matter where you are, whether you're in a restaurant or... where you are, people look at you, you know? And, I mean, quite clearly they probably think, "Oh, God. This person's... got the flu or swine flu, or... whatever." And point in fact is my son would have been with me in a lift and if I was coughing, as a joke, he'd turn to the wall and say, "Swine flu. Swine flu." And the building we were in, the next floor, you'd see them all get out of the lift. I mean, it is a terrible sound, that cough, so I'm not really... And for some people there's an indignity about that because people are looking at them and they feel very self-conscious. I did feel like that. I don't feel like that now.

Colette, 45: For me, air conditioning. Extreme cold, breathing in extreme cold. Stairs, running. But it doesn't stop me. You can't stop, you might exacerbate it. Sometimes if you go north into humidity, the change in seasons can, it's almost like an asthma attack but not. It's just a lack of oxygen.

Graham, 69: Might sound a bit funny – temperature range between 18 and 24 degrees is a comfortable situation to be in. Anything below or over that... I become breathless in the cold and it makes me cough something shocking. If it gets over 25 I become – or 24 or so – I become breathless, lethargic, and I can't do much at all.

Ruth, 72: People do ask me why I've got oxygen on. And I will say, "Because I have emphysema – FROM smoking." I don't bang the drum about smoking, but I do now, if somebody asks me, or if it's a relative of mine, or somebody that I feel... I will say to them, you know, "This is 100% caused from smoking. You really should give thought to giving it up, because nobody gets away with it."

Roy, 53: Telling people I've got emphysema, I was adopted at birth, it's a fact of life. I was adopted as birth, I had rheumatic fever at 6. Now I've got emphysema. It's a fact of life. Then they see me out there running and they say, "You're a 53, and you and the wife – that's cute." You know, you've got kids going past on the P plates, honking, and going, "We saw you mum and dad, and that's cute, they're running together," you know? So telling people that the reason I'm running is to slow down the process, I see it as a positive thing.