

## **Families & Eating Disorders**

### **Chapter 8 of 9: Words of wisdom**

**Ian:**

I think you've got to trust when the diagnosis comes that it has a lot of sinister implications but you need to reassure yourself and be reassured that your son or daughter can get better with the right treatment. It might take a short amount of time or it might take a long amount of time.

**Carol:**

Don't treat it lightly. It's very, very serious and you have to do whatever you have to do to support them and to help them get through. And it's very scary so get support for yourself and get ... it's not just about the child starting to eat. It's about you learning how to help them to eat and that's a different role to one that I have ever experienced before so you need help.

**Tracey:**

It's just a long road and you have to be there for them like as a parent you can't just say, oh well she has an eating disorder, I'll leave it to the professional. You have to be there for them.

**Veronica:**

'Cause you're the day to day one there dealing with it.

**Alex:**

There is support there. You mightn't have known about it because it's not that well known but there are other people that have been through it that could help you along the way, that will provide you with support. That you're not on your own, because you feel like you're on your own. You've suddenly found this diagnosis and wow that's, and you don't really know enough about it, about the disease. But if you know that there is support in different forms then, you know it'll take you a while for you to learn about it but there is time and there'll be people that will work with you. Even people in the same situation so you've got some peer support in that way. It does help.

**Tracey:**

You have to take time out for yourself. It's very difficult to take time out for yourself when you are dealing with an eating disorder because it's so full on. There's so much to do and you also have work commitments, family commitments, a husband and everything else. I've found that if you're not healthy, how do you expect them to be healthy? If you don't take time out for yourself to heal then how do you expect them to heal? I'm not the best at that at the moment but I'm getting better.

**Lisa:**

Look maybe seek a little bit of counselling yourself even if you don't think you need it. Possibly ...

**Malcolm:**

Very important.

**Lisa:**

...before you think, whilst it's all happening because I didn't think for one minute that I probably needed some counselling at the time of Suzanne being unwell and you are just so consumed that you don't think that you need that help and then I think that when they get better you crash.



**Rosanne:**

I think it's really important to gain as much knowledge and understanding of the eating disorder because I think I found that very helpful. So that when I'm seeing symptoms in my daughter that are so unlike her, I can understand it a little bit more because more because I've read about it. And I think that's how I've perhaps learnt to cope with my anxiety is to try and understand it a little bit more.

**Malcolm:**

My biggest fear was when they said, oh well you are going to have to go to a psychologist, - as a father I thought, you know, I've failed here. And I very reluctantly went along that day. I remember vividly thinking, you know, what can of worms are going to be opened or whatever but after sitting there five minutes I thought right, we need this, we need this as a family and we've got to find someone better. So that was one thing and I also think even if a marriage counsellor wouldn't hurt or like Lisa said, go and have a yarn to someone.

**Lisa:**

Before you think you need it maybe.

**Malcolm:**

When you are in the middle of it because, you know it mightn't be about marriage, it might just be about other issues too that might help your son or daughter come out the other end.

**Trevor:**

Most times the wheel will turn in the right direction for you if you follow the program religiously and you don't give up. You've got to be tenacious and persistent and just accept that it turns very, very slowly, that's why they put it as, this will turn slowly. You won't wake up one morning and it's over but it will turn and you know one day we got to a point where we went, we weren't even think about it, it just kept on turning and turning and turning and one day it was hey we don't have to go up to the school, have the school supervise her lunch or ... And we went to the clinic one day and they said well we don't have to see you for two weeks and then it was three weeks and then it was six weeks and all of a sudden it's just sort of behind you.