

## Speaking from Experience Living with Depression

### Transcript for Chapter 2 of 6: Impact on life

**James, 15 years since diagnosis:** I think people who don't experience depression often fall into that trap of thinking that people can just snap out of it or get over it and that's the kind of feedback they'll give them. I think once you've experienced depression, you perhaps have a different perspective on that.

**Denielle, 11 years since diagnosis:** Some people reacted just magnificently and were very supportive and very understanding. And some people just couldn't handle it, and drifted away. And some people, you know, just said to me that there's no such thing as depression.

**Barry, 4 years since diagnosis:** Depression is sort of a no-no. You don't mention that you've got it or you keep it at bay, that everything is fine. Um... people don't want to divulge their terrible fight with it.

**John, 18 months since diagnosis:** A lot of people don't understand it. There was never any explicit negative feedback that I got, though. It was often a case of, "Oh," you know, "What do you mean?" You know. "We all go through stages." Which just isn't the case.

**Denielle:** A gentleman from a regional football club actually said to me, "Oh, you just need to harden up a bit and rub some dirt on it." I thought, "Oh... is that right?" You know? "Oh, is that all I need to do? Why hadn't I thought of that before?"

**Claire, 2 years since diagnosis:** I was being told by some people that I just needed to snap out of it so that's where I really just didn't accept at all that I had an illness and I almost saw it as a choice – that if I didn't want to be here, then that's my choice and I can make that decision myself and tried to rationalize those suicidal thoughts.

**Kevin, 20 years since diagnosis, and Kris:** It took me a while to take it all in, for a start, anyway, you know. And the consequences of telling whoever I was going to tell, you know, what they were going to think of me, 'cause of the stigma of depression.

**Barry:** When I look at it now, I mean, I wasn't earning well. I was cancelling classes as a teacher. I wasn't much fun for the kids in the classroom. And, you know, I lost work writing for newspapers, 'cause I've always written for the press.

**Claire:** Look, I miss working, because it was... It did sort of, I suppose, define a bit, how I saw myself and I just feel like I'm contributing to society when I'm working. So not working is quite difficult, because I do get quite bored. Even though I'm studying, there's only so much time you can spend studying. So that is, you know, sort of a goal, to try and find a job. But at the same time, it's not...

**Claire's father:** A driving force.

**Claire:** It's not... I don't...

**Claire's father:** It's not essential at this stage.

**Claire:** I'm not going to just do it for the sake of doing it. That it's sort of about finding the right job and the right employer and things like that.

**Fiona, 17 years since diagnosis:** I think the workplace is a difficult one. I think we're... It's learning. I think it's improving within different companies. And as per all stigma related and as it gets better, it's getting better in the workplace. But I do feel that my experience has been you've got to really know which way you're going with the bosses and what you feel... or how you feel.

**James:** By and large, people were very supportive and I felt like I'd lifted a big weight off my shoulders by sharing it. Not that I needed to talk about it a lot with people, but just letting that secret out was great.