



Speaking from Experience *Type 2 Diabetes*

Transcript for chapter 3 of 8: Self management

Bruce (diagnosed 8 years) and Rosemary: This friend of mine, he looked really down in the mouth one day and I said, “What’s wrong with you?” “Oh, I’ve got that diabetes.” I said, “Well, so what?” And he said, “But it’s awful!” I said, “No, it’s not. I’ve had it for nine years.” “Oh!” [laughs] But, you know, like, he sparked up a bit but he’s still down in the dumps with it.

Bruce (diagnosed 8 years) and Rosemary: People’s perception is they get diabetes and they think they’ve been given a life sentence, where in fact, yes, they have a chronic disease but it’s a manageable condition.

Cliff (diagnosed 7 years) and Marcia: Probably the most helpful thing that I’ve found in managing diabetes is having a good medical resource. And the gentleman I go to see some four times a year, he’s been very, very helpful and practical and he’s been very caring and he’s been very thorough.

Cliff and Marcia: And you can talk to him.

Cliff and Marcia: I can talk to him and I appreciate that greatly.

Peter (diagnosed 8 years): Certainly, education is paramount to understanding diabetes and how to manage it. Just going to a doctor and getting your medication and taking some responsibility for your own body and understanding what it is you have, how you manage it, there’s just no substitution for education.

Bruce and Rosemary: People with type 2 diabetes, they’re usually... They have a diabetes educator, they’re seen by a podiatrist, they’re seen by the psychologist if they need it. They have an overview by their GP. If it’s... If either they’re having problems with it, or for some other reason, that they need to be sent to an endocrinologist, well, then, they’re then sent to the endocrinologist, so there’s a whole... Oh, and a dietician. I forgot the dietician. My goodness.

Toni (diagnosed 4 years): You need to be able to feel comfortable enough in telling them exactly what’s going on, how it’s going on, how your sugars are going, and in turn, they can then help you keep on track, keep everything monitored, making sure you’ve got no complications, making sure you’re visiting your ophthalmologist and your podiatrist and getting everything checked over – your kidneys and everything. It’s essential. Without your health care team... Well, I wouldn’t be able to function without them.

Peter: I religiously keep my appointments. I follow their guidance and direction. I ask a lot of questions ‘cause it’s my body, not theirs.

Helen (diagnosed 13 years): If you write it down beforehand and make yourself a little list well before you go, you’ll be thinking things and, “Oh, I must ask him this.” and if you jot it down and take the list with you, you usually come out of it feeling that you’ve covered everything in it and your mind’s at ease till the next time you see your doctor.



John (diagnosed 1 year): I've found that the diabetes education program at our local community assisted me immensely, especially with the qualified practitioners, to talk about diabetes, and if it wasn't for the people there, possibly I wouldn't have taken the approach I have and I'd probably be still sitting down feeling miserable with my life.

Bruce and Rosemary: If you're missing out on something, not doing something right and you go in there and they'll say, "Well, what did you do? What's this? What's that?" And they try and set you right.

John: OK, what they're saying it, "These are the symptoms." Which symptoms can I physically change? As opposed to things like age, I can't change, unfortunately, which I'd like to – hereditary and so forth. The other symptoms like improving your lifestyle, which involved diet, exercise, I can do.

Peter: I've never let diabetes take over from how I live, what I do. It's got to fit in. But being able to control my blood sugar and get that part of my life balanced has enabled me to do a lot more things than I was able to do before I had it under control.

John: With regards to my three-monthly blood tests, I've now maintained an excellent level which is 6.0, which is a standard figure and, in fact, my doctor mentioned to me if this continues over the next six months, he may look at possibly stopping the medication as long as I continue with my diet and my exercise. So I think there are some positives to be gained by doing what I've done, and not just doing it, like, on a 20% level. Just going full bore ahead and looking at my goals that I want to achieve on a daily basis and a monthly basis as well. And that reflects upon the results I'm getting with my blood tests and so that reinforces the fact that I can do it and I will continue to do it.