



## Speaking from Experience *Type 2 Diabetes*

### **Transcript for chapter 4 of 8: Healthy eating & exercise**

**Toni (diagnosed 4 years):** I'm managing my diabetes with tablets, exercise and diet, so I take my tablets daily and watch what I eat and try and get as much exercise in as I can.

**Peter (diagnosed 8 years):** Went to the gym got a much more active lifestyle. I'm now 57 next month. I bound downstairs, I don't hold the banisters anymore, I don't have my power naps.

**Toni:** I try and dance with the kids a little bit. We have the Wiggles and Hi-5 going, so I find if we're doing half an hour of that, even though it doesn't feel like exercise and sometimes I don't think it is and I forget sometimes that I'm doing it. The girls are having a ball, I'm spending time with the kids, I'm getting a bit of exercise in.

**Cliff (diagnosed 7 years) and Marcia:** I try to regiment my exercise. Well, that's a challenge. Walking is one of the better exercises, but I've actually been building a shed, so...

**Cliff and Marcia:** Up and down ladders.

**Cliff and Marcia:** Up and down ladders. That's... I find that's been good exercise.

**Bruce and Rosemary:** He's also got a lot of other health challenges which create a bit of difficulty. He can walk but not for long and... But I try to get him walking every day. We manage most days.

**John:** At the moment I'm doing 45 minutes to one hour of walking. I do my mountain bike riding in the afternoon. I have my hand weights and every Wednesday I go to the gym, break the monotony. And I've found that most beneficial, especially with my upper part – my cardio – that needs to improve, and therefore a stronger heart, stronger limbs, hopefully... Considering my age factor, I'm getting along there slowly and I'm enjoying it too and I feel better for it.

**Helen (diagnosed 13 years):** Makes you happy. [Laughs] It does. People think of exercise as, "Ohh..." You know, when we were children and used to run around like little idiots and chase each other around. You didn't think of it as exercise. You just had fun. And now you think, "Oh, structured exercise. Mmm..." [Laughs] But it's not. It's just, you know... It does make you feel better.

**Toni:** If I'm going anywhere, I try and park further away so that at least I'm trying to get in a little bit of exercise every day. I take the stairs instead of the elevator. On a weekend, I'll walk around the shops for a couple of hours. It might not be a lot, but it's two hours of walking that I probably wouldn't have had otherwise. And it's my time as well. It's time for me. I don't take the kids. They stay home with Dad, so it's a benefit all round.

**Bruce and Rosemary:** I think, really, the fact that he has changed his lifestyle and he's eating better and he's still here, that he could've easily died, and the fact that he was fit and well probably prolonged his life.



**Bernadette (diagnosed 5 years):** When I did get diabetes I made a really concerted effort to lose weight because I knew the health implications, and I did lose quite a lot of weight in the first year. Since then I've just more or less been on a plateau and I find that it's been very difficult to lose any more weight, so because my diabetes seems to be under control, I feel that you do the best you can, you don't lose hope, you keep trying, but you just keep to your sensible diet, you do your exercise to the best of your ability and you don't worry about it.

**Toni:** In 2004 I had a health scare, so I had a heart attack and I was quite overweight. I lost 30 kilos in corporation of diet and personal training. So I went to a personal trainer two night a week for 12 months which helped me lose the weight.

**Peter:** I've set myself a common weight and target and things that I can live with that manages my diabetes in a responsible fashion but doesn't become so rigid that I can't live life. So, yes, I do go to the gym, yes, I take my pills, yes I watch my diet, but around a lifestyle that I can accept. And I don't let my weight get above that. I try not to *not* go to the gym, or if I don't go for a week 'cause I'm away or I've got the flu or something or other, I still maintain that routine.

**John:** I think, for the first two weeks, I was walking around about an hour a day. And there was no change immediately, which didn't bother me at all, 'cause I knew it was gonna be a gradual process, there'd be a plateau where your weight might stay stagnant for a period of time, which I can accept.

**Cliff and Marcia:** The diet is better now, although we've always been very careful about diet, but particularly in relation to fats and sugars now, we take more note and, of course, it's monitored each day, so we know if we're doing more or less the right thing.

**John:** There have been occasions in the past where, by eating the wrong meals, I have suffered with that a few hours down the track and I do record that on my monitoring book, but at least I can read my body and understand why that occurred. So I do a little notation to explain why my level was high, as opposed to being high on a regular basis because of lack of diet or exercise.

**Helen:** Portion sizes is my problem, and portion sizes – hmm – tend to raise your sugars [Laughs]. So that's still my big hill to climb. I like to... I like my food. [Laughs]

**Bruce and Rosemary:** Eating stuff that I'm supposed to eat, that's the biggest one I've got. And, um, strangely enough, all of it's coming together now. I don't know why it's taken all this time to come together. And, um... now I sort of... just eat proper things. Even if I'm cooking, I'll eat it.

**John:** I think the main concern is not finding the time to do their physical activities to help them with their weight loss, and also they're having difficulties changing their dietary habits. So it's purely upon the person concerned if they want to do that properly. In other words, go through and look at what you're eating, writing down what foods you're eating and then talk to your dietician. Are you following the right pattern? Low-GI foods are important to have. So some sacrifices like... I love my Teddy Bear biscuits and my watermelon, which are a no-no for me. That's OK. Little sacrifices initially were a bit uncomfortable, but, hey, they're OK, you know? There's more important things I've got to look out for at the moment.



**Toni:** It's hard when you look at that, whether you haven't lost any or whether it's creeping up. Um... but with my support network I have around me, they, um... they're very annoying in that they're always on me, "Don't give up. Don't give up. You have to go out. You have to do this. You have to try and lose your weight. You have to get out there and try and do a little bit of exercise every day". So, I suppose, without them, I really would've given up and I really would've gone, "No, this is far too hard. I'll just keep on my tablets. I'll just wait for the insulin to come in and I'll be right."