



Speaking from Experience Families & Chronic Illness

Transcript for chapter 1 of 8: Introductions

Shiralee (age 22, cared for father): Well, my father was unwell. Seven years ago he had cancer. Yeah, and it really impact in my life because I was close to him - only daughter.

Simon (age 18, Shiralee's brother): Our relationship was pretty close. Being the youngest son and being so close to my dad was pretty good for me.

Jandarmarra (age 11, cared for grandmother): I, my brother and my sister live with my nan. And my uncle helps too.

Aaron (age 17, cared for grandparents): My Nan, she had half a liver and half a lung and bladder problems. And my pop had bladder problems as well, and I think half a liver from drinking. And not long ago, my pop had a stroke. That's why we had to put him in the old persons' home. At first he went to rehab, to work his left leg. It was too much for me and my mum and my whole family, so we had to put him in an old persons' home.

Lisa (age 14, cared for grandmother): She had diabetes and she had kidney failure and heart disease and potassium problems and calcium problems.

Sheridan (age 16, parents with illness): My dad's been dealing with continual heart problems, mostly because of... yeah, just mostly because of it's just how things were, really. It's just continual. It's been ever since I was five. And what actually happens is somehow stomach acid comes up around his heart and it give him heart attack. He always has high blood pressure, and he's just had it for years.

Jessica and Alister (age 17 and 18, respectively, both cared for grandfather): It was about...

Jessica and Alister: ...two years ago, he found out that he had cancer.

Jessica and Alister: But he didn't really tell no one. And after, he just told us.

Jessica and Alister: That was at the late stage of the cancer. So, we all didn't know, he kind of knew.

Jessica and Alister: He's turned Christian too. So he believed in God. And he always used to read the Bible and that, before he'd go to bed, and pray.

Tianna (age 14, cared for grandmother): My nan's got kidney failure and my mum has got chronic asthma, or something.

Simon: I don't really know much about it but, she's got, I think, Diabetes Type 2. She has to do insulin, and that.

Jandarmarra: I know that she's sick and all that, but I don't know, because she only says it's heart problems.

Tianna: Sometimes she's, like, when it's really hot, she gets really cold because her kidneys have failed and the weather's different for her. And sometimes she forgets a lot of stuff and she forgets her pin numbers for her bank.

Jessica and Alister: He was like a dad to us... he would've done anything. He took us to school, helped us with our homework. He was like a father.

Jessica and Alister: Yeah, we grew up with him. We've been with him all of our lives, so we were really close to him.

Jessica and Alister: He didn't show us anything. He was stronger, I reckon, than us.



Jessica and Alister: Yeah, he never looked like he was sick too.

Jessica and Alister: So it all came at a late stage when he got sick and you could see it.

Jessica and Alister: He was getting a bit skinnier and that.

Jessica and Alister: That's when it probably hit everyone most. And when he went to the hospital he didn't like staying in the hospital. He'd want to come home.

Jessica and Alister: And plus, he had diabetes.

Jessica and Alister: Yeah.

Jessica and Alister: And arthritis. But he never even showed none of that. He was out the back. Still mucking around out the back, cleaning the back up. Doing everything; still driving the car and that.

Jessica and Alister: He didn't show us that he was sick so we didn't... We knew. We didn't know how to deal with it until he showed he was sicker.