



Speaking from Experience

Bowel Cancer

Transcript for chapter 8 of 10: Relationships

Dennis - I've got two boys. They were in their late teens at the time. And I don't think... well, they knew dad was sick and they probably knew what I had, but I think at their age I didn't understand the consequences or the life threatening aspects of it. They don't even mention it these days. It was just another blimp in dad's life.

Les - I tried to tell Molly everything that I knew. And some of the things I didn't know, I couldn't comprehend. So there is a mystique with something of that nature, which is life threatening.

Dennis - Because of bowel cancer being in the family, I said, "By the time you're at least thirty, not much later, you should voluntarily go and get a colostomy, just to check for polyps or things in the bowel." Because I believe they're the things... that can manifest from there and grow.

John and Joy - My youngest son, when my eldest daughter told his wife, she said, "How am I going to tell Russell?" And Annette said, "Well, you've got to Ros, because I can't." And I believe he was very devastated. But once they saw that I was positive, they were fine. I must say, the first five days when I wasn't so good, they were devastated.

Les - I also had to console my youngest child. Bronwyn was of eighteen years of age. She just couldn't cope.

Caroline - The only people that I had directly told were the ones that had known about my pain and my discomfort. I said, "This is the diagnosis." And my parents and my brother I had to tell. And then I allowed some close friends to make calls to some other people that I thought would like to know.

Peter - The wife and I, we sort of sat in. And as I said before, we never went to restaurants because of 'Paul' going burp, and we never went to cinemas. And we never did things, even going to mass on a Sunday morning.

John and Joy - I was pretty upset, but the fact of the matter is that you can only go so far down. And that's where I went - straight to rock bottom. And from there on, it was... well, I came up, you know. And I started to look on the positive side of things, and tried to reassure myself that things weren't as bad as all that.

Debra - In the hospital situation when I first had the colostomy formed, he was talking to some of the nurses and says, "Well, you know, I must go out and find a pair of shoes to go with Deb's bag." And I thought, "Oh, that's really nice." So his sense of humour has really helped, and it really did bring us closer to together. It made us focus, I suppose, on our relationship, because the thought of perhaps me losing my life, makes you focus pretty clearly on the future.



Paul - Nicky is probably also at the stage in her life where she's looking at values in life and she probably thought that our relationship was the most important thing for both of us. What we did in the work activity, we should... if we can do it together in the farm environment, then that would be ideal. And that's what we've been able to do.

Les - It certainly does help to have a partner, who is not so much understanding, but a real good buddy as well.