

## Speaking from Experience Living with Osteoporosis USA

### Transcript for Chapter 4 of 6: Support

#### **Shelley –**

In terms of support from...in my day to day life...as I said my family members are really key and I can always say whatever I need to say to them. But what's even important... I would say as important but in a different way is peer support which I finally do have. And I've got a really good buddy who...she and I have connected through our health club and we're very similar in a lot of ways. We have some differences but our journey is very similar. And so we are a constant source of support for each other because sometimes the details and the amount of depth that we want to go in with each other... I don't want to do it with my family per se, because I don't want to a) worry them or ya know, involve them to that degree. I feel like sometimes they're saturated. So it's important to not just depend on your family but to make sure you have a good support group. So I've got a couple of buddies that have a bone journey like me.

#### **Alan –**

My family and friends have been quite wonderful. My wife's been great. She encourages me. I call her my nurse. In fact, I gave her some stars and stripes because she gets me to walk a little farther, encourages me to do a little more. But she's very supportive. My family's been great, my kids...my three sons have been very good. When she goes away, they come and stay with me. And they too are generally supportive and encouraging. My friends come to visit me when I can't get out. So I'm very fortunate, I have a really great network of support.

#### **Don –**

Well, my wife makes sure I take my pills. She's absolutely... is very interested in that.

#### **Phyllis & Bob –**

Well, when she's tired or has a back ache, well I'll take over. I like to cook too, so we share those duties. And anything else that has to be done, if there's something to do I'll just get up and do it.

#### **Don –**

My doctor has been my doctor for about 15 years. He knows all about what's happened to me. He was the one who diagnosed me with osteoporosis. So he's been following very carefully, my progress.

#### **Alan –**

I think it's important to have your doctors all working together. I'm lucky because 3 of the 4 doctors I work with are at the same hospital, and the 4<sup>th</sup> has access to it. And now with new electronic records, everything gets posted on what's called "My Chart" and so everybody has access to everything and that's a huge help. But in the early days before that, it was...I sort of had to manage it a little bit more but now it's much better with the internet and the common material.

#### **Don –**

The main thing to remember is that it's your body, it's your health. Come with a list of questions. Don't come empty-handed, because the doctor can't read your mind. And especially if they're busy, you have to get them to slow down and answer all your questions. And I think that's a very important thing to do. My wife and I...when either of us go to the doctor, the other person says well now don't forget to ask for this and don't forget to ask for that. That's really crucial.

#### **Marti –**

He was a wonderful support system. And he also gave me a diet. He said let's take a look at what you're eating, what you're not eating, what you're drinking, what you're not drinking, what your exercises are. And so we went through a whole kind of litany of things that I needed to take a serious look at and possibly change. Ya know, for my lifestyle.

**Shelley –**

My first doctor that I went to before we moved who... after I was diagnosed...he was the one that put me in touch with the organization so I became involved with that and as I learned more about the disease and things that...I thought I knew most of it and realized how much I didn't know...that empowered me as well to have some more hope and to feel like I had connections and support for that.

**Don –**

Just knowing that there's an organization...if I have any questions I can ask people. Or not only that, but because I know a lot about it now, I can tell people what to do if they have that situation. I can...and that's been really great for me.

**Alan –**

When I was first diagnosed, I was desperate looking for help and it just wasn't available so now I have a practice where I coach people who have osteoporosis...particularly if they're newly diagnosed and they're... it's a whole new world and you don't know what to do... how to live in it. And so I really help people...try to help people to work that out through their own planning. Again... I mentioned food, nutrition, exercise, explaining to your family what your needs are and just sort of managing a new kind of life. And I... that keeps me going, that's important to me that I do that.