



Diabetes UK – Coping with the emotional impact of diabetes.

John's Story

The word is relentless because that's how it feels. My first response was to be one of frustration; resentment; I didn't want to be diabetic; frustrated that my body wasn't going to do what I wanted it to do and it meant changing my lifestyle which at the time I really wasn't prepared to.

My wife and I and my daughter were up in Ripon and I remember waking up on the Friday morning and being very very breathless and they rushed an ambulance to me. And I remember sitting on the side of the bed waiting for the ambulance to come and hearing the ambulance coming in the distance as it was racing towards me, looking into the eyes of my wife and daughter and thinking I'm not ready to die. This is the result of my non-engagement. I'd become increasingly unwell and I vowed then if I got through it, then I would start to make some changes to the way I lived. I would start to take this seriously.

John's Wife

It made me angry, cross, resentful, guilty and all the rest of it. His lifestyle has changed dramatically. He's now got more energy he's lost nearly 5 stone in weight. He's taken it seriously which has enormous benefits to me in the family to watch him and delight in the lifestyle that he's making for himself. Choosing for himself. When the ambulance came for him his blood sugars were 39, this morning it was six point naught so he's doing very well and we have a new phase and a new life. I'm a big fan of him.

John

I'm also now involved with Diabetes Cymru as a volunteer and so I take every opportunity to talk to other people. I can't talk about something I'm not living so I can't talk to other people with Type 2 diabetes and say this is what you need to be thinking about and go home and stuff my face and not think about my diabetes. And it's helpful, it's just reassuring to come home and say well I'm not the only one that feels like throwing their meter across the room. I'm not the only one who feels resentful that I've got this condition.

Having someone to talk to who could actually own the fact that it's a struggle and own the fact that it's an emotional response as well may have helped me own it myself then and talk about it. I'm just not a thing, a machine, I'm a human being with all the emotions attached to it and so I can.

John's Wife

Education is a big part of managing your diabetes or any chronic condition.



John

My doctor's practice is wonderful but I don't think they had the time in their 10 minutes appointment time to be able to sit down with me and say 'ok John I've just told you that you are type 2 diabetes, what does that mean for you? How do you feel about it?'. It was very much based on we'll take the tablets, lose weight but the underlying psychological message I don't think was recognized or they had time to do it but it was that that really made a difference to my ability to manage my Type 2 diabetes.

