

Participant case study: Kim

I have officially been supporting my wife for the past seven years, but I know I've been a carer for a lot longer than that. It was a major concern that there was something wrong, but you can't always put a name to it straight away.

There are still ups and downs and still worrying times. I don't think this is a situation where you can say it's sorted, because it changes all the time. You have to adapt to the mood swings, and as she gets better or gets sick you have to adapt to that too.

One of the things I've always had in my mind and I said from the start, "I'm not going anywhere". And I keep saying to my wife "our relationship will not end and I will not be leaving". It's what she needs to know because sometimes she doesn't know what is going to happen next and she needs to know I'm there to back her up. I hope that makes it a little easier for her.

Attending the *Partners in Depression* group made a huge difference. Knowing you aren't alone and connecting with people who can say "I know you're having the same problem as I'm having. It can be dealt with". It halves the worry and breaks it down.

Initially it can be very difficult to go into a group. Sometimes it's easier to talk one on one but you have to have someone you can talk with. I was down at a local club with my brother, who went to the *Partners in Depression* group before I did, and we were talking about things. This young bloke behind us came up and said "I know exactly what you're talking about. I've been through it", but he had no one to talk to.

I'm very open, but now my wife and I have more to talk about. Since the group we both have more information. The more information you've got, the more you can talk about it, and the more things come out - stuff that would never have come out in the first place.

I do get low sometimes, but that comes from years ago. I know have to deal with it, and relax. I'm 60 now. I'm going to make the most of all my years left with my wife.



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