

DEPRESSION INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

A: "Ok, so, got to preface a little bit."

J: "Ok"

A: "So you have the option to withdraw from this interview at any time. You just need to say. Eh, so in terms of you responding, I'll nod but I won't go "m'hm" and I won't say anything."

J: "Ok"

A: "Eh, we're going to leave a few seconds between my question and your answer, and your answer and my next question. Helps with cutting things up."

J: "Yup"

A: "And, if you could try and repeat the question or include some of its wording in your answer, so, yeah. Let's start off with. **Can you tell me your name and a bit about yourself?**"

J: "My name is Jim Tarvet, i'm 57 years old, i'm a PE teacher at Madras College and I really enjoy the sport of cycling and reading is also another one of my hobbies."

A: "Ok, so, how would you like others to see you?"

J: "How others see me?"

A: "M'hm"

J: "Em, I, well, the thing I would always focus on is fairness. I would like people to think that i'm a fair person, that I consider other people as equal as myself, and I'd like them to think that I was a decent bloke, haha, I would hope."

A: "Cool. Can you tell me a bit about your family?"

J: "My family. My family. I have 3 boys, and a lovely wife. So I am married to Sylvia. 3 boys; I have Ruairidh, Sandy and Arran. Em. Good."

A: "Can you tell me about your favourite walk alone. Or a moment during one when you felt totally carefree?"

J: "I have lots of favourite walks alone. Em, one of my other hobbies that I didn't mention at the start is a, a hillwalker. And my escapism was from family and stress and job was to go and walk alone. So I have many memories of individual walks up various mountains. Em, and I wouldn't rate one as being the most favourite other than other ones. Locally, we've got nice little walks around Gauldry, but eh, yeah."

A: "So there wasn't one particular mountain that you climbed, that, you know, or one particular moment at the top of a mountain where you felt was a special one to you?"

J: "Not on one particular, because almost every time I climb a mountain it's special. Em, I can, I look back, em, in some terrific, amazing moments like seeing the sunrise on Ben Lui when I walked up and slept on the hill, which always sticks me, and that's like 30-odd years ago. But, my time on Rum, fantastic. Five days on my own and no-one in sight, in a bothy, but, nope. I've got loads of memories, i've done hundreds of hills, but I can't attach one with a particular feeling of elation or peace and tranquility, em, sorry."

A: "That's ok. So, moving a little closer to home, can you recall a walk across the Tay Bridge that was your favourite?"

J: "A walk across the Tay Bridge... Em. Not necessarily. Walking across the Tay Bridge to me is a noisy experience 'cause the cars go flying past. Em, but walking across the Tay Bridge with the family when you guys were young, going across to get a cup/ (couple) of hot chocolate, em, in the bookshop; Waterstones. Eh, I remember that. And that was, ah, it was a nice day, it was a nice walk, and we would we go across the bridge and point out all the various bits and pieces and, then when you were getting tired I would have to try and carry one of you or not, or, cajole you along."

A: "Ok, eh, can you tell me about a time when you went for a walk or cycle to clear your head?"

J: "Yeah, em, I remember in Kingsbarns when, the boys, you boys were very young and it was always difficult with the work. I was very stressed at work. And to try and get you guys down to sleep: Bath, down sleep, tea, tidy up. Em, and then I would go out on my bike or go for a run, which i don't do much now, but, just to, but I can remember one in particular just thinking: "Ah i've done it, I've got all these things, I can get some me time, and get out on my bike. And it was a lovely night, going up and down the hill and, and having that little bit of, em, escapism. Because I didn't want to escape you but, eh, I am a guy who did a lot of things on his own and, em, and I think when you're giving time to other people with your job, you sometimes need a wee bit of time to yourself without being too selfish. Em, but i do remember that, and I also do remember once, a run, and actually being on the beach at Kingsbarns, and thinking, because I was away from you'se all and I was having me time, then I reflected on what a fucking great life I had, this is brilliant, I love my family and this is great that I can do this, so, yeah these are, that, that time at Kingsbarns I remember really well."

A: "So, in terms of that time at Kingsbarns, eh, how did you feel at the start of that run compared to how you felt at the end of it?"

J: "The start was eh, yeah, oh god, quick, shorts, get my shoes, get out the door aaaaaah. And it, it was just a feeling of oh, yeah, god i've only got 40 minutes i've got to do this in. But as soon as I got out there and into my stride, which, i'm not a great runner, but into

my stride, I could, the head would clear, and then you can just enjoy the experience. So you hear the birds, you listen to the sea crashing and, yeah you feel tactile, the sand, em, and the experience of being, doing that sort of thing. So I could enjoy the surroundings, so, but yeah, at the start, aaaaah, panic, rush rush rush, because it was about timetabling, and at the end, yeah more relaxed, i could come home and get on with the rest of it.

A: "Ok, so, now we're going to move into more the depression side of things.

J: "M'hm"

A: "So, before you were diagnosed, can you tell me what you knew about depression?"

J: "Yeah, em, I didn't know an awful lot. I didn't know anyone who was depressed, em, I didn't know much about it because it happened to other people. It certainly wasn't going to happen to me, because i'm a busy, upfront guy who, you know, could see it, and almost think it's, it would be a bit of a weakness. And that was my perception of it. That I thought people, it's not an excuse but I didn't understand because I had no experience of it. So, you'd hear about people with it but you'd never know one to one. You'd never meet people and say I can discuss that with you or, tell me what you're going through, what is this? I just knew, to me it was you just had moods: Up or Down. I certainly didn't think it would happen to me."

A: "Did you know anyone suffering from depression at the time?"

J: "At the time I didn't, but I now know there's other people that have been suffering who, classic, male, Scottish, keep it to yourself... didn't talk about it. So, em, I, I knew people who were eh, em, a bit down at times and not as, when I was young, not as, eh, involved and engaged with things, but I'd never put it down to depression. Whereas now I would see that as, as depression. But um, I was, I, I'm quite shocked in a way to know my dad suffered a bit from depression. I'm not shocked, but yeah I'm shocked because again, I didn't expect him to have depression, so, em, but unfortunately we don't talk about it, so, no idea what it was, what the trigger was, or what the episodes were. And I think that's the thing with depression, you don't know how clinically depressed people are, how deep it is until you're in there. Yeah."

A: "So, do you think your perception and understanding of depression was skewed by social stigma."

J: "Definitely social stigma, it was, it was a weakness if you had depression. And you're already off work, or you were not engaging as I was saying then there was something wrong with you. It was the classic, come on, give yourself a shake, get on with it, em, certainly, em, well, I didn't know much about it in the seventies and the eighties, and it was only until the nineties, that uh, no sorry, the two-thousands that it came to me. Em, but yeah, I think, older generation parents don't talk about it, me, not wanting to talk about these things when i'm feeling down, not understanding it. Um, made it

quite difficult to accept it, but yeah, social stigma and also social status about how people perceive you and not wanting to be seen as weak. So yeah."

A: "So, do you feel it is more difficult for men to be open about mental health. If so, why?"

J: "Um, for men and mental health, I think it's cultural that old, older men, it is hard to do it, because you're just not used to opening up in general. Although I think I do open up as a person, but I still didn't initially. I think the younger men now are more comfortable discussing these things and would, would come out and discuss mental health issues. But it's obviously don't, because statistics of suicides and people in mental health institutions. Um, and I find that strange. I think we should really, you know, I deal with young pupils all the time and they do come out with incredible insights into the modern world, but maybe they still just don't want to talk about what could be lurking behind them.

A: "So, is there anything that you think can be done to combat this issue?"

J: "Well things are being done to combat this issue, there's things that you see when either footballers or pop-stars, rock-stars, people they look up to have admitted to mental health. There's a few in the media who are saying it's ok to talk, there's been a few campaigns to encourage people to talk. And I think that, that is the thing is when people see it as it can happen to anyone and it doesn't matter how successful they are. To me it's, I related to Stephen Fry, who's the most brilliant man I know, the most cleverest person ever. Yet, he suffers with depression, or he suffered. And eh, to me that's phenomenal, everybody looks up to them and says "They're great" and "I wish I was them", but they're saying "I wish I wasn't me, because I can't cope with this" and I think that's really good that these people are talking out, and then people can then get the confidence and say "Well, if it happened to them then why, that's why it can happen to me."

A: "So, can you tell me about when you first realised something was wrong?"

J: "Um, I, I was under eh, it was uh, I only realised something was wrong when I was driving back from the school crying. And I knew this wasn't right, and it was uh, it was a build-up of stress and work and expectations at work and me trying my best to do all the work. And then finding that uh, I couldn't do it. Em, I wasn't alone, other people were struggling with it, but I just thought "I can't do this, I can't do this, Why? What's wrong with me? Why can't I do it? I'm a failure.". Em, and I didn't know at the time, it's taken me a long time to realise that I wasn't a failure, I just couldn't cope with the amount of work that they were giving me. Em, but, I went home and I was crying in the car, which, eh, because it was hopeless. And I knew I was stressed, I didn't know I was, eh, depressed, and I think it just got worse after that point. Um, there was no stopping it. Once it started, the feelings of negativity about not being good enough, em, I couldn't stop it.

A: "So, what types of symptoms were you experiencing, other than obviously feelings of overwhelmed?"

J: "Yeah, yeah overwhelmed, yeah I felt overwhelmed. I felt, uh, as it progressed, I felt tired-er and tired-er. I felt anxious, so anxious that I was burning, I was, my heart was beating really fast. I couldn't sleep, I got tired-er and tired-er because I couldn't sleep, because I was worrying. And it was worry, worry, I've let my family down, uh, everyone's going to suffer because i'm not good. Everybody who relied on me, it was a false reliance, I was a fake, um, therefore I worried even more about what financial disaster i'd put on my family. Um, so anxiety, nervous energy burning off, lack of sleep, yup."

A: "So, how did you find that these, uh, feelings and symptoms were affecting how you felt about cycling, meeting with friends, eating, work, you know, how did they impact your day-to-day life?"

J: "Yeah, the whole, the whole symptom, the whole thing made me feel that I was worthless. So I didn't want to meet anyone. I didn't want to speak to anyone. I, I was so worthless there was no point in, I shouldn't be indulging in my hobbies, which I love, my cycling and my books, I couldn't do that. I couldn't, I couldn't see, and now I can, that these were the sort of things I should have kept doing. I should have kept in contact, I should have gone out on my bike, I should have gone to the cinema, I should have done this. I just had to hide because I was an embarrassment, because I was a worthless human being. Um, and, all the things that laterally I know is how you deal with it, I couldn't. But then when I did get better, and then a year or so later it happened again, I was aware of what I should do. But I couldn't stop it. Um, and when it happened again, I wasn't aware of it, and I couldn't stop it. It is shocking that I couldn't, I could understand, no, I could under, yeah, I knew what it was, I couldn understand, but I couldn't do anything about it, because the negativity was telling me "You're not worth it."."

A: "So, were there any factors at work, home or otherwise that made the situation worse?"

J: "Yeah, I, I felt the situation was, was made worse by, at work, the "Oh my god, i'm not there, i'm not doing my job, all these children are suffering because of me. I had an over-inflated sense of importance about my job, how important it was for me. Absolutely nothing in my family made it worse, in fact it was the only thing that kept me going. It kept, it was, Sylvia my wife was just, just the best ever. And it was eh, my family just carried on normally and accepted where I was. So, nothing in my family made it worse, eh, and nothing in my extended family made it worse. It was just the work. It was all work."

A: "So, who did you first talk to about your symptoms?"

J: "Well fortunately, Sylvia has background in psychology and she knew, um, things about it which was, helped me try to understand it, but being so close, it needed a third-party. But obviously when I, when I first became ill I, uh, I went to the doctor, and the doctor, um, was good but you have a limited amount of time and, um, very

quickly put me on the, antidepressant, and tried to get me things to calm me down. And then referred me to a, a psephologist, who was superb, and an amazing person. So, the doctor referred but I think I was lucky because I was seen within a few weeks, which at the time felt like years. But when I hear the stories about months I don't know how that's supposed to help people because you need it now.

A: "So, what was it like sharing your thoughts and feelings with someone else, like opening up for the first time to them, how did that make you feel?"

J: "Yeah, opening up to someone without the family, and friends and work, was quite refreshing because they had a clear view of what is important in life and what is, what you should be dealing with. Um, Sheila was fantastic, she uh, she understood because the way she responded to what I would tell her and how she got me to think in a different way about it, um, it was a very, very enlightening, she was absolutely marvelous. Um, I tried to get help privately and it, it was a different situation and it didn't work for me, and uh, I think that's the whole point, is when you get therapy you have to believe and understand in the, in the person that's working with you. So Sheila Barratt I owe a lot to, a lot.

A: "So, do you feel that you talked to someone about your problems at the right time?"

J: "Em, i talked to them at the right time to deal with it, but I should have been talking to someone before hand to stop it happening in the first place. Em, which I tried to do on my third episode, but, it just took over. Em, so, yeah, I wish I had spoken to someone earlier on about these feelings. Which I did in some ways at work and it was a case of "Oh well we're all busy, everybody's got this, everybody's got that." OK, that makes me feel great. Em, and there was nobody, you know, it is going back to the "Oh yeah, you've got to be strong, get on with your job and do this you're a promoted member of staff. You should be doing this. Should be, should be, could be". Terrible scenario. So, yeah, I would have befitted from being able to open up to it, em, and being able to talk like I am just now. When I talk to people about work and , and say to them like, look, keep it in perspective.

A: "So, eh, do you think things may have gone differently if you opened up any sooner or later? How do you think either scenario would have gone?"

J: "Yeah, if, huh, I'd like to think if I had opened up earlier and let people know how I was feeling either at work or, at, at home I was, it's like moaning, but at work to let them know that, this, these pressures were on me. But, I doubt if they would have listened, I think there was "We were this, we were, we're all busy, everyone's doing it" It just didn't feel as if it was appropriate, there was nobody I could go and speak to. Em, em, if i'd done it later then I don't know what would have happened, 'cause suicidal thoughts were definitely there. Eh, well, em, it consumed me. Finding a way to kill myself that nobody would get hurt with, huh, I, if I, I didn't want to jump in front of a train in case of the train driver had to suffer

shock. I didn't want to hang myself in the forest because some kid might find you. But I didn't want to kill myself. But I did. Em, and that was not a drama thing, it wasn't "Oh attention, oh I want to kill myself", it was "I'm a useless piece of shit, and I'm no good to anyone, everyone would be better off without me.". Which didn't make sense, now when i say it. It doesn't make sense but I was so desperate, I was so down, I could understand why people would do it. And I was so numb that I could feel that people of my position then would, I could see how they could do it, but fortunately I knew, I knew I couldn't because of my family. There's no way. Even though I was suffering and I was hating it, and I was absolutely hating myself. I would have never done that to my family. And it was a lot of talking from Sylvia and from people saying "No, no you can't do this, it's not, it's not fair and it'll pass". And it was a phrase my mum used to say, this "bad time, this too will pass". It kindof stuck in my head. Even though I didn't believe it. Em, and now I can sit back and say "Well yeah, but at the time no, I, If i hadn't got help. I don't know. If it hadn't been for Sylvia. If it hadn't been for the love of my kids over the hate of myself, something might have happened."

A: "Can you tell me a bit about your diagnosis journey?"

J: "How I was diagnosed... I was diagnosed, it was pretty quick. When I went to the doctors, the first time, he knew I was under pressure, so I was off for stress and anxiety. Which is classic apparently for people who are overworked, stress and anxiety. And I just needed a few weeks off just to slow down, get a grip, and then the stress would relieve. But, because I was off, and because I was letting everybody down at work, the kids down. And because I was in the situation where I, I was just "What am I then if I can't do that? Oh everybody else can do this, these guidance teachers here, I've heard that this person's like that. They're great. I'm useless." and it wasn't til a few weeks after that it became pretty clear that I was becoming depressed. And, really depressed as the weeks went on. That, it really was, it wasn't anxiety, which has different levels. You've got you know your continuum of a wee bit anxious.... (to) uuugh. Em, it was extreme, it was taking over, and it was depression. It was definitely all black. Huh, all dark, all negative all, all awful.

A: "Do you feel that the doctors listened to you?"

J: "I felt that the doctors, I feel for them. Now I look back and I think "God, they've got ten minutes, my whole life has just collapsed", I'm trying to explain to them what's wrong with me and how it got there. Don't have time for this, though they wouldn't look at their watch, but I was conscious, but that was me worrying about other people. Em, you know "I don't want to waste your time". I think they did well, they tried, they medicated me which I think I needed. Em, one doctor in particular, one that terrible episodes, and I really was bad. Em, she gave me the right sort of medication at the time, got me to, to get a grip of myself, the medicine kicked in. Another doctor I saw referred me to the psychiatric hospital, which I didn't enjoy, and came straight out. And another doctor set me on these courses of improvement and working through these things with a group of people that I had nothing in common with and, nat (nope). So yeah the doctors did what they could, I mean I don't know how you deal with

these people. I'd like to sit with doctors and try and articulate how it feels like to be depressive and all of the issues, and i'm sure there's training to have that. But to make them more aware, but they don't have the time, but the psychiatric nurses did, but even then didn't have that much time. And that's, that's the crucial thing, is that you need specialists in there supporting at the right time."

A: "What piece of advice, resource or medication do you feel made the biggest impact on your life."

J: "The biggest impact, em, the biggest change. Em, I think it must have been the medication, and it was a time thing cause, that thanks to speaking to your mum and reading about it and some advice is that the chemical reaction in your head was a, is a major contributor to how you feel that way. And em, it was not not expecting quick fixes but as soon as medication would kick in, it was a timescale and I don't know if that then made me feel a little bit better. Then I started to accelerate and feel better. Em, but the medication, em, certainly the anti-depressant. I used to have these eh, I've forgotten the name of them now, to calm you down, really powerful drugs. I've forgotten the name. Anyway, these drug's you'd take them and it, what were they called, ugh, that's another shocker, but anyway. They, they, they got my levels down. I tried beta blockers, I tried things that didn't work, but the medication eventually kicked in. So, that and a combination of that and the combination of the weekly talks i'd have with the psychiatric nurse, made a, made the difference. And it was kind of bizarre that I felt that it took so long, like 3 months almost to get feeling more better. And then it would kick in and I would accelerate and whoooof. It was fantastic, I became myself within days, a week. I was back to myself, back to this clear thinking guy who wanted to do things and was wanting to be busy again. And it was, it was remarkable. And it was like a chemical switch. So yeah, I think medication, which has stigmas to it "Oh you're on happy pills" em, doesn't bother me. It's like people need insulin, or people need statins, I need anti-depressants on a low dose just to make sure these chemical things don't change.

A: "And what is your opinion on online forums or support groups? What's your opinion on those?"

J: "E,. I don't have a great opinion of online forums because you have all the extremes on it. So you have people who say one thing and people who contradict it completely. "This worked for me, that didn't work for me.". Em, and even, I think you know experience of forums in general; cycling forum, or a forum for Scottish rugby, whatever it is, you're like ugh. Really, it's, you can't take anything as the truth. Em, and didn't, I didn't use online resources at that time. Em, maybe, maybe there's a need to have that."

A: "So, ah, you've kindof already brushed on when you took time off work to recover. I was just going to ask you about your thoughts and feelings at the time when you were off. How you thought and felt you know about taking the time off work and..."

J: "Ah, that was awful taking time off work. My attendance record up until I was ill in 2006 was almost impeccable. As like, almost at

deaths door before I would take days off. And you could count up on two hands, so twenty, twenty five years, hardly any days off. So to be off for a period of more, more than two weeks to three months, I felt horrendous. Horrendous feeling of guilt, people covering my classes, not there doing my job supporting people, being at home and not at work. And because I couldn't get a grip of that, that made it worse. Em, and for the second and third episodes I got better at dealing with it. and saying "I can't do anything about it, I'm ill". If I had a broken leg and it was in a plaster, it's obvious. But because i've got a broken head it's not obvious to see that I'm ill. Em, and I didn't want to do all the things, my cycling, walking, reading, watching comedy stuff, I couldn't do that cause I didn't want people to see me and think "He's not at work, why's he away on his bike.". When if i had gone on my bike, I would have felt better and I would have been back at my work quicker. So it was really terrible not being at my work. And that's my old protestant work ethic coming through again; "Got to be working, got to be working." Which i'm understanding, yeah, you don't have to be working quite as hard as that, but you have to be working, yeah. But no, so it didn't work well with me, em, I still don't take time off work so. Bad."

A: "Can you give me a few examples of what you consider to be good days and why?"

J: "In general, what my good days? Good days."

A: "So sort-of your good days during, you know, your time of, when you were taken off ill."

J: "Oh, I thought you meant the good days as in, recently; "Oh we all came round for my birthday, it was great." During that, there were, there were, when I was ill. There were no good days. I never had a good day. I only had a good day, well, I only had a good day when I started to get better. A, a good day, I don't know, if i could, if i could watch some television. Phwoah, i've done something. If your mum Sylvia would give me these jobs. And if I could clean the, the fire, the glass on the fire, or even make the fire. That was a good day. To be able to get off the couch where I was stuck, knackered, not able to move, just worry myself there. To actually do something physical, em, was a good day. I didn't have good days. I didn't have anything I would say. Nat (nope), didn't have good days."

A: "So, in the contrary to that, can you give me a few examples of what you considered to be bad days, or the worst days?"

J: "The worst days were, when I would, och, ye, ye've probably heard of when people won't get out their beds. I, I would never, I didn't want to get out my bed. Sylvia made me religiously get up. I would refuse to get up. And it wouldn't, and it started off I wouldn't get out til one o'clock, and then eventually maybe get up at twelve, and eleven. It's just not like me. And, em, the, the worst days were when I wouldnae (wouldn't) get out of bed, and a, a, the duvet would go over my head, i'd be crying. I just didnae (didn't) want to face the day. Em, really bad days I might be up and eh, I remember vividly curling up in a ball on the livingroom floor, howling, not even crying, howling, saying how shit I was. Eh, and eh, your poor mum having to

try and talk to me, try and speak to me. That was the worst. That, that day. And I was, ah, I was so bad, and I knew you guys were coming home from school. And yet I was there on in this ball howling my eyes out. And it was just horrible, just horrible. And I didn't want to be putting your mum through it, and I didn't want to be, let you guys see me like that. Yet I felt so bad, it was, that was, it was all I could do. I just wanted to be taken away from it all. Yeah. Too many bad days. But, I think that was the time that I went to the doctors, and then I asked the doctor to put me in Stratheden, 'cause I couldn't see any, any hope. It was around about that time. Mhm."

A: "Can you tell me what your thoughts were at the time? When you were..."

J: "Yeah it was the usual; "Worthless piece of shit, em, I don't know what i'm doing, what use am I? Yeah, get me out of here." But there was no way out. Eh, well there is. So it's this juxtaposition that, yeah, yeah I didn't want to be there, it's just what was the point of me being there, em, and yet I couldn't do what was the obvious way to get out. And that's, that was so lucky that I couldn't. 'Cause, yeah I think, if, if I was working and I didn't have my family. My own family, and this is terrible because I wasn't really thinking about my mum and dad. And I did think how awful it would be for them if I killed myself. But if I didn't have my immediate family - my dependents - it would have been different, and I can see why people would do it. I can also see why people do it even when they've got dependents. But for me I was lucky to have the knowledge that, that this would be devastating for everyone. But, then I wouldnae (wouldn't) be there to see it so. I couldn't have done that, but yeah, definitely. Couldn't get it out of my head, the ideas of what I could do to kill myself. Yeah."

A: "Can you tell me about how depression affected those closes to you? So like your immediate family and how your depression affected them?"

J: "The boys, I don't know exactly what we talked about, and I think they weren't fully aware of just how seriously ill I was. Which is brilliant. Because they were too young to deal with that at the time, but it's good to talk about it now. My parents, em, dead worried, but happy that they knew that I had the support systems around me and that I was getting help. They didn't know really what to do. Em, in the background my sister as well, kinda in the background. Offering to do whatever they could, but it's difficult because it's such an internal thing. So, but, yeah, I think having Sylvia having this incredible awareness of what it was, and that it wasn't me, well it was, but it wasn't me, it was an illness, and it was, it's something that would, that would pass, was probably the main thing. It did, it took a lot out of her, I'm pretty sure it did, em, we would joke about "You're never doing that to me again." I said "Well you'd better look after me, because, or i'll just get depressed.". But no, it's eh, it was hard. So, I don't know. I think, i think the boys were fairly sheltered from it, but I don't know. I hope, well, ah, ah, yeah, I hope they, they know that if anything like that happens to them then they understand it, well it's happened to their dad and he's still here, and he's still ok I hope. And em, and yeah, that if it happens to

their friends and if it happens to people, they love that they'll, they'll have the insight into it, to know that it's, people need help.

A: "So, looking back, what was the scariest moment for you and why?"

J: "The scariest. Em, I didn't have any scary moments because I never, I, it was always about thoughts and negativities. It was all about, "Ah I shouldn't be here, i need to do something about it". I couldn't think of a way of committing suicide, either painlessly, successfully, or have a genuine reason to do it. Em, eh, eh I've lost the question now."

A: "It's alright, it was about scariest moment..."

J: "Yeah, ah, the scariest moment was probably going into Stratheden and seeing these, and going into this building in the middle of Fife and this woman coming up to me and going "You're Tam Tarvet's son, you're Jimmy Tarvet, you're from, you're in Shore Street isn't it, you come from Shore Street?" This woman, who has obviously a high-level disorder spouting out this amazing stuff about me, and then me thinking "Oh my god i'm in Stratheden" which is known as the, well let's go for it "Loony Bin". Em, this woman frightened me, but er, and then she's going round telling other people and I'm going "Wow, these people really have got issues.". Eh, and it was, oh my god, and I sat there, and it was a young girl asking my history, asking these questions and i'm going. "Oh dear, I don't think you've got enough life skills to deal with this, and I don't really want to be in here dealing with this, thank you very much". So that was quite scary, cause I wasn't sectioned, huh, but I was in with people had obviously been, i don't know if it's sectioned, but put for their own good to be out there. So that was scary. Scary to think about suicide. That's never good. Em, but yeah, that's scary it's the ones I'd think are bad.

A: "So what do you think was your greatest strength at the time."

J: "I didn't have any strength, but Sylvia was my greatest strength, undoubtedly, yup. I don't know how she put up with that. Well she did, she loved me. And eh, um, she could see it. So she could see the bigger picture and I couldn't, that was it. Simples. I couldn't see a way out of it. Optimistic, or no, realistic basically. I was being unrealistic. Sylvia was being realistic, this is what's happening, it's an illness, it's going to take time, you'll get through it, you'll be fine, we'll be fine. Don't worry about money. Which is my biggest cause of not working and having to give up a higher salary. Em, oh my god I can't get kids through University, I can't get them to this, I can't get them their trips abroad, I can't do anything because i'm useless. So, Sylvia's perspective was, was incredible. Her insight into it, her strength to keep at it and keep with me say, not losing her patience at all. A couple of minor things which, that's nothing. And, yeah, if I didn't have that. Different story.

A: "On the flip side of that, what do you think was your greatest weakness at the time?"

J: "My greatest weakness was worrying about work. Still worrying about me, my perception of what a failure I am. People thinking "Oh dear, he's skiving or he's at it, or he's no good. There's so many better people than me, there's so many better teachers than me, there's better this..." That doesn't help at all, that, if I'd just been able to accept that "Hey you're doing your best. If it's not good enough for that type of job, don't do that job, do something else you're happier with.". And Sheila Barratt - the psychiatric nurse- was saying "You know, you've worked hard, you've done everything you possibly can. You've done the provider. You need a break. You don't have to be doing this sort of stuff, You don't need to..." and, it, to try and convince myself that I didn't need to and that things would be ok. That was my biggest weakness 'cause it, it just perpetrated it. And I think the last time I was ill it was much quicker. Haha. Cause I did get a grip. Although I understood what was happening, I was going into the episode. I couldn't stop it. I even went for help, but it didn't work, em, I knew well, things will get better. So, yup."

A: "So, if we just say for instance look back at, at previous you. How would you describe yourself, eh before you started showing your symptoms?"

J: "Previous me? Em, well before all this happened, I don't know, I, I don't know, I'm always, everyone's on a journey of self-discovery in that previous me - young - I find quite embarrassing now. Too cocky. Too me-me-me. Well, not really but, yeah, I don't, I'm sure everybody reflects on "I'm not a great person" but I could have been better. Em, yeah, so, yeah, understanding people, and understanding illnesses, mental illnesses, yep, I don't think I would have been half as tolerant as Sylvia or other people i've met, or half as understanding as I am now. And now, well, old me "Yeah oh come on, get a grip, get on with it you waster, what are you off for stress for? Six weeks for stress, come on, everybody's under stress." So, yup. Not good. Not bad, but yeah, yeah that's life discovery."

A: "And how do you see yourself now that you've been diagnosed and are receiving treatment?"

J: "Yeah I don't see myself as being diagnosed and receiving treatment. I don't see it as an issue. I know that I've had these issues, I'm hopeful that I won't have them again. I can't tell if i'm going to have them or not. I don't know what's going to kick in. You know, I didn't think i'd get it after the second time, but then I went back into a position of responsibility and I had a trigger there and whoah. But now I don't. I eh, have a responsible for my job. My kids are much more grown up and looking after themselves. Em, no."

A: "So, do you feel this experience has changed your perspective on life?"

J: "Absolutely, huh, this, it's a, I think I might have said earlier that I'm a, I would like to think i'm a better person for it. It was a good thing. It was a horrible thing, but it was a good thing in that it made me reflect on what was important. What, um, yeah, what was important; my family was more important than anything else. What other people think doesn't matter, apart from the ones close to you. And,

and work is important, but hey, it's a job, and getting that balance right, and that was what was wrong. My work was far too full on, far too engrossing, and I had to have wrong perspective on how important it was. And if I would go back, I would change my work practices. Spend more time with my family, which I did loads of, but it came at a cost. So yeah, I think it's made me, well, you'd have to ask other people if it's made me a better person, they might disagree. Nah, I am."

A: "If future you could give past you one piece of advice, what would it be?"

J: "Flippantly, don't go into teaching. Haha. No, cause I love my job, em, yeah, it's, stop taking everything so seriously. Particularly criticism, um negativity from people, um, and get a balance on it because you can't please, *muttered*, you couldn't please everybody all of the time. And getting a balance on your work, life, and what's important to you. And to me, the job was important, but it shouldn't be as important as it was. So no, I'd have a word with myself and say "Look", but I don't know if you'd be able to do it, eh, the time thing I don't know if you could go back and change it or would you change it. It's like everything else, I'd love to be, I'd love to be your age, I'd love to be young again because i've got all this experience that I could put into it, but would it be right if I change it? You know. So, would it be right if I changed that I didn't go through these experiences, would I be less of a person for it? Probably I would be, you know, I, I am, and I don't know if it's just the tablets, much more chilled. And I think that, that to me is worth spades. It's worth an amazing amount stuff just to feel this way and not to feel every waking minute of your job is full on."

A: "So, lastly is there anything else that you'd like to say or anything that you'd like to add that I didn't cover in my questions?"

J: "No, I think your questions have covered just about everything but em, trying to think. Something I was going to say when I was talking about something, but I didn't use it. Em, no, I don't know if it was like, like the last episode, I knew things were happening, and I knew that I didn't want to be ill, and I knew that I should be doing certain things doing all these different techniques but I couldn't stop it. Em, and that, that was also a frustrating thing that to have this experience of two big episodes and then for third one to come again and know and be aware 'cause I was aware of the triggers and stresses and em' that was eh, that that rugby thing about, just, again criticism. What would people think of me? And I must be a rubbish principle teacher and ach. You know and, I wasn't. Haha I hope. But now I'm just a teacher and it's nice."