

Case study File – Jess – MSE interview Transcript

Jane: Hi Jess, I'm Jane from the mental health service. I'm replacing Doug, the other community worker. He told me good things about this place. He said the country was beautiful and the people are really nice. I had to get used to a train running by my house that took a bit, a little while. I prefer the birds, but I suppose you don't hear them any more?

Jess: No, I hear the cockatoos in the evening.

Jane: Yeah, Julie my friend said she just wishes it to be night time so they go away. Do you know her?

Jess: Yeah, she's a good lady. I used to see her at work all the time. She would come into the shop.

Jane: Yeah, she works down there at the community clinic a lot, is that where you saw her?

Jess: No I knew her when she used to come into the shop. She would come in everyday and everyday she would have an egg and lettuce sandwich.

Jane: Is that the shop on the main street?

Jess: Yeah.

Jane: Oh yeah, that's the one with the good hamburgers. I was in there the other day and I went in for bread and milk and it took me an hour and a half to get out. I met a few people in there that I knew and they chatted and yarned. I like that, it must be hard working in a shop where people are talking and chatting all the time.

Jess: It can be, when they take their time buying things, but it's a good place for them to catch up and talk and find out what's going around the place.

Jane: Yeah, I used to work in a shop one time and to be honest I do like to have a chat but the boss wasn't that keen on it. He used to say to me they come in here and chat and talk and buy nothing, so he kind of put a stop to that.

Jess: Yeah, it happens here too but my boss don't mind, says it's the best part of the job getting to know the people.

Jane: So what did you think about that Jess?

Jess: I didn't mind, it gives me time to catch up with the community while I'm working so I didn't mind it.

Jane: Dr Jackson said you weren't feeling the best, said that you think your spirit has been a bit weak recently. Would that be right?

Jess: Yeah.

Jane: He said he wants you to have a chat with us. Is it ok to have a chat about that Jess?

Jess: Yeah.

Jane: So how do you think your feeling right now?

Jess: Just tired all the time.

Jane: A lot of people with broken spirits have troubles Jess, and some can't sleep and sometimes they are always sleeping, some people don't eat, and some people eat too much or they lose weight or they put on weight and sometimes people have strange thoughts, and sometimes people have all of them together Jess. Is there anything there that you are having at the moment? Is anything like that troubling you?

Jess: I'm off my tucker, um, and I used to cook a lot but I don't do that much anymore. I think because I don't feel like eating so I don't feel like cooking, but the trouble is the family misses that. They used to come over a couple of times a week, and now they can't have the roast.

Jane: Okay, Do you think they miss that cooking or having that time with you, is that what it is?

Jess: I think they miss both. My daughter comes over, she's good.

Jane: Yeah.

Jess: She tries to encourage me to cook, reckons it will make me feel better.

I know I should but I just get too tired, and I got to go to bed. So, in the afternoon I'll have a kip and sometimes I'll get up but sometimes I just don't want to get out of bed and I just stay in there.

Jane: Your daughter sounds pretty good.

Jess: Yeah, she's good. She cooks hot meals and brings over three hot meals every week.

Jane: And it's good to have someone there for support when you're not feeling so good.

Jess: Yeah, she's good.

Jane: And when you're feeling down like that, having trouble getting out of bed, not feeling like cooking, not eating well. How's the family feeling about that generally, I know you said your daughter comes over and helps but overall, how's the family feeling?

Jess: Yeah, they're ok, they still come over, they still come for visit, but they just miss that I don't cook for them anymore.

Jane: What about your sleeping Jess? Are you sleeping?

Jess: I have troubles sleeping, but I wake up all the time, I have trouble getting to sleep, then I can't stay asleep.

Jane: Yeah, 'cause I was wondering about that thinking, you know, if you're going to sleep and can't stay asleep is that something about your thoughts, when you wake up?

Jess: Sometimes I can hear my son calling out to me from the trees, telling me I'm not a good mother, then it's yelling and the yelling gets louder and louder. That makes me feel like I'm not a good mother and I should be banished.

Jane: Yeah, it must be awful Jess for you. Our mind can play tricks on us sometimes, and it happens to some of us all the time but certainly it's not a good feeling and it's not good having those thoughts. What is it like when you wake up at night time, does the thoughts come in and prevent you going back asleep? Is that what it is?

Jess: Yeah, I just lay there thinking about what he's saying to me.

Jane: Right.

Jess: That I'm not a good mother.

Jane: What is your son saying to you? That you're not a good mother?

Jess: That I'm not a good mother.

Jane: And what happened to your son, what was it?

Jess: He was in a bad car accident last year, and he was killed. He was a good boy.
He was my eldest.

Jane: Have you got other children Jess? I know you mentioned your daughter...

Jess: Yeah I have got other children. I've got five, three boys and two girls, but the boys are always busy, they've got things to do so I don't see them very much. And my daughter, she comes over and she helps me out. But my other daughter has two little ones and they keep her busy all the time. She's always running around after them.

Jane: It makes it hard, doesn't it?

Jess: Yeah.

Jane: I'm from Ireland and so I don't get to see my parents or my family.

They're all there, I don't get to see them very much, and you know there is times that I wish I could get to see them more, but life sometimes gets in the way. I think sometimes we overlook these important things, however if your daughter is supporting you in some way that's... I can see you value that.

Jess: She's a good girl.

Jane: Yeah. And they sound like good kids. The boys are probably a bit like me, they wish they had more time to see their parents. I used to live close to them but then by the time I'd get home from work I wouldn't have the energy I'd just flop down on in front of the television. What are your energy levels like Jess?

Jess: Haven't got none. I just sit here at home most days just looking at the dust. I used to have a nice house. But now I can't be bothered. Dad gets upset with it sometimes, especially if he's had a few before he gets home. He doesn't understand why I just sit here all day and do nothing. Gets wild he does.

Jane: Ok, yeah some people don't understand what it's like to be feeling like you are now. It can make them a bit frustrated sometimes because they really love you and they really care for you and they feel a bit helpless in that situation. So that can be quite frustrating for them, and they don't know what to do.

Jess: Nah, he's a good man really. He knows family always comes first. He couldn't understand but now he's ok but it makes me angry 'cause he went back to work and got on with it and not understanding how I'm feeling and I'm just here now, I feel so weak.

Jane: It may look like that but that isn't always the case Jess. It sounds like you've had a lot on your plate now the last few months, and your doctor was telling me that now that you've been diagnosed with diabetes and you haven't been doing too well. Is that the case Jess?

Jess: Yeah, my daughter took me to see him because my eyes were all blurry, I thought I was going blind.

Jane: Right.

Jess: My daughter knows about that stuff. When I told her I was always thirsty she even said about the diabetes.

Jane: Yeah, my mother had a lot of troubles when she found out she had diabetes, she had trouble finding out about the diagnosis and then as well it took the doctor, took them long time to work it out what was suitable for her. So it sounds like they figured it out quite quickly for you. So what did the doctor do for you, what are they doing for you now, what is the, where do you go from here with your diabetes?

Jess: Well he sorted it out, he gave me some tablets, told me to watch my sugar, eat proper and go back and see him in a couple of weeks.

Jane: Right, yeah my mother was the same she didn't like the...it was stopping the sugary bits that she didn't, wasn't willing to or very happy about.

Jess: Yeah the sugary stuff doesn't worry me, it's eating properly, I don't even feel like eating once let alone three meals a day.

Jane: Ok.

Jess: Haven't paid much attention to that. I think it's good that I can bring myself to eat anything most days.

Jane: Great, that's great Jess. What about the grog? You said earlier sometime you have a few drinks to help you go to sleep or before you went to sleep. Is that a problem, do you see that as a problem for you right now?

Jess: No, just used to help me get to sleep.

Jane: Right

Jess: I still have some but not as many.

Jane: And what about drugs Jess? Are you using anything?

Jess: What yandie? I want to feel better not stupid.

Jane: Ok.

Jess: Once when I was a girl I tried that stuff, didn't like it, I see some kids come into the shop, you can tell what they've been up to. Some of the parents are just as bad.

Jane: Oh well, you did very well Jess, didn't you?

Jess: Yeah, I kept my kids away from that stuff best I could.

Jane: So, I was just wondering about your memory Jess, how was it going? I know you said you work in a shop so obviously your maths is pretty good. I'm going to ask you a few questions, a couple of questions about that. Is that ok if we just test your memory a little bit? What about counting back from twenty in threes, would you be able to do that for me?

Jess: [pause] 20, [pause] 17, [pause] 14, [pause] 11.

Jane: That's ok Jess. Do you remember my name and what I do?

Jess: Yeah, you're Jill from the community clinic.

Jane: Yes, though my name is Jane.

Jess: Oh.

Jane: Just a day out, that's fine.

Jess: Yeah, sometimes I have trouble with my memory.

Jane: Well we'll have a bit of a chat about your memory a bit later.