

CAN I TELL YOU ABOUT DEPRESSION?



“So what is depression? It’s a bit like being sad and tired. I’ll tell you about that later, so that you can understand better if it happens to someone in your family, and not worry too much.

First, I’d like to tell you a bit about me and my family.

I’m 38 years old. I teach history in a secondary school. I’m usually well apart from my depression, but sometimes I get bouts of irritable bowel syndrome (sometimes called IBS), which causes pain in my tummy and makes me go to the toilet all the time. I know, euuch!

Jim’s my husband. We met at college. We’ve been married for 15 years now. He’s an accountant with a big company in the city. He is very good with numbers, and looks after all our bills. He’s kind and friendly, though he doesn’t really know how to talk about things like how he feels.”



“We live in a comfortable house, though we have a biggish mortgage to pay off. I enjoy pottering around in the back garden of an evening, planting new flowers and weeding.”

“We love going on holidays to hot places, especially Spain. We’re trying to save up to buy an apartment there as we all like it so much.

We have two wonderful children, Helen and Andy. Helen is 13. She’s very bright. She can speak Spanish better than Jim or me. She’s a bit of a moody teenager these days, and has a great line in put-downs (especially to me). Andy is 11. Maths is his best subject in school. He is mad keen on football. He plays with his mates in the park. He’s a regular on his junior school team (‘attacking midfielder’ he tells me, whatever that means). And he goes to all Liverpool’s home games with his dad.

I think the world of them all, especially the kids. Usually I feel fine, but sometimes everything gets a bit too much for me.

Every few years I become depressed for a couple of months. I’m going to tell you what that’s like, and how best to handle it.”