

# The Tree of Life

## Stories from those with friends and family with mental health conditions

My grand-mother has suffered her whole life, it's clear she is bi-polar but in her days this was called "hysteria" I think, and she turned to alcohol. She is/had always been an alcoholic since - it has affected her relationship with her 4 children & 12 grandkids - some don't speak to her - But I know. Because I am getting the help she never had.

My step Dad has depression and anxiety. His experience and the impact of his condition is my motivation.

My brother has severe depression, anxiety.  
It can be so difficult sometimes to talk to him about anything else as it's such a dominant force in his life. There are times when I want to point out that the way he behaves can be very selfish - but I know he can't help it.

My son was top of his first year at Uni. But then something happened that made him so depressed he stopped attending. How his Uni failed to notice his absences I shall never understand. He came home and went to bed for six months. It was heart-wrenching seeing him in pieces and being unable to help. Eventually he started to look for work, got temp jobs and gradually picked himself up. Eight years on, he has a good job and has been promoted twice. He's doing an Open University degree which his work is part-funding. He has good friends, a nice girlfriend and a lovely place to live.

One of my best friends  
committed suicide at 30 yrs.  
He had tried before when he  
was given no opportunity  
to talk or have any support.  
Please let people be open!

I feel that I could do  
more to offer support to  
my sister but after years of  
trying... I handed it  
to her husband... SORRY

Q+

My daughter has been 'troubled'  
for 4 years. This weekend she  
admitted she had suicidal  
thoughts. A Big step admitting  
that to me. I believe the first  
step on the long road to recovery  
I'll be there for every step Qx

My dad has a brain tumour,  
and has suffered 3 strokes.

Being away from him fills  
me with fear and guilt. But  
he tells me as long as I do well  
at Uni and give him hugs when I'm  
home, he will always be happy &

My son is 28. He has post traumatic  
stress disorder from something that  
happened 10 years ago. He believes  
people watch what he does and  
judge him negatively.  
He might be right. People are nosy.  
He does things that seem odd.  
He is clever, funny, kind. But his  
life is a mess. It breaks my heart.

My mum attempted suicide 3 times when  
I was small. Without the help, support &  
vigilance of family & friends, she would  
have succeeded. Many people  
now comment that she is the happiest  
person they know. Listen to people,  
and don't ignore a cry for help.