



## **Diverse Perspectives on Mental Health**

*Everyday experiences*

### **Jonathan Leach:**

We used the case study of Bronwyn living in a council estate in Wales as a slightly different approach to our other audio in that it was in a way a composite story that people involved in the team who had been involved in working in the mental health field had encountered people like Bronwyn experiencing difficulties in their everyday lives, and so Bronwyn is actually played by an actress from South Wales but we used her story as best to capture how everyday life experiences can feed into mental distress, and how in turn mental distress feeds back into the everyday.

So Bronwyn's story is perhaps not particularly extreme, perhaps unlike some of our other examples, and you might even wonder whether she has an official mental health diagnosis or not, and that's part of the point really because one of the things that the course looks at is that mental health is not necessarily an 'us' and 'them' situation, it's really an 'us' situation, that we can all experience mental distress to one degree or another, and at different times in our lives, and some people may be tipped over the edge by certain events; other people may be just coping, some people doing better than that, and probably Bronwyn is somebody who's just coping but could go over the edge because she's experiencing all sorts of difficulties in her life and she's got, she lives in an area that's not particularly cared for, the soul seems to have gone out of it, people don't seem to particularly care about the litter or the state of the place, economically it's going downhill, it's losing its shops, she's only got part-time employment, her husband's unemployed, she's worried about her children, she doesn't feel she can buy the things she'd like to, so she's experiencing pressures that a lot of people experience, and I think we wanted to convey in the course, so that is part of mental distress, and that people don't have to feel bad about that, it perhaps help to break down the 'us' and 'them', it's really these are things that can, we all have to grapple with from time to time, and people like Bronwyn are an example of people who are affected by real life issues which can then spill over into them experiencing anxiety, depression or other mental health issues.