

Patient Instructions

Name of Patient: Jane Connor

age 28

Description of the patient & instructions to simulator:

You are a junior doctor training in pathology. Your grandmother died when you were 23. You were very close. You think you never really let yourself grieve.

If asked about your weight: Yeah, I feel like I've lost a little weight, but I don't know whether that's just from feeling anxious, but I train everyday – exercise makes me feel...amazing, but it always has done, I've always been very active.

If asked specifically about your mood and your anxiety levels: Okay, let me just clarify a little bit about your mood, if that's okay.

On average your mood is probably say a four out of ten.

In terms of anxiety or stress, feeling panicky or het up – ten's the worst, nought's the best: you feel maybe a six. Six.

You are happy with your weight and your physical fitness.

PSQ

You've got a good relationship with your husband. He's very understanding. He's in no rush to have kids.

Yeah, we get on well. I mean, obviously he's very stressed at work sometimes, but he doesn't bring it back with him, doesn't bring it back home.

He's a medical consultant, so yeah, you can imagine his working hours.

Yeah, but he's started to become more relaxed himself, because I actually had to speak with him about how I felt.

Communication is key, isn't it?

Not a smoker, maybe the odd glass of red wine in moderation, but always with food really; I'm not a heavy drinker. I don't go out partying.

Your concentration at work has been wavering a little bit.

Just at times. You don't think that anyone's safety is at risk.

And your role at work at the moment, you're studying pathology? And you love it. You're already trained as a doctor.

But pathology's the route for me. It always has been, I have a passion.

I love it, I absolutely, that's what I mean, death doesn't actually faze me.

If asked what experience you have previously had of counselling or support: I've spoken with my priest, who's absolutely amazing, and every time I see him, he just uplifts me, but I can't carry him around in a bag. He's always there on the phone, but

he's just like, 'Jane, the power of God...' and I do believe that the power of God can... He is there to help, and I know not everybody believes and I don't preach it to people, but I do - we aren't meant to feel like this, we aren't meant to feel sadness or darkness, that's...

First line and history

Right, well. It's taken me a long time to, sort of, actually seek help about this. I don't know where to start, really.

Becoming tearful and emotional: I'm just so down, I mean it's been a long time – I lost my nana when I was 23. Now, I'm a very, strong, positive person, church-goer, I seek help that way. Physically active, very active indeed; but just of late it seems like suppressed emotions are coming to the surface and making me feel just — yes, I'm still me, just, kind of not level.

If that makes any, sort of, sense.

It's an awful, sort of, strange way to feel. I wouldn't say that I'm manic depressed, you know, I wouldn't. I certainly don't have schizophrenia or bipolar, but it's just a down-ness, and I've tried to keep... That's what I show, I put a mask on and, you know, but, it got so bad and the other week I felt like I was just going to break; as if something was just going to snap in my mind.

I mean, I spoke to my husband about it, he's a medical consultant and he said, 'you know, maybe just something to lift you up a little bit – to balance you out, because this is just not you'. You're just very flat sometimes and you become agitated just - it's just certainly not me, I'm such a patient person. I mean, initially, he said maybe it's the work you do, you know, because I'm doing my pathology training, but I've been around death since I was 18, so it's not that.

You know, I'm able to deal with quite shocking things, as well, what I see in the post-mortem room.

It is quite - I don't think it's that, it's not like I have sort of sadness—I know that sounds so cold, but I don't have sadness for these people because I don't know them, but I do everything in my utmost to get, you know, the right outcome and especially for families and things. So, yeah, it's just basically, it's this sadness which you think you deal with, you know, and it's bizarre, the mind is so complex.

I'm not an angry person, I don't feel anger, it's just this sadness, it's... I mean I miss her greatly, we all go through grief, it's a process, it's not something you get over, you learn how to deal with it and have coping mechanisms. I just feel like my coping mechanism isn't functioning the way it has been in the past.

Yeah, there's been quite a lot of pressure to have a child for the past, I would say, four- I am married, but I need to change my details – for the past four years, but indirect pressure, I would say? But I'm just, I'm not ready for it yet because I need to feel 110%. I know we can't always be 110% but I know that I need balance restored within my emotional state and mental state, and just - I mean, my in-laws are Spanish, they're quite, they're all medically trained so it's all, 'come on, what's wrong with you, come on

you should be pregnant by now, you should be pregnant after three months of marriage'. Different cultures.

Yes, and I felt a little bit, sort of a little bit, lost that maybe I won't have the support there, because my nana's been removed. Because she would have just - the problem is, Dr Birrell, she did so much for me. So does my mother as well, she works full time, I don't know, that maternal. It's not that I dislike children, I absolutely adore them, I have great relationships with nieces, friend's children... I have animals, I put my energy into my dog, and I just felt, I don't know, I just haven't been ready.

And I think, we had a trip to Spain, I think, three weeks ago and I just... I told them, 'please just back off and stop it, because I'm really not coping at the minute, and I'm just not ready'.

Ideas – I mean, could I be suffering from borderline depression, am I at that stage? I don't want to admit that I would have this, that's the thing. I have an armour on, where it's 'I can cope with anything, I'm strong, I can cope with anything'. The mind is so complex, isn't it, our emotions are things that you can't physically see.

Concerns – Well, I did have a very terrible sort of nightmare, really, that I was sort of dangling from the staircase.

I also had a dreadful feeling once when I was awake. I was in the living room, relaxing, nothing really major, with a cup of tea and I just thought to myself, 'have I really got to carry this (emotional) pain around much longer?'.

It's ridiculous. I'm sorry.

You have never self-harmed.

It was a brief feeling, and then it went. Sort of a strange bizarre...

Expectations – I didn't know whether I could maybe, perhaps, go for some counselling sessions or something? (*When asked what form that might take: I would like the face-to-face communication.*)