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# FROM THE EDITOR

Anyone who has gone through illness knows how vulnerable, alone and powerless it can make you feel. When a family member has dementia, the family may also feel that vulnerability acutely, as Julie Vernon expresses powerfully on page 8. Julie describes what happened when her mother, who has dementia, had to be hospitalised. Communication gaps between hospital and family, and a lack of awareness by staff of how to care for her mother's needs, did little to ease the stress of either Julie's mother or the family members who cared for her. Rather, they compounded it. Better dementia awareness training for staff in hospitals could make the experience so much better for patients and carers is this author's clear message.

Experiences like Julie's are familiar to counsellor Danuta Lipinska, a specialist in ageing and dementia care, who herself has been a carer to family members with dementia. Danuta comprehensively describes the 'increasing and ongoing stress and strain' of being a carer of someone with dementia, and how counselling can empower carers to move from situations of vulnerability, including depression, anxiety and feelings of hopelessness, towards hope and the return of a measure of self-agency.

From vulnerability in older age, to vulnerability in younger people: psychotherapist Wendy Jones considers the relationship between anorexia nervosa, which often surfaces around puberty, and self-identity; and relates how, as they move through the therapeutic process, people with anorexia can be helped to develop, or redevelop, a healthy and stronger sense of self as they 'fill out' in all ways into who they really are. As someone who suffered with an eating disorder in my early teens, Wendy's article reminded me how particularly vulnerable young people are.

