

### **Aliya - Barriers and challenges**

I have much more empathy [now]. Not that I did not before. Even as a child, I always felt people's pain very quickly. But not knowing the full story, that can sometimes make us biased, have an opinion.

I am more forgiving because I say, hold on a minute, okay, hold on, step back. Yes, that is wrong. However, what was the root cause here? What is going on here? That is what helps me put myself in the shoes of others.

I am somebody who has actually been a victim of hate crime and Islamophobia. I think for some time that did become a problem for me and I did develop some PTSD, but with the right support I have got through it. Sometimes I may feel a little bit unsure, like when we had the recent unrest. But I will not let it stop me. I am not allowing that to stop me doing what I need to do and to go out there and make a difference. Because even when we had the unrest, I just carried on because I thought no, I am not having that. Because that fear that they instilled in us is how they win.