

## Speaking from Experience

### Young People & Mental Health

#### Transcript for chapter 6 of 9: Taking action early

**Sean** – I can think back to having a conversation with one of my mates, probably about 6 – 9 months before I became unwell. We were having a bit of a chit-chat, a bit of a yarn, and he said, “I think I’ve noticed a few changes in your behaviour”. I said, “What are you talking about, mate?” He said that he could see things happening a bit differently. Of course, when I was in that perspective, I sort of blocked it out. I thought, I didn’t know what he was talking about, and I wasn’t going to take that on board. That was because I was going out and living the over-indulgent lifestyle. I was probably enjoying that a bit too much to take on board what my mate was saying. So, fast forward 9 months after that and some extra things started happening, which gave a bit of merit to what my mate was saying, making him actually 100% right. Basically, I think it is important that if you have a friend who identifies a change in your behaviour, take it on board and don’t just block it out, like I did. Because if you take it on board, when someone says they’re noticing changes about you behaviour, then you’re more likely to be able to get help before something more serious happens.

**Bianca** – I had symptoms since I was 13. I never actually got help until I was 16. Which, I think, in myself, that things could have been helped a bit better and maybe I wouldn’t have ended up with everything adding on to the one thing that I started out with, if I had of got help straight away.

**Carla** - Initially I tried to ignore my thoughts and feelings, in the hopes that if I ignored them that they’d sort of go away on their own. Unfortunately, they didn’t, and they just got worse until I sought help. If I had sought help earlier, then maybe I could’ve not only prevented things from getting worse, but also started recovery a lot earlier.

**Sean** – In my case, I know that if my mate had have done something when I noticed the changes in my behaviour, it would’ve made a much better outcome for me. It would’ve prevented me from going through a bit of a rough patch, and at the same time, putting those closest to me through a rough patch as well.

**Bianca** – I know that there’s lots of help out there, but if you don’t seek it you’re not going to get it. I didn’t know that when I was younger.

**Sean** – You might think, “mental health... blah, blah, blah, it’s never going to happen to me”, but 6 months to a year down the track, and you might be suffering from depression through using drugs, you might have mental health problems. There are many things that can trigger mental health issues.

**Trent** – It’s a good thing that parents and good friends as well can notice these changes. Otherwise, if you didn’t have these kinds of people, not many people would care, and we could go on to do even more stuff, like someone committing suicide or just hurting themselves.



**Sean** – Even though I thought I was aware of what I was doing and had it under wraps, it caused mental health problems for me. So, it's sort of a sign that even though you think that you might know what you're doing, it can still kind of come and bight you on the backside.

**Jade** – I guess things like having those three or four support people, who you know you can go to and talk to. Not keeping it all inside and sort of acknowledging those feelings that you're having, and just having someone there who you can talk to about it. Even if it's picking up a helpline, I know it's really hard to do, but you'll benefit from it in the long run. Stuff like drugs, party drugs, definitely if you get into that cycle, you can get addicted. Stuff like that could lead to a drug-induced psychosis.

**Sean** – The thing about people undergoing a mental health problem is that they may not know that they are unwell, because it slowly builds up. It's something that they may not realise they're becoming unwell. I think the help comes from those people that are around. They're the ones who are going to recognise the changes in behaviour, before you recognise them yourself.