



Speaking from Experience

Young People & Mental Health

Transcript for chapter 4 of 9: Staying well

Raquel – I wake up in the morning and I assess where I am. If I've had a good few days, it usually means that I'm going to be okay, depending on environmental factors. So, stress is my number one trigger. If I'm triggered, I can go either manic or depressed. I have to keep myself stress free, kind of Zen-like.

Carla – Outside of therapy, there are a lot of things that you can try to minimise the impact of mental illness. Things like having a routine can be really handy. Waking up at the same time every day, and going to bed and living a normal nine to five life. Physical activity, getting out there and having a go and having fun, is always good.

Bianca – Because I was addicted to drugs, being in the wrong environment and around the wrong people can be encouraging, if you don't have will-power.

Raquel – I allot spaces to socialise, for instance, I will go out on a Friday night, but I won't go out on a Saturday night. I won't take excessive amounts of alcohol and I won't touch illicit drugs.

Sean – If I'm at a party and there are people there smoking bongos and getting stoned, if they offer it to me, I'd say, "thanks, but no thanks." I'll walk off and speak to the people who aren't smoking. If I'm in a position where people might be passing around other drugs, like ecstasy or whatever, again thanks, but no thanks. It is something that I've tried, and something that I've experienced. Now that I've experienced it, I'm happy to move on from it.

Raquel – Sleep is my main thing. If I'm not sleeping, that means I'm unwell. So, definitely trying to get to bed at a reasonable hour, and trying to get to sleep. But if you can't get to sleep and it's been going on for a while, then seeing a GP would be a great idea, just to see if they can help you to know the reason why you can't sleep.

Bianca – I never wrote anything down about how I was feeling at school, but I had my own diary at home that a lot of that went into. That helped me a lot.

Tyson – If we're doing work and people are really bugging me, I just walk over and sit in the corner. I have to tell my teacher that I was going over there. I just sit there until I get my act together and then I just go back.

Trent – Certain things can keep people happy, whereas other things, basically slow people down. For instance, I was tired all the time and wasn't doing anything. So, I got told to hang out with mates more. I rang up my friend every day, and told him, "Let's hang out". He'd ask me what I wanted to do, and I was like, "just go for a walk."

Bianca – You feel like you're getting jammed up, when you bottle it all up like that. You just don't know what to do next. It's really hard, because you just want to let someone know, and have someone to talk to, but you just can't.



Tyson – I go to the corner if someone is annoying me and I need to get away before I'll do something that I'll regret. I'll just sit there and think. Once I've thought enough, I just go back and sit down.

Raquel – I have a little card that will be in my wallet, usually. That tells anyone what I have, what medications I'm on and what you need to do if you think I'm going a bit crazy.

Bianca – I make sure I take my medication, and try to stay in a calm environment. I also make sure I keep appointments.

Carla – I do play a few team sports. They're not formal at all. It's really relaxed and just about getting together, playing a bit of sport, having a laugh and then enjoying dinner afterwards.