



Speaking from Experience Anxiety Disorders

Transcript for chapter 2 of 7: In the beginning

Amber (diagnosed 4 months): I think the cause of the anxiety for me was probably a traumatic experience in my life, and maybe suppressing a lot of the things that had happened to me, and not dealing with the issue there and then. And it all sort of coming more back out.

David (diagnosed 3 years): My situation stems from depression with a break-up of a marriage, which was about four years ago. I think I started having what turned out to be anxiety attacks probably twelve or thirteen months after that.

Kate (diagnosed 5 years): Bullying took a big part in my life, because of not being accepted and people calling you names. You just think, hang on, what's wrong with me, what do I do wrong? You look at every single thing.

Keith (diagnosed 25 years): At lunch time I walked up Swanston Street, near the intersection of Bourke Street, and bang, this anxiety attack came on. And I remember putting my arms around a power pole or something, and I saw a workmate walking up the street, and I said for God's sake, get a bloody ambulance.

Karen (diagnosed 2 ½ years): When I do get stressed and can't cope, I just tense up, and I can feel myself doing that. I didn't at the time realise that that's what it was, and of course the more it would start, the worse it would get. But, yeah, it would cause my stomach to spasm, and I would end up with diarrhoea. And it was just on ongoing.

Luke (diagnosed 5 years): I probably always had a low self-esteem as well and it probably coincides with it. And so I guess that's another factor that comes into it. Sometimes I feel like it's the underlying problem.

David: The job I do as a Bed and Breakfast proprietor is pretty simple. I always tell people I could probably train a monkey to do what I do in less than a week. It's simple – I get up in the morning, I set tables up. I only have to cook breakfast for six people, I don't have a dining room full of hundreds of people. I cook breakfast, I clean up, and they go and do their thing, and I do mine. So having done this nearly six days a week for seven years, getting up in the morning and throwing up, and having absolute fear of having to do what I've been doing for the last seven years, it was driving me crazy. I just thought why am I feeling like this?

Luke: You realise from an early stage what sort of things trigger your anxiety. Like for me, I guess it's being around a lot of people or having a lot of attention placed on me.

Kate: Looking up into the sky, going to the beach, thinking about space, the thought of space freaks me out. The fact, how are we here? And that fact that I'll never know... we'll never know that, really makes me anxious and it feels like I'm not real.



Amber: Nervousness, shaking, which I'm probably presenting now, sweats, hot and sweaty, headaches, a lot of nausea, that type of thing, tiredness, achy.

Karen: Sometimes I just wake up in the middle of the night and I get this intense feeling of fear and my heart would race. But it was never because of anything. It was just there.

David: Owning my own business I rely very heavily on my phone and the internet. The phone would ring, and I would sit there and look at it. Because I knew, if I answered the phone, I may have to write a confirmation and I couldn't write. My handwriting was just all over the place. I couldn't even read it.

Kate: It takes over your life. It stops you from doing things you want to be able to do. You want doing what everyone else is doing and you feel like you can't.

Karen: It's stopping me from doing a lot of things. I wanted to do things in life and I wasn't able to do them, because I was always frightened. So that's when I decided, now's a good time to fix me.