Participant 24

Duration: 42:51

Dysmenorrheic girl (16 years old)

Interviewer: OK (name) could you start off by telling me about yourself?

Participant: I’m 16, an Army child, and I’ve moved around quite a lot, pretty much every 18 months erm I’m at (name of school) doing my A-levels and I’m doing erm Sociology, Psychology, English Literature and Applied Science.

Interviewer: Oh OK

Participant: Erm that’s about it…

Interviewer: OK so who’s at home, who do you live at home with?

Participant: Erm my younger brother and sister and my mum and my nan

Interviewer: And is it your mum who’s in the Army?

Participant: No, my dad’s in the Army and I’ve recently moved down here in August time like cause he married another woman and we didn’t get on and it was all a bit of a mmm so I moved down here.

Interviewer: OK so did you live with your dad previously and then now with your mum and your nan?

Participant: Yeah

Interviewer: OK and how is that working out, are you happy? Do you like it here?

Participant: Yeah I knew everyone before anyway cause my dad was based down here when I was younger and I went to school with all the girls that I’m with now so…

Interviewer: OK so you’ve made, re-made touch with people?

Participant: Yeah

Interviewer: OK, that’s good um so what type of things do you like to do in your spare time?

Participant: Um, I spend a lot of time with (friends name) and obviously the girls now whereas before I moved down here I was very into my sport like, I’d gone to England try-outs for gymnastics and hurdling and I was county level for Hockey and Netball, and I got my like certificates in dance and yeah so I did all of that and now I’m just like a full time bum (laughs)

Interviewer: So you don’t do dance or gymnastics anymore?

Participant: I don't do any of it anymore.

Interviewer: OK, do you miss it or?

Participant: Sometimes, sometimes when I’m just sat by myself I think oh it’s normally training time and I’m just sat doing nothing.

Interviewer: Are you gonna, have you got any plans to join any teams or clubs or anything?

Participant: No, I’m more focussed on my education now and getting a job and saving up and getting my drivers liscence and a car and holidays and stuff like that.

Interviewer: OK yeah

Participant: Yeah, I’m not in my boarding school bubble anymore, so I have to grow up.

Interviewer: Yeah, OK so how long have you lived here?

Participant: Since August so like 7 months, 7 or 8 months.

Interviewer: OK so can you tell me a little bit about when your period started and things like that?

Participant: Erm it was really awkward because so I was 11, just turned 11 in the November and I was with my dad and he hadn’t got a new girlfriend yet so I had to be like ‘dad, what, what’s this?’ Um and he had to get his mates on the phone like erm ‘my daughter’s just started her period, what do I do?’ so it was a really awkward situation for me and then I, my periods are like clockwork so always the same day, on time every month no matter what um but they were really, really heavy and painful where I’d been admitted to hospital before cause they thought there was something generally wrong with my stomach and it was just my period cramps and so like, the same as (friends name), I got put on medication and I got told to stop doing sport funny enough cause it was making it worse so where I was doing all my crunches and everything for my conditioning, it was making my periods like seize up more. Erm…

Interviewer: So can you tell me a bit more about like so, your dad wasn't really sure when your periods started, erm had he, had he had the conversation with you before?

Participant: We never had that sort of conversation cause he was like, I was very much a tomboy, obviously I was into my football and my rugby and like I was just one of the, I was a boy to him so we didn’t really have to have that talk and then it, I think it came a lot sooner than he thought as well so we had to sort of have the talk on the way to the shop, that was about as far as it went. We’re much closer now, he just throws them down the isle at me going ‘I’ve seen there’s none in the bathroom’, he just throws them at me now.

(Mum of friend walks in and gives participant a cup of tea)

Mum: You want more milk?

Participant: No that’s fine thanks

Mum: We have to teach these youngsters to say when you come in ‘would you like a cup of tea’ when you come in the hosue

Interviewer: No, it’s alright, it’s OK

(mum walks out)

Interviewer: Erm so, what type of, what type of thing did you do at the start, did you start getting the pain straight away or…

Participant: I didn't start getting the pain until a year after and then it just slowly got worse and worse and worse but funnily enough when like, drinking and obviously smoking as well, it got to a point where it was unbearable so I found like my social activities affected my actual periods more so I started like not going out as much, to reduce the pain and stuff.

Interviewer: OK and can you sort of describe it for me?

Participant: Mine were really bad like, I just felt like someone was stabbing me in the stomach, it was a horrible pain and mine came for like a week before as well then I’d have it a week before and all throughout it as well and I’d get like really sore boobs as well, and I’d get back pain and I’d get all of that and just be tired all the time and just be the worst person in the world and I’m sure if you are (friends name) later, nobody comes near me on my period because I am the most psychotic bitch in the world. I’ve gone crazy at people before and I found if I did drink on my period as well, there’ s no holding me back, I’ll just go on a mad one, on a mad one, it’s horrible. So I found myself on my periods not drinking, not doing anything, I’d be at home. Erm yeah I was just yeah really moody, I’d snap at anyone and then I’ll go from that to just crying an that’s the bit, I don’t cry, I don’t cry, it’s like if you see me crying it’s normally a stand back, she’s either very, very angry or she’s on her period so stand back again and put a little x on her cause she’s at the exploding mark (laughs)

Interviewer: OK and is that all hormonal or…

Participant: I think so yeah cause I’m not like it at any other time, I’m a very sort of laid back person so I’ll just chill unless someone actually irritates me and then I’ll go on a rant and the 5 minutes later I’ll be like… whereas when I’m on my period I’ll just go crazy consistently.

Interviewer: OK and does, does the pain make you feel worse? Is that a contributing factor?

Participant: Yeah, yeah, yeah I think so, yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah I can imagine pain isn’t the best thing to make you happier… so can you talk to me a little bit about the time-line of the pain, so you said it starts a week before your period?

Participant: Yeah a week before until it ends so yeah about, just under two weeks cause my periods last about 5 days

Interviewer: OK, OK and is it the same sort of intensity, does it feel the same throughout all of that?

Participant: Um it gets worse on the first 2 days of my period but then it sort of levels back out to like, it’s still really painful for me but like not as painful as them two days, I wouldn’t get out of bed. It was um ‘mum bring me soup, bring me my hot water bottle and dose me up on medication because I don’t want to feel the pain’

(participants spills some tea)

Interviewer: OK so can you tell me some times when it’s worse or better, is it the same every month like the feeling of the pain?

Participant: Well I was on the pill from year 10 to halfway through September time this year, or last year now and I still got my periods but they were still the same amount of pain like all the way throughout but they were just shorted so I didn't have to deal with the pain for like as long, I just had like 2 days of really heavy period, of really intense pain and that was it and then I came off of it because although I was having shorted periods, I was just a psychotic bitch all the time and I was putting a lot of weight on as well and obviously because I was doing my sport, it wasn’t getting me where I needed to be and I just wanted to eat all the time, all day round- I’d have my breakfast and be sat there at my boarding table with the rest of the girls and they’d have their museli and there was me with 5 pieces of toast, a bowl of cereal, 3 bowls of cereal and then it’d come to lunch and I’d have for lunch a salad and whatever else and then it’d come to dinner time, I’d eat again before I went to the gym, after I went to the gym, I was just consistently eating and it made me feel worse cause I was eating all the time. And I went on the coil about a month ago erm, that was like, sort of like, I’d wanted one for ages cause everyone was like, who had got it was ‘yeah its really good, you don't have periods anymore blah blah blah’ and I’ve just bled for the past 4 weeks. The first 2 weeks of it was like intense pain to the point where I thought I’d ripped it out when I’d gone on a night out, and but I just put it down to cause obviously the muscles are contracting around the coil and everything so I just put it down to that but it’s, it’s not a period, it’s just sort of like do you know the last day you have a period, it’s not really a period it’s just sort of a blotting, it’s not even a blot really it’s just consistently, it makes me feel bad cause like…

Interviewer: Yeah OK so the coil, was that specifically for the pain and the heaviness and that?

Participant: Yeah it was just I couldn’t deal with my periods anymore cause like before I got it in December cause my period falls on Christmas, like on Christmas day and it pretty much was just putting me on a downer and the pain was unbearable and my mum couldn’t get me out of bed for Christmas and then I was just sat there like and I couldn’t deal with it anymore emotionally either cause it was just draining me cause I was just consistently like…

Interviewer: OK, when you went to the, when you spoke to the doctors about going onto the coil, how did that come about?

Participant: Well I went in for a check up one day, that’s gonna be really awkward to say but yeah just to make sure I was clean and everything. It was just to reassure myself I’d been thinking about it for a while cause of like my periods and I was gonna go off it when I lived (location) just before I moved here but obviously you’ve got to go through the same process with the doctors and like where we live so I spoke about the contraception and they asked me if I was on contraception and they were like have you thought about it, and I was on the coil so I had that, that you know the initial sort of and you have to book an appointment, for an appointment and they ask you all about like which one you’d prefer so they’ve got 3 now, they’ve got like a coil that stays in for like 3 years and it doesn’t stop your periods, it just stops you getting pregnant erm, they’ve got the one I’ve got which is I can’t remember, and then you’ve got the jayden which is a smaller version which only lasts for 3 years erm but that’s only been out like 8 months now so they take you through that, they take you through the different things and where they put it and then they do you like a health check of like if you ever had cancer blah blah blah, miscarriages stuff like that, erm I actually missed my appointment the first time cause I was in (location) so obviously trying to get over there was quite hard and then my second one was like the beginning, end of July, January sorry not July, erm and I had that fitted and they like put this thing up you, it’s a clear thing and then they put local anaesthetic and that was the most painful thing I have ever experienced, it’s like a nip inside your wall but it’s really ard to describe and then it’s, this measuring tape inside you, I thought they were gonna make a kitchen extension in me or something, I was like ‘she’s got a measuring tape in my fufu’ like this isn’t OK erm and I had two women just, and it was the most uncomfortable thing I’ve ever been in but then I thought it would be 10 minutes embarrassed so it was reall quick but it was just embarrassing that I had some women’s hands up my lady parts and I was just like ohh I think I walked out of there and there was this bunch of girls and they’re all say there on a Friday afternoon getting themselves checked and I was just a bit like OK I’ll just addle out now, I waddled out and funnily enough I did actually go out that night as well and it stopped the pain and then the next day I was just like no, really bad, really weird as well and it just feels like a ripping sensation and it’s like, have you ever pulled a muscle like really bad?

Interviewer: Mhmm

Participant: Yeah and I was like, you know when you stretch it too far and it pulls, it’s a bit like that.

Interviewer: Does em, just going back a little bit to erm, you were talking about it was really embarrassing…

Participant: Yeah, yeah obviously cause obviously I missed my first appointment with the woman that I’d spoke to all the way through about it and she was the one who fit it as well and I felt a bit more comfortable with her cause I knew her and we’d gone through it and stuff like that cause obviously stuff like that and they know how many people you’ve like slept with so obviously you’ve confided in her but obviously when I turnt up and my second appointment it was a different woman so erm and I was a bit like oh, and she was really happy and really bubbly and she was just like ‘oh I’m gonna do this now’, the first thing she ever did was put her fingers in my and I was a bit like oh OK and she tried like cheering me up and she had to get someone else cause her hands weren't long enough and I was a bit like OK and so I had some other woman’s hands up and it was just a bit, felt a bit passed around by the doctors just having a good inspection of me

Interviewer: Do you think that, because you are young, they were particularly sensitive, did they really talk it through with you or….

Participant: I think so cause I went in there like knowing a lot about it anyway I think they were a bit more surprised because girls turn up and go I don’t really know what I’m getting, but I’d researched it cause I wanted to know like what was going in me cause it releases a hormone as well but not as much as like the pill does as well so the pill, potentially releases a lot more hormone because it has further to travel whereas, so yeah it was really quick in the 6 week check up as well cause obviously the coild has these little strings so they have to check where it’s positioned and if it’s sat there right so unfortunately I’ve got to go back in like 2 weeks but in (locations) to a different woman so…

Interviewer: OK did you have anyone, your mum or nan go with you?

Participant: One of my best mates but he’s a boy but he doesn’t go in with me, I was sort of sat there like ‘I just got fingered by a woman’ and we sort of have a laugh about it, it’s one of those situations where if you over think it, it will just play on your mind whereas it’s in there now, in 5 years I’ll be a lot more mature than I am now so it’s gonna be a totally different situation cause I’ll obviously have had a smear test and that by then anyway so…. Just one of those things

Interviewer: Yeah, is it your first sort of examination?

Participant: Erm I have had one before, but that was cause like they thought there was something wrong with me but there weren't so…

Interviewer: OK, erm can we also talk about, sorry going back- in a bit more detail, you mentioned you went to the hospital?

Participant: Yeah

Interviewer: Yeah so can you tell me a bit about how that sort of came about?

Participant: Yeah it was in fact just after my gymnastics trials so in year 10 and yeah year 10 well just before I went on the pill because I was actually curled over in my bed and my dad was got so worried about me cause he thought I was like passing a kidney stone or something I was in that much pain and he got really worried about me and I was just cry, I was just crying and screaming in bed cause of the pain but I hadn’t actually started to bleed yet and they, obviously I went to hospital and they were like it’s just coming on period pain and obviously I was sat there in like such denial that there must be something more wrong with me cause of the pain I was in but erm they just couldn’t like say why it was so painful, they couldn’t tell em why and they were just like it’s period pain so no I had like ultrasounds and thought I was pregnant and I was like oh, and then they just gave me like a strong pain killer for it and then that’s all I had and they advised me to go on contraception and that’s what I did.

Interviewer: Did the pain killer work?

Participant: No not really

Interviewer: OK, did you find um, the first time that you went to the doctors or whatever for your period pain um did you go with like you mum or….

Participant: I went with my dad

Interviewer: Yeah and was that OK talking to him about it?

Participant: Yeah like me and my dad are best, like it’s a bit of a bromance situation I just sit there, I’ll get in the car and he’s like ‘oh look at her, she’s a right fitty I’m gonna go and get her number’ he’s one of those people, he won’t take anything ever seriously but then when he does take things seriously he’ll confide in me like when him and his wife aren’t very happy he’ll ring me up and he’s like I miss you like cause obviously I left on a bit of a bad note with him but no when I go to the doctors I talk to him about everything.

Interviewer: It’s good that you can talk to him

Participant: Yeah, before he’s wife come in, I was like 13, 14 when she turnt up so me and my dad had 3 years of just living together and it was just me and him so it was like, he wasn’t just my add he was like my gym buddy and like, we just used to do stupid things all the time like I’d turn up at work, like I’d go to his work in the night time and we used to jump off the balcony onto the trampoline and random stuff like that so it was just… bit of a different connection that most girls have to their dads.

Interviewer: OK that sounds nice, that sounds good. Erm OK, can you tell me about, cause we talked about erm treatment, the pill, erm the coil, could can we talk about stuff that you do at home to relieve the pain, anything that works so… hot water bottles and…

Participant: Yeah I do have to have a hot water bottle and I just have chocolate, anything, anything like chocolate, crisps, anything I can get my hands on I just eat it but I don’t want proper food I just want greasy fat pizzas, kebabs, that’s all I want all day just my mum will literally stack up crisps, she an assistant manager of (name of supermarket) and obviously they do crisps, there is a dedicated box of crisps at my house, just for me cause I eat that many crisps (laughs).

Interviewer: (laughs) does she come home with lots of crisps for you?

Participant: I can go through a pack of 25, the walkers and they’ll be gone and she’ll just be sat there and she’ll go (name) you’re on your period aren’t you, what you on about? (name) you on your period?

Interviewer: Do you talk to your mum about it as well?

Participant: Um yeah, em and my mum are a bit different to my dad like, we were, we used to be really close when I didn’t live with her but I think that’s because she was trying to keep me like still connected with me whereas now we’re very, very distant like, I’ll just text her and be like blah blah blah blah blah and then she’ll be like OK like we rarely see each other now like cause I used to work with her as well, well like partially work with her, I used to do about 8 hours with her a week so that was a bit more bonding time but then it would turn into more a she was the manager so I’d see her more as a manager so like our relationship isn’t as but yeah I talk to her like about the coil like I spoke to her about it and asked if she was OK with it and obviously anything like that um like I talk to her about most things like my piercings like my mum’s very into her piercings and tattoos as well like she recently just had another one and she’s like had half of her sleeve done now in watercolour and like faces and like butterflies and stuff, it looks really cool. But I, we don't bond like a mother and daughter should, we bond about weird things so it’s not, I’ll talk to her about periods and the coil but nothing really too emotional.

Interviewer: Yeah, OK, OK erm can you talk to me a bit now about the impact that like it’s had on your life and, yeah can we start with like school?

Participant: School, well obviously it affected my sports quite a bit like I was getting big places with my sport and then at the peak of my like sport they just told me to stop doing it cause obviously the cramps came and then when I came back into it, there was someone 10 times better than me like and someone had already beaten me to it so, I was still doing it afterwards but I wasn’t in the place I could’ve been if I didn’t have them pains and then, with like, I just couldn’t be bothered to do anything cause I was in pain and like with boarding school cause that’s when my pain was pretty much at it’s worse, there is no way of getting out of it, unless you have ebola or your leg is falling off, you’re not going anywhere- they will keep you at school. It, 10 ft snow outside, you’re on the premises, you’re going to school so like but I found myself arguing with the teachers a lot, especially the PE teachers cause there’s a short little blonde called (name), she had little man syndrome erm and I was consistently arguing with her cause she was very aggressive and she just twisted me up the wrong way and I’d be face-to-face with her most months while I was on my period and I found myself like slacking, wouldn’t do anything, erm I did product design for my GCSE’s, and obviously I was building things and like um my teacher was also my tutor and we had banter like I used to write stuff on the board like (name of teacher) is a (inappropriate word) and stuff like that, it’s just really like, weird, I’m being serious, I’ve got a picture on facebook of him writing on the board and he used to ban me from the workshop cause he’d know straight away cause I’d come in, be in a bad mood, I’d break everything in his shop, in his workshop, like his saws, I’d just throw stuff around and he’ll say (name) get out so..

Interviewer: OK, so did you explain to him why?

Participant: I think he sort of knew cause it was only that one week a month where I was just a little ball of anger

Interviewer: Yeah OK so he could guess, but you didn't actually explicitly say ‘this is why I’m angry’ OK and were there any other teachers you felt you could kind of you could confide in?

Participant: Well obviously cause I was living in boarding school one of the English teachers actually, she spent a lot of time in the boarding house with us but specifically our year cause she obviously just grew attached to our year and she actually followed us up with us so she came, she was our year 8 head of year and she ended up being 6th form, well year 11 then going into 6th form as well cause she was just so attached to us girls like our year generally cause we were such a big, like heavy bunch to handle cause our erm it was an international boarding school so any of well, 99.9% of English people in our year were Army kids and obviously we were a lot different to the rest of them, cause all the rest of them were there cause they had money whereas I got, my dad put me into boarding school cause he went to Afgan so like we were all in different situations so she stuck with us and I think I made one connection within 5 years being there of a house parent and she was like a second mum to me. (participant burps) oh excuse me. Erm, she was like, I’d just go sit in her office and like I could cry to her and she’d just come and sit in my room and cheer me up and the best thing ever, she would always get me out of trouble. I’d be in the biggest amount of trouble like I flooded the common room one night and not just like a little bit, we had the biggest water fight we ever, cause all the English girls, cause we were up to no good as normal, we put washing up liquid in the washing machine, had a foam party and then started throwing water around and then the water was nearly up to our knees.

Interviewer: And she got you out of trouble?

Participant: Everyone else got gated but I didn't (laughs). We used to get so, like so much trouble like turn everything upside down like in the boarding school like all the notices, we used to take things off the boards so people couldn’t find it. We had a milk fight, food fights consistently where we used to eat in the cafeteria, it looked like Hogwarts, those long tables and the jacket potatoes used to get launched across them, jelly, coleslaw, anything on your plate would get thrown. And at one point we had to be escorted down to dinner and had to eat with the teachers cause they didn’t trust us (laughs) so yeah

Interviewer: Did you erm stay at like the same school then? You said that you moved around every 18 months?

Participant: Yeah I stayed permanent, that’s like, it was one of the main, part of my dad going to Afgan for 9 months, he didn’t want me moving round with him so I stayed in there and it was like stability for me, for my education but then it like messed up anyway because with us in our year, there’s only being 12 girls, English girls, they could turn quite nasty and I ended up getting severely bulled in year 11 and it like impacted my results in my GCSE’s, I was meant to come out with like 9 A stars and I only got like one so, it impacted me but then it put me in a worse place and then my periods did get irregular then when I was really, really down I was like having a one-day period if that.

Interviewer: Was you still getting pain then?

Participant: No not really, I think cause I was so worn down, my body wasn’t functioning.

Interviewer: OK so like obviously what you’ve just said you know, getting bullied and was there anyone friends wise you could say, when you were experiencing pain at school was there anyone you could go to and say I need a bit of support or I need someone to talk to

Participant: Well I lived in a room with my best friend for 4 years so… we got to the point where we were very open with each other, where she’d come sit in the shower with me, I’d be in the shower and she’d sit on the toilet seat or walk round the room naked like she became more, more of a sister sort of figure than she did anything else

Interviewer: OK so you did have someone who could…

Participant: Yeah, she used to go and get me my toast with chocolate spread on it, I’d be cooped up in bed and we’d have the longest yard on or she’d get me out of bed and be like come on (name), we’ll go gym, get your frustration out in the gym. We were always there to support each other like I was on the phone to each other, she lives in (location) now sorry slurring my words (laughs)

Interviewer: No honestly you’re not at all

Participant: I had her on the phone and she was crying her eyes out because of a family situation like we’re still really close and because of the support we’ve had with each other, it was someone I could confide in while I was there.

Interviewer: OK that’s good, can you tell me about your social life? Did it ever impact on going out with friends or…

Participant: Well actually, truthfully I’ll tell you a very funny story well just about the week after I got the coil put in and I started my period again erm we were having drinks round (friends name) , where was I, we were at (name)’s, and it was one night (name of friend) wasn’t there actually and erm I had a few drinks and I just lost it, I went crazy, blacked out, hit one of my best friends, knocked her clean out…

Interviewer: OK, was that because you were hormonal or…

Participant: There was nothing that I could explain it to than I came on my period that day and I’ve, anyone, my friend sat there and cried because no one has ever seen me like that erm apparently I was like someone else, and said you seemed possessed because you weren't making sense like you, they were like you haven't even drunk that much, you just went crazy and you were crying and … I was like sorry, I don’t really know what to say…

Interviewer: Did you tell them, and say look I came on…

Participant: Something like that, it was obviously the mixture of my hormones and the hormones in the coil or whatever and then alcohol wasn’t a good mix so I just clicked, something went in my brain and I went crazy

Interviewer: OK and do you ever not want to go out…

Participant: Normally if I’m like that I’ll sort of say to (friend) what you doing this weekend, nothing, I’m gonna come and hibernate in your bed, that was sort of how it went and we would just hibernate with each other and she’d look after me while I was being a psychotic little random person

Interviewer: That sounds good so you’ve got your support there as well

Inaudible then plate falls off table and toast falls onto the floor

Interviewer: So how about your mum and your nan, so when you do feel like that, does it ever cause conflict?

Participant: Yeah all the time, all the time like cause obviously we all have different menstrual cycles so we’re all moody at different times so my nan hasn’t had her menopause yet either cause she’s still quite young, she’s like 55 so erm she’ll, we’’ll all have periods at different times and we’ll all end up arguing at different times because we’re all moody um then you’ll have mum will start crying and then a week later we’ll have the other one crying feeling that no one loves me and you don’t spend enough time with me so yeah knowing how it is

Interviewer: OK and are they quite understanding?

Participant: It’s not normally me that gets emotional (laughs), it’s normally them cause I normally, I sort of got used to it now, I’ll go out anyway sort of like if I don’t get out of bed, I won’t do anything productive for the rest of the week so, I won’t drink, I’ll just be with them whereas my mum just sort of goes all weird, you sort of avoid her for a week if she’s on her period. Just little things, she’ll just start an argument and it’ll like, you walk in the door and she’ll be like ‘you’re 5 minutes late than you normally are’ and I’ll be like mum you’ve been at work and then she’ll be like ‘yeah but I wanted to see you’ and I’m fine, yeah

Interviewer: And what do you do?

Participant: I’m sort of like mum where has this come from? And she’s like ‘I don't get to see you’ and this was only Thursday, so quite recent (laughs)

Interviewer: OK so, can you tell me about, you mentioned at Christmas when it’s happened…

Participant: Oh it’s horrible cause I’ve been really ill as well where I’ve had glandular fever where I’ve been really, really tired anyway and like run down and I’ve had that since November and obviously my social habits don’t make it any better erm but erm I just started like literally Christmas Eve I went to the toilet and was like oh merry Christmas and I got my period. I was like that is the greatest Christmas ever, last month I got Christened with it on valentine’s day, I was like god is just telling me something, they’ve given me a present, my body loves me and nature loves me and it just puts me down because you can’t really do anything because you feel ill or when you’re on your period you just sweat two times more and you just smell and you just want to hibernate in a cave and then it’s Christmas day and you have to put a brave face on and cook dinner and dress all nice and I was just sat there…. and yeah you just don't want to move, and you want to get changed all the time cause you feel like you’re smelly and…

Interviewer: Yeah

Participant: Oh my god (friends name) had been moaning about me all day, she went on a mad one because she was like ‘you just don’t shut up, you’re so moody, you’re doing my head in just shut up before I punch you’ and I was just like why are you talking to me like this like nearly crying and then I was like I need to go to the toilet and she was like what do you mean? And I was like I need to go to the toilet and we were sat in the middle of a field and the only thing I had was a portaloo to find out that I had bled through my jeans and had to sit there through the next 4 hours with my bled through jeans. I cried. It was horrible; it just puts you in such an awkward situation cause like when you’re so far away from home, you can't do anything about it and the fact that I couldn’t have a fag because there were teachers like half a mile down, I had to sit behind my own tent thinking they’re not gonna see it with smoke blowing out of my tent while I’m going (breathes) in an emotional state because I wanted to be clean and I was just emotional which made me cry more and I have a nickname, they all call me Naomi because Naomi spelt backwards is I moan, (laughs) so my nickname is Naomi because when I’m on my period, all I do is moan, everything, my hair doesn’t go right, I’m not coming out my eyelashes aren’t stuck on.. that is me every Friday anyway, I refuse to come out of the house if my eyelashes are not stuck on properly. I will peel them off and re-do them again. Like one time she was like (name), we are stood in the middle of (name of club), and your eyelashes are coming off and I was like take em off, get em off my face and just going crazy because it wasn’t stuck on right, that, that is another thing, going to your friends house isn’t so bad when you’re on your period but when your out, you can’t really dance, you can’t really do anything, you’re just that awkward person stuck in the corner with their drink like…. Watching everyone else enjoy themselves because you don’t really wanna do anything, you don't want to wear a skirt either because you feel a bit too open but you don’t want to wear trousers because you get hot and sweaty and feel like you’re gonna smell, there’s just no winning, there’s not.

Interviewer: OK so because of things like that does it impact on how confident you feel or how..

Participant: Sometimes like when I have fits about what I wear, I’ll do it in the morning as well, I can’t wear that because I look fat or I cant wear that skirt because it won’t fit and the only thing I want to wear is my red addidas trackies and my big hoodie with my hot water bottle, with my hair up looking all manky in my bed but you can't cause, can you imagine that ringing up work, ‘I’m not coming in today’ , why? ‘erm I’m on my period, sorry mate but I don't feel like coming in today’, it’s just not a valid excuse

Interviewer: No, have you ever tried?

Participant: Well, I’ve done it for numerous reasons for getting out of work and my main reasons because I only started work in September and I was a really, really hard worker until I sort of found…

Interviewer: Where did you work sorry?

Participant: I worked in (name of supermarket),

Interviewer: OK yeah, yep with your mum

Participant: Yeah, and when November hit it was sort of like I’m not coming in today, my glandular fever’s playing up, so I did play off that to the max and so when my periods got really heavy before I got my implant, my coil put in, I was ringing up going ‘yeah I’m not coming in today cause I have bled through at work as well because I got to the point in the last 8 months where I was changing every hour like clockwork or I’d bleed through so it was pretty, it was disgusting, I just felt disgusting all the time. I just wanted to stand in the shower all day.

Interviewer: Yeah I understand. Erm and finally has it impacted on anything else that you would normally do like in the day?

Participant: It affects my relationships with people quite a bit cause obviously how stress I got, I push quite a lot of people away when I’m actually on my period like (friend) used to get really tetchy at the start cause I’d push her away but then she sort of realise that, it weren't me, it was my period and that she just sort of got used to like, it’s not that I push them, I just moan and then I’ll get upset about nothing and then I’ll get angry about nothing and I just turn into a bipolar person for a week. Yeah I get te- about anything, someone will say oh (name) your hair is a different colour oh yeah I’ll just get techy about something like I was round my friend’s house the other day and I was wearing a crop top and a pair of jeans on and her friend turned round and went (name), you’re getting quite fat aren’t you and I just started crying and I was just like couldn’t deal with it and she was just like you look really fat in the face, that week I’d been quite happy cause I got into a pair of size 6 jeans and she comes out with (name) you’re quite fat. But like it does affect the way I am during the day, I’ll be quite secluded and cut off to people just cause I sort of learnt to leave people alone otherwise I’ll just be moody, I’m just moody.

Interviewer: Is there anything else?

Participant: I dunno I have blabbed on a bit

Interviewer: Not at all, not at all. Any other ways or things that make it better or things that, is there just anything really that you want to talk about?

Participant: Chocolate, chocolate is the saviour of life. But that is a thing like, cause you’re eating the chocolate and then you’re like well I’m gonna get fat now so then I just end up crying about being fat as well. I used to get proper spotty as well like I got prescription, again prescription from the doctors for like special creams and stuff cause I went through a stage where I had a pizza face and err that made me really self-conscious so then when my period came and it got even worse, I’d get even more self-conscious and put more make up on and then get more spots cause I’m caking the make up on so there’s just not any winning on that one. But they’ve cleared up loads so now I don't really get any spots anymore.

Interviewer: OK is it OK to stop the recording?

Participant: Yeah

Interviewer: Thank you