Participant 3

Duration: 38.42

Dysmenorrheic girl (17 years old but almost 18)

Interviewer: OK (name), if it’s OK, could you start off by telling me about yourself?

Participant: Erm (laughs), erm… um I’m generally happy…

Interviewer: mhmm

Participant: Very easily excitable

Interviewer: Mhmm

Participant: Erm, I don’t really know…

Interviewer: How old are you?

Participant: I’m nearly 18, so I’m 17 at the moment.

Interviewer: OK, and what school year are you in?

Participant: I’m in year 13 at sixth form right now, erm yeah

Interviewer: What subjects are you studying?

Participant: Erm, I do health and social care BTech, English language, and media studies.

Interviewer: OK, how are they going?

Participant: They’re going pretty well yeah just a lot of work to sort of handle cause yeah I’m applying to uni next year so I’ve got to get everything done erm and mocks in January as well so yeah…

Interviewer: Yeah, lots of revision and stuff like that... (pause) OK, have you got any hobbies or anything like that that you do?

Participant: Err I used to read a lot like before like if I don’t have a lot of work to do, I do, I do read. I used to go swimming a lot, now I do, I work out at home, erm not really, erm just watch films, just cause of media so I’m told to watch a lot of films so I do that (laughs).

Interviewer: (laughs) that sounds good.

Participant: And play with my cats really.

Interviewer: And how about your family and living arrangements? Who do you live at home with?

Participant: Erm, I live at home with my mum, dad and my sister.

Interviewer: Mhmm

Participant: Erm, it’s, it’s alright, I’m quite close to my mum than anyone really err I don't know why that is (laughs).

Interviewer: How old is your sister?

Participant: She’s 9. Yeah, she’s alright, I help her with homework so… yeah.

Interviewer: OK so would it be alright if I ask you a bit about the period pain that you experience?

Participant: Yeah

Interviewer: OK, so can you start off by telling me a bit about that?

Participant: Erm, er well I started having, I started coming on my period when I was 11 and it was honestly the most horrendous thing I’ve ever experienced. It was horrible like I don't know this is normal with everyone but I used to get loads of cramps when I was on my period like it usually goes like from my foot, all the way up my thighs, like I couldn't even walk, like it was horrible like so because of that I had to miss quite a bit of school every month because I couldn’t always make it.

Interviewer: Yeah

Participant: But it was a lot easier when my mum got a car because I didn’t have to use public transport but erm, I just used to find myself sort of sitting in the medical, the nurse place quite a lot which was quite annoying cause they’d only give you paracetamol and it never really helped anything so that did annoy me a little bit. And also with paracetamol, they used to ring up my mum and ask her if they could give me paracetamol for period pain so that really did annoy me

Interviewer: Yeah

Participant: Yeah err, I don’t really know, I used to get like loads of cramps like, like it was sort of not very nice at all, it, it was alright if I sat in a really warm place with like a hot water bottle erm I used to get loads of stomach cramps as well.

Interviewer: So when, when did that pain start? Was it at the same time as your periods started?

Participant: Yeah, it was as soon as my, as soon as I started at like 11 it just, um, I don’t know if it did get worse and worse every month cause you just sort of get it for like a week and then you don't get it for like 3 weeks and then you think it’s gotten worse but I don’t think it really did. It stayed the same and it did hurt a lot and I did used to bleed a lot as well so that wasn’t really, yeah it wasn’t very easy, it was very sort of annoying and I used to get really moody as well because of it. So, obviously my mum understood but we used to get in quite a bit of arguments at the time because I was just really moody and sort of, felt quite selfish but you know cause I was in a lot of pain and I didn’t really feel like anyone got that. Erm but yeah it did get a little bit more bearable when I got on the pill because, they gave me a couple of pills when I went to the GP last year, early last year

Interviewer: Mhmm

Participant: Erm so they put me on the microgyenon err that, and.. that helped but I still, obviously the cramps and stuff didn’t go away but instead of it being well, instead of me bleeding for 7 days straight, I’d only erm, I mean the gap is obviously still 7 days but I only come on for about 3 days of those so it’s not too bad.

Interviewer: Mhmm

Participant: It’s more bearable so I can go about and stuff so… it’s, it’s gotten much easier now.

Interviewer: Does the pain last throughout the whole of the period so all of them 3 days?

Participant: Erm yeah it does erm but I can usually get it before as well so like the day before so that I know that I’m going to sort of come on.

Interviewer: Yeah

Participant: So suppose if I come on at like midnight then I’ll get the pain about 5pm the day before so I sort of know yeah, that I’m going to, yeah.

Interviewer: OK, can you describe the pain for me?

Participant: Oh gosh (laughs)

Interviewer: Only if you can…

Participant: I don't really know, it’s just like, very uneasy, like in your stomach you get like, I can’t really explain it, it’s just like sort of cramps and a little, I don’t know how to sort of explain it but yeah. Your, err one of my thighs always, yeah like every month I suppose it would be my left thigh, it was heavier than my right thigh and I don't know what it was but it was always that thigh that would always cramp, like always my thighs would really really hurt like I couldn’t really walk about- it was the most weirdest pain, like I don’t know that would, if that’s normal with everyone but… I used to have that. It was just, I dunno, it was just really painful, I couldn't walk on it or anything

Interviewer: Yeah

Participant: Especially cause I didn’t feel like I could walk cause I felt like I was gonna get a cramp so…

Interviewer: So, was it the same sort of feeling as the tummy cramps? Was that the same type of pain all throughout so in your tummy and legs or was it different?

Participant: I think it was a little different, I’m, not sure why but yeah, it really just felt like, my thighs were in pain and then from the bottom of my knees like my calves and stuff, that was like cramping pain erm but my stomach it was more like a, I don’t really know to be honest, I think it was because you know when you’re on your period, your tummy does hurt a little bit so I think it was just that and I obviously felt a bit bloated as well and yeah, I think that was just because of, yeah… I don’t really know how to describe them to be honest…

Interviewer: No, that’s OK, that’s alright. Erm so, can you talk to me about like if there’s any other symptoms you get so you said about sort of moods and..

Participant: Well, I get loads of headaches now because of stress but yeah erm, yeah I did get headaches at the time. It was really weird, before I erm, just before I went on my period, a day or two, a few days before, I used to get 2 spots you know like the ones that you get like from under your skin like but they’d always disappear like when I’d come on, they’d just sort of tell me that I’m gonna be on. It was so strange. Erm yeah that, and erm, I don’t really know. I used to get sort of muscle pains, and stuff, yeah I don’t know why (laughs) again, I dunno…

Interviewer: So like general aches and pains?

Participant: Yeah errr yeah

Interviewer: Has em, has the pain changed at all since you first started getting it at 11?

Participant: Erm, well the, the feeling is still sort of the same but the extent to it has sort of changed. It was so bad before but I think it’s only gotten better now because I’m on the pill but if I was to go off the pill it would be a massive like you know…

Interviewer: You think it would come back?

Participant: Yeah, it would come back so bad like honestly I could not stop crying when I was on like the first couple of times it was horrible like I couldn’t leave the sofa or my bed yeah, it wasn’t, it wasn’t very nice (laughs)

Interviewer: No, I can imagine

Participant: Yeah.

Interviewer: Erm, did you notice any times when the pain was worse or better? Was it the same every month?

Participant: Erm, yeah there are some months when it’s better and like last month I felt like it was really bad erm, I don't remember why… I have this little app on my phone where I sort of note down all the symptoms and stuff…

Interviewer: Is that helpful?

Participant: Yeah it is because then I can go back and see how many days it lasted and I mean it’s lighter now, it used to be really heavy before erm so it’s gotten lighter now, err some cramps have slowed down err my leg cramps, I get those in the winter as well when it’s really cold outside erm err no I mean I feel quite sick sometimes, I don’t know why, I think it’s cause of my headaches and I just feel like really sick.

Interviewer: So that all coincides with your periods?

Participant: Yeah during the time mhmm I think I do get yeah, I get some em muscle pains as well em… I think that’s about it…

Interviewer: Erm, so are they any times when…. Does the intensity change like over the course of the periods?

Participant: Oh err the pain, yeah the pain doesn’t vary, I mean it doesn't, I mean it doesn't really hurt much before, it’s just like a little bit so I know like sort of like a tingling you know like OK so I think I might be coming on erm and then I do come on and maybe the first day, and then the second day a little bit I think they’re the worst days and then the third and fourth day they’re alright. Yeah it’s sort of, alright.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Participant: Yeah, alright, the first two days are very painful cause I get a lot of the, err I take a lot of the ibroprofen and stuff now so it’s bearable, it’s more alright I think. Paracetamol doesn’t really help anyone, it really doesn’t (laughs).

Interviewer: Yeah. Do you have um any other medical conditions? Any unrelated things?

Participant: Mmm no I don’t think so. No, that’s about it.

Interviewer: So generally, generally you’re quite healthy..

Participant: Yeah

Interviewer: Erm so, you were talking a bit about ibuprofen and paracetamol not working and things erm and you said that the doctor put you on the pill, can you tell me about like the first time that you went to the doctors and how that was?

Participant: Erm….

Interviewer: If you can remember that…

Participant: OK yeah, I can I remember going to the doctors I think when I was about 12, erm this is when I was taking a lot of days off and I was quite worried because my mum, whenever my mum was on she, you couldn't really tell that my mum was on like she’d just be around the house like normal and then like, I’d ask her like you know, do you get this and she’s like no I’m on now and I’m fine and I was like oh so why am I not like, so I was a bit erm and then obviously I knew (friend) so I knew how we both were and so I went to the doctors for a couple of checkups like because I wanted to you know, get something and erm at first they were really quite annoying and they said oh you just need to eat well and do loads of exercise and drink loads of water and I thought OK fair enough (laughs) and then I went 3 more times I think during the course of the year and they said the same thing again and again.

Interviewer: Did you try doing that?

Participant: Yeah I did, I did, I ate loads of broccoli and greens, I mean I’m fine with it now but at the time I hated it (laughs) err I drank loads or water… err yeah I tried my best erm but it just wasn't really working I mean, I knew it wasn’t gonna work, it was quite silly. So I went back and they said oh you should do exercise. At the time I hated exercise (laughs) so I was like that’s not gonna help and, and then I went to see them about my cramps as well and they gave me, oh they gave me this kind of gel to massage into wherever you’re having the cramp. I forgot what it was called but like that was just unnecessary in my opion. That did not help any, like there was no point doing, it wasn’t gonna do anything

Interviewer: Yeah

Participant: So that didn’t help at all like, I had to put it all over my thighs, all over my foot ergh everywhere and it was just such a horrible pain like I couldn't really bare it. So that was me from like 11 to 15, 16 maybe and then, then I found out through (friend) that she had gone to the doctors for some like pills and stuff so I thought you know what, I might as well try that because nothing really works on me… on no before that I think I took some neurofen, I think neurofen helped a little but I had to take like one every 4 hours and I thought you know, it’s better if I go to the doctors to get something for actual period pains and I talked to (friend) about it. So I went and they gave me this, this little box of pills, of little tablets and erm I was like OK fair enough I’ll try it, it didn’t help, it made no difference at all, if anything I think my cramps got a little worse that week as well so I was, I was like you know what I don’t really want this so I went back and then I said would the pill help because I heard it’s very effective for, not only contraceptive, but also period pain relief so they said yeah we’ll put you on it and see how you’re doing and I have not left it since because it’s got so much better now.

Interviewer: Yeah, so this has been the thing that..

Participant: Yeah

Interviewer: How did you hear that the pill was something that would help?

Participant: Err well, I was talking to, well (friend) told me because it was really weird, because we hang around so much we normally get it around the same time so we’re always together and so she was like, and I was like oh how are you so alright cause I was really not, has everything gotten better, and she told me that she’s gone on because of something and I was like oh, I was really confused because I thought that was only for birth control and she was like no it’s not because it controls erm your hormones as well and I was like OK fair enough. So I did a bit of research before and then I asked them and my doctor seemed really OK with it and she was like yeah, yeah I think I’d really recommend that and mum was a bit mmmm erm but it does really help so…

Interviewer: Why do you think that your mum was a bit unsure?

Participant: cause of erm birth control (laughs) and erm because I have a boyfriend so she was a bit like mmm but yeah.

Interviewer: How did, in the end though, how did she become OK with it?

Participant: I think she just learnt, I mean I got better with it obviously like I’m so much better than I used to be and that’s sort of, and also my doctor did say to her it’s because she needs it for this, it’s not for that so- my mum’s obviously not 100% happy with it but she sort of gets on with it now yeah.

Interviewer: And erm, did your mum always go to the doctors with you?

Participant: She used to yeah but now I just go on my own yeah.

Interviewer: Mhmm, would erm, did you find that that’s helpful to have your mum there or?

Participant: Erm, not really, I felt like a bit of a child cause I knew what I needed and I knew what I wanted to talk to her about and stuff but I felt like whenever I talked to the doctor and stuff she’d be like oh no, and then she’d come in and be like oh no this this and this and so the doctor would be like OK, fair enough and then she would try and talk to me again it would just be a bit, you know and I didn’t really feel like I was getting myself across but she, she doesn’t really come with me anymore so I think it’s easier now.

Interviewer: Is that why she doesn’t come with you now?

Participant: Erm no, she just says that I’m old enough so I can go on my own now.

Interviewer: So now do you feel like your experience of going to the doctors is better?

Participant: Yeah it is better I think because obviously if I have any worries, anything that I want to talk to them about my health I can just sort of tell them and they’ll go oh this this and this but with my mum there it can be something like I’d already talked to her about before like suppose I was having headaches because of stress, my mum would be like god you don’t stress about anything, you don’t have any worries because you’re so young… but then like the doctors would understand because you know, the stress of exams and stuff so I can sort of talk to them about that so yeah it’s easier going now I think.

Interviewer: Yeah, that’s understandable. Err can I ask if you have had an examinations or anything like that?

Participant: Errr, could you be more specific?

Interviewer: Have the doctors tried to find out the cause of your pain like examined you physically…

Participant: No they haven’t, the only thing they’ve done is check my height and weight, ask me if I eat loads of vegetables and drink loads of water but that’s about it.

Interviewer: Have they told you if they think there might be a cause.

Participant: No

Interviewer: No, nothing like that…

Participant: No because I have kept asking my mum because I don’t sort of know if it’s inherited or if it just happens person to person because my aunty, she gets it really bad as well erm she gets, she used to get really bad, I think she still does, like, like,like,like as bad as me, maybe even worse I’m not sure erm but my mum’s fine with it she just, you know, so I dunno, I’ve asked her and she doesn’t have anything like this so no the doctors haven’t really said anything to be honest.

Interviewer: OK erm and so what do you think could be the cause, do you have any idea if there’s a cause to it?

Participant: I thought it could be inherit, inheri, I can’t even say it- like genetically inherited, it could be because I know that like some people in the family do have it erm but nn, no I’m not really sure- that’s just a theory.

Interviewer: Erm, and can I ask, what do you do to relieve your pain so I know that the pill has helped you but is there anything that you do at home. You sort of mentioned that warm places help…

Participant: Yeah I have a bed that’s pressed up against the radiator so what I do is lie down, put my really fluffy socks on and just sort of life put them on the radiator like that and erm just sort of sit there for a bit and you know I put my clothe… yeah before I put on my clothes or like my blanket, I just put them on the radiator so I get warm. And yeah, my cats, I let my cats sit next to me because you kno when your focus is off of it, yeah my cats really do help with pain relieving. Yeah I used to, when I had more time, I used to go jogging and you know work out but only if I was doing it regularly because if I just started I’d get muscle aches anyway erm yeah I used to do that but yeah I think just sit with my cats. Um, yeah when I was in year 8, when I was 12 cause I used to have days off, what I would do is, I would go… my mum would be sitting on her laptop because she works from home, I used to go sit next to her on my laptop, I used to watch cartoons all day to get my mind off sort of everything.

Interviewer: Did that work?

Participant: Yeah it really does work so yeah when I’m home I watch telly a lot and try to keep warm and feel better and cats (laughs)

Interviewer: And do you find the warmth works?

Participant: It does, it does work yeah cause as long as I’m not cold, cause when I’m cold I get cramps all in my legs and stuff cause you know when your tummy hurts and you want to put a hot water bottle on it?

Interviewer: Yeah

Participant: Yeah, it’s soothing.

Interviewer: Yeah OK, so do you have any future expectations about how things might be in the future?

Participant: Err

Interviewer: Do you still see it hurting in years to come?

Participant: Probably, I dunno probably, if they don’t have an amazing period pain cure by then then probably, probably still have it yeah.

Interviewer: What’s your plan then? Will you stay on the pill?

Participant: Yeah probably, it does help but if there’s any alternatives or anything better because I’d go for that too cause it is a nuisance, it really is so yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah, OK. Can we now talk a bit about the effect that your period pain has on your life?

Participant: OK

Interviewer: OK you did talk about school absenteeism and things like that, do you still take a lot of time off?

Participant: Yeah, during my GCSE’s it was not helpful cause like I’d have to take loads of days off even during like, oh I remember once erm we were gonna go on a school trip to year 7 to Thorpe par because I was on, and that was really annoying for me because I’d never been before and that so I really wanted to go but I couldn’t. Um I missed a lot, a lot of stuff with my friends from erm school, which obviously at the time you’d think yey no school but I literally would have done anything to go to school that week because it was so bad erm, yeah that, I dunno, it was, I dunno really, trying to think….

Interviewer: (pause) if you did take time off, how erm, how many days might you take?

Participant: Literally a week. I wouldn’t plan it, it would be like today, my mum would say can you, can you do anything and I would be like no I really can’t and she’d be like OK and then I took the day off and I’d see how I feel tomorrow and then it would be the same thing tomorrow and the day after and the day after and then before you know it, a whole week’s gone and yeah, you’ve just missed like a week of school. At the time when you were in high school, it didn’t really matter because it wasn’t anything really important that we were doing anyway, but it’s worse now, if I was in high school now because they do a lot now but at the time it didn’t really matter. But it was really helpful that I went on the pill just before A levels because if I had taken days off I would have honestly failed. Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. OK, how about things like exams, you mentioned your GCSE’s, did you….

Participant: No I didn’t do as well as I was meant to do at GCSEs, I don’t know if that was the cause or, I sort of didn’t revise as much as I should have, yeah I ended up getting loads of C’s when I was predicted As and Bs. I did miss a lot of school at the time and I think I’m fine now because I can go in now.

Interviewer: Um, if you did go in, when you had pain- how would your day at school be?

Participant: Oh it’d be terrible. OK, I’d go in, mum would drop me off, well before mum would drop me off I used to get the train and the bus into school and waking up at seven in the morning, well waking up at 6 in the morning and that’s bad enough without (laughs). And I’d have to get changed and pack a load of pads in my bad because I don’t live around here I live in (location) so it was a train and a bus journey just to get to school so I used to get on a bus to get to the train and then get on another bus to school. And then I’d get there and to be honest, friends were a distraction in lesson and stuff and again you’d be sitting there. I dunno what it is but when I stay still, I feel it a lot and so I dunno what it is but I start to automatically start shaking my leg I don’t know what it is, I dunno if it’s like a, I duno if that’s how I deal with pain physically or what but sometimes I'd get the pain really bad on my thigh or my lower stomach but that’s when I used to be like I need some paracetamol or something so I used to go to the nurses office and it was, it was really annoying because erm, because who worked in the office were quite mouthy, not to you but like with each other and like they’d talk about it and you could hear them talk about it and they’d be like oh they’re just trying to take loads of lessons off so they don’t have to go in, this and this and like…

Interviewer: How did that make you feel?

Participant: Annoyed, really annoyed me because they might be sailing through it like yeah you know but like I just don’t understand cause some people do have it bad but erm yeah that did really annoy me and my mum didn’t drive, she only started driving when I was in year 10 so before that she couldn’t even come and pick me up from school so I’d, I’d, I’d have to get the train home anyway so I literally had to just bite my way through it and just do the whole day of school with it.

Interviewer: Do you find that it affects your ability to do your work or anything like that?

Participant: Definitely, cause that’s all you can really focus on. The only distractions are your friends at lunch when they’re all like, when we’re all being like all silly and laughing and stuff cause like happy thoughts take your mind off the pain but when you’re doing maths, you don’t really care about maths (laughs)

Interviewer: (laughs)

Participant: No, it was, it was horrible, I wasn’t really paying attention half the time.

Interviewer: Yeah, how were the school about you taking time off?

Participant: I don’t really know cause my mum, oh no they weren't very happy cause, obviously cause of my absence, my attendance obviously went down and every single year they’d be like (name), you can do better this year and I would just be like yeah I try but I can’t help it, you don’t understand and yeah it was only, that wasn’t the only reason I took time off, I’d be ill sometimes so that all added up but a week, I know it’s a bit much but you can’t really help it if you’re you know, struggling.

Interviewer: So erm, so if you, if you went into school and you experienced the pain, did you talk to any teachers about it?

Participant: No, no I never did. I spoke to my friends about it because someone would always have paracetamol or something and so it’d save me from going to the office and being there for a bit cause it was really weird cause what they’d do is they’d make you sit down for a bit, give you a glass of water and make you, sort of hope you’ll get better in like half an hour and I didn’t understand, I would’ve sat in lesson for half an hour and just been there but yeah, erm yeah I’d ask my friend for a paracetamol because again, they’d ring up your mum and ask if it was OK for them to give you one and it just felt silly, it’s just paracetamol but yeah erm so I talked to friends more than teachers really.

Interviewer: Why didn’t you want to talk to teacher about it.

Participant: I dunno it was just awkward. I dunno I just didn’t feel like I could because If I said anything they’d be like go to the office so yeah I think that’s the only thing I ever said like yeah I have a lot of pain, cramps and stuff can I go to the office. There was not much they could really say

Interviewer: Erm, can I ask how it’s impacted on daily activities and things that you would normally be able to do or…

Participant: I used to go swimming every weekend or like some days after school. Erm and obviously I couldn’t go as much as I wanted to because I’d be on. Yeah, I dunno, I couldn’t really go out with my friends as much as I wanted to if I had that. School trips maybe that fell upon… and also because with the pill you obviously know when you’re gonna be on, but before I, I didn't know, like I didn’t keep a little diary or anything, my mum always told me to I just didn't really so it was just sort of suddenly.

Interviewer: Did that impact on you making plans?

Participant: Yeah it did a lot of the time, I had to cancel a lot of the time just cause- I’d always say maybe I can go this time, maybe maybe I can and, and I couldn’t in the end and I had to cancel last minute and I felt quite bad after that because I did want to go but yeah that was quite annoying.

Interviewer: How, how were your friends about that?

Participant: Well if it was (friend), she would completely understand, she’d say that’s fine, as long as you feel better and then some, some other friends were like OK nevermind, I, I don’t really know how they were, they acted alright but I don’t think they were. From someone who was going through the same thing, I think they were more likely to understand.

Interviewer: OK so can I ask, has it affected anything about how you feel about yourself at all?

Participant: I don't know, I never thought about this. Err I don’t know. No idea (laughs)

Interviewer: That’s OK, that’s absolutely fine, don’t worry. Erm, and how about, you mentioned you know sort of friendships and relationships and you know, some people you don’t know if they were OK with you cancelling and things like that, were they supportive if you talked to them about it…

Participant: Oh yeah they were, if I needed a paracetamol or something they’d be like yeah yeah I’ll give you one um, but I don’t think they understood the extent of the pain like oh I remember, I was staying round my friends house and I had a cramp.. oh no… yeah… I think it was like 2 days before I came on and I told you how I get the cramps before anyway, we were ata like a pool party type thing erm and my leg, I started cramping and I was like I’ve got to go upstairs and get changed, I need to put socks on and dry up, I need like a hairdryer to my foot and em and she was like OK… and so I went up and I don’t really think she understood cause she was standing there like what are you doing (laughs) and I was in so much pain and… Oh yeah and when I’m in a lot of pain and I need to sort of, when I have a cramp I need to really like sort of, I dunno, I’m all shouty like I dunno what to do like all in a panic and erm I need like a pair of socks. I call for my mum when I’m at home and it makes me cry a lot and I’m just like on my bed and I’m like I need to you mum, mum come here, and so she’d go, grab a towel or something, put it on the radiator and come and like get… and so I prefer being at home a lot of the time.

Interviewer: Because your mum helps you cope…

Participant: Yeah, my mum really does. Now, as I said I’m fine, I’m better now. I mean I still get the occasional cramps and stuff but yeah.

Interviewer: Is there any other ways that you cope with it?

Participant: Errrr well tea helps. Any hot beverage err that really does help. And it’s really weird but you know when you make like a cup of tea and it’s like a really really hot, can’t even drink it, I’d just like you know (actions holding tea to stomach).

Interviewer: Hold it to your stomach?

Participant: Yeah just sort of hold it to your stomach before you drink it and I remember once I was sort of laying on my bed and I was on my phone and I don’t know why but my cat came up and, and it was when they were kittens as well, they came up and one of them sort of put their head on my tummy and I was like ohhh you’re so cute so that took my mind off it for like 20 minutes yeah.

Interviewer: OK, so there are ways that can make it feel a bit better…

Participant: Yeah

Interviewer: Erm, how about, we were talking about relationships with friends, err what about relationships with partners or anything like that?

Participant: Erm…

Interviewer: Has it impacted on that at all?

Participant: Not really badly he’s (boyfriend) very understandable. He erm, sort of has a… stomach condition as well which gives him cramps and stuff every few days and so he just helps me through it a lot to be honest. He’s like oh go look at your cats, go watch this show, and then links it to me on, on facebook or whatever and it’s very helpful. One thing that isn’t helpful though, you know how chocolate gets you through everything?

Interviewer: Yeah

Participant: He’s allergic to it.

Interviewer: That’s a shame

Participant: Err yeah and I’m sort of home stuffing my face with chocolate, chocolate helps, hot chocolate helps a lot and with the little marshmallows, I don't know why it just makes me feel all cosy (laughs). So yeah very helpful yeah.

Interviewer: SO your boyfriend he supports you and it doesn’t impact on that. How about your relationship with (clears throat) your sibling, or your sister?

Participant: I feel really terrible but I’ve not been in the best moods obviously and she’s like (name) let’s do this, let’s do that and em sometimes I just snap and I’m like oh my god I’m so sorry like and I can’t even say it’s because of this, erm so I’ll just be like I’ve had a really bad day, I have a stomach ache and a headache, I’ll play with you later erm and yeah…. Yeah….

Interviewer: It’s difficult…

Participant: It really is. It was really awkward because they were talking about body changes in school with her and so she heard someone say period and she said mum what’s a period and my mum said go ask (name) and so I had to sit there and explain what a period was and she, her response was eww that’s so gross, I don’t wanna do that (laughs)

Interviewer: (Laughs) So it does impact on your sister sometimes when you’re feeling a bit fed up…

Participant: Yeah…

Interviewer: And how about with your mum and dad? Does it affect your relationship with them at all?

Participant: Errrm not really. Obviously with my mum again we were arguing about chores or something really really stupid, something that you would argue with your mums for erm but obviously when I’m on and I get really moody I’m just like no just leave me alone for a bit. She doesn’t really get that sometimes, but somestimes she does leave me alone. But yeah err my dad, well me and my dad aren’t very close, I don’t know why (laughs) we just aren’t really any more but yeah he’s been really helpful before yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah, how was he helpful?

Participant: Again we used to just sit down and watch like films together like on the telly and that took my mind off it a lot cause when you’re watching something, you’re concentrating on something else, yeah we used to rent out films or go out for a film you know, just films. Yeah…

Interviewer: That sounds good. Yeah, how about family activities? Or family time together?

Participant: I don’t actually think we do that (laughs). Yeah, I don’t think we do that.

Interviewer: So it doesn’t affect it…

Participant: Oh no, it doesn’t, no.

Interviewer: OK so I just want to ask you a bit about social support so you mentioned that your mum’s there, friends experiencing the same thing, erm have you got any other social support for when you are experiencing pain?

Participant: No I don’t think so, I think that’s about it. Yeah um, yeah that’s about it.

Interviewer: So when you feel pain you talk to your mum and friends…..would you talk to your dad?

Participant: I did before but as I said we’re not really that close erm really but yeah before we did a lot but I’m on the pill now so it’s not as bad. But yeah I used to yeah.

Interviewer: Is there anything today that you would like to talk about that we haven’t talked about?

Participant: No, I don’t think so,

Interviewer: Well thank you very much, everything you’ve said has been very helpful. Can I stop the recording?

Participant: Yeah sure.