

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT:

MODULE 3: HAVING THE CONVERSATION

Merinda: There's certain basic needs that a person needs to be met in life; housing or shelter I guess, food, clothing. That kind of provides a base from which to develop emotional and social wellbeing. If someone doesn't have that groundwork, that base, having their basic needs met, then it's difficult for them to work on their emotional wellbeing or on issues that they need to address to develop that wellbeing.

Allan: I understand that when I got housed, I became happy, and I've remained happy. I've had my ups and downs, but nothing major.

David: Well put it this way, it's a combination. First of all you need accommodation, you need food so that you've got good health. As I said, I was suffering from mental illness and I was suffering from poor physical health.

Peter: My name's Peter Burns, I'm 56. Often what you'll find is you'll get people who don't have any conditions until they actually become homeless, and that's when a lot of these conditions come on. Obviously because of sleeping out and so on, they get chronically ill; mentally, physically and emotionally smashed. So, a lot of this stuff comes on after the event.

Merinda: The first step in the process of addressing depression or anxiety with someone who has identified that as an issue of concern in their life is to build up a relationship with them so that they feel comfortable disclosing certain information to you.

Tom: My name's Tom. I was born in Denmark. I came to Australia with my parents and my sister. I'd just come out of hospital and was sort of quite weak and whatever. I had to go – well I didn't have to – but I decided to go on this trip up to see my sister. And to do so I had to catch a v-line train. And I had my dog. So to do so there were all these requirements and I didn't have any way of working it out. My counsellor at the time who had broken down a lot of those barriers managed to, after a whole day of staying on the phone and basically devoting hours and hours of her day off her own bat had managed to get a pass for the dog! So since then I've been able to take Ella on public transport. It's had a big impact especially as I've got older and the bones aren't up to riding around all the time!

Peter: they're more comfortable talking off the record. What I mean by that is, take someone out to a coffee shop and talk to them away from your office.

Ben: For me, having a coffee might be a really good idea as opposed to someone who isn't as in tuned with the community might flip out. They might need to meet down at the park or somewhere more local. It really depends and varies on the situation of the person and what degree they are, and what they're facing.

Tom: Finding workers who would look past the fact that I would dress relatively nicely for someone who was homeless (was important). I put a lot of effort into putting up a front of "normality". It took a long time before I found workers who would put enough effort into breaking down some of those walls.

Merinda: From there, you would go into assessing where the person's at, particularly with their motivational level; whether they're wanting to address their depression and anxiety. Their level of motivation and their level of insight. At that time it's useful to use screening tools like the K10.

Merinda: Linking the person in with services; providing referral if a person needs to be referred by an agency. With some particular services in the homelessness sector, a person can't self refer, so making those referrals is really important.

Tom: Treating the person as that, a person, other than the many labels of clients or patients or whatever else.