

NMC01 RT 16/5/89

QU: What are you doing here at college?

AN: (001) Certificate in social care. It's all different...(002)..Sociology, welfare and society. And we do day release, and different things, like I do the clinic.

QU: Like schemes in the community?

AN: Yeah.

QU: What do you do in the clinic?

AN: Well, I'm working in the office; it's like a part-time clinic..

QU: Which clinic?

AN: HEALTH CENTRE.

QU: Is that a general medical centre?

AN: Well, we've got like dentists there, and chiropractors, doctors, and we've got like a baby clinic and family planning and all that. And I do all the filing.

QU: So you've found out how it works. Have you any idea what you want to do when you've finished this?

AN: Hopefully office work. Something like that.

QU: It doesn't appeal to you to be something like a community worker?

AN: No. I did want to work with the elderly, but I had a road accident and I can't lift people up now. It hurts my shoulders, so I had to..(013)..but I'm still working with people, but more this side of it.

QU: Administration. Probably easier, not so depressing. Why did you decide to do this then?

AN: I was on YTS, Community Care, but I wasn't getting anywhere on that and I thought it was about time for a change, and I wanted to get some 'O' levels as well and stuff. So I just read up about this course and came for the interview and I got on it.

QU: So you left school and went straight on to YTS?

AN: Yeah, I've done one year YTS.

QU: Did you take any exams at school?

AN: Computer studies, typing, office practice, German and general English and maths.

QU: But that wasn't enough to get you a job that you wanted?

AN: No.

QU: Did you realise that at the time?

AN: No, I didn't. Not until afterwards when I went for interviews and jobs and they said that I didn't have the qualifications..(025)

QU: What sort of careers advice did you get at school?

AN: Didn't get any.

QU: What school was this?

AN: [NAME OF CATHOLIC SCHOOL].

QU: Do you think they were bad about that at school?

AN: Yeah. School's should do more careers work, because in the third year you get to choose the exams you're going to take, and you don't know what you're doing, so careers officers come in, they can give you ideas and stuff.

QU: Do you think you'd have done differently if you'd been given careers advice?

AN: Yes. Probably, yeah.

QU: Do you think you'd have worked harder?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Can you tell me about your background? Where do you live?

AN: Moston.

QU: In your parent's home?

AN: Yeah.

QU: What do your parents do?

AN: Well, my dad's retired and my mum's just a housewife.

QU: What did your dad use to do?

AN: He used to (?)pack bread.

QU: Did they push you?

AN: Yeah, they pushed me more towards college, because they get the benefits, instead of me going out and getting a job.

QU: You mean they carry on getting their benefits?

AN: Yes, because they need the money, you see. But I'm fed up of going here now, because I've been here three years. I'll try and get myself a job.

QU: It's quite a long course? But you're a lot better qualified now? Did you get any careers advice from your parents, did they suggest anything?

AN: Not really, no. My mum wanted me to be a nurse.

QU: You weren't interested?

AN: No.

QU: Any reason?

AN: No, I just don't like nursing. (?)I couldn't be bothered with the job.

QU: It's underpaid isn't it? Was it a Catholic school?

AN: Yes.

QU: Do you remember getting any sex education at school?

AN: We had one video and that was of a girl having a baby. That was it.

QU: That was the whole of it?

AN: That was the whole of it.

QU: Was this done in a special class?

AN: It was just in the school hall assembly; it was mixed. They didn't separate the girls from the boys.

QU: Do you think that was a bad idea?

AN: No.

QU: Did you get the chance to ask questions?

AN: No. They just explained what was happening and we had this really childish one saying this is how the mummy gets pregnant, this that and the other.

QU: So they actually told you about how you get pregnant as well as how you give birth?

AN: Yeah. It was like a cartoon thing that was just describing it, but that was it. They didn't let us ask questions; as soon as the film had finished it was straight back to class and start your subjects.

QU: Were people talking amongst themselves about it?

AN: Yeah, they were just going round saying how horrible it was, and gooey and all that.

QU: What was the attitude amongst the teachers, were they not open about it?

AN: They were embarrassed.

QU: Were there any teachers that you could go and ask questions to?

AN: Not really, no.

QU: They didn't tell you about the forms of contraception that were available?

AN: They did like in jokes and things like that, you know. One of the teachers used to laugh about it, he was the only one, but you couldn't talk to him about it. But he'd laugh and joke about it. It was his way of showing us what we could use and stuff.

QU: Was it very helpful?

AN: Not really, no.

QU: There was nothing that was part of the course and syllabus about sex? Eg. did anyone talk about sexually-transmitted diseases?

AN: No.

QU: So you got nothing on that. Where did you learn about these things?

AN: The clinic. The family planning clinic...and friends and my family; my mum told me a lot about sex.

QU: Have you got quite a good relationship with your mum, you talk about those sort of things?

AN: Yes, we talk about those sort of things, yeah.

QU: Do you talk about anything else..!

AN: Not really, we just argue about everything else.

QU: When did your mum start telling you about those sort of things?

AN: When I was about 13.

QU: Was that periods?

AN: Yeah, well I've been having periods since I was 11.

QU: Did she tell you about that?

AN: No. She didn't know until I was 13 that I was having periods. I kept it a secret because I didn't like it. I thought it was horrible.

QU: Did you know what it was?

AN: I knew what it was. But I just didn't want to tell my mum. I didn't know whether she'd go mad with me or anything for saying it, but in the end I just come out with it, and she was alright. She explained everything; she bought me loads of books and stuff.

QU: Did you feel at the time that you'd done something wrong, that you were scared to tell your mum?

AN: Yeah. Guilty.

QU: You've got to go through that, yeah. I felt like that when I first started, you don't know whether...

AN: ...you've done something wrong and God's punishing you..

QU: Had any of your friends started at that time?

AN: No, I was the only one.

QU: That makes it a lot worse. Did you talk to your friends about it?

AN: Not a lot, no. After I'd told my mum and I read up about it, then I started to talk about it, as the others started to have their periods.

QU: So how long were you having them and you hadn't told anyone?

AN: Two years.

QU: Two years, that's a hell of a long time, isn't it? You must have gone through quite a lot then. Did your dad have anything to do with telling you about this?

AN: No, he didn't then, but he does now. Now and then he talks. That's probably he's just being nosey though. Wants to know what's going on.

QU: Tell me about when your mum first told you about sex.

AN: Well, we was in the bathroom, and she just asked me what I knew. Did I know what such and such a thing was, this, that and the other.

QU: What sort of things did she ask you?

AN: I can't quite remember actually. It was that long ago. It was just, did I know what happened if you went to bed with somebody, and things like that.

QU: Did you?

AN: No. I said no. And she just explained all that.

QU: Did she explain what intercourse was, and how you get pregnant?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Did she tell you about contraception?

AN: No, she didn't.

QU: Did she tell you about sexually-transmitted diseases?

AN: No.

QU: So it was pretty basic?

AN: Yeah.

QU: After you became sexually active did you go back and ask her about contraception?

AN: Yeah. And she just said you'll have to use Durex and the pill, but if you want something..(113)..go to the clinic.

QU: So she took you down to the clinic?

AN: Yeah, she took me down to find out, but I went on the pill. Which she wasn't too pleased about because when I started on the pill, she thought that I saw it was that I could just have sexual relationships whenever I wanted. But I wasn't going to. It was just in case I did, which I didn't plan on doing, I was prepared for it sort of thing.

QU: But she thought the pill had that image?

AN: Yeah, she thought I was sleeping around with people.

QU: Do you think the pill has that image

AN: I don't know. I suppose it does; because if people say - Are you taking anything? - 'Yeah, I'm on the pill', they think she sleeps around.

QU: When did you first have sex?

AN: I was just turned 15.

QU: Tell me about that.

AN: I was in a steady relationship.

QU: At 15?

AN: Yeah.

QU: What's 'steady' at 15?

AN: I'd been going out with him for a year. I finished with him when I was 16. But we was drunk at the time, we'd gone to a party. And like he was 24.

QU: A lot older than you.

AN: Yeah. And he got me drunk, and I didn't really know what I was doing, but I enjoyed it at the same time.

QU: You did enjoy it? So he hadn't forced you?

AN: Yeah. No, he hadn't forced me.

QU: If he'd asked you would you have said no, if you hadn't been drunk?

AN: If I hadn't been drunk, yeah.

QU: But you didn't regret it?

AN: I didn't regret it afterwards, no.

QU: What was the attitude of people to you going out with a 24 year old?

AN: They all didn't like it, but like, they were all prejudiced against him because he was a biker and he was a slaughter man.

QU: A slaughter man? He worked in an abattoir?

AN: Yeah. He was 6'2", you know. And everybody said he was going to be no good for you, this that and the other. And it all turned out right, because in the end he were battering me.

QU: He was hitting you?

AN: Yeah. He hit me with a cast iron bar on the head, a couple of times.

QU: Jesus. And this was when you were 15?

AN: 15, 16. So I finished with him and then I started going out..

QU: Is it when he became violent that you finished with him?

AN: Yeah. Well, it wasn't exactly straight away. I'd been out with him a year after that. He'd been hitting me for a year...

(phone interruption)

QU: What do you think you learnt from that relationship?

AN: I learnt quite a lot. I learnt all about, all different parts about sexual intercourse and..

QU: Did you have quite a good sexual relationship?

AN: Yeah. And all the different emotional problems you could have with it, as well as the physical.

QU: Did you feel more mature than your friends?

AN: Yeah, I did, because I learnt a lot more than, they hadn't learnt it. Because they were all very late. Like me starting at 15, having sexual intercourse and that. They didn't like it sort of thing. They thought I was too young, this, that and the other; I should be going out with all different lads.

QU: Did people start calling you because you were..(154)

AN: Yeah.

QU: I can imagine what sort of situation..

AN: I had been out with him for a year. And I knew him pretty well. At least I thought I knew him. I thought 'what the hell'.

QU: But the (157) things seemed to be wrong?

AN: Yeah, he was at that age.

QU: What about your mum?

AN: I didn't tell her.

QU: Would they have gone mad?

AN: They would have gone mad, yeah. Well I got another boyfriend. I've been going out with him for 18 months, now.

QU: Is this the second?

AN: The second one, yeah.

QU: So you've just had two sexual relationships?

AN: Yeah. My mum kept saying 'Have I, have I, have I?' And I kept saying no and I did in the end when I was going..

QU: 'Have I had sex'?

AN: Yeah. And I kept denying it, and then one day when I was coming on the bus to college and my mum was going to the doctors, and I was getting off at the next stop; I told her sort of thing, so I could get off and she wouldn't (?)be able to do anything. But she was OK.

QU: She probably expected it.

AN: Yeah, because I was like 18 then..

QU: And you'd been on the pill for four years..

AN: Yeah. So she probably like realised that something probably was going on. But she wasn't too bad.

QU: Is the relationship you're having now very different from the one that you had?

AN: Yeah. It's a lot closer. A lot closer. Like, it took me a year to get used to he's not going to hit me. Every time he moved I was ducking and things, but.. he's dead nice ADAM, he's alright.

QU: Do you think you've changed?

AN: Yeah, I've settled down a lot more, now that I'm with ADAM. Like I used to be always running around the common room messing around, but now I just come in and sit down and have a game of pool. But I've gone dead quiet now apparently. Everybody keeps telling me.

QU: Do you think you've learnt from that first relationship to take yourself more into consideration, to demand more than you did before?

AN: No, not really. It's not really changed, no.

QU: What do you mean when you said you learnt 'different sexual things' from this first boyfriend?

AN: Like different positions and things like that.

QU: So sex had a wider meaning than just intercourse?

AN: Yeah..

QU: Did you have a relationship where your sexual pleasure was seen as important?

AN: It wasn't with the first boyfriend, but with ADAM now it is.

QU: So has that been quite a big change?

AN: Yeah. He gets enjoyment out of making me enjoy it.

QU: Did you know about that before?

AN: No. I didn't realise.

QU: How did you think about sex with this older guy?

AN: I just thought it was like a few different positions, he had his fun and that was it sort of thing.

QU: So it was for him?

AN: Yeah.

QU: You didn't have much of a role in it?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Are you a lot happier with it now?

AN: Yeah, definitely yeah.

QU: Did you ever have unprotected sex with your first boyfriend?

AN: Yeah.

QU: How long did that go on for?

AN: About a year.

QU: Was that consistent?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Did you get pregnant?

AN: I did once when I was with him. But this was after I'd started the pill and I lost that one because he sort of like battered it out of me; he kept punching me in the stomach and things like that. And I lost that. No, (?)beautiful. And I got pregnant since and I lost that as well, for no apparent reason.

QU: Do you think perhaps he damaged you?

AN: Yeah, I got a feeling he had. But like I've been to the doctors and they've said that there's nothing that they can tell is wrong. But I'm getting to the point where I don't know whether to take the pill or not because I don't think I can have kids. Because of me losing two.

QU: But then you don't want to keep getting pregnant and having miscarriages. You didn't actually get pregnant (?)until.. you were having sex with him..

AN: ..(216)..

QU: Were you worried about it? Having sex without contraception?

AN: I was always worried, yeah.

QU: Was he worried about it?

AN: No. He didn't care.

QU: What did he used to say?

AN: He used to say – 'well, if you get pregnant, you get pregnant'. That was all he used to say.

QU: Meaning you'd have to have the kid?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Would you have been prepared to have done that at that time?

AN: I think I wanted one then, but I know now I wouldn't have been able to cope. Because of me being that young as well, not having no money. Then I didn't see it like that; but now when I think back, I think it's stupid like.

QU: Did you not think you could go out and get contraception at that time?

AN: I knew I could, but I didn't want to because I thought that they'd tell my mum and dad, what I was doing.

QU: This is at the family planning clinic? And you were under 16 as well? That was a really tough situation to be in, isn't it?

AN: Yeah.

QU: And he didn't take any responsibility for any of it?

AN: No. Once or twice he used a condom but that was it.

QU: What was his attitude towards condoms?

AN: He thought that he couldn't feel anything. You know, with a condom on it wasn't as close.

QU: Did you think it made any difference?

AN: No. I preferred it on.

QU: Why?

AN: I knew that if he had that on I couldn't get pregnant.

QU: So when he wore a condom was that because you'd asked him to?

AN: Yeah. I asked him to like all the time but, he didn't have them with him or he was.. (242)..stuff like that. So in the end I brought two over. And sort of like hid them, like

under the mattress, and then whenever he said, I said - yeah but here you are. And he didn't like that. Because then he had to use it.

QU: Were you scared of him?

AN: It wasn't there all the time. The first year it was OK; I enjoyed the relationship, but I was frightened then because in the second year it was, either have sex or get battered, it was (249)..., it was like every night of the week. Even if I was on my period, he had to have it.

QU: So you had no choice?

AN: No choice.

QU: Did you realise that you didn't have to put up with this sort of thing?

AN: Yeah, I knew that but, I was too scared to get out of the relationship. Threatened and..

QU: Do you still see this guy?

AN: I've seen him twice since, because I'm on the police protection from him, and he walked past our house the other day as I was walking in, and he shouted me, and I just turned round and said - 'What?' And he said - Talk, sort of thing. So we were just talking for a few minutes. And like he denied it to everyone, and he said he felt embarrassed. And I says - 'How the hell do you think I felt?'. I was embarrassed telling everyone else. And he said - 'But you're a girl and girls are supposed to take it without telling anyone', this, that and the other.

QU: Take the battering?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Is that how he thinks of girls? That's what's so wrong.

AN: He had a girlfriend in Moss Side. And he hit her, and all her friends didn't like it and he got all his stomach slashed for it. And it still hasn't worked; he's done it again.

QU: That's what he thinks girls should do.

AN: Yeah, he thinks girls are for battering, if they don't do anything nice or..it's 'batter time' sort of thing.

QU: I suppose when you were 15 you didn't really know what sort of relationship you could have, so if he tells you girls are for battering, you sort of go - Oh, are we? OK. You haven't got enough control at that age. When was the first time you remember hearing about AIDS? Had it been heard of when you were at school?

AN: No, it hadn't been, no. The first time I heard about it was about two years ago when I first heard it on the news.

QU: And you were in this relationship with this guy still?

AN: Yeah.

QU: What did you think about it when you heard about it?

AN: I was a little bit worried, but I knew that he hadn't been to bed with anybody else.

QU: Did you know that? While he was sleeping with you?

AN: Yeah, but before that. I'd known him before that, but not gone out with him. I'd known his family. Because we lived facing his sister.

QU: Were you the first person he'd had sex with?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Were you sure about that? It sounds unlikely!

AN: I know, it does sound unlikely but, I've never known him have a girlfriend before. He may have, with him being 24 and that, he probably had a couple of girlfriends, but I don't know whether he'd actually had a sexual relationship or not.

QU: So as far as you knew, he hadn't. So you weren't worried you were going to catch it from him?

AN: No.

QU: When you first heard about it, what type of person did you think got it?

AN: Somebody who slept around a lot.

QU: What would you call 'sleeping around'?

AN: Going to bed with a different person like every other night. Stuff like that. And not having a steady boyfriend and things.

QU: You say every other night. If someone had a relationship for, say, two months, and then another one for six months, would that be sleeping around?

AN: No, that wouldn't be sleeping around.

QU: So it's having sex without being emotionally involved?

AN: Yeah, just casual.

QU: Did you think that because you weren't gay that you were less likely to get it?

AN: No.

QU: So that wasn't a confusion?

AN: No.

QU: When you first heard about it, did you know how it was actually spread?

AN: No.

QU: When did you find out, do you know now?

AN: Just lately. Like if somebody's got it, and they have sexual intercourse with somebody who hasn't, like it's passed on, that's all I know.

QU: Do you know how you can protect against it?

AN: Condoms and stuff like that.

QU: Would you know if oral sex had any risk attached to it?

AN: That's not really got any risk attached, I don't think because you need a lot of saliva to pass it on.

QU: Yes, but the virus is in your body fluids, vaginal fluids and semen. That's why sexual intercourse is a risk without a condom because the sperm makes contact with the surface blood vessels of the cervix. You wouldn't have realised that that was the risk?

AN: No, no.

QU: So you didn't really know why a condom would protect you?

AN: That's right, yeah.

QU: If somebody said 'safe-sex' to you, what would you think it meant?

AN: Somebody that you'd been going out with for a while, and you were taking the proper, like I was say, taking the pill, and they was using a condom at the same time. I'd say that was safe-sex.

QU: Would you say that it was sexual practices that didn't include intercourse, things like oral sex.

AN: Yeah, fore-play, things like that.

QU: Do you think that having sex in that type of way would be impossible, for you for instance?

AN: Yeah, well I do that.

QU: Is that the type of relationship you and your present boyfriend have?

AN: Yes, that plus proper intercourse as well.

QU: How important for you is the actual intercourse?

AN: It's not very important to me. I prefer like the fore-play; it's more close.

QU: Do you think the intercourse is more important for your boyfriend?

AN: No, I don't think so; I think it's exactly the same.

QU: So you could imagine then one way of protecting yourself from AIDS would be safe-sex; having a relationship which didn't include the risky bits?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Would you know that that was a way of protecting yourself?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Have you heard about that?

AN: I've not actually heard about it, but I've thought about it myself.

QU: They don't talk about it very much in the publicity because they think - Oh, nobody could do that. I think maybe a lot of men wouldn't like to do it, but a lot of women would say - Oh yeah!

AN: Yeah, it sounds alright!

QU: How at risk would you say you were from HIV and AIDS?

AN: I'm not; I don't think I am at all.

QU: Why?

AN: Well, I don't know really but, I know that he hasn't got it, because he only went with one girl before me, and she was his first. And she didn't have it obviously like, and I don't think I've got it.

QU: Because you've had the one sexual partner before?

AN: Yeah. So with, like, me and him together, we've not slept with other partners or anything like that. I wouldn't do that.

QU: Do you trust him in terms of going out with other women?

AN: Yeah.

QU: Do you practice safe-sex, do you take protection?

AN: Well I am on the pill but nothing else. If I miss a pill more than once during the pill, then he uses a condom. Just to be on the safe side, because he doesn't want me to have children yet.

QU: Do you think that the pill protects you in any way from AIDS?

AN: No, it doesn't protect you from AIDS. It just stops you from getting pregnant.

QU: Tell me about this relationship you've got now then.

AN: Well, he's Jewish and obviously I'm Catholic so there's a bit of a mix..

QU: Is he practising Jewish?

AN: No. Well when he had his bar mitzvah at 13, he said - 'Right, am I a man now?'. His mum and dad said, yeah. He said - 'Right, no more synagogues, no more Jewish stuff', sort of thing.

QU: But are his parents quite keen.....?

AN: They don't go to the synagogue either but...

QU: ..they want him to marry a Jewish girl.

AN: Yeah, that sort of thing, yeah, a proper little Jewish girl, but they seem to accept me more now cos of it being a long relationship.

QU: How long have you been going out?

AN: 18 months, 19 months on the 5th of June.

QU: Right.

AN: Like we've got a sexual relationship. We started one, I'd say about two weeks into the relationship. 'Cos, like, even though I'd only been going out with him those two weeks I felt as if I'd known him.

QU: Would that be unusual for you then?

AN: It was because it seemed to me... but I'm glad I did then instead of like leaving it for six months or something.

QU: What because it got better quicker?

AN: Yeah it got closer quicker, but like he's planning on us getting married, but he doesn't want me to have kids until we're over in CANADA, 'cos we're going to emigrate to CANADA in a few years. He says it saves on the air fare.

QU: What do you think about all that?

AN: I'd like to. I'd love to. I'd love to marry him tomorrow if I could.

QU: So you want to, it's not just him saying I'm going to marry you.

AN: I think I would go over to CANADA because there is more sun.

QU: But what about kids?

AN: Yeah, I wouldn't mind a few kids when I've got a bit of money put away, and like, when I am married, so as I can like, they can have both parents looking after them and I can go out and he can look after them.

QU: Is it the type of relationship where you could do that?

AN: Yeah. He'd stay in and I'd go out. He does that now he says, like, he'll stay in and he'll give me the bike and he'll say you go out to the pub or something.

QU: That's good. Do you think he's untypical of men in general? Do you think he's unusual?

AN: I thought it was unusual yeah, from the last one. He wouldn't let me out and like if we did go out it was together and if I spoke to one of his friends he used to hit me in the pub sort of thing you know. But, like, with this one it's completely different and I thought it was unusual but now I wouldn't have it any other way.

QU: Right, so your standards have changed?

AN: Yeah.

QU: So you are looking at this as a permanent relationship, you are not expecting to split up?

AN: Not at all, no.

QU: If like, say that you did, for unforeseen reasons, what would your attitude be about seeing other men? I mean would you worry about AIDS and things like that when you thought about having a relationship?

AN: I would, yeah. I wouldn't have casual relationships because I've had two steady ones now. I prefer steady ones than casual ones and I wouldn't go straight into a sexual relationship either. I would wait and get to know them.

QU: Do you think if AIDS wasn't around that might be different?

AN: Not really, no. It's probably changed the way other people do it, but not me.

QU: You think like everyone's situation is individual as well?

AN: Well if I'm meant to get it I'll get it.

QU: But do you feel that you can do anything to make sure you don't get it?

AN: I could try and make sure that I don't get it, but, like, if I did, I did. It would be my fault anyway so....

QU: Do you think that people who do get it are responsible?

AN: Not all the time, no.

QU: When are they and when aren't they?

AN: Well say like you've got a married couple and the fella goes off and has an affair, he gets it and passes it on to his wife, like she isn't responsible for that. She didn't know she got it. Like prostitutes are responsible; they're going with all these different men and they know full well there's that problem with AIDS. I only know a few, and they swear they won't use contraception. They said that they'd rather not because if they do they are gonna lose custom and they are gonna get done off their bosses and stuff like that.

QU: Do you think that is their fault though?

AN: I don't know, it could be their fault and then it couldn't be their fault. They should get out of it, they should like, stop it or something and get a proper relationship instead of being under this boss all the time.

QU: They don't have an awful lot of choice I suppose because their ..(472)...is going to hit them. In the same way you said you didn't have much choice about using contraception. How about a young woman who's having a relationship with somebody and doesn't use safe-sex, doesn't use a condom? Do you think they would be responsible if they got it?

AN: I think so, yeah. Because they should use safe-sex.

QU: How about if the boyfriend doesn't want to use a condom?

AN: I don't think they should do it then. Not if he doesn't want to use a condom and like if she's not using anything anyway. I don't think they should do it.

QU: If you had a new relationship now would you insist on the person using a condom, would you refuse to have sex without one?

AN: Yeah, yeah. I mean like if I could I'd get a test done sort of thing. I know that sounds a bit snobbish: 'I'm not going out with you until you prove that you're not HIV and that'. But I'd rather know for definite first. And if they wasn't, and it was a steady relationship, and they wasn't going with anybody else; then I wouldn't make him use a condom.

QU: If he hadn't had the test and he said to you - I've only had a couple of sexual partners...

AN: If he'd had two he could still have it; he'd still have to wear one, and if he didn't want to wear one, we wouldn't do it.

QU: Do you think you have to be a certain type of person to ask your partner, tell your partner to wear one?

AN: Yeah, you've got to be brave. And be able to just say it. I could. I could just like say it to them.

QU: You could now, perhaps you couldn't in the past?

AN: I couldn't in the past; I've asked in the past, but now I'd say.

QU: What do you think makes the difference between asking and being able to tell someone?

AN: I think it's the difference between the two people, sort of thing. Like him, I was too scared to ask. But with this one I could tell him straight away, and he'd do it if I really wanted it.

QU: So it depends on the man?

AN: Yeah.

QU: So you personally wouldn't see yourself as at risk?

AN: No.

QU: Do you think if you weren't in this relationship, if you were a young single girl looking for a relationship, do you think you would be at risk?

AN: Not really, no.

QU: Do you think you and your friends are not the sort of people who are at risk at the moment?

AN: No.

QU: What sort of people are at risk at the moment?

AN: Like I said before people that are sleeping around sort of thing; because the girlfriends that I've got at the moment, they're all married. Except for one, and she's been going out with this lad for four years anyway.

QU: Do you know if drug-users would be at risk?

AN: Yeah, I think they would; sharing their needles and stuff like that.

QU: Do you know any drug-users or, rather, users who inject?

AN: One. Yeah, just the one, and that was my ex-boyfriend. He's now on anything he can get; heroin, the lot. And he told it to me straight up and smiling.

QU: Was he when you were seeing him?

AN: No.

QU: Since we split up. He feels dead good because he's taking this stuff and this, that and the other.

QU: What did you feel?

AN: I just called him a big kid. And I turned round and said I hoped he got AIDS. I know it's evil but...(554)

QU: So if you had to say what sort of person you thought you were, how would you describe yourself?

AN: I know where I'm going. Pretty brave now; I can say something to somebody if I didn't like something. I think I could say it now. Then again it depends on the other person but.. I can get on with people now; like I give people advice, like if they come to me, I can give them advice as well.

QU: Do you think when you were younger you could have done with the advice that you're giving now?

AN: Yeah, I could have done, yeah.

QU: You said you could talk to your mum, but you did get yourself into a pretty bad situation with that boyfriend. Was there anything that helped you then, did you get any advice?

AN: Well, I didn't get any support from anyone because I didn't tell anybody what was going on. I kept it a secret.

QU: If there'd been better sex education at school, where you didn't just talk about how babies were born, where you actually talked about relationships and sexual violence etc., do you think that would have been a help?

AN: Yeah, it would have been definitely, yeah. I would have had a different outlook on life, rather than not having any education at all.

(end: 588)