

Case Studies

Janice – some parental anxiety

Janice was happily married with two children. She enjoyed an enviable lifestyle and marriage. She was taking time out from her career to take care of her kids. She had recently moved into her dream home and was in every respect living the life she'd always wanted. However she'd been experiencing some real anxiety when she found herself left alone with her kids.

She found the evenings after her children returned from school and before her husband returned from work to be overwhelming. She has a vague sense that she and her children were somehow in danger but couldn't find any good reasons for it.

This was causing some difficulty with her family; her mother frequently had to come round to help and her father gave up on important professional engagements to help out.

After just a few consultations with Benjamin she traced the origin of her real anxiety to a period of living in a South American country with real internal security issues. It was a great relief to make sense of these feelings at last and it became much easier to manage.

She was able to take control of her emotions and no longer needed to lean on her family for extra help. This made a huge difference to her outlook on life and she was able once again to enjoy all of the outward benefits of her great lifestyle.

Harold – career crisis

Harold was a successful local trade unionist and respected figure in his community. However he had recently become overwhelmed by new responsibilities as a result of his success and was struggling with some weight issues, possibly as a result.

He found this difficult to understand since his ambitions had always been to succeed but now that he was he resented the authority and having everyone come to him when they needed something. He was ready to give up on his life's ambition because it all seemed to be too emotionally draining. In addition he didn't think he could talk to anyone about this, since everyone he knew looked up to him as the one to cope.

What emerged was that Harold had grown up in a family with parents who seemed to be engaged in a long-running power struggle which he often found himself in the middle of. His mother particularly was overtly "political" in the family with him, trying to turn him to her side against his father. He learnt to keep one step ahead of her tricks, which he credits for his political skills today.

As Harold invested in the long-forgotten memories of his childhood, he realised that the source of his stress was the tensions that were brought into his life in the present by people who were "at war" with each other. It made him want to run away; just like he had felt at home on occasion.

By doing some therapeutic work on his childhood, he found his work in the present much easier to bear, and even realised that his skills formed in childhood could help people with similar problems to himself today. As a bonus, without even focusing on it, his eating habits improved and he gained control again of his weight.