Bluecat Interview

KA: So I'm going to take you through um just some admin stuff at the beginning um and after that we can get started with the main interview. So the interview will probably take around um one hour in total but it will probably only be like 45 minutes ish of the interview itself um and you can take breaks at any time um you know if you need to use the bathroom grab some water or something that's absolutely OK. Um just let me know and you know you could turn your camera off turn your mic off in that time that's all absolutely fine uh and yeah if you you know (.) it might be that in the moment you kind of struggle to say verbally that you need a break if you just like turn your camera off for a bit I'll know what that means. And yeah I think practically um obviously doing a zoom or teams interviews is a little bit different because there's always the risk that the Internet drops off at some point um

Bluecat: Yeah

KA: Which is (.) it happens all of the time. Even if you think you have the best Internet in the world so that

Bluecat: Had that with ((inaudible)) CAHMS appointments then they just disappear and I'm like great what do I do now?

KA: ((Laughs)) yeah yeah it's so frustrating, isn't it? I do a lot of tutoring and sometimes I will just be in the middle of a call with my students and I'm like where did where did they go? Um but if that happens just rejoin using the same link and if it (.) um (.) if there's any problems with that link just e-mail me and we'll sort it out um but hopefully that doesn't happen um yeah ((pause)) I think that's it in terms of the practical things. Um. Thank you for participating another really really important thing. Your insight is so so valuable to us and in our lab we're I think I mentioned this a bit in our intro call but (.) we're really really enthusiastic to (.) you know uh amplify the autistic voices with our research rather than just you know as a group of researchers researching something with no insight from the actual community that it affects. Um ((pause)) So yeah I (.) my name is Kiera (.) obviously you can see in the lil' screen there. Um I'm in my second year of my PhD or well it's actually called a DPhil which is just because Oxford like wants to be special and name everything differently (.) Um but yeah and my research overall looks at the association between autism ((overlaps))

((Dog barking))

Bluecat: (Indie!)

KA: ((laughs)) aw so cute. (.) um and various mental health conditions so especially anxiety and eating disorders is where I focus (.) um (.) and yeah this interview series I'm doing I'll be interviewing around 15 to 20 adolescents like yourself about their experiences of anxiety and autism and kind of the way that these two things can interact (.) um ((pause)) I know I sent you the information sheet and the PowerPoint and all of that beforehand (.) um (.) do you want to go over that again or are you all happy with everything from that?

Bluecat: I'm happy with it

KA: Cool fantastic um. And ((pause)) yeah once again I'd like to reiterate that as well as taking breaks you also have the right to withdraw at any time and if you withdraw then all of the information about you that we've collected so far will be deleted. So all of the responses to

the surveys anything you've said in the interview (.) um (.) And it also might be that you know a couple of weeks after doing the interview you've changed your mind about wanting to participate and that's fine as well we up to a certain point we can remove your transcript from our data. Um but also of course your data will all be completely anonymised by the end point so no one you no one will be able to identify who you (.) um (.) As well as things like your name being removed from the interview transcript also if you accidentally mentioned like the name of your school or any brothers or sisters or friends, anything which we class as identifying information will be deleted. (.) Um (.) And you also can if you would like to skip any questions that you don't feel comfortable answering um or you can just say ahh you know it might be that you're just not sure about something and you want to come back to it in a little bit. That's fine as well. Um there are absolutely no right answers here like there's nothing that I'm particularly expecting to see I just want to get a good understanding. And to be honest it's really useful to me to get like a wide range of like different interpretations and different results because (.) with anxiety with autism all things like that we expect to see these huge like differences like not everyone experiences these things in the same way um and if my data reflects that then that's perfect. You know I wanna reflect all the variability that's in the world. Um ((pause)) yeah ((pause)) I have access to like this online whiteboard thing if at any point you're you know struggling with the verbal side of communicating and equally we can use the um zoom chat box at any time. If we do use the chat box um then I would just be kind of like copy and pasting that into um into the transcript as well um. Ohh yeah and one last thing (.) don't worry about like the way you talk or having like perfectly scripted answers. No one (.) no one does that and um it can read quite funny when you're not used to it when you look back at the transcripts. For myself I say like like all of the time and I say all um of the time and it just doesn't matter because that's kind of how everyone talks so don't worry about you know stumbling over your words or anything like that um everyone does it. (.) Um (.) But yeah do you have any questions about any of that?

Bluecat: No

KA: Cool ((pause)) Um and yep I am just going to (.) uh yeah one more thing is that I will be um ((pause)) making occasional notes just on my laptop and so if you hear typing it's not that I'm not paying attention at any point it's just that I've had a thought about something you've said and yeah I think it's either quite interesting or it relates to uh something else I had an idea about um. Great. And then my last question I know we spoke about this a little bit in the introduction call was just do you have any preferences with regards to communication that you think I should be aware of?

Bluecat: Nope

KA: OK fantastic cool. Well if you're all happy we'll get started um with the interview (.) um (.) so first question is really broad and you can interpret it however you want (.) um (.) but I'd just like for you to tell me a little bit about yourself

Bluecat: Er ((pause)) Like (.) I play at pipe band ((pause)) which I quite enjoy.

KA: Ooh that’s super cool

Bluecat: ((pause)) and er (.) I don't have a lot of friends, but I have like 3 close friends I get on really well with

KA: Yeah and are they people you've known for quite some time? ((overlap))

Bluecat: Er one of them I've known since nursery one I've known since P3 and the other one I just met in Academy but he's moved in to [[county]] now so I still get to see him

KA: Oh, wow that's you've really kept your friends for a long time. I definitely don't speak to anyone from nursery anymore. That's impressive. And um (.) whereabouts do you go to school and like, what kind of school is it?

Bluecat: Secondary school so but I'm on study leave just now but I've just finished S5 so I'll be going to S6 my last year.

KA: OK. Ah how are you feeling about last year?

Bluecat: It's annoying because like on Friday I just found out I didn't get one of my courses

KA: Oh no

Bluecat: So yeah

KA: Ohh that's frustrating but I'm ((overlap))

Bluecat: It was like the one I really wanted to do as well because it was eh related to like (.) childcare and that's what I want to do. But I didn't get in

KA: Oh that's such a shame. But I also feel with things like childcare there's lots of like alternate routes into it. So just because

Bluecat: Yes

KA: you don't get on this course it doesn't mean that that has to affect you know everything down the line. And yeah sometimes these things happen for a reason. I actually I don't know why I said that because I get so annoyed when people tell me like “everything happens for a reason” I'm like let me be angry.

Bluecat: I'm like telling myself that at the same time I'm still annoyed ((laughs))

KA: ((laughs)) Yeah exactly exactly. I think you can do both right? You can accept that maybe things happen for a reason but you can also say oh I don't know what the reason for this is because it’s rubbish ((laughs))

Bluecat: Yep

KA: OK cool. And what about your experiences in relation to autism? You know would you mind sharing with me like when did you get diagnosed and how did that change things?

Bluecat: I was diagnosed 'bout 15 (.) so October 21.

KA: Mm

Bluecat: Like looking back there probably was traits all along but no one just picked up. Erryone just was like oh you just have anxiety.

KA: Yeah yeah

Bluecat: And it wasn't until like COVID started and then like ((pause)) Well I had OCD for a few years like I wasn't diagnosed or anything but like once COVID started that basically triggered it off because it was (.) contamination related (.) um (.) So that made set like that triggered that off. Then we went there they're like "oh, have you ever like considered any other diagnoses?" We're like "nope" and they're like (.) and she was like "oh, maybe you've autism". And then (.) so (.) and then we had our first appoin- That was like [[county]] Resilience Hub. And then we had our first appointment with CAHMS and she's like "oh no you don't have autism I mean you laugh (.) you laugh with your mum (.) you laugh when it's appropriate you make eye contact with your mum." I'm like (.) OK. And then yeah I did end up having autism so ((pause))

KA: Yeah I think mental health services in the UK can sometimes really struggle with how autism might manifest differently in girls and women versus males.

Bluecat: Yeah because they weren't hearing- even the man that did like the like ADOS wasn't sure but then once he scored up he's like yeah it's obvious (.) you definitely do

KA: Yeah (.) And have things (.) have things been better for you having had that diagnosis? Or just similar?

Bluecat: Yeah I think things make more sense

KA: Yeah well that's good that's good (.) um. And about your sort of like experiences of anxiety this time (.) would you mind telling me a little bit about that?

Bluecat: Pretty much had anxiety all my life I think. I can remember like young primary school ((pause))

KA: Mm

Bluecat: Like when I was really young it was like a lot of like being away from my mum (.) absolutely hated it. And as I got older it was just more general like.

KA: Yeah yeah. And you mentioned there that you had um OCD and especially related to contamination and um things like that (.) how would that kind of affect your everyday life?

Bluecat: A lot of it (.) it's not as bad now but a lot of it's like not wanting to touch door handles or like commonly touched things like light switches (.) public door handles ((pause)) eh bannisters on stairs (.) things like that. Money.

KA: Yeah. Well I can imagine COVID must have made that an uh especially difficult time

Bluecat: Yeah

KA: Um yeah (.) and have you ever thought much about how (.) I guess your ((pause)) um (.) your experiences of anxiety and also OCD might have been shaped by um (.) autism

Bluecat: Yes sort of cause of like before I was like oh I just have anxiety. But then once they told me I've got autism like that's what causes my anxiety makes more sense rather than just being anxiety.

KA: Yeah yeah. And that's really interesting I think (.) the idea that it (.) yeah it causes the anxiety are there are there certain things about it that you feel makes you more anxious? I know that's quite a vague question ((laughs))

Bluecat: Ah yeah I mean I do have certain things that I struggle with like (.) I mean at school like exams, tests (.) that's like big ones (.) pretty much (.) every time I have an exam coming up I'm just super stressed

KA: Yeah

Bluecat: Luckily I've finished them this year

KA: Yeah yeah. Well yeah ((laughs)) I'm sure it will be a very happy day for you when you sit your last exam. I know it ((overlaps))

Bluecat: My last one was last Monday so I'm like yus I'm done.

KA: Ohh amazing amazing. That's so good. Now you can have a break

Bluecat: Yeah

KA: Uh

Bluecat: Until the 5th of June when I go back

KA: Uh. I feel like they never let kids have (.) well you're not really a kid anymore (.) but like up until the age of 18 they don't give you enough breaks at school. I feel like I remember all of my breaks being taken up by like especially at the Easter holidays I was just revising the whole break

Bluecat: Yeah that's what I was doing

KA: Yeah. And it's like well when do we get to like recharge a bit? ((laughs))

Bluecat: And I absolutely hate the period from like January because that's when prelims start like January right through till like May.

KA: Yeah oof. But at least ((overlaps))

Bluecat: Some teachers even refer to it as like the term of doom.

KA: ((Laughs)) That is, that is so accurate ((laughs)) We have the same here in Oxford at the moment it's exam term um so all of the libraries are like full up every day (.) all of the students are stressing out. It's (.) it's not fun at all. Ok. So we're going to move on now to some kind of deeper questions about your experiences of anxiety. So first of all and this is quite an abstract question but if you were going to describe anxiety to someone who has never felt it before, how would you describe it?

Bluecat: Almost like an internal bully that's like telling you you can't do things (.) and like (.) really like just gets on your nerves. It's like "you can't do it you can't do you can't do it"

KA: Yeah. And in psychology we have this thing called a hot cross bun model which is a lot more delicious sounding than it actually is (.) um but it's this idea that we split things like depression and anxiety up into four different sections (.) um (.) so we have our thoughts our emotions our behaviour and how it makes our body feel. Um so do you have any thoughts?

You can chat a bit about any or all four of those um sections of the hot cross bun. But yeah maybe you could talk a bit about how anxiety relates to those things.

Bluecat: It makes me feel like (.) really shaky like makes my hands really sweaty and then like (.) I- Almost like chest really tight it almost feels like it like completely like consumes your whole body.

KA: Mm

Bluecat: Like it takes over ((pause)) and it just makes you feel really like ((pause)) it's difficult to do anything sometimes

KA: Yeah yeah I can definitely relate to that um. And then in terms of like the emotions it makes you feel (.) what- how- you know what emotions do you feel when you're anxious?

Bluecat: Anxious, worried, upset, overwhelmed

KA: Yeah yeah. I think overwhelmed especially that's one that we hear a lot from our participants. This sense of it suddenly all being a bit too much (.) Um and do you have any strategies um you know when you're feeling anxious that you find quite helps you to (.) cool down?

Bluecat: Listening to music, talking to someone really helps (.) At school I've got eh my guidance teacher and my mentor coordinator they're really good I can go and speak to them. I can come out of class anytime I need to and go and speak to them.

KA: Ah

Bluecat: Speak to my mum a lot and yeah

KA: It's really good that the school's accommodating on that front

Bluecat: Yeah my guidance teacher and my mentor coordinator they're so good

KA: Ah it's so nice to hear um like positive uh stories from my participants because a lot of the time people can get quite frustrated or their school isn't very good

Bluecat: Yeah

KA: So it always makes me really happy to hear examples of where schools are-

Bluecat: I feel like I feel like they just get it

KA: Yeah

Bluecat: And I think it helps as well because my guidance teacher before she became an English teacher and then became a guidance teacher she did some she worked with like English and like additional support needs like people with dyslexia autism

KA: Oh

Bluecat: Before becoming like an English teacher in like a classroom so.

KA: That's really good yeah. So yeah I bet that helped her like understand everything a bit more

Bluecat: And she's done like numerous courses on mental health and heaps of different things

KA: Good good. I think all teachers should be required to do that, to be honest. Um (.) cool (.) So next we're going to talk a bit about emotions more broadly not just anxiety. And I might have talked about this a bit on our intro call but if not no worries. But I'm going to throw like a sciency word at you now that I had no idea what it meant until about a year ago and um that is alexithymia. Um have you heard of alexi-

Bluecat: Oh yeah

KA: OK cool cool. And had you heard of that from um like reading and stuff your family had done into autism? Or is it something-

Bluecat: Mostly from Google and YouTube videos and stuff

KA: Yeah that's really cool that's really cool. Yeah (.) um see it's something we look at a lot in our lab um because as I'm um sure you're aware we see quite a big overlap with autism and alexithymia and sometimes a lot of things that people say "ohh this is a trait of autism" it might actually be that it's more related to alexithymia (.) um (.) so yeah just to recount again although I'm sure you already know alexithymia is kind of a difficulty with identifying and describing emotions. And then when we kind of like extend that outwards it can mean you also find it difficult to recognise and identify emotions in other people (.) um (.) but we're going to look today more at just identifying and recognising those emotions like within yourself like your own emotions. So is this something that you think you've ever experienced or even something you know you've thought about?

Bluecat: Erm probably I think ((pause))

KA: Mm ((pause)) Yeah and sort of what is it about your experiences that kind of make you think-

Bluecat: I mean sometimes like someone asked me how I'm feeling and I'm literally just like no clue like I really don't know like I don't have a clue

KA: Mm (.) yeah and ((pause)) yeah if (.) have you ever had it I mean some of our other participants have had this where like you know you're feeling something quite intense but you can't work out perhaps if it's like a happy intense or a worried intense

Bluecat: Yeah or like you'll feel an emotion, but you don't know how to explain it to anyone in a way that actually makes sense. Like you can try and like write out to explain it, but it's like really intense and you don't know how to ((pause)) explain it fully in a way they'll actually understand.

KA: Yeah yeah. And does that make like um things a bit tricky for you sometimes when you're not quite able to describe what you're feeling?

Bluecat: Yeah it's like no matter how much explaining you don't think anyone's actually gonna get it unless they felt it themselves

KA: Yeah yeah I imagine that's tough (.) um (.) Yeah I guess in the times when you maybe are able to describe or even just identify within yourself what you're feeling, what kind of cues do you look for to (.) give you an indication?

Bluecat: I usually just I mean sometimes like I'll like look and see if I'm anxious. Like I'll be like oh like am I shaky is my chest tight and whatever and then. When I'm overwhelmed I just feel like done with everything like everything just feels like way too much

KA: Mm

Bluecat: It almost feels like you just want to like curl up in a ball and hide from the world

KA: Yeah yeah

Bluecat: And ya want like press a pause button and everything get everyone to like stop

KA: Yeah yeah (.) um and are there times or situations in which you find it a bit easier sometimes to tell what you're feeling or is it kind of consistently difficult?

Bluecat: ((pause)) I think sometimes like I know what certain emotions feel like like if I definitely feel a certain way I know what that definitely is but it's when I'm feeling like a mix of emotions it's harder because I'm like I don't know how to explain what I'm totally feeling because it's like things mixed together

KA: Yeah yeah. No that's something that we definitely like come across a lot with our other participants. They say very similar things that these you know it's when it's like a complex mix of emotions or even when situations are a bit more ambiguous and can be interpreted in different ways. (.) um (.) OK (.) um (.) The next questions I have are about interception which I it's very very tightly related or at least we think to alexithymia. Um so interception is like our ability to detect signals inside of our body and our ability to I guess gain meaning from those signals that we detect. Um so some examples might be how fast our heart is beating how hungry we are or how badly we might need to use the bathroom. So if I were to like hold my wrist here now um I can feel my pulse in my wrist and I can feel that's when my heart is beating. But if I was to let go and wasn't touching any part of my body personally I have no idea when my heartbeat is I can't feel anything. So I have quite low interoception for my heartbeat because yeah (.) I can't feel anything and ((pause)) Yeah for me I also think I have quite low interoception for telling when I'm hungry or not because like sometimes I have to um (.) like I have to look at the time to decide when I eat a meal because otherwise I just won't feel hungry. Um so I'm ((stutters)) not so good at interoception. Um but how do you feel about that? You know do you feel aware of signals like that?

Bluecat: I don't feel like my heart beating like all the time like just like I don't feel it. But I feel it if I'm like really anxious or like if you've been like running or exercising like you'll feel like your heartbeat beating.

KA: Mm yeah

Bluecat: And then like sometimes like I don't feel like if I look at the time I'm like oh it's like 1 o'clock or something and I haven't even had lunch yet but I don't feel hungry (.) but then other other times I can feel hungry and it's like half eleven

KA: Yeah (.) Um do you think cause yeah I think what you've mentioned there with both of them is yeah sometimes it's just like the situation that determines how much (.) um (.) I guess for the hunger one do you know what the difference is between those times when you feel hunger and the times that you don't? Is there anything that's like different?

Bluecat: ((pause)) I don’t know like today I guess I'm a bit like stressed or whatever cause like my college like I'm still trying to figure what's going on there

KA: Mm

Bluecat: But so I never had breakfast today but I still don't feel hungry. But then sometimes I will have breakfast and I'll go to school and then like 11 o'clock I will be hungry

KA: Yeah so maybe then do you think it might be a bit related to anxiety and like anxiety kind of muddles your appetite a bit?

Bluecat: Yeah I think so and I think it’s also like based on how overwhelmed I feel sometimes cause like if I feel really overwhelmed then I just won’t feel like eating

KA: Yeah oh that’s interesting. I think I'm um a bit similar with that as well. Um and yeah you mentioned about like the heart beating and you said that you know either if you're anxious or if you've had a run and I know you said earlier that sometimes you know um if you're trying to work out if you're anxious you look at things like is your chest feeling tight and is heartbeat another one of those things that you might try to focus on to see if you're anxious?

Bluecat: Yeah

KA: Yeah

Bluecat: Usually I don't get a fast heartbeat unless I'm like super anxious but on the odd occasion I will get it when I'm slightly less anxious

KA: Yeah yeah. And do you like feel it in your chest?

Bluecat: Yeah

KA: Yeah (.) oh it’s horrible isn’t it? ((laughs))

Bluecat: ((laughs)) yeah (.) Like you don't even have to touch your chest you just like you're just sitting and you like feel beating and like (.) urgh

KA: Yeah yeah. But then say for instance your heart starts beating really fast but it's ((pause)) It (.) say you've just done a run or something like that (.) um (.) does that feel different to the way your heart feels when you're anxious or does it feel the same? (.) and yeah

Bluecat: It sort of feels the same like (.) like I don't really like running and stuff because like when I run like I get like my heart beats fast and that like reminds me of like being anxious and it makes me feel like I can't breathe even though I know I can (.) Like it makes me feel a bit panicky cos I'm like ohh like my hearts beating really fast like uh like what's wrong with me but (.)

KA: That's actually something that yeah you've really hit the nail on the head there. This is something we look at a lot with our research and it's this idea that your evaluation of the signals can make you quite anxious. Um and yeah we see that a lot with patients with like panic disorders and things like that (.) you know (.) almost like you, you get a signal that reminds you of anxiety and that makes you anxious (.) and then because you're anxious your heart starts beating even faster which makes you even more anxious (.) and then all of a

sudden you're panicking. Um (.) so yeah it’s really really interesting that that's something that you can relate to as well. (.) Um

Bluecat: You've obviously got like the irrational thought of like oh like I'm dying I'm gonna have a heart attack or something. You're like I know I'm not but then that makes me even more anxious

KA: Yeah yeah and I imagine that could link quite a bit with like the OCD as well because I know you can get certain like I think we would call them like catastrophizing thoughts but it's this idea that ins- like if you don't do certain things or if you do certain things that something really really bad is gonna happen and it kind of escalates and I guess would you say that's kind of similar to what you experienced when your heart beats fast?

Bluecat: Sort of to an extent I think yeah

KA: Yeah ((pause)) um and (.) yeah I know we then spoke about sort of the evaluations of heartbeats as quite negative but thinking a little bit about other interceptive signals (.) um (.) do you kind of feel like they’re negative all the time when you feel them or are there some that are neutral some that are positive to you?

Bluecat: Um (.) depends on the situation I think ((pause)) like (.) there's been times where like I've been hungry and I'm like oh but I just need something to eat. But there's been times when I've eaten something and I'm still hungry and I'm like what is going on? Like just go away

KA: Yeah (.) um ((pause))

Bluecat: Like I don't want to eat everything. Just go away.

KA: Yeah yeah ((laughs)) I feel that. I guess that's almost (.) I dunno would you describe that as like almost like a bit of a disconnect between I know I've eaten so why does my body still feel like- ((overlap))

Bluecat: Yeah

KA: ((pause)) yeah yeah (.) um ((pause)) OK and are there any signals within your body and cause (.) you know we've kind of focused on like hunger and heartbeat there but are there any signals from your body that you think are quite obvious to you or that you are quite good at detecting?

Bluecat: Um ((pause)) Probably if I needed toilet like that's quite easy most of the time

KA: Yeah

Bluecat: But apart from I don't get it as much now but I know a lot when I was younger like I had like I would panic if the teacher didn't let me go to the toilet like the hospital had to write to them and be like you have to let her go like at all times because if I was anxious I needed the toilet like I like I need to pee now (.)

KA: Yeah

Bluecat: Um (.) so if they don't let me go I'd just completely panic

KA: Right OK yeah

Bluecat: Like I'd basically just I'd almost like have a full blown panic attack with them I would be like I need to go like I need to go

KA: Yeah yeah and was it like that kind of feeling of needing to go and not being able to that kind of made you-

Bluecat: There's like (.) like I need to but like there's like the fact like the fear of like not being allowed. And also I think maybe to some extent it was like the fact like the toilet's away from everyone like I can have like a couple of minutes just to calm down in there like a quick break.

((pause))

KA: Yeah that's really interesting (.) um (.) yeah. And these do you find that your kind of like interpretation of these internal signals (.) does it affect your everyday life at all or is it something that's not so big a deal?

Bluecat: ((pause)) I don't think it's a big deal but sometimes I think it does have some effect.

((pause))

KA: Mm yeah (.) yeah yeah (.) OK I've realised we've been talking for a little while now um so it's up to you we can either just carry on or we can take a little 5 minute break. Um what are you feeling?

Bluecat: I'm alright to carry on

KA: Ok cool cool. Um (.) so I'm going to talk to you a bit about eating specifically. As I said I as well as looking at anxiety also looking at uh also look at like eating disorders and things like that. Um (.) and is this anything that you've ever had experience with or not?

Bluecat: Eh no. So like the most extent I've had it is like I like (.) want to eat something and be like oh I don't like (.) if I eat it like (.) I don't want to be fat basically

KA: Mm ok ok so it's that yeah-

Bluecat: Like I've always got that fear of being like even though my mum's like you're not you're not like yeah I know but I feel like a pig for like eating that.

KA: OK, so it's almost like a bit of guilt associated with certain- ((overlaps))

Bluecat: Sometimes yeah

KA: Yeah but does that (.) would you say that there's a lot of scenarios in which that would stop you from eating something you kind of wanted to eat or is it just an occasional thing or?

Bluecat: Er (.) it's mostly from like if I've like had my tea and like still hungry or something and like I have pudding or something

KA: Mm ok ok. Um (.) so is it that (.) because I guess some people would if they still felt hungry after eating they'd say "oh well, my body's telling me I'm still hungry so I must still be hungry and I'll carry on eating" but for you is it more that you yeah you worry that if you continue eating, you'll get fat or or things like that?

Bluecat: Yeah

KA: Yeah yeah

Bluecat: And most of the time I will have it anyway cos my mum's like just go for it like you're not fat like just go for it ((overlaps)) I usually will

KA: Yeah!

Bluecat: But yeah

KA: Yeah. No I mean I totally agree with that I think (.) yeah if you're hungry you gotta eat (.) um (.) But then if you if you were to go for it you know if your mum was like yeah just go for it and you did (.) do you sometimes feel a bit guilty after or is it (.) you relax a bit after you've eaten it

Bluecat: Bit of both I think

KA: Ok yeah (.) I think that's to some extent normal to (.) yeah. But I think it's it definitely becomes an issue where it's (.) really restricting you from eating what you want to eat or feeling a lot of guilt around food ((pause)) So sometimes with our participants we find that they (.) um (.) find it difficult to eat certain foods because of texture or taste or basically certain sensory things that make it quite overwhelming. Um have you ever experienced this with certain foods?

Bluecat: I mean I am picky I'm not as bad as I was (.) like before I would like not eat any vegetables unless it was like in soup

KA: Yeah

Bluecat: Um now I am getting better but (.) there's still some things I'm absolutely like (.) nope

KA: Yeah. And there's-

Bluecat: Like even a lot of things like lamb or something I'm like no

KA: Oh yeah yeah (.) And is it-

Bluecat: I'm like there's (.) like fur on it I'm not eating something with like fur on it

KA: ((laughs)) yeah

Bluecat: ((inaudible)) but it's an animal that has fur so I'm like you know

KA: ((laughs)) That makes a lot of sense I am (.) I am maybe the world's worst vegetarian I say that I'm a vegetarian, but I end up eating meat quite a lot ((laughs)) so no fur rule would be a good one for me

Bluecat: Yeah I think if I was actually vegetarian I'd probably barely eat anything cos most of what I eat is meat so

KA: Yeah yeah. And those foods that you like absolutely can't stand well do you know what it is about them that you really don't like? Is it the taste?

Bluecat: Think sometimes it's just the thought the taste the smell

KA: Yeah ((pause)) I get that I get that

Bluecat: Like I used to eat pate and then when I found out it was made of liver I'm like I'm never eating that again ((laughs))

KA: ((laughs)) yeah it's so weird isn't it

Bluecat: Uh I mean I will have haggis (.) but I'm like hesitant I'm like mm ((laughs)) like because I never even used to know what it is and now I know what it is I'm a bit like I like it but I don't really want to eat it but I will

KA: Yeah. It's almost like why did people tell me what was in this? Now I can't enjoy it as much

Bluecat: Like I wont eat black pudding

KA: Yeah. Oh yeah that's (.) is it blood that's in black pudding it is isn't it?

Bluecat: Yeah like I'm not gonna eat that

KA: Yeah cringes me out a bit ((laughs)) (.) um (.) But no I-

Bluecat: But I have like steak even though like I know there's been blood on it but like I won't eat it well I mean I will eat it slightly more raw but I'm not gonna eat it like with blood pouring out of it

KA: Yeah yeah. I think in France they do have it like I've heard (.) uh (.) obviously I'm a bad vegetarian but yeah I've heard that they have it like super super raw out there so

Bluecat: Just hit it with a pan to warm it up

KA: ((laughs)) yeah literally literally

Bluecat: Snails as well no?

KA: Mm I think I tried snails once before and they weren't too bad but that was just because they were they tasted more like garlic than anything because I'd had loads of garlic on them and I think I'll eat anything that has lots of garlic on it so

Bluecat: There was like this boy in my form class and he said his older brother went to China on holiday and he had what he thought was chicken but after he ate it, he found it was dog

KA: Oh no that would make me really sad

Bluecat: It tasted like chicken he thought it was chicken but it wasn't

KA: I swear people say everything tastes like chicken don't they? Like every like uh unusual meat I hear people say like oh yeah it tastes just like chicken ((pause)) Yeah (.) No (.) Well dog would definitely not be on my menu

Bluecat: They're too cute

KA: Yeah yeah I heard you (.) you have a dog right?

Bluecat: Yeah

KA: Is it just the one?

Bluecat: Yeah (.) cocker spaniel

KA: Oh my gosh Cocker spaniels are so cute. They're some of my favourite

Bluecat: He’s ten now was 10 in April

KA: Oh wow OK so he’s (.) I guess he’s not super old but he’s heading in the older (.)

Bluecat: Yeah

KA: Yeah. I- ((overlaps))

Bluecat: Still running around (.) He’s getting more uh (.) picky I’ll tell ya that

KA: Oh really?

Bluecat: He wont eat his food unless you play with them or give him something else then he’ll eat it

KA: ((laughs)) that’s a good strategy for getting attention I suppose

Bluecat: Yeah (.) Yeah he's like you have to play with me or you have to stand next to me or you have to hide my treats before I’ll eat them.

KA: ((laughs)) aw. I (.) I don't have a dog with me in my I'm in my like university house at the moment and we're not allowed pets which sucks (.) um (.) but at my family home which I think was where I did the introduction call with you I have a dog and she is crazy and she's not fussy at all. In fact if you leave anything down even like a piece of paper when she was a puppy she would just eat anything

Bluecat: Yeah he’ll eat anything but I think a lot of that is like he was like the smallest in the litter

KA: Aw

Bluecat: And the food (.) the food they gave him gave him an upset stomach so I don't think he ever felt full as a puppy cos it would just go through him

KA: Oh

Bluecat: I think that’s a lot to do with it

KA: That’s really interesting yeah

Bluecat: Cos he can’t (.) he can’t have like he's prone to pancreatitis so he can't have any like human food and he can’t have like poultry or anything

KA: Mm

Bluecat: So the only really human food he gets is like carrot rice and whitefish

KA: Oh ok (.) hmm (.) uh (.) A dog of good taste

Bluecat: Yep (.) He likes his carrots (.) loves em

KA: Yeah my dog too she’s like obsessed with carrots and I’m also obsessed with carrots so that works. It’s like a uh owner dog thing

Bluecat: I’ll eat them cooked but not raw

KA: ((laughs)) yeah no much better cooked

Bluecat: I tried it raw once I was like ugh

KA: Yeah it (.) it doesn't taste as good that's for sure (.) um (.) Cool. So I think we're pretty much near the end of all of the questions I had to ask you today (.) um (.) but I just wondered is there anything that you would like to flag up to me you know is there anything that you think I might be missing or anything that maybe you experienced that I haven't touched upon that you think would relate to these topics?

Bluecat: It's probably more of a sensory thing but I know like if like (.) um (.) like it's really warm outside and I'm like super warm or like if I got like a really annoying tag in my clothes I get like irritable so easily

KA: Oh ok yeah

Bluecat: Cos it just like gets on your nerves that like (.) I don't- It's like so hard to explain ((pause))

KA: Yeah yeah so it's like that sensory side of things like ((pauses)) influences I guess your mood and your emotions and

Bluecat: Make it just makes me so like so annoyed and I'm just like get it off me now like get it away

KA: Yeah yeah (.) and is that like (.) I know you said about like the heat and stuff as well but it could it also be like feelings of like clothes on your skin and stuff like that or?

Bluecat: Yeah I'm alright with most clothes but it's like tags and like don't touch my feet (.) like you'll probably end up getting kicked. I hate my feet being touched

KA: ((laughs)) yeah yeah (.) Uh (.) OK

Bluecat: Like some people like only walk around in bare feet and well but I'm like no I have to have socks on like at all times

KA: Yeah yeah that makes sense for sure (.) um (.) Yeah and anything else or?

Bluecat: Eh (.) don't think so

KA: OK um cool. Well thank you so much for participating. Uh you gave some really really interesting answers there and it will no doubt be so so useful for our analyses (.) um (.) and yeah it was really really lovely to speak to you and I'm very grateful that you shared such like personal experiences with me

Bluecat: OK

KA: OK great. Well have a lovely rest of your day and I'll be in touch soon with the transcript

Bluecat: OK thank you