

Caroline Lotoux, Psychotherapist

Rob : And I'm with Caroline Lotoux, who is a psychotherapist, who is in the medical centre here in Maël-Carhaix. Hello, Caroline.

Caroline : Hello.

Rob: You're a French person, you're a Bretonne ...

Caroline: Yes.

Rob: ... but you're an English-speaker.

Caroline: Absolutely.

Rob: You are a psychotherapist who offers services to people who are English-speaking.

Caroline: Yes.

Rob: How come this has come about? What's brought you here to Central Brittany?

Caroline: I am originally from, from le Haut-Corlay on the side of my dad's family. My grandparents were farmers in Haut-Corlay. I was raised in Saint Brieuc. Then afterwards I went to the U.S. to study. And that's where I learned American English, as you can hear it, and I worked there then for a bit more than three years in Washington, D.C. for a non-profit. After 9/11, I decided to, to move back to, to Brittany, and then I've worked in communications, and then I was self-employed and did some training sessions for young professionals, then I started to, to study in order to become a psychotherapist.

Rob : And what is it about this profession that interests you?

Caroline: I think it's meeting people, which at some point in their lives are facing issues or dilemmas, or are feeling depressed, down a.. and they want things to change. And, and, and I believe that taking time to speak about your issues can help. I deeply believe in that, and I know that it has effects. And, I find it meaningful to me.

Rob: You are attached to a couple of medical centres. What kind of problems in general—I mean, I don't want to be specific — but what kind of general problems do you encounter amongst the local population—amongst the people of Central Brittany?

Caroline: Many issues. Depression. I work a lot with farmers, too. And, and you know that their job, their profession is, is not easy. Some of them are, are close to getting retired, they don't know if they are going to be able to sell their farm, and all different issues like that, so, yeah, depression. And, and I think when you've got the thoughts, talking about it may help you move forward. It may be people who have lost a loved one, around them, whether, you know, it's a, it's a husband, wife, parents, child and you've



got different issues. Or, people are, you know, jobless—they are wondering what kind of job could they do, uh, they are questioning themselves. So, usually, it's making a step on the side and taking time to really talk about what make them suffer or what is an obstacle for them to move forward.

Rob: It's ironic that many of us English come to live here in Central Brittany because of the way of life that appeals to us, but clearly it's not the same for everyone, is it? This is actually one of France's saddest places in, in terms of suicide, I understand.

Caroline: Absolutely. The Pays COB is the French area which is the most impacted by suicide.

Rob: So, we're thinking about your English-speaking clientele, are these the same sorts of problems, or do they have different problems? I can't help but mention the "B-word".

Caroline: Yeah. I welcome patients, whether they are French or British, and they come with the issues they want to, to bring up, and I adapt. The "B-word," as you mention, has been, of course, talked about, sometimes, not, not always, by my English-speaking patients.

Rob : What kind of things are going through their minds?

Caroline: Well, each of them have their own view and, and their own history, as far as why they are living in Brittany, and all that. And, I'm not going to tell you more about that.

Rob: Of course not, OK. So, someone who might find themselves at a bit of a difficult time and they want to speak to somebody with a listening ear, someone who will understand everything they are saying, because I imagine that language is one of the big problems that people face when they come from the English-speaking countries. What can they do to contact you?

Caroline: They can call me, and I'm going to give you my phone number, which is 02 56 25 11 68 and you can go to my website, which is www.caroline-lotoux.fr. And, you know sometimes just one appointment or two, you know, can make it easier. It doesn't have to last, you know, many, many sessions. I am in Maël-Carhaix on Monday and Fridays, and I am in Ploërdut I am in Morbihan on Tuesday and Thursdays.

Rob: I understand that you have a couple of patients waiting, so I won't keep you any longer. Caroline Lotoux, thank you very much indeed for your time.

Caroline: You're very welcome.