D: Oh, that's right. He said people's professional lives are now quite volatile and unpredictable due to immense changes in technology and working climates. In our work roles, we are under medium to high levels of pressure to meet increased competition and targets, therefore we need to be more productive working longer hours each day. Also, he mentioned something about not being clear in your job role and job expectations, the possibility of making mistakes and the lack of sharing of work responsibilities.

K: That's right. It's so true, isn't it? As related to the part when he spoke about family roles in regard to family members' expectations of you, sharing family responsibilities, caring for children or elderly members and financial concerns.

C: I see, I see, ok, work and family pressure causes. Just a sec. Anything about how pressure can lead to feeling stressed? What is the relationship between the two?

K: Dr. Trent believes that when forms of pressure build up to a "high" level, it becomes difficult to analyse and handle so therefore the result is stress. This can be quite harmful to the body then both physically and psychologically. Individual personalities and abilities can affect the link between pressure handling and the onset of stress. Anxiety sets in only when the body and mind fail to cope with pressure levels successfully.

C: Yes, I guess those effects being mental illness such as clinical depression which could even lead to suicide.

D: Mmm... true. Dr. Trent mentioned that pressure becoming stress focuses on the physical reactions which take place in the body. Under pressure, the body recognizes this through a series of biochemical and physiological changes and prepares for what is commonly referred to as a "fight" or "flight" response. This is an immediate response to a kind of danger which could either pass or, when continuing, can produce chemicals which negatively affect your immune system. Also the cardiac and respiratory systems can be affected.

K: Yes, that is one way of recognizing stress. Other signs include physical symptoms such as high blood pressure, insomnia, fatigue, tension headaches and digestive disorders.

C: So are there any emotional signs we can see from the onset of stress?

D: Yes. He talked of panic or anxiety attacks, phobias, depression, anger, problems with eating habits and low confidence levels. Oh, there are a few more as well. Ummm... strange behaviour, lack of humour, loss of decision making ability and loss of interest in physical appearance. No doubt this causes further pressure to family members and loved ones around them.

C: Ok, loss of interest in appearance, got it! Ha! well, you don't ever have to worry about that one, do you, Kate?

K: Hey, what do you mean?

C: Just kidding! Thanks guys, you have been a real help.

D: Now how about that lunch?