



# Episode 16: Andrew's Story Transcript

**Bree:** Backyard bonfires, dark star-filled skies and lots of cows. These are some of the lovely memories that our storyteller, Andrew, shares with us in today's episode about his time living and working in the Australian countryside.

In today's episode, Andrew talks about the wonders and challenges of moving out of home for the first time and starting a job at a country hospital in the small town of Colac. After spending his whole life growing up in the big city, Andrew tells us about learning to spend time on his own and how he realised that family, friends and fun come in all shapes and sizes. We're calling this episode: 'Feeling fine'.

Before we begin listening, let's talk about some of the vocabulary and expressions you'll hear Andrew say:

1. Firstly, to look out for - Andrew's story is full of phrasal verbs and this one of them. To look out for means to take notice or watch over someone usually with a level of care. Another common expression with a similar meaning is 'to keep an eye on someone' - estar pendiente de alguien. Andrew talks about moving out of home and realizing that he needed to start looking out for himself.
2. Next, Dodgy - Dodgy is an informal adjective we use to describe something or someone that is suspicious, dishonest or of bad quality. For example, you could talk about a dodgy internet connection or a dodgy car salesman. Dodgy.
3. Bonfire - A bonfire is a big fire lit outdoors usually as part of a celebration or to burn rubbish. Una hoguera en español. Typically in many English books or movies they talk about children toasting marshmallows and telling scary stories around a bonfire.
4. Footy - F-O-O-T-Y Footy is a nickname that Australians use to refer to Australian football. This is a sport that looks a little bit like rugby but involves bouncing the ball in addition to throwing and kicking it around a big grass oval. Andrew mentions watching and playing footy as a typical weekend hobby of many Australians.
5. And finally to come to a head - To come to a head usually refers to a problem or difficult situation reaching some sort of critical moment or stage that some action needs to be taken to change what's happening. Llegar a un punto crítico en español. In his story, Andrew talks about his feeling of loneliness coming to a head when he broke up with his girlfriend. To come to a head.

As always you have a downloadable transcript, vocabulary list, and listening comprehension activities on our website [acingles.com/podcast](https://acingles.com/podcast). OK let's get into the story...



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**Andrew:** G'day I'm Andrew...I just started working at the hospital in Colac and I and it was my first time living out of home and I was just sitting at the table having breakfast with one of the dieticians who worked there and before we're heading into work she looked across at me and said, 'before we go in you should probably iron your shirt!' And that was kind of the first time I kind of realised that, I don't know, I was out of home and I needed to sort of start looking out for myself.

Colac is a very classic Australian country town. One main street, a couple of pubs, one supermarket and then around it, lots of farms. Big dairy industry, cows, cows for milk and lots of sheep as well. And I'd always, always lived in Melbourne and I was looking, looking for work around Melbourne but there wasn't really anything available. My, my girlfriend at the time had moved out towards the west of Victoria, the state that I lived in, so it kind of made sense to be out that way. I stayed in the accommodation that the hospital had put me up in for a couple of weeks and then eventually a really nice lady that I worked with, one of the physio assistants, said that she had a spare room at her place.

So I rolled up to this, to their property and they had this big beautiful kind of homestead kind of big house at the front. Really beautiful brick house, really big chimney. So I was actually really, I was really excited. Then I drove past that, down the really long driveway they were on quite a big block to what turned out to be my flat which is essentially probably the size of my bedroom now so. But the whole place! So one one small bedroom single bed and then a really really tiny bathroom and toilet and then a really small kitchen and living area. No internet. Pretty dodgy mobile phone signal. No heating for a lot of the time and then a couple of months after I moved in the oven broke as well. So that was my home for the 14 months.

It took a little bit of adjusting. Melbourne's a really big vibrant city. Really cosmopolitan. Like I lived at home with my family and I had a really big network of friends that I saw really really often. A standard weekend in Melbourne would be maybe going out for dinner or meeting friends for brunch or coffee or going out at night time to a few different bars. There's lots of really good nightlife in Melbourne. So it was definitely different leaving that and going to a really small place like Colac.



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One of those things that they like to do out there was bonfires. So what they'd do during the couple of weeks is they'd gather everything up either that was kind of like old rubbish they didn't need or scrap bits of timber or old furniture things like that and then in the back half of Trevor and Di's property, they basically had what was a big empty field. So everything would just get piled up into the middle of the field during the week and then every, every fortnight normally on a Friday night they'd have a group of family and friends around and we light up the bonfire and everyone would just stand around and have a couple of drinks and chat next to the bonfire all night. I don't think it was my first experience but I think one of my first regular experiences of when the sun goes down it's actually dark. This always seemed really strange to me as something to do when I saw in movies and stuff when people would go out and just lie on their back on the grass and just look up at the sky like at the stars. But that was something I started to do. Really beautiful starry sky, massive fire in the background, lots of really beautiful warm people around.

Trevor and Di, the people that took me in, were just the most beautiful incredible people. So I would describe Trevor and Di as classically Australian so they're in the mid-50s, adult kids, Di had shoulder-length dyed blonde hair and then Trevor pretty much always in the same outfit of flannel shirt, khaki work shorts, work boots and just really into classic Australian male hobbies so the footy, fishing. We would spend every weekend going into the forest to cut firewood - just really friendly.

Something I found, just the effects of being away from everything that was familiar, was really challenging. That was definitely something that I found, I found quite difficult was I think spending lots of time alone and that being quite new whereas normally I'd be really social, seeing people all the time and I think that kind of really came to a head as well when about halfway through the year my girlfriend and I broke up and that exacerbated that, that kind of feeling of being alone. Initially I'd get home from work at 5:30 and I might go for a walk or something then have dinner and then and then go to bed basically when it got dark.

So I think there were times that it was really challenging and I was feeling really lonely and it wasn't that great.



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So after we'd, Just after we'd broken up, and I can remember just being inside cooking dinner one night and there was a knock at the the sliding glass door behind me and it was Trevor standing there with a couple of beers and he handed me a beer, came in and sat down with me and chatted for 30 or 40 minutes. I think that brought it home as well even though I was away from who I would normally think of as familiar as friends and family is that I've found kind of another really good for another group of really important people as well.

So I found, I found lots of things to get involved with. I actually started coaching a kid's basketball team. In my, in my actual alone time, I think I just got a lot better at trying to find things that were meaningful and and just being comfortable with that so I taught myself the guitar, spent time playing basketball by myself but just just just being comfortable that I didn't have to be around people all the time to kind of be happy. I left Colac for the last time and then drove away knowing that it had been a really really positive experience and taking with me lots of friends that I'll, I'll have forever and I think a lot of confidence in skills I got in terms of just being independent were helpful when I when I did eventually move home from Colac and move overseas. I was able to take a little of those things with me as well.

I think there's, there's very little, to be honest, that people from the city could teach people from the country. I think they've definitely got all the knowledge and wisdom. So I think a couple of things that I, I definitely learned were that strawberries and other fruits grow from flowers and that there are many more than one type of cow.

**Bree:** After moving away from Colac, Andrew has since explored South East Asia, worked in London and backpacked across Europe, not on his own but with his new girlfriend, Amanda. The couple now live their version of the Australian dream in the suburbs of Melbourne, where they live together in their newly bought home, a veggie patch, worm farm and their lovable adopted greyhound named Granny.

Gracias por haber escuchado la historia de Andrew. Si aún no lo has hecho suscribirte a Into the Story en Spotify, iTunes o tu plataforma preferida. And if you have a story to tell we'd love to hear it. Send an email [hello@acingles.com](mailto:hello@acingles.com). Thank you for listening, until next time we hope you have a good time, or at least, a good story to tell.