

Hi,

My name is Rick. When Georgie asked me if I wanted to share my experience with the Support Service, I couldn't say yes quickly enough. Beyond Blue has made a huge difference in my life. So I'm more than happy to share my story.



It all started shortly after I turned 50.

I had a lovely family, a successful business, no money worries, but for some reason I felt something was lacking. I constantly found that I was comparing myself to others, usually in a negative way. And although I didn't see it, my family felt that I was angry much of the time.

Then one night I went to bed and woke up in the early hours with great pain, panic and nausea. I paced the house for hours and could not calm down.

I went to work but the anxiety was terrible. Before a meeting I lay on the floor of my office breathing deeply trying to get some relief. I felt so awful that I walked out of the appointment. Something I had never done in 25 years of seeing clients.

I got home and rang my wife. I felt sheer panic taking hold of me until I collapsed on the floor unable to move. I remember curling up in a foetal position on the kitchen floor unable to stop crying.

The anxiety created a relentless fear of bad things happening. I found that I needed to be with someone constantly. I had crippling anxiety that made me too scared to go out. And when I tried, I felt panic the whole time.

My wife and daughter would take it in turns sitting with me holding my hand as I could not bear to be alone. It must have been terrible for them not to know how to comfort me.

I felt utterly worthless.

I would go to bed unable to sleep, desperately wishing it would all end. And there were times when I even thought about how I might do that.

At my lowest point, I felt like I had completely lost my identity. My sense of who I was as a person. My purpose in life. I remember asking myself: "Will I ever see Rick again?" I reached the point where the sleeping tablet I took when I went to bed was the highlight of my day, because I knew it would block out what I was feeling for a while.

I called Beyond Blue twice. And both times were critically important to me. The first time, it was actually my elderly mother who made the call.

I was in such a bad way I can barely remember the details. But I was on my own feeling terrible, and went to my mother's desperately looking for comfort and support. When she saw the state I was in, she called Beyond Blue and handed me the phone.

I can't remember the details of what we talked about, but the person on the other end of that line listened to me, really heard me, talked to me and got me to a better place.

It meant so much to know that there was someone out there who really cared about me, even though they didn't know me, that made a world of difference.

And the second time I called I had a real sense of reassurance, because I knew they'd be able to help me.

That's the thing about Beyond Blue - maybe the most important thing - that they're always there for you. Every hour of every day, right through the year. I don't think I can overstate just how valuable it is to be able to get professional help from someone who really cares at any point in time, with just one phone call.

You call. They answer. You get help. I'll forever be grateful for that simple fact.

And to the wonderful people out there who see the value in this service, and who support Beyond Blue, I can't thank you enough either. Through Beyond Blue, you were there for me when I needed you most.

Thank you, and my best wishes to you and your family.

Regards,
Rick