

Laurie's Story...

“Buddy’s unconditional love is helping unlock that part of my brain, so I can feel the same to and from my wife and 5 girls again”

I can no longer live with my wife and daughters. My children see me as an angry grumpy dad.

I’m 41 years old and my life is at a crossroads.

I joined the army in 1994 at 17. I spent the next 16 years as a soldier, 12 of them in Infantry, 4 in a support and logistics role.

I have been married for 17 years. We have 5 daughters.

In the last 3 years in the army I had 7 surgeries, 5 of them on my spine, due to a work-related injury. You see I have suffered from chronic back and sciatic pain for the last 10 years. I also live with chronic neck and arm pain and have done so for more than 5 years.

The medicos call my situation an “Adjustment Disorder”, whatever that really means. All I know is the pain has been so bad that I black out, especially whilst driving on the highway. It’s fair to say I’m a danger to myself and to others.

To cope, for the last 10 years I have learned to block out my pain. This has caused me to also block out my emotions.

Like I said, **because of this and the anger my pain causes me, I no longer live with my family.**

In fact I have been admitted to the mental health facility Cooina Clinic in Buderim on two occasions. It was the last resort for me to cope with my anger and depression.

Whilst in Cooina, I learnt that because in the military we are trained to be reactive and instinctive in life or death situations in war, we learn to turn off the emotional part of our brain. It actually shuts down completely and stops functioning. That was me 100%.

Lucky for me, my life took a turn for the better in the form of **Buddy, a rescued border collie.**

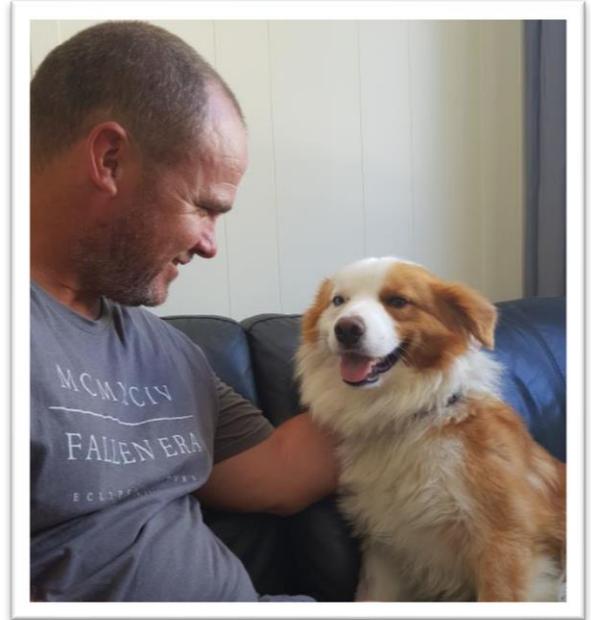
He’s my best mate now. He’s there for me, no matter what my mood. With Buddy’s unconditional love we are working on unlocking my emotions again, so I can feel the love and affection to and from my wife and 5 girls.

In no way am I “healed” yet. But people have been commenting on how much calmer I am and not as reactive to life.

The little bloke is so loving and affectionate he is drawing those emotions out of me. He doesn’t care if I am feeling awful. He just puts his paw on me and sits with me.

Thanks to Buddy, I’m spending more time with my family. I’m even going out to school functions to watch the girls perform, something I would not do without Buddy by my side.

Thanks to my little mate Buddy and to **PTSD Dogs Australia**, I reckon you’ve “saved” me and gone a long way to bringing me back home.



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