

My Story...



It seems like a lifetime ago when I started a career in Corporate Law. I had high hopes of finding satisfaction and fulfilment but after some years I quit.

I was disillusioned with the unhealthy culture at the firm I worked in. The catalyst was the suicide of my boss. Finding myself out of work, I took various jobs in the beginning including driving trucks, presenting science shows for children and working as a lawyer at the Mental Health Legal Centre in Johnson Street, Collingwood, Victoria. For the first time I came face to face with mental illness in the community and the workplace. With each new client I slowly unlearned my legal training (*“Let’s not get emotional here. Just tell me the facts and we will see what the law says”*).

I found myself closing the law books and wanting to know more about the client’s experience and how they had got to this point in their life. One day, I sat across from a young professional like myself whose life and promising career had unravelled. All I wanted to do was understand. *“What happened to you that you have ended up at this point in life?”* I spent the afternoon listening to this young journalist’s life story. I think I had found my path then. Mental health wellbeing has been the constant thread in the fabric of my career and life. I have worked in Corporate Change Programs in some of the largest Corporations in Australia, but I keep coming back to my key focus and the focus of C4M – How do we sustain healthy and productive workplace environments for our people.

Fast forward to 2016.

I am on an empty stretch of road in the middle of nowhere, Extremadura in Southern Spain.

I have taken a break from a successful (but very hectic) business in workplace investigations and mediations to walk the Camino Via dela Plata – just to know what it feels like to create this space in my life. I discover that stepping out of your comfort zone for 55 days not only challenges you to your limits... it brings clarity to your life’s choices. Big ones and small ones. In the months and years that followed, **I discovered that the important choices that we need to make do not dim, they only get clearer.**

MJ

