



## Last Christmas, a call to Mind's Infoline saved me.

I'm looking forward to Christmas. I know that doesn't sound very radical, but it's a massive step forward for me. In the past, I felt such dread as the streets and shops filled with lights and decorations. I desperately wanted Christmas to be perfect – the way it is in the films and adverts. The pressure never failed to worsen the depression that's dogged me since my teens.

Last year, I felt so low that every tiny thing was a struggle. Boiling the kettle was harder than running a marathon. Everyone seemed to be buzzing with excitement, but all I could feel was numbing sadness. I wanted to be included in the warmth and joy of Christmas but I felt like an outcast.

One afternoon, everything came to a head. I felt as though I'd reached breaking point. Then I remember thinking that perhaps – just perhaps – it might help to hear another human voice. Someone who'd listen and help me.

I found that person when I plucked up the courage to call Mind's Infoline and Claire picked up the phone.

That conversation was a turning point for me. Claire was brilliant. She didn't just listen, she came up with strategies to help me cope too.

Claire helped unravel what I could do to get out of that hole. Thanks to her, I put down the phone with a new perspective. Slowly, I took my first tentative steps forward.

One of those steps was to put my efforts into art. Drawing cards for my friends and family last year really helped me to cope. Art was my way forward, but everyone is different, and one of the reasons the Infoline is so effective is that the advisers treated me as an individual. Their support was tailored to me.

From signposting to the right local services, to discussing the treatments available or practical ways of coping, Mind's advisers offer both hope and choices. **Most important of all, they show those of us with mental health problems that we're not alone.**



By supporting Mind today, you could help someone else like me to cope this Christmas.  
Caitlin





**By supporting Mind this Christmas, you'll be giving someone like me the best gift in the world: The chance to speak to someone they can connect with, who genuinely cares.**

Mind was able to help me, thanks to our supporters like Lansons – and I will always be grateful for that generosity. But with mental health problems affecting one in four of us, services like the Infoline are already really stretched. Mind has to be able to help all of us when we need them. One day, one of your friends or loved ones may need to call – your gift today could help make sure Mind are there to answer that call when it comes.

I know Mind is absolutely determined to be there for everyone who turns to them. But keeping their promise simply won't be possible unless compassionate people like you help them.

**Last year, Mind turned my life around.** I hope you will help them to do the same for another person who's struggling to cope this Christmas. Your support could mean that, by this time next year, even more people will have found a way forward. Maybe they'll even be looking forward to the festivities, just like I am.

If you would like to support Mind this Christmas you could take part in Lansons' Christmas events, organise your own event or [donate direct to Mind](#).

With best wishes for a happy and peaceful Christmas.

*Caitlin*

Caitlin Maggs

