

Behind the Smile Transcribed Audio

Quinn Steed

"This is a podcast from Rova. My name is Quinn Steed, and I'm a voice of hope.

Upbringing for me was always on the farm, always spending time at Granddad's, helping him in the yards or in the shed, holding the spanners for him in the workshop. Love the animals. It's where I first got it from, was from Granddad's farm, and I've loved being outdoors and being in the paddock and driving the motorbikes and tractors, and it's just been who I am since I was born, I guess.

I think I realised the way I was feeling when I was so tired I couldn't sleep. I came out of school, went contracting, best time of my life, probably the best three or four weeks I've had in years. I just loved it, but I started not sleeping, not eating a lot, always being sad. You know, I'd leave a friend's place and sit in the car for five minutes just sitting there, no emotion, staring off into the darkness. I started feeling like I was a burden to a lot of people, you know. I went 'round to my friend's place, had a ball at a time, great night. The next morning, there was an argument, and I thought that I was the start of it. And when I left the house there, I thought that I can't do it anymore. I just couldn't be a burden to people's lives. I'm not enhancing anyone's lives being this way. And when I drove off down the drive, I sent a message to her saying, sorry, but I can't do it anymore.

I had something like 16 or 17 missed calls from her, and, you know, I was set that I just didn't wanna be here anymore. And then I got to a certain part of the road and I slowed down and I just broke into tears. And I'd hate to think what would have happened if my friend hadn't have seen her phone, seen her message, but I'm really grateful that she did.

When they got to me, came and sat in the car, didn't say a word, didn't do anything, all she did was give me a hug, and that was the exact moment that I knew that people really cared about me. I think the rural communities struggle because there's so many things to do in such little time. You know, we have very, very tight calendars. There's a stigma out there that, you know, you just toughen up and carry on. And they'll overwork and overwork and overwork because that's how they make their money. You know, you might be able to sit in a shop selling apples and no matter how many you sell you're still gonna get paid your wage. But with a farmer, the harder they work, the more they get for their money and being such a labour-intensive job, getting burnt out is really easy.

I don't think many farmers realise because, you know, that's what Granddad did, that's what Dad did, that's what my uncle did. But I think now we gotta start realising that there's a limit to that hard work. Sometimes you just need to ask for help.

VOICES

of hope

I think animals keep me grounded, being up there on the horse. No noise, all quiet, and I love working with them even though some days it gets a bit frustrating. But you know, all they're trying to do is give you their best, and give you a hundred per cent, and that ties back into my mental health because that keeps my mind clear all the time. That keeps me with a positive mindset. It's just a humbling feeling.

I think my one main message is talk to someone. You can tell them they don't have to talk, they just have to listen. Just getting it off your chest really, really helps. Problems shared is a problem halved. You're not weak, You're not stupid. Try and be brave. Brave isn't not feeling fear. It's feeling fear and moving forward still. 'Cause you can push through it and you can push through anything if you put your mind to it."