

To the Gentleman  
That did the raffle at the bike event  
c/o The Olive Tree Pub  
Sutton Green Road  
Guildford  
Surrey  
GU4 7QD

Dear Sir

I am sorry I did not catch your name but I needed to get in touch for a reason that will become clear.

First off, what an amazing experience the day was. Although it was my 4<sup>th</sup> ride it was my first at Guildford and to be perfectly frank it blew away the others. The organisation when I first arrived and the atmosphere in the high street was superb. Who ever organised the route needs a medal, it was fabulous. Just the right length with a delightful stop half way. I have no idea where it was but it was wonderful. Then when all those bikes arrived at the Brewery the marshals worked wonders getting us parked up. All those bikes in quite a tight space and hardly any time wasted. Lastly although a 30 min wait for a pint, it was worth it and the food was really tasty. There was a great team fund raising, the band were fun and plenty of lighted hearted banter.

But the reason for this letter is what happened towards the end and has started what I hope is a permanent and substantial change to my life. You jumped up on the mic, I thought to call the raffle, but first gave one of the most personal and passionate speeches I have ever witnessed. You apologised at the end saying you didn't know where that came from, well it was very obvious it came from your heart and if I may be so bold to say, your own personal experience I suspect. Your soft and kind words were inspiring, a phrase I will never forget "mental health hides in the shadows waiting to pounce" cut to my core. Your description of how a day goes, achieving nothing, yet returning home as if nothing was different is how I have lived my life for over 2 years now.

Anyway to bring this to a close, after I left I took a little longer on my ride home, stopping off at the pub in the village. I was greeted by the landlord as usual, who asked if everything was okay! I sat, hand shaking with a pint and did as you suggested, he stood, said nothing, just listened, towards the end he put his hand on my shoulder and suggested I go home and talk it through with my wife. The 5 minute ride seemed to take a lifetime but on getting home I discovered the kids were out giving me the space and privacy I needed. Since that evening, I have been to see my doctor, who has given me medication and referred me for counselling.

If that really was off the cuff it was amazing. Please find a way to do more of it, you could easily change many more lives than just mine.

A life changing thank you

