

"I grew up without my Dad in my life and that had a lot of impact on me. I grew up with a lot of personal issues such as low self-esteem, lack of confidence and a lot of anger towards my Dad. Without a positive male role model in my life to help teach me about masculinity and develop effective coping strategies, I had to work a lot of it out myself." Rodney reveals that counselling was a big part of his journey.

"I've had a lot of experience with counselling while growing up. For me it's always been an effective way to work through issues. It was a platform I could be free to be vulnerable without the judgement and ridicule that a lot of blokes tend to give each other. It's this reason I decided to study counselling as an adult."

It wasn't until a near death experience nearly 3 years ago that Rodney began to actually live his Y. In October 2010, Rodney contracted swine flu. This led to double Pneumonia which shut down Rodney's lungs. He spent 11 days in hospital in an induced coma on life support.

"I nearly didn't make it. There were a few occasions when there were complications and I nearly died. I've since discovered that a near death experience has a profound effect on people's lives, including mine. Reasons become clearer and the outlook you have on life changes."

After a 3 month recovery period, which included having to learn how to walk again, Rodney threw himself into living his Y.

"That's when I started Bloke Support, a counselling and support organisation which helps men, families and couples overcome issues they have with relationships, anger, depression, stress and work. The reason Y Bloke Support exists is to create a world where men are free to be themselves without judgement, ridicule and stigma. Our mission is to redefine masculinity."

Rodney insists that Bloke Support is a vehicle to help him live his personal Y.

"I believe I'm here to have an impact on the world and the people in it. Knowing this has helped me to live my life. My Y gives me a reason to do what I do. It's something to live by and something to believe in. Working towards something that's bigger than yourself is, for me, the way to living a life with meaning and purpose." ●



SYDNEY/NSW, AUSTRALIA

Rodney Owen

FINDING HIS Y HAS BEEN A LIFELONG JOURNEY, BEGINNING IN HIS CHILD HOOD

I'm here to have an impact on the world