



## Marks Story

Member

**Mark Fielding**

Reason for joining C2R

**Served with founder Neil Heritage / PTSD**

Service Career

**Regular Army service**



**M**ark joined the Royal Corps of Signals in 1991 and served in Bosnia, Macedonia, and Kosovo, he deployed on five operational tours of Iraq and two to Afghanistan. In 2013, after years of struggling and finding life increasingly difficult, Mark was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. As his symptoms continued to deteriorate Mark transitioned from Regular to Full Time Reserve Service in 2016, hoping to focus more on his recovery and treatment. However, despite this occupational change and his being clinically treated for three years, his PTSD remained severe and impacted every aspect of his life. Eventually, after many years of being committed to his clinical treatment, hard work and determination, his symptoms remained largely unabated and he was medically discharged in 2023, 31 years after joining the Army.

**D**uring his Army career Mark served alongside and became good friends with Neil Heritage, C2R's founder.

*"I found out about C2R after I put out a social media post about my PTSD diagnosis and the challenges I was having. Neil got in touch immediately and invited me along to a C2R meeting in Avon Gorge. As soon as I got on the rock and started moving upwards, I felt refreshed, clear headed and at peace with the world – it was a spectacular transformation".*

**F**ollowing this Mark attended a Learn to Climb course in the Peak District and since then has attended numerous courses in the Lake District, Scotland, North Wales, and Spain. Each time Mark climbs it affords him valuable space, perspective, and respite from his PTSD, he feels more at ease, comfortable, less overwhelmed and, most importantly, he feels happy and laughs.

Mark benefits from the climbing and mountaineering, the pace of the courses, the people, and friendships, being outdoors, regularly challenging himself and overcoming, and always having something positive to look forward to.



**Mark (Right) with climbing partner Tom, in Scotland, on the winter skills course in February 2023.**

Additionally, Climb 2 Recovery enabled Mark to train and qualify as an International Rope Access Technician Association (IRATA) Level 1.

Mark said, **"passing my IRATA has transformed my life"**. Powerfully, this qualification has allowed Mark to find a new profession and employment that is far more compatible with managing his PTSD. He has not only returned to work and rediscovered his independence and self-confidence, but now looks forward to work every day!



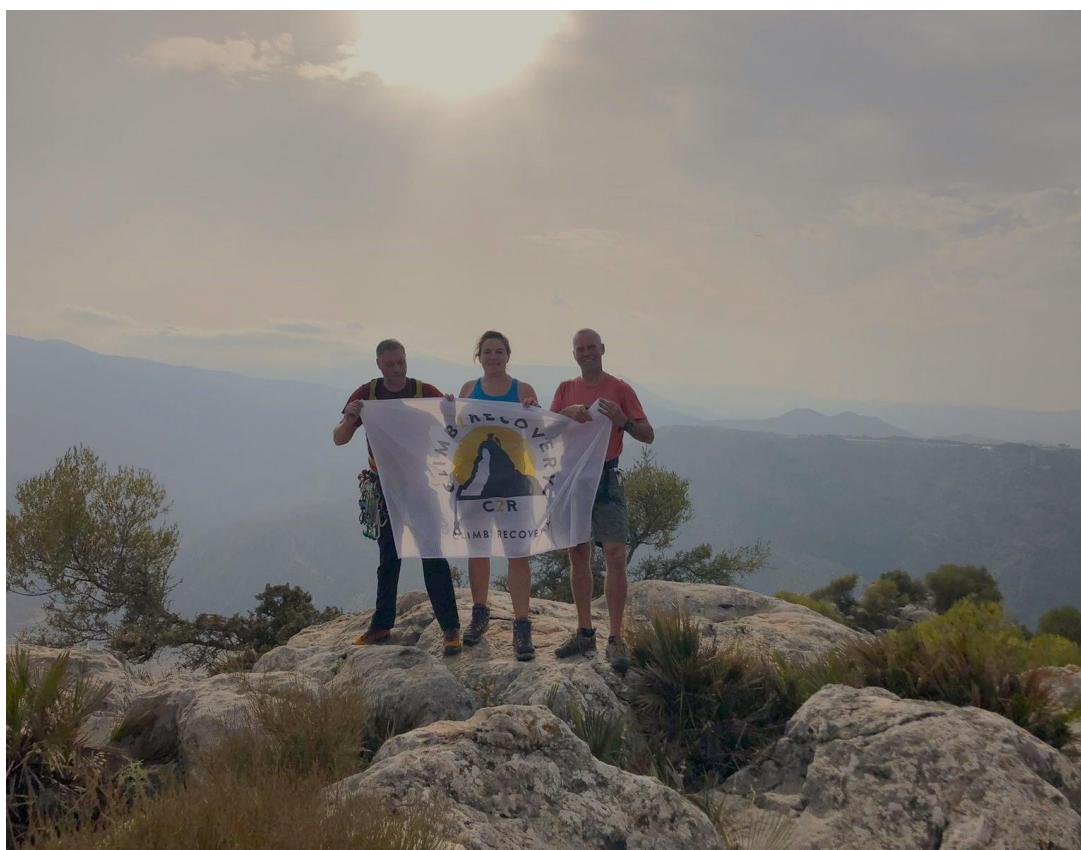
## My Situation now

**M**ark said, “for me, C2R has made an enormous and ongoing difference, helping me where clinical treatment alone either failed or simply didn’t have much of an impact. I have met with old friends and rekindled these friendships, as well as meeting many great new friends through the various courses. I find that when I am on C2R courses I am more relaxed and feel far more comfortable with those around me, knowing that we have or are going through similar circumstances and that we all just want to get better and help one another. It has given me a wonderful community”.

“As well, my PTSD ended my career in the military – a career I loved, and this had a catastrophic effect on my identity, confidence, and purpose. But C2R, through its climbing training and qualifications, and especially the industrial ropes certification, has helped me find a new profession and return to work. This has made an extraordinary difference to me – giving me an occupation that is compatible with, and allows me to far better manage, my symptoms. It has also helped to transform my independence, self-confidence and self-esteem, my happiness, life-outlook and optimism”.

“My aspirations are to attend the Winter Mountain Leader training in the future. Then, when I am ready, I would like to try and give something back to the charity as I feel it has done so much to help me through my recovery”.

Mark with fellow members in El Churro Spain.





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**Climb2Recovery**  
**Registered Charity Number 1186493**  
Supporting the recovery of veterans,  
through climbing and mountaineering

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