



## **The science of the mind: investigating mental health**

*Talking about Blackthorn: Colin*

### **Narrator**

Colin is a co-worker at Blackthorn Garden. His time there has helped him to change his outlook on life.

### **Colin**

When I first came to Blackthorn after seven years of being a bit of a hermit I couldn't even sit in the café. If there was more than two or three people in there I couldn't sit in the café, I had to go out and wander round the gardens which, in a normal circumstance in a job environment you wouldn't get away with, but at Blackthorn they accept that people need space sometimes, and it didn't take very long actually for me to settle down into the community side of it because it was so different to what I'd been used to. That's the whole thing about Blackthorn is everybody helps everybody else. All the co-workers, , we have little chats amongst ourselves, we support each other, it's, it's all part of a big team really. I did the, the horticulture NVQ when I first came to Blackthorn in the first year, with a view to starting my own gardening-cum-DIY sort of business, and since then learning the carpentry skills in the workshop it's given me a completely new way of earning a living., I was trained as an IT support engineer and that was far too pressurised, it was just too much, people want it yesterday, you sit down at a desk and straight away, is it fixed yet, and that kind of pressure isn't what I can do any more. I want to be a more relaxed sort of person and I'm finding that working with wood is therapeutic. It's nice to start off with a plank of wood and then finish up with a, a finished article that somebody will either buy or you give it as a gift and, you know, you get thanks for it. It's, it's a big boost to the ego and that's necessary, I think.

When I first came to Blackthorn I felt broken and being here for the last couple of years has fixed me, it's, it's put me into a position where I can go forward with my life.