

# Self Help Queensland Support & Information Since 1983



'supporting people in finding their own solutions to improve well being'

Queensland Self Help & Support Group Sector

News & Information  
Bi-monthly

Issue 1  
Jan/Feb  
2017



Self Help Queensland Office  
Located at Sunnybank, Brisbane



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## From the President

Joseph Soda

I trust everyone had a happy and safe New Year, and welcome to our first Newsletter for the calendar year.

Firstly, we would like to thank FSG for their generosity in again sponsoring this newsletter in 2017. Without their help it would not be possible to keep you up to date with what is happening in the Self Help and Support Group Sector here in Queensland and elsewhere.

Self Help Queensland also welcomes a new member to the Management Committee in 2017. We are pleased to introduce Melody Edwardson to our team, and look forward to the benefit of her extensive skills and experience. Read Melody's brief bio further on.

SHQ has registered to sell the very popular 'Entertainment Books' as a fundraising project. Sales are made through the website and the company supplies all the advertising and apps for our IT volunteer, Roy to make this happen. Books sell for \$65 and SHQ receive \$13 for every book sold. Books are either electronic, or posted by the Company. We will advertise through our newsletter, facebook and website. I hope those of you who can support this will do so, as SHQ needs to develop additional funding to continue our work.

A Federal Government volunteer grant application was submitted by SHQ for resources to make life easier for our volunteers in carrying out their work. We are keeping our finger crossed in the meanwhile. It is a very popular and worthwhile grant that enables organisations to recognise and value their volunteers.

It was a very busy end of year at SHQ. We submitted our new Strategic plan to Queensland Health during December. As with any plan we will need to continually measure ourselves against the actions agreed to in our plan and report to QH what we have achieved. We have approached Board Connect for some assistance with this plan.

(Continued on Page 3)



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The SHQ Newsletter is kindly  
sponsored by FSG Australia  
fsg.org.au

## To receive This Newsletter in Hardcopy

Self Help Queensland can no longer afford to distribute a free hardcopy newsletter. The cost of paper, printing, postage and handling has forced us to charge a fee of \$20 per year for 6 issues.

We appreciate that some professionals like to leave them in their waiting rooms, or facilitators take them to group meetings, and we apologise that we are no longer in a financial position to provide this service free.

Please contact Trish if you would like to opt for a hardcopy by post. Ph 07 3344 6919 or Email [info@selfhelpqld.org.au](mailto:info@selfhelpqld.org.au)

## Looking for a Self Help or Support Group in Queensland?

The Self Help Queensland Directory of Self Help and Support Groups is now online and free. To search for a self help or support group follow this link <http://www.selfhelpqld.org.au/> On the Home Page click on 'Search the Directory' and follow the prompts.

## Please Register Your Group in the Free SHQ Online Directory

We are aiming to feature all of the Self Help and Support Groups in Queensland under the one roof so they can be found more easily.

Please go to <http://www.selfhelpqld.org.au/> and click on 'Register a Support Group' or call Trish at the SHQ office on 33446 919 or email [info@selfhelpqld.org.au](mailto:info@selfhelpqld.org.au) for a registration form.

### Disclaimer

The views expressed in this publication are those of the individual authors and not necessarily those of Self Help Qld

The material supplied is for information purposes only, and is not to be used for diagnosis/treatment, or as legal, tax, accounting or any other type of advice. The SHQ newsletter editor reserves the right to edit contributed articles.



Queensland Government

Thanks to Queensland Health for providing funding to Self Help Queensland to help carry out its activities.



Please Like Us! We're Just Getting Started on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/SelfHelpQueensland/>

## Who We Are

|                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| President         | Joseph Soda         |
| Secretary         | Kathy Thomas        |
| Treasurer         | Christopher Spriggs |
| Committee Members | Val McNamara        |
|                   | Rosa Prah           |
|                   | Elizabeth Carrigan  |
|                   | Melody Edwardson    |
| Co-ordinator      | Trish Fallon        |
| Bookkeeper        | Janette Evans       |
| IT Volunteer:     | Roy Hanfling        |

## How to Contact Us

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Phone:         | 07 3344 6919   |
| Email:         | <a href="mailto:info@selfhelpqld.org.au">info@selfhelpqld.org.au</a> |
| Website:       | <a href="http://www.selfhelpqld.org.au">www.selfhelpqld.org.au</a>   |
| Postal:        | PO Box 353<br>SUNNYBANK QLD 4109                                     |
| Street:        | Sunnybank Community Hall<br>121 Lister Street<br>SUNNYBANK QLD 410   |
| Office Hours : | Tues - Friday 9am - 4.30pm   |

## Please Help Us by Becoming a Member of SHQ

After 33 years, Self Help Queensland has been forced to introduce a membership fee to help sustain our work. There are three tiers of membership which we have kept to an absolute minimum cost.

Concession: Students, pensioners (\$10)

Support groups and individuals: (\$20)

Professionals and organisations: (\$30)

To become a member please click the link below <http://www.selfhelpqld.org.au/membership>

## What We Do

Self Help Queensland (SHQ) supports self help and support groups in Queensland across a broad range of health conditions and related issues. We do this by:

Providing a free, online Directory of self help and support groups in Queensland.

Assisting people to start new self help and support groups where no groups exist.

Working individually with existing groups to build their capacity to improve the wellbeing of their members.

Providing Sector information to individuals, groups, organisations and professionals in Queensland.

Making referrals, providing low cost training, assisting groups with funding applications.

Promoting the benefits of self help and support groups.

Bi-monthly newsletter, website, facebook.

Continued from Page 1)

As part of what we do to build the capacity of self help and support groups, SHQ stepped in to be the sponsor of the AusCongo Network in a successful fundraising event at Buranda Village over Christmas. This provided an opportunity for AusCongo to wrap Christmas gifts at the centre for a gold coin donation. It was a lot of fun and a great success according to the President, Constantin Mukendi in an enthusiastic letter of thanks sent to SHQ.

A Successful Networking meeting with Lions Club members through our former councillor Steven Huang resulted in SHQ obtaining the services of a professional sewing teacher to carry out a sewing project during 2017 to assist refugee women to learn to sew. This request has come about following 2 very successful similar projects.

We have arranged to meet with another not for profit, Smiles of Strength, during March in respect to the possibility of developing a working relationship with them.

SHQ facilitated a meeting between the Department of Immigration and Border Security and the Somali Community. The meeting way exceeded expectations and the Somali community were overjoyed with the support made available to their Community. Our thanks to Trish for organising this meeting.

Regards,  
Joe Soda, President



## Welcome Melody

**SHQ is pleased to introduce the newest member of our Management Committee**

Melody Edwardson lives in the same suburb as Self Help Qld with her daughter, 4 chooks and a dog. Melody has 20 years' experience working in the community sector in a variety of roles including frontline service delivery, management, training, peak bodies, government, policy and as a management committee member.

Melody currently works for a disability advocacy organisation and enjoys volunteer literacy tutoring with refugees. Melody shares Self Help Qld's belief in the power of community members to support each other to improve their lives and looks forward to the opportunity to contribute to the organisation's work via the management committee.



## Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) Introduces Charity Tick

**Self Help Queensland Inc** is eligible to use the Charity Tick. This means that we are transparent, accountable and meet the ACNC's governance standards and reporting requirements.

The ACNC has created the Registered Charity Tick to help charities show the public that they're registered with the ACNC. The Charity Tick is intended to promote public trust and confidence in the sector via this increased transparency.

The Registered Charity Tick is a simple logo that registered charities can use to show their charity status.

Charities can display their Registered Charity Tick on their websites, email signature blocks, donation receipts, letterheads, and fundraising materials, such as brochures and collection tins.

**If your organisation would like information about eligibility for use of the Registered Charity Tick visit:**

[acnc.gov.au/registeredcharitytick](http://acnc.gov.au/registeredcharitytick)



Freedom • Social Justice • Growth

REGISTERED NDIS PROVIDER



**"WHEN A DREAM IS WEAVED INTO A PLAN AND THEN INTO REALITY, WE GROW, AND IN GROWING WE CAN MAKE WHAT WE BELIEVED WAS IMPOSSIBLE, POSSIBLE!"**

VICKI BATTEN, FSG CEO

**Are you NDIS Eligible? Are you NDIS Ready?**

**TALK TO US ABOUT:**

- Accommodation Options | Hassle Free Holidays | Training & Employment Opportunities
- Community Connections | Workshops & Short Courses | Vacation Care
- Peer Connections | Parenting Information & Family Support | Local Services & People Planning Your Future | Leisure & Recreational Activities

*and much more...*

**CONTACT AN FSG DREAMWEAVER ON:**

07 5564 0655

ndis@fsg.org.au

**fsg.org.au**





## In 2017 SHQ is Fundraising Through the Sale of Entertainment Memberships

Entertainment Memberships are very popular because they are such great value. You have access to thousands of **50% off and 2-for-1 offers** for Brisbane's best restaurants, cafes, attractions and retail.

You now have the choice of purchasing memberships in the traditional book form or smart phone app version. 20% of each membership sold contributes to our work of strengthening Self Help and Support Groups for health conditions and wellbeing issues across Queensland, through practical activities and community involvement.

**Please support us and SAVE hundreds of dollars each year!**

Follow the link to purchase your 2017/2018 membership today, all editions throughout AUS/NZ are also via the link available.

[www.entbook.com.au/229j520](http://www.entbook.com.au/229j520)

**Thank You!**



## New Code of Ethics for Australia's Community Workers

Australian Community Workers Association  
[www.acwa.org.au](http://www.acwa.org.au)

Community work is a diverse profession that covers over **50 occupations**. For this reason practitioners are often distinguished by the client area within which they work. These can include aged care, disability services, Indigenous and multicultural support, asylum seekers and refugee services, mental health, child and family services, counselling, schools, emergency relief, youth, justice, housing and community development. Roles include intake, support, case work, crisis intervention, team management and advocacy.

The New Code of Ethics explicitly states the principles that underpin community work and the responsibilities that practitioners have to their clients, employers, colleagues and the profession at large.

Occupations covered by Community Services Workers

|                               |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Aged Care professionals       | Family Court Counsellor       | Residential Care Officer                                  |
| Assessment Officer            | Financial Counsellor          | Social Worker   |
| Careers Counsellor            | Housing Officer               | Student Counsellor  |
| Chaplain                      | Intake Officer                | Support Worker (Disability, Community, Family, Youth etc) |
| Child Protection Worker       | Juvenile Justice Officer      | Trauma Counsellor   |
| Children's Service Worker     | Men's Health Officer          | Volunteer Manager   |
| Community Development Officer | Multicultural Support Officer | Welfare Officer   |
| Community Educator            | Outreach Worker               | Welfare Worker  |
| Crisis Intervention Worker    | Parole Officer                | Youth Accommodation Services Worker                       |
| Disability Care Worker        | Personal Care Worker          | Youth Worker  |
| Drug and Alcohol Counsellor   | Rape Crisis Counsellor        |   |
| Family Counsellor             | Rehabilitation Counsellor     |   |

**Download the Code of Ethics at**

<http://www.acwa.org.au/resources/ethics-and-standards>



## Have You Heard About the “Make an Oath Campaign”

We all know that many millions of \$\$ are being increasingly directed towards mental health programs, clinics, services etc in a bid to improve the mental health of Australians. There wouldn't be anyone who did not have good intentions in this regard; they just don't produce the successful outcomes we would all like to see.

The White Cloud Foundation has come up with a simple, cost-free suggestion that is at least worth our efforts. The idea is based on the strong Australian cultural tradition of “looking out for your mate”.

Rates of depression leading to suicide are skyrocketing, and most of us are aware but not knowing what to do. Almost 3,000 Australians are taking their own lives each year.

White Cloud is asking people to seek out a friend and “...make an oath to them that if you are ever in that dark place and think that suicide is your only option, you will tell your friend what you are thinking before you take any action. This is a loyalty oath to your friend which must never be broken, because friends honour a promise.

Regardless of your mental health today, the oath is the safety net that shows your friendship can endure dark times and prevent a catastrophe. It is honourable and powerful.” Perhaps it could be even stronger if it was reciprocal, both placing trust and honour in each other.

“Help protect your friends and family from suicide, use #makeanoath on social media to show you have a safety plan in place and ask them to make an oath too.

Life might be clear skies and sunshine today but you never know when a cloud may appear. Some people are able to manage their situation, However for others, the clouds of depression are too heavy, leaving them in a very dark place, thinking the only option is to make a catastrophic decision.”

#makeanoath today!

(Source: <http://whitecloudfoundation.org/get-involved/make-oath-makeanoath>)

### Please Tell Us What You Think

**Self Help Queensland welcomes your constructive feedback on any aspect of our service.**

**All feedback is reported to our monthly Management Committee for discussion and further action.**

**We strive to improve our service to self help and support groups, individuals, organisations, professionals, health workers, community members, government and of course our sponsors and funders.**

**If you have any constructive criticisms or suggestions please take the time to let us know and help us do things better. Contact: the President @ info@selfhelpqld.org.au or phone Trish on 3344 6919**

**Thank You**

### Thank You to Our Christmas Donor

SHQ is very thankful for a \$250 donation we received over the Christmas period. It came to us via Give Now, from someone we have never met.

We would like to publicly acknowledge this generous donation from “Mr S.W.” because small organisations like ours do not easily attract funding.

It has been said to us previously, by a social group that has small annual fundraising events, that while they recognise the exceptional value of SHQ's work to the community, we do not have a high enough profile in the eyes of their members!

We can only respond by saying that small organisations stretch their \$ a lot further than most. We are used to living on the smell of an oily rag. Every dollar is used wisely in carrying out our work!

**Thanks again W.S.**

## Genetic Matters

by Professor Kim Summers PhD FRSB

Y, Oh why?

Boys and girls, mares and stallions, bucks and does, ewes and rams, ducks and drakes, hens and roosters.... As animals evolved from single celled organisms they also evolved reproduction by a process called meiosis, which involves combining the genetic information from two parents in a very precise way. In mammals, birds, some reptiles and other animals this process is controlled by having two sexes, males and females. And in mammals the key to determining whether an individual is male or female is the Y chromosome.

Our DNA, our genetic material, is organised into a number of chromosomes, linear DNA molecules combined with protein. We have two of each chromosome and we pass one copy of each to our offspring. For every chromosome pair except one males and females are indistinguishable. But that one pair, called the sex chromosomes, make all the difference, because females have two almost identical X chromosomes, but males have one X inherited from their mother, and a very different Y chromosome inherited from their father. I wrote about genetic conditions that result from abnormalities of the sex chromosomes in a past SHQ newsletter (March 2004). Since then we have learned more about the Y chromosome and its contribution to health and disease.

The Y chromosome is a remnant of an ancestral X chromosome. There are two very small regions at the ends that match the X and pair up with it during the production of sperm. This is important because if this pairing doesn't happen sperm are likely to be made without a sex chromosome at all, or with more than one. Between these pairing regions, the Y chromosome is much shorter than the X, but it carries one critical gene called SRY (sex-determining region Y) which triggers male development. In general, if you lack the SRY gene you will develop as female; if you have it you will develop as male. The SRY gene is very different from the equivalent on the X (called SOX3) and has a quite distinct function, of turning on male differentiation.

As well as the SRY gene, the Y chromosome is now known to carry a small number of other functional genes. Many of these were thought to be inactive; they are recognisable versions of genes on the X chromosome (reflecting the shared origin of the X and Y) but they have changes in the DNA that would mean they can't do the job of the X genes. This led to the idea that the Y chromosome is gradually degenerating and may even be lost one day. Comparing Y chromosomes of mammals shows that they are much less alike than the other chromosomes. For example the Y of our nearest relative the chimpanzee is very different – more like the difference between chicken and human for the rest of the chromosomes. The mouse Y chromosome is much longer although the region matching the human Y is very small, while the marsupial Dunnart has a tiny Y with only four recognisable genes.

We now know that some of the other Y chromosome genes are functional. Female mice which have no copies of particular X chromosome genes do not survive, but their brothers do, probably because they have a matching gene on the Y which can do at least part of the job of the X gene. Perhaps the deterioration of the Y is slowing down because of the vital role of some of these genes?

And what about other animals? Birds have a different system. In them, males have two Z chromosomes and females have a Z and a W, so the system has been swapped and it is the females who should have the degenerating chromosome. Study of bird sex determination is only just beginning and so far no equivalent of SRY has been found on the W. None of the genes on the X are found on the Z, so the system in birds seems to have developed separately. Our odd little egg-laying mammals, the platypus and echidna, have the most complicated sex chromosome system. The females have five pairs of X chromosomes and males have 5 X's and 4 or 5 Y's. Although it is the males that have the Y chromosomes, the X's are similar to the bird Z rather than to the mammalian X chromosome, reflecting the evolutionary position of these egg layers between mammals and birds. In other animals sex is determined all or in (Continued on Page 8)

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part by cues from the environment, (such as temperature or the presence of other members of the same species), or development (such as age or weight). Unravelling how all of these mechanisms result in males and females will help us understand sex determination in humans and the likely fate of the human Y chromosome.

(Kim is Professor of Comparative Genetics, The Roslin Institute, University of Edinburgh and Honorary Professor, School of Medicine, The University of Queensland. Kim is also a valued past Committee Member of Self Help Queensland Inc)



## Chromosome Structure XY & Variations (CSVXY)

### Support Group Petitions Australian Parliament Please Sign it and Share it!

Chromosome Structure XY & Variations is a Support Group Petitioning to Declare a Day for People Living with Chromosome Variations. Please Sign it and Share it!

#### Why should you sign it?

In Australia, individuals and parents of children living with a number of sex chromosome variations, have minimal information about what lies ahead, and the future impacts. There is no care plan, no treatment framework within the health industry and no plan for when children start primary school- for teachers and parents.

These chromosome variations effect most areas of ones body. From muscle tone, to hormone imbalances, fertility, cognitive difficulties, muscle mass issues, autism... a lot from a whole extra chromosome.

A national awareness day is a foundation for families, health industry and the education sector to start raising awareness and start to open our eyes to a complex condition that should be properly managed.

#### To sign the Petition Go to:

[http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Petitions/House\\_of\\_Representatives\\_Petitions/Petitions\\_General/Petitions\\_List?id=EN0125](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Petitions/House_of_Representatives_Petitions/Petitions_General/Petitions_List?id=EN0125)

#### Petition number EN0125 Closes 8th March 2017

To learn more about Chromosome Structure XY & Variations Support Group go to:

<http://www.csvxy.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/CSVXY/?ref=bookmarks>



#### What is Australian Allergy Friendly Finds?

It's the Facebook page of ausEE Inc that shares recipes and allergy friendly finds.

ausEE Inc. is an Australian charity providing support and information to anyone diagnosed with or caring for someone with an Eosinophilic Gastrointestinal Disorder (EGID) including Eosinophilic oEsophagitis (EoE). We are committed to raising public awareness and supporting the medical community for further research into eosinophilic disorders in Australia.

**Eosinophilic Gastrointestinal Disorders (EGIDs)** occur when eosinophils (pronounced ee-oh-sin-oh-fills), a type of white blood cell, are found in above-normal amounts within the gastrointestinal tract. The eosinophils can accumulate in the gut in response to food and/or airborne allergens and can cause inflammation and tissue damage.

**Allergy Friendly Finds:** <https://www.facebook.com/NoNutzProducts/>

**ausEE Inc:** <http://www.ausee.org/>





## Head and Neck Cancer Support Group Up and Running on the Gold Coast

After its formation in 2016, the Gold Coast Head and Neck Cancer Support Group has grown in attendance from 3 to 31 people! A remarkable performance in such a short time. They must be doing something right on the Gold Coast to attract such an impressive number of people.

The aim of the group is to provide a forum where head and neck cancer survivors can:

- Meet other cancer survivors who have shared a similar journey to their own
- Support one another
- Receive information/education on various topics relating to cancer treatments including long term post treatment care

Where Cancer Council Qld  
1 Short Street  
SOUTHPORT

When Thursday 11am - 1pm (Contact Chairperson for dates as they vary according to holidays)

Contact: Walter Jennings (Chairperson)  
Contact Preference is by Email: [walter-j@bigpond.com](mailto:walter-j@bigpond.com)  
Otherwise Ph: 0412 727 350

### What I Love About Self Help and Support Groups

by Roy Hanfling

**I love** that they are mostly free. Who has heaps of money, especially if you need support ?

**I love** that the groups are for people, by people. We can get the professionals in for information but they don't own the joint.

**I love** that there is a Self Help Group somewhere, for everyone and everything, especially now that Self Help and Support groups have moved more online.

**I love** that the groups are usually small.

**I love** that I matter and that other people matter to me.

**I love** that they are grounded in life not in some abstract theory wielded by some kid that has just graduated from Uni. (thanks to the kids though, your enthusiasm and knowledge is appreciated)

**I love** that they are evidenced based. When you have real needs and real families with real issues you don't have much time for Gurus and Snake oil Salesmen and Con-persons.

**I love** that when I am there, people know what I am talking about. The words "me too" have enormous power.

**I love** that we develop enduring friendships. Lifeline is still a better bet at 3am because other members have lives as well, but I love that people really care; it's not just a job.

**I love** that the meetings are regular. I love that I can hang on till the end of the month but at the end of the month my people will be there.

What do you love most about your support group?

**(Roy has been involved with support groups most of his life, having participated as a member, facilitator and manager. He has been an ardent champion of support groups throughout his career in the Community Sector, believing that many of the social problems we have stem from a reliance on governments and bureaucracies rather than self help and kindness from people, communities. Roy's vast experience also adds greater value to Self Help Queensland)**

PO Box 353 SUNNYBANK, QLD 4109 Ph: 07 3344 6919 Email: [info@selfhelpqld.org.au](mailto:info@selfhelpqld.org.au) URL: [www.selfhelpqld.org.au](http://www.selfhelpqld.org.au)

## When the Going Gets Tough, Should We Just Give Up?

- By Doctor Harmony, Psychiatrist

There are few things in life that are certain: birth, death and life stress. Sometimes, stress in life may seem overwhelming. It may seem easier to give up than to persist. This could mean giving up our diet, stop saving for that holiday, restart smoking after aiming to quit, opt out of our studies or quit that job with the demanding boss and long hours. It could mean ending the relationship with our partner who we vowed was the “love of my life” a few years ago. Is it easier to break contact with that friend who hurt us or the family member who made one too many promises they failed to keep?

Some of us may give up because we don't want to fail or worry about the result. We may think, “Will people think I don't know what I'm talking about? Am I going to make a fool of myself? If I can't do it properly or know how to do it, then there's no point in doing it at all!”

***If we give up, what is at stake?*** How will we feel about it in years to come? Will there be any regrets? Do you hear this ringing in your head, “If only I...What if I had... I wish I had.” Some regrets are difficult to reverse as time passes and some opportunities are fleeting.

If you are a parent, your children are watching and learning from you. Much of their learning of coping skills come from parents' role-modelling. If we give up, our children are more likely to do so too. They then do not get to practice essential life skills that will be required for warm, committed relationships and successful careers and studies in future. Much success in adult life requires qualities such as commitment, persistence and teamwork.

When we fail ourselves, our self-confidence and self-esteem plummet. This then becomes a vicious cycle. With low self-esteem, we are more likely to give up or not even try next time an opportunity comes up. We are more likely to ask ourselves, “Why bother?”

So, giving up prematurely may seem like we feel more comfortable in the short-term, as we don't have to face possible scrutiny, self-doubt, discomfort and our fears. Unfortunately the cons of giving up linger on longer-term. Is it worth it?

Persistence despite adversity, plays a major role in resilience. It helps us to feel hopeful, empowered, more confident and less helpless.

There is extensive research suggesting that teaching resilience to children and adults reduces mental illness, suicide, teenage pregnancy, school dropout, self-harm, aggression, drug and alcohol use problems and bullying. It also increases academic and work performance, improves relationships, physical health and leads to better mental health outcomes in people with mental illness already.

### **If it all seems overwhelming and you feel like quitting, try this:**

- Ask, “Are the cons of giving up worth living with?”
- Remind yourself of what is important in life to you. Is quitting in keeping with this?
- Break it down into smaller tasks or steps;
- Start with easier steps first to build confidence and motivation;
- Reward small gains;
- Seek help if needed.

If you would like to find out more ways of dealing with anger, sadness and other uncomfortable feelings, check out series one of my Building Resilience books series [www.doctorharmony.com](http://www.doctorharmony.com) Although it is marketed as children's picture books, it has great tips for children and adults alike.

-oOo-



## Queenslanders with Disability Network - Local Support Groups



Queenslanders with Disability Network operates Local Support Groups of people with disability in locations around Queensland.

The Local Support Groups are a peer group of people with disability, who get together to:

- Get helpful information.
- Share information, stories, experiences and learning.
- Connect with your community, and build on the strengths you already have.
- Support people to think about and plan for the life they want.

Groups of people with disability meet, with a convenor.

Currently QDN has 17 face to face groups which meet monthly and 2 virtual groups through QDN's Facebook page.

### Local Support Groups – meeting information

| Local Support Group   | Where  | When                       | What time                                  | Next Meeting Date |
|---|--|----------------------------|--|-------------------|
| <b>Logan</b>  | Marsden Library  | 3rd Wednesday of the month | 10:30am – 12:30pm                          | 15 March 2017     |
| <b>Sunnybank</b>  | Sunnybank Hotel  | 4th Saturday of the month  | 10:30am – 12:30pm                          | 25 March 2017     |
| <b>Caboolture</b>   | Caboolture Sports Club                                     | 4th Saturday of the month  | 11am – 1pm                                 | 25 March 2017     |
| <b>North Lakes</b>  | North Lakes Community Centre                               | 1st Tuesday of the month   | Times vary – next meeting 12:30pm – 2:30pm | 7 March 2017      |
| <b>Sunshine Coast</b>   | Mike Ahern Building  | 4th Wednesday of the month | 10:30am – 12:30pm                          | 22 March 2017     |
| <b>Brisbane</b>   | QDN meeting room, Bowen Hills                              | 3rd Wednesday of the month | 10:30am – 12:30pm                          | 15 March 2017     |
| <b>Brisbane Hot Topics for people with intellectual disability,</b> | QDN meeting room, Bowen Hills                              | last Friday of the month   | 12pm – 2pm                                 | 31 March 2017     |
| <b>Gold Coast</b>   | Southport Library meeting room                             | 2nd Saturday of the month  | 10:30am – 12:30pm                          | 11 March 2017     |
| <b>Townsville</b>   | Aitkenvale Library   | 1st Tuesday of the month   | 11:30am – 1:30pm                           | 7 March 2017      |
| <b>Charters Towers</b>  | Charters Towers Regional Council meeting room              | 4th Friday of the month    |  | TBC               |
| <b>Mackay</b>   | 63 Wellington Street with every third meeting at Endeavour | 4th Wednesday of the month | 12pm – 2pm                                 | 15 March 2017     |
| <b>Maryborough</b>  | Maryborough Neighbourhood Centre                           | 2nd Thursday of the month  | 1pm – 2:30pm                               | 9 March 2017      |

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|                  |                               |   |            |               |
|------------------|-------------------------------|---|------------|---------------|
| <b>Toowoomba</b> | Seminar Room,<br>Civic Centre | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday of the<br>month    | 12pm -2pm  | 17 March 2017 |
| <b>Ipswich</b>   | Humanities<br>Building        | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the<br>month  | 10am- 12pm | 18 March 2017 |
| <b>Normanton</b> | Bynoe Hall                    | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of<br>the month | 2pm – 4pm  | 15 March 2017 |
| <b>Gladstone</b> | McDonalds<br>Meeting Room,    | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the<br>month  | 1pm – 3pm  | 9 March 2017  |

More details on individual meetings are available on our website at:

<http://www.qdn.org.au/events.aspx>

Please contact QDN at [dso@qdn.org.au](mailto:dso@qdn.org.au) or phone 1300 363 783 if you would like any further information about a local support group or if you would like to register to attend. When you register please let us know if you require any support for the meeting.

## New Way to Get Help or Help Out

A new charity has been established to help people to do one-off tasks. It also provides a new way for people to volunteer just once in a while. Called 'Help Me With It', the charity uses an online platform to connect people who need help (called 'Seekers') with people who can help (called 'Helpers').

One-off tasks might require someone to fix, clean, care, shop, transport, garden, sort, teach and more. In this way, Seekers are getting an answer to the question – Who can help me with it?



Sometimes it is hard to know *why* someone needs help and it is hard to know what people really need help with. Help Me With It enables people to share what they need help to do and why.

Late last year, Help Me With It was able to connect Simon (a Helper) and Melissa (a Seeker) to complete a handyman task. Simon helped Melissa assemble two cabinets from IKEA. They provided needed storage in her one bedroom unit in supported accommodation. Melissa used Help Me With It a second time for another one-off task - helping her to settle into her home.

"Helping out just once was easy," said Simon. "I was very happy to help after work one day and plus I've put together a lot of IKEA furniture."

For Melissa, the help provided was a great support. "There aren't people to help me set up my furniture where I live and I couldn't do it. I learnt though. Simon patiently helped me and we put the cupboards together. I can finally put my clothes away and have more room."

[helpmewithit.org.au](http://helpmewithit.org.au)



Do you need help with a simple, one-off task?

Could you volunteer to help someone locally just once for a few hours?

You can learn more and join at [helpmewithit.org.au](http://helpmewithit.org.au)





## Google Launches Health Condition Cards in Australia

One in every 20 Google searches are health-related, according to the tech giant.

A National Prescribing Service (NPS) Medicinewise survey suggested three in five Australians used internet searches to avoid seeing a doctor. That proportion rose to 80 per cent among 18-34 year olds.

As of February 2017, when Australians search for a common health condition, a health card will appear to the right of the screen.

For the unwary, there are a lot of dangerous websites, suspect information, dodgy products, and bizarre health treatments on the internet. The google health cards are an attempt to provide Australians with health information that is sourced from credible health professionals working in reputable organisations.

Google Project Manager Isobel Solaqua said "These health cards are meant to provide basic information about health conditions and a framework to help users dive deeper across the web and do deeper research as well as to have more informed conversations with their doctors,"

Some health cards are accompanied by illustrations created by licensed medical illustrators.

The feature was developed with the expertise of US-based medical doctors led by Google's Dr Kapil Parakh, a cardiologist, and Mayo Clinic doctors who compiled, curated and reviewed the most relevant and accurate health facts.

Australian Doctors are cautiously wary and taking a "wait and see approach".

(Source: Kate Aubussen, Sydney Morning Herald 17/1/2017

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/health/dr-google-makes-australian-house-calls-with-launch-of-new-health-condition-cards-20170131-gu232o.html>)

## Where have all the Queensland Depression Support Groups Gone?

As a big part of what we do, SHQ assists people to locate self help and support groups in Queensland. Anecdotally, we have observed a very noticeable reduction in the number of mental health support groups (particularly depression and anxiety) available in Queensland, yet the requests to be linked into these groups by members of the general community is more in demand than ever.

What has happened to cause this change? Does it really matter? Were the groups ineffective and disappeared in the natural ebb and flow of things? Or, did something happen TO them? Why is demand outstripping supply?

### Some things we do know

- Support groups usually have to pay for the use of a meeting room where once they were offered free in community, health and neighbourhood centres. Difficult for people on pensions.
- Expensive Public Liability Insurance is usually a requirement to book a meeting room.
- Groups are increasingly being managed by mental health organisations as part of funding contracts
- Some have moved online - Facebook, Meetup groups
- A preference for non-mental health specific names makes groups harder to find eg. activity groups
- If one or more facilitators become unwell or hospitalised, the group sometimes folds

We're talking about mental health here! Millions of \$\$ and very good minds have tried to address the growing challenge of improved public mental health. Depression, Suicide and the consequences are often at the fore in the media and in our conversations.

**If this is what people want, can effective resources and support be found to sustain mental health self help and support groups in our communities? It's pretty basic stuff. People looking out for each other!**

## No credit, no problem. Homeless help now free of data charges

Mobile phone credit is no longer standing in the way of people who are homeless with a Telstra phone trying to find help.

Telstra is now providing free access to Ask Izzy, the mobile website that connects people who are homeless or at risk to over 350 000 services nation-wide, for anyone on the Telstra network.

Infoxchange CEO, David Spriggs, says the contribution of Telstra in the fight to end homelessness is significant. “Over 80 percent of people who are homeless own a smartphone. They are often on prepaid plans, but without credit to search for services they need,” David says.

Prior to Telstra’s announcement of free access, homeless people had to search around to find free wifi to access Ask Izzy. Over 250 000 searches for services have been made on the Ask Izzy site so far.

“The top three searches on Ask Izzy are accommodation, food and everyday things like blankets and showers,” David says.

“We hope free access to Ask Izzy on Telstra’s extensive regional and metropolitan network will encourage more people to seek help.”

Ask Izzy was developed by Infoxchange in partnership with Google, realestate.com.au and News Corp Australia. It was co-designed with people with lived experience of homelessness, and the frontline workers who support them.

(Source: Adapted from Nov 2016 News article <https://www.infoxchange.org/au#>)

## Is it a Group or a Cult?

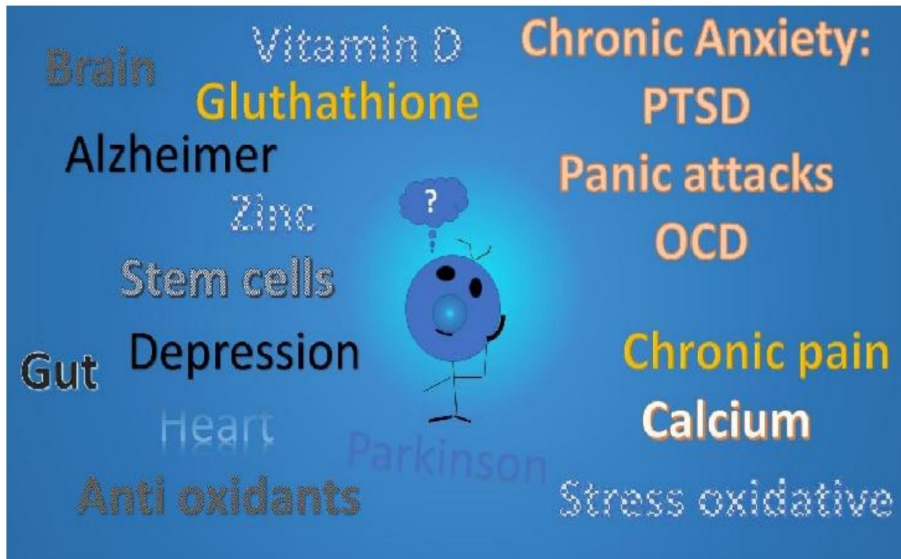
Support Groups have enormous capacity to improve people’s lives through the sharing of information, resources and emotional support. They are banks of wisdom, knowledge and day to day practical information. However, on rare occasions, they can go very wrong and become cult-like.

Here is a simple check list adapted from an article in The Guardian that can help you work out if a group has become a cult. While the article points in the general direction of religion, it is not specifically dedicated to religious groups, and could easily relate to leaders of a few support groups we have heard of over the years. Online groups may be particularly susceptible.

1. What the leader say goes, no questions.
2. There is one right way, no question. Questions mean you are “bad” and should be punished or ridiculed.
3. No one knows where the money or resources go and the leader is beyond the rules of common people.
4. The rest of the world is wrong and dangerous, and probably out to get you.
5. People only leave because they are “bad”.
6. Former “bad” members spread malicious gossip about the leader.
7. Often there are lots of stories around with the same malicious gossip by “bad” people, (google it, you might be surprised).
8. Members are never good enough.
9. The leader is always right, always.
10. Only the leader can pass on true knowledge, other sources of knowledge are corrupt.

Adapted from Guardian article

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2009/may/27/cults-definition-religion>



You will learn and have a lot of fun with this friendly seminar

Where: Barry Jones Auditorium; Ground Floor of the Ipswich Global Information Centre, South Street. Ipswich Library, 40 South St. Ipswich 4305

From 1 - 2pm

For RSVP or further information contact  
Rosa  
rosaprah@gmail.com  
/ 0423 435 802

Cost \$25.00 p.p. to be paid at entry

# SAT. 11<sup>TH</sup> MAR. 2017

## EDUCATION IN NEUROSCIENCE

### Knowledge for improving quality of life

Even when open-access to scientific and medical articles are available to the general public on the internet, these are currently written to be understood by highly trained professionals. It makes it difficult for non-specialized audiences to accurately grapple with the concepts, and use these to help themselves.

After this seminar, attendees will know how their human body works and understand why certain medical conditions could occur. This will then enable people to accurately approach any potential health issue and look for the right professional support.

Presenter: Rosa Prahl

*MPhil (Res) (Biochem) MSc (CellBio) (Neurosci) BSc (Bio) (CellBio)*

**ROSA PRAHL** *MPhil.*

*(Res) MSc BSc Cell  
Biology Neuroscience*

The main aim that I hope to reach is teaching about cutting-edge concepts in science related to healthcare by providing friendly seminars that are short in time and designed to all members of our community.

## Spinal Home Help (SHH)



Spinal Home Help is a not for profit community organisation run by people with spinal cord injuries and their families, for people with spinal cord injuries and their families.

40 GAINSBOROUGH ST, MOOROOKA 4105

If you have a spinal cord injury or are the loved one of someone who does, and you need some help getting connected with the right providers or resources, please get in touch.

Our advocacy team can help link people to the most suitable supports, and our peer mentors are here to share their experiences if you just need to talk to someone about the things you're going through. Go to <http://spinalhomehelp.com.au/services/peer-mentoring/> for more information about Peer Mentoring or email [info@spinalhomehelp.com.au](mailto:info@spinalhomehelp.com.au) to be connected with a mentor or added to our Facebook support group.

**Please Sign Our Petition for the Creation of Australia's First Dedicated Spinal Injuries Support Centre**

[www.communityrun.org/petitions/don-t-let-people-with-spinal-injury-and-their-loved-ones-fall-through-the-cracks](http://www.communityrun.org/petitions/don-t-let-people-with-spinal-injury-and-their-loved-ones-fall-through-the-cracks)

### Why is this important?

People with spinal injury and their families are often denied the basic right to informed choices after their injury - patients aren't taught about the range of support networks or their options when it comes to service providers. Kept in the dark for most of their rehabilitation, patients are often forced to accept one service provider and aren't given a choice. A lot of patients are unprepared for life outside of the hospital and often isolate themselves from their families, friends and communities when they return home. The risk of depression, anxiety and other mental health issues are very high for people with SCI, yet too many people are discharged from hospital with absolutely no emotional, physical or spiritual preparation for the shock of the lifestyle change, and no coping mechanisms for handling life after the trauma of a spinal cord injury.

This has to change. People with spinal cord injury deserve peer mentor support services from people who understand what they are going through, and access to all the information and encouragement they may need in order to have full, informed, and above all free choice in their support networks.

With this support centre, we can provide all these vital services and more. Fully wheelchair accessible and run by and for people with spinal injury, this centre will provide assistance from people who truly understand what the patient is going through, to make sure that nobody with a spinal cord injury, whether from city or country, has to go home unprepared or isolated ever again.

SHH is always looking for other organisations in the community services to collaborate on new initiatives.

**New Support Group Starting at Moorooka for people with Spinal Cord Injuries, their families and carers + Hydrotherapy Program starting soon.**

40 Gainsborough St. Moorooka QLD 4105 Web: <http://www.spinalhomehelp.com.au>

Postal Address: PO Box 228 – 115 Beaudesert Rd, Moorooka QLD 4105

PH: 0415 276 834 Office: (07) 3189 3414 Email: [mal@spinalhomehelp.com.au](mailto:mal@spinalhomehelp.com.au)

Source: <http://www.spinalhomehelp.com.au>

- Do you have ideas for improving this newsletter?
- Are there any particular topics you would like us to cover ?
- Do you have any interesting articles to feature or promote your self help or support group?

Please contact Trish at the SHQ office on 3344 6919 or [info@selfhelpqld.org.au](mailto:info@selfhelpqld.org.au)



**Do you have a friend (or cousin!) who is dedicated to emailing you jokes, health information or statistics that sound feasible and interesting - but you are not quite sure - so you try them out anyway?**

**This is one or those!**

**Reportedly an old Infantry trick**



**This is all you need**

Have you ever come home from vacation, business trip or maybe a long weekend away with the family - and noticed your digital clocks flashing the wrong time? You quickly realise that you had a power outage while you were away, but it's basically impossible to tell when it occurred or how long it lasted. It's therefore also impossible to tell just how long the food in your freezer may have thawed, gotten destroyed and then frozen again. Or is it?

But the trick is certainly also good to know in case of any prolonged departure from your home - and will ease your mind about whether or not the food in your freezer is good to eat - or best be thrown out right away. The trick lies in the magical combination of three simple but effective tools everyone already has at home: a mug, a coin and some tap water.

You put a cup of water in your freezer. Freeze it solid, then put a coin on top of it and leave it in your freezer. That way, when you come back after you've been away, you can tell if your food went completely bad and just refroze, or if it stayed frozen while you were gone.

If the coin has fallen to the bottom of the cup, that means all the food defrosted and you should throw it out. But if the coin is either on the top or in the middle of the cup, your food may still be ok. It would be a great idea to leave this in your freezer all the time. Then, if you lose power for any reason, you will have this tip to fall back on.

If you don't feel good about your food, just throw it out. The main thing is for all to be safe.



## Refugee Health Connect (RHC)

**A one point of contact regarding all aspects of refugee health.**

RHC links people from refugee backgrounds to appropriate primary health providers in order to improve health access and engagement with primary care.

Linkages are made based on factors such as the patient's location, complexity of needs and cultural requirements.

RHC works closely with community refugee support services, general practices, hospital-based services and primary health networks to ensure timely and appropriate access for this patient population. RHC is an initiative of the South East Queensland Refugee Health Partnership Advisory Group.

### Who can contact Refugee Health Connect?

- Refugee and asylum seeker support agencies
- Health providers
- Any member of the community who would like assistance with accessing refugee health primary care services

**Contact:** Phone: 07 3864 7580 Email: [refugeehealth@bsphn.org.au](mailto:refugeehealth@bsphn.org.au)  
**Information:** [www.bsphn.org.au/vulnerable-populations/refugee-health](http://www.bsphn.org.au/vulnerable-populations/refugee-health)  
[www.materonline.org.au/services/refugee-services](http://www.materonline.org.au/services/refugee-services)

## Hearing Aids Improving Love Life

Hearing aids improve social relations, including the users' love life and make intimate conversations easier, according to an Australian Study.

An opinion poll among 300 elderly hearing impaired Australians found that hearing aids had wide-ranging positive effects on personal and social relationships.

More than half of the respondents stated that their hearing aids improved their social lives. Two in every three said that their hearing aids helped them overcome difficulties in connecting with family and friends.

A little more than 70 percent of the respondents in the study live with their partners and one in 10 said their hearing aids had improved their love life, whereas nobody stated that their love life had been harmed. Many pointed out, that hearing aids made it easier to engage in intimate conversations.

Hearing aid users also strongly reported that it was easier for other people to talk to them (84 percent), and that these people no longer had to talk loudly (75 percent).

The study was carried out by The Galaxy Research for Deafness Forum, Australia.

(Source: Better Hearing Australia Inc Newsletter February 2017 originally printed by Brisbane Times [www.brisbanetimes.com](http://www.brisbanetimes.com))

Editor: Let's hope future research leads to even stronger back up of these results!

## Update on NDIS Rollout in Queensland

The areas of Balonne, Bulloo, Goondiwindi, Maranoa, Murweh, Paroo, Quilpie, Southern Downs, Toowoomba and Western Downs joined the scheme on 1 January 2017

Ipswich, Lockyer Valley, Scenic Rim and Somerset local government areas will join from 1 July 2017



The SHQ Newsletter is kindly sponsored by FSG Australia [fsg.org.au](http://fsg.org.au)



## Farewell IBIS and Thank You

The Irritable Bowel Information and Support Association (IBIS) Brisbane has been supporting people with Irritable Bowel Syndrome since 1994.

Sadly, but common to community organisations these days, IBIS has succumbed to funding and volunteer shortages. SHQ has made many successful referrals to IBIS over the years for which we thank them.

For information about Irritable Bowel Syndrome: The Gut Foundation [www.gutfoundation.com.au](http://www.gutfoundation.com.au) [www.facebook.com/groups/IBSupport](https://www.facebook.com/groups/IBSupport)

## China Launches National Rare Diseases Registry

China recently launched its first nation-wide patient registry system for rare diseases, the National Rare Diseases Registry System of China (NRDRS), which aims to promote the rare diseases research in China. Led by Professor Zhang Shuyang from Peking Union Medical College Hospital (PUMCH), this registry incorporates resources from 20 leading medical institutes of China and provides informatics system for more than 50 rare diseases and disease groups.

(Source: Rare Voices Australia: February 2017 e-News) To read more go to: <http://international.orphanews.org/newsletter-en/political/nl/id-28-january->



## "It's Easier To Ask Forgiveness Than It Is To Get Permission"

Rear Admiral Grace Murray Hopper (9 December 1906 – 1 January 1992)

Grace Murray Hopper was a U.S. Naval officer, and an early computer programmer. She was the developer of the first compiler for a computer programming language. At the end of her service she was the oldest serving officer in the United States Navy.

Editor's note: I was always curious about the author of this quote, having heard it in a response by a former Prime Minister of Australia to a journalist when he was challenged about not being consultative.

Grace Hopper would have been a really interesting character in her day. There are many quotes attributed to her wit and wisdom. (Source: Wikipedia)