

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 3
May/June
2017



Self Help Queensland Office
Located at Sunnybank, Brisbane



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From the President

Joseph Soda



As we approach the end of our financial year, I believe it is time to reflect on the importance of not for profit charitable organisations, and the work they do in the communities they represent.

In particular Self Help Queensland's Management Committee all have management roles in other support organisations. This does put a limitation on the time they have to devote to our organisation.

I have in past newsletters advised that we need to build on our current expertise within our Management Team. We meet once a month and you would only have to give up a small amount of your time to assist. As the saying goes 'Many Hands Make Light Work'.

The many groups that we assist and contact our office regularly either by phone or email must realise that this places a heavy workload on our current coordinator, and one part time volunteer. We don't have sufficient funding to employ additional staff, so have to rely on voluntary assistance to manage day to day inquiries.

Organisations such as ours deserve more recognition and more funding support from both Government and the corporate sector. Furthermore, for example if we were to stop operating, the work we do would have to be taken on by other health or community organisations.

Recent Activities

Successful application for grants to assist 2 community groups.
Advocacy to 2 peak bodies to lower membership fees for non-funded and poorly funded support groups.

Acting as a conduit for meeting between Refugee Group & Govt.
Met with 'Charity Hub' to explore common ground opportunities.
Assisted group to gain a computer through "Givit".

Extensive help to assist group to meet Statutory Regulations.
Core business of making referrals to self help and support groups.
Individual support given to groups according to their priorities.

Joseph Soda, President



Standing for Freedom, Social Justice & Growth.

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

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 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

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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.



Does your Self Help or Support Group need Video for your FB page or Website ?

Thanks to the latest round of DSS Volunteer Grant Funding, and as an extension of Self Help Queensland's efforts to help build the capacity of self help and support groups in Queensland, we are now offering Videography assistance to smaller, under-resourced and under-funded groups.

Our IT volunteer, Roy, can help support groups prepare and publish short video clips or videotape a training session or presentation.

Roy is prepared to come to you if your group is located in the Brisbane area. Though the service is free, travel costs would be appreciated.

If your group is located outside the Brisbane area, SHQ is happy to negotiate suitable arrangements.

For further information please Contact Roy or Trish at SHQ:

Ph: 3344 6919 Email: info@selfhelpqld.org.au

Got Something to Say to Federal Politicians? Thinking of going to Canberra to Say it?



Self Help Queensland disseminates a broad range of sector information and looks for opportunities to provide member groups with relevant information and resources through this newsletter.

Thanks to the latest Pro Bono Australia News we were alerted to the following excellent resource, which is a **FREE** guide to making the most of a visit to Parliament House. It is a **"must"** if you are planning a visit to Canberra.

Teaching NFPs to Walk the Blue Carpet | Not for profits looking for "insider knowledge" on how to inform, assist and influence decision-makers in federal Parliament can now turn to a new e-book.

Thanks to **89 degrees east**, a company delivering communication advice and services, NFP's can download the free e-book PDF **"WALKING THE BLUE CARPET - The 4 Ps of Success."**

89 degrees east advises that if you want to ensure the best possible outcome, you should base your visit on the 4Ps – **"be purposeful, pragmatic, and politically astute and have really, really good product."**

Download the Free e-book PDF at [89 degrees east website](http://www.89degreeseast.com/).

(Source: <http://www.89degreeseast.com/>)

How SHQ Can Help You

- Help you start a new support group
- Promote your support group via our Online Directory and e-Newsletter
- Video your group for FB page or website
- Assist your group with starting a website
- Help your group locate appropriate funding grants and assist with application
- Troubleshoot
- Anything you would like to discuss

How You Might Like to Help SHQ

- Provide feedback about our services
- Join our Committee
- Become a data entry volunteer
- Become a membership volunteer
- Register your self help/support group with us
- Become a financial member
- Buy an Entertainment Book
- Contribute to our Newsletter in any capacity
- Make a Donation



New Neurofibromatosis Support Group in Rockhampton

Katrina Sinclair is starting an NF support group in the Rockhampton area of Queensland. Don't be shy, let Katrina know you are interested by sending an email and organising a get together. Email: gpontour@internode.on.net

New Hearing Voices Support Group, Southport

Hearing Voices Group is a safe environment that offers the opportunity to explore the experiences of living with voices, paranoia, and other mental health experiences.

The group is for voice hearers only. It meets on the first Wednesday of every month from 2pm to 3.30pm at the MIHub, Southport. Voice Hearers are welcome to just turn up.

Ph: 07 5591 1750 Email: mihubsouthport@mifq.org.au



New Website for Young Carers

Did you know there are around 60,000 young carers in Queensland?

A young carer is someone under the age of 25 who cares for a family member with disability or illness, often juggling school and study with their care requirements. Young carers can feel alone and misunderstood by their teachers and peers.

To combat this, Carers Australia has launched a new website for young carers, www.youngcarers.net.au. The website includes stories, information and tips for young carers, and also resources for educators, parents and medical practitioners.

There is also a Facebook page where young carers can access news and information. Please help us reach our goal of reaching more young carers by sharing the website and Facebook page with your networks.

(Source: Carers Queensland eFirst May 2017)



New 'Guide Dog on Board' Sticker Guides Help During an Emergency

A new bumper sticker has been launched by Queensland Police, Fire and Emergency Services Minister Mark Ryan to alert emergency responders that a Guide Dog and its vision-impaired handler might be inside a vehicle involved in a traffic accident.

The new sticker is designed to alert emergency responders and guide them to an information card in the vehicle's glove box.

(Source: <http://statements.qld.gov.au/Statement/2017/4/26/guide-dog-on-board-sticker-guides-help-during-an-emergency>)

New Name! Blue Knot Foundation (Formerly Adults Surviving Child Abuse) ASCA



Blue Knot Foundation is a national organisation working to improve the lives of the 1 in 4 Australian adults who are survivors of childhood trauma, including abuse. We support survivors, their families and communities through professional phone counselling, information and resources, advocacy and educational workshops.

Need Support? Contact our Blue Knot Helpline on 1300 657 380

Blue Knot Helpline

Phone: 1300 657 380 Hours: Mon-Sun, 9am-5pm AEST

Email: helpline@blueknot.org.au

Website: <http://www.blueknot.org.au/>

Genetic Matters

by Professor Kim Summers PhD FRSB

Will it make you sick?

With the decreasing cost of DNA sequencing and increased interest in personalised medicine, where therapies are tailored specifically to match the genetic information, more and more people are having all or part of their DNA sequenced. But what if the sequence reveals unexpected variations that might or might not be associated with disease?

Your DNA is often described as the blueprint for life. It carries all the information needed to make your body, encoded by the sequence of the four letters of the genetic code. There are over 3 billion letters in the DNA of a human being and almost all cells have two copies of the script. The DNA specifies the proteins that each cell will make, and then the proteins are responsible for the cell's activities. Some parts of the DNA are responsible for regulating the activity of the DNA, whether a particular segment can be activated or not. A change in a single letter can change looks, behaviour, reproductive success, health and mortality.

DNA sequencing aims to identify the order of all the letters in a person's DNA and see whether the letter at any position is different from the rest of the population. Some changes in the DNA are already known to be associated with diseases, for example a DNA difference which alters the function of fibres in the heart muscle might be associated with heart disease. Although the laboratory may be looking for changes that affect one aspect of health (for example how a tumour will respond to chemotherapy), whole genome sequencing is likely to find many other differences and the problem is how to work out whether these other differences are important and likely to impact on health.

Before you have your DNA sequenced there are a few things to consider. Firstly, what is going to be used to establish "normal"? The original human DNA sequence came from a pool of individuals, and it is not known which individual carries which DNA variant ("allele"). A second published sequence was from a single individual and since then tens of thousands of human DNA sequences have become available. The majority of these are from people of European origin. So if you have a different background, a variant that seems to be different could be normal for your community. There is now a push to make genomes from non-Europeans (including different Asian groups, African Americans and individuals of First Nations ancestry) more widely available. Before you pay for a DNA sequence make sure the right base line (the appropriate population group) is being used.

Secondly, what will you learn and how will you know if it is important? One family who obtained the DNA sequence of their 14 year old daughter hoping to find out the reason one of her adult teeth hadn't emerged, found that she carried a variant associated with a form of heart disease. Others have been told they are predisposed to cancer or diabetes. This information is revealed by the sequence, regardless of whether it was what you were looking for.

Thirdly, there may be an impact on your family. If you are carrying a genetic variant, you must have inherited it from either your father or your mother. What if neither parent has the same variant? That could mean one of them is not your parent. How would you deal with that discovery? Assuming a parent has the variant, they must also be at risk of the genetic condition. Would you tell your healthy father or mother that some time down the track he or she will develop a specific cancer? At what age would you tell your children that they are at an undefined risk of the genetic condition? Some individuals have discovered that they are carriers of rare genetic variants and would be at risk of having a severely affected child if their partner also carried the variant. These discoveries have been possible ever since the inheritance of genetic markers such as blood groups was understood. However with the development of DNA sequencing it is possible to know every genetic variant, not just the small number that were tested individually, and so the likelihood of finding unexpected information is increased. (Continued on Page 6)

(Continued from Page 5)

Finally, what is the basis for saying a particular DNA change is associated with a disease? Usually the variant will have been seen in all affected members of one family and not in the unaffected members, so for that family there is a strong association between the variant and the disease. However in other families, or other populations, this might not be the case. If your elderly mother has the same variant as someone in another family who died from heart disease at 25, it is likely that in your family this variant does not have the same impact.

Some companies are now offering DNA testing to help you work out your genetic background. A very British colleague recently announced that she is 41% Italian and 3% Jewish. Some of these companies will also give you an estimate of risk for various diseases such as cancer and diabetes. These tests do not involve DNA sequencing; they look at a limited number of variants and compare them with the variants most common in different population groups based on ethnicity or health status. The information is at best a rough guide. DNA sequencing provides a more detailed picture of your inherited information, but we are still a long way from understanding the complex interactions to go to making a healthy human. So if your DNA is going to be tested, ask the laboratory and yourself questions, about what is considered normal, about the implications of any discoveries, about the impact on the family. This is powerful technology that can reveal a lot more than you bargained for, so approach it carefully!

(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)



Dialysis Massage ? What a brilliant idea!

Congratulations to the Kidney Support Network (KSN) for coming up with such a marvelous service as Hand and Foot Relaxation Massage and social contact for patients undergoing dialysis in renal units in Queensland.

As if it isn't hard enough dealing with kidney failure, but having to undergo dialysis in renal units several times a week is a heavy burden to carry with its own in-built problems associated with loneliness and boredom sitting in a chair for hours on end.

KSN is again re-connecting with renal units after battling funding cuts over the past few years. However, things are starting to improve with an invigorated Management Committee, experienced General Manager and dedicated volunteers.

Of course it would not be possible without the committed KSN massage volunteers. This is a non-clinical, relaxation massage. If you would like to become a massage volunteer KSN will assist with any training; essential history checks, hospital orientation and hand hygiene certification needs.

Please contact Marcia if you are interested in joining the Volunteer Massage Team in a Renal Unit near you. circulationtherapy@ksn.org.au; Mob: 0422 010 371

If you would like to learn more about the services that KSN provides, put your hand up to be a volunteer, locate support groups, subscribe to the newsletter, become a member or make a donation please contact KSN at:

Phone: [07 3855 9781](tel:0738559781)

Free Call: [1800 358 797](tel:1800358797)

Email: information@ksn.org.au

<http://ksn.org.au/>

You know you're an introvert when.....you get excited about cancelled plans



Meet Virginia

fsg
Australia
Freedom • Social Justice • Growth
NDIS REGISTERED PROVIDER
fsg.org.au @ f i

Our mission is to provide innovative, responsive and quality community services through our commitment to Freedom, Social Justice and Growth for all people. Get in touch with us to start your journey.
(07) 5564 0655

Virginia's traumatic past culminated with an ugly divorce which nearly cost her life. Her assets frozen, her mental health in a bad way, she was forced to find accommodation where she could, moving into a room at a local pub. When Virginia walked into the FSG Beaudesert Hub she was confused, frightened and didn't know where to start in terms of getting back on her feet.

Goal #1

GAINING CONTROL

The FSG team helped Virginia start to move forward with her life. Together they navigated the murky legal waters around her divorce settlement and assisted her to achieve more control and understanding around her medical appointments and treatments.



Goal #2

INDEPENDENCE



The top priority was to help Virginia move out of the pub room and into her own independent accommodation. She is now a very appreciative tenant of her own one bedroom cottage. Her eyes lit up as she summed up her past few months.

"My new place is wonderful. I've put some plants out the front. I've started to get my life back."

Goal #3

FINDING PURPOSE

Virginia's nurturing personality has led her to be a mother figure for the young people at the hub. She noticed that one of the youngsters, Max, didn't have a bike like his mates, so she got an old donated bike, bought a new chain and fashioned it into a BMX style bike for Max. He could not believe her generosity. She has now built a reputation for herself, 'Virginia's Bike Restoration', restoring bikes for others in need and locals donate their old bikes for her to re-purpose.



"I see it as a win-win experience. They get a new bike and I get to see their delightful smiles!"

Goal #4

ACCEPTANCE & NEW GOALS



When asked where she saw herself in five years time, Virginia laughs, "That's way too far ahead! I'm too busy enjoying myself at the moment. Something I haven't been able to do in a long time. I'm safe now and I have wonderful friends and supports around me. One day I'll write a book called 'I Want to be Free' about how hard the painful steps in life are, but also necessary for us to grow. It's about having the courage to accept that."

Bec Shorter, FSG Beaudesert Hub Coordinator, says, "Virginia has used her experiences to care for others in a unique way. Her past contains tremendous pain and suffering, but from it has emerged a mentor, mother figure, guardian and friend. Virginia touches everyone wherever she goes, even to the point where she comforts other customers of ours when they are distressed. She came into FSG seeking assistance herself but at the same time showed great compassion, comforting others who need it."

And this is just the beginning...

Self Help and Support Groups are Going Online and We are Going with Them!

Some people think that Self Help and Support Groups are declining, but they are actually growing bigger in number, and it's happening online.

While face to face meetings still remain the core of the Self Help Sector, online tools are being used more and more to provide choices about how people might connect with each other locally or globally.

Self Help Queensland has been supporting our groups to make better use of online resources.

We have actually been very successful with using the internet. Our website (<http://selfhelpqld.org.au/>) is delivering information to about 1500 clients a month, the FB page (<https://www.facebook.com/SelfHelpQueensland/>) is being seen by about 900 people a month and we have been consulting with and supporting a number of groups in their online projects.

Another resource that is becoming more useful is Meetup. (<https://www.meetup.com/help/>) Meetup assists with starting groups, finding potential members and organising meetings. The Australian Pain Management Association has been using Meetup groups to organise some of their groups for quite a while now and they have found it very useful.

If you want to learn more about how to use Meetup to support your group have a look on their website <https://www.meetup.com/help/>. If you would like to start a Meetup group our IT volunteer Roy Hanfling is willing to assist you. (roy@hanfling.id.au or 0400 921 5100)



When Charities and Non Profits go Looking for Help, Where do They Turn?

Now a new service is available to provide a new level of professionalism and assistance to this sector.

Called The Charity Hub, and based in Archerfield in Brisbane, it is the brainchild of the team behind the very successful Buy a Bale drought program.

If your non profit needs office space with high speed internet, help with grants, attracting volunteers, marketing or website development, HR, Google Grants and Ad words , we have people keen to help.

The Charity Hub also runs monthly free courses on a range of subjects and also hosts a MeetUp group for non Profits in Brisbane each month.

Give us a call 1300 637 482 or visit our website, www.thecharityhub.com.au



Where to Find Free Wi-Fi in Brisbane

Brisbane City Council now offers free wireless internet (Wi-Fi) access in 22 parks and public spaces across Brisbane, as well as the Queen Street Mall, Reddacliff Place, Victoria Bridge, South Bank Parklands, Roma Street Parkland, Valley Malls, Mt Coot-tha Summit Lookout, Brisbane Libraries and on CityCats.

Council has expanded its free Wi-Fi service across the Brisbane Central Business District (CBD) and into the popular James Street precinct in Newstead, Caxton Street/Given Terrace in Paddington and the Stones Corner Precinct, allowing residents and visitors to stay connected as they move around Brisbane.

(Source: <https://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/facilities-recreation/wi-fi-brisbane>)

Do You Know Which is Australia's Most Trusted Charity?

Go to Page 16 to find out!



It's Okay to Never Wash Your Coffee Mug!

There are two types of people in this world: those who regularly wash their office coffee mug, and those who only take it off their desk to cover up the crusted coffee stain at the bottom with a fresh pour, chasing away their shame with the reasoning that the heat must kill the germs or something.

Depending on which type of person you are, this will be either mildly annoying or more-than-mildly exciting: As Heidi Mitchell wrote in a recent *Wall Street Journal* column, it's fine to never wash your mug, as long as you're not sharing it with anybody else. Better than fine, in fact: It may actually be the most sanitary option.

There are two caveats to that statement, infectious-disease expert Jeffrey Starke, a pediatrics professor at Baylor College of Medicine, told Mitchell: One, it only applies if you're not sharing the mug with anybody else. And two, "if you leave cream or sugar in your mug over the weekend, that can certainly cause mold to grow" — in which case, wash it out.

Otherwise, though, there's not really much to worry about: "If I went and cultured the average unwashed coffee cup, of course I'm going to find germs," Starke said. "But remember the vast majority came from the person who used the cup." Even if you drink from it while sick, it's pretty hard to re-infect yourself with the same mug; most viruses don't live long outside the body.

Which means that just letting your mug live in its own filth may be a safer bet than the alternative: scrubbing it with the disgusting communal sponge in the office kitchen. "The sponge in the break room probably has the highest bacteria count of anything in the office," Starke said. If the idea of *not* washing horrifies you, just stick the sponge in the **microwave** before using. Otherwise, though, feel free to continue your lazy ways without guilt.

(Source: Story by Cari Romm, Science of Us. http://nymag.com/scienceofus/2016/11/how-often-should-you-wash-your-office-coffee-mug-never.html?mid=facebook_scienceofus)

Calling all Families of Children with Disability

Are you the parent of a child with disability or do you work with the families of children with disabilities?

Fiona Russo, a researcher at University of Southern Queensland and also a parent of a young child with a disability, is seeking families to assist with her PhD research.

She says, "When we started to look for services and support for our daughter, nothing was as easy as it should have been. An incredible amount of advocacy is required on behalf of a child to source, apply for, and secure the services and equipment they need."

Fiona's study will look at the way parents advocate—what success looks like, what activities are being undertaken, and how the professionals around us view the role of parents and carers.

Fiona says, "Supporting parents in developing the necessary skills and exercising them will save our government money and assist families to better navigate the NDIS— but most importantly, it will ensure that no child is left behind."

To get involved, contact Fiona on fiona.russo@usq.edu.au or 0404 246 223.

'Never be a spectator of unfairness or stupidity. The grave will supply plenty of time for silence.'

Christopher Eric Hitchens

English-born American author, journalist and literary critic.

1949....2011



Scleroderma is an unknown disease to many, but it is believed an estimated 6,000 Australians and 300,000 Americans have the condition.

Scleroderma, or systemic sclerosis, is a chronic connective tissue disease generally classified as one of the autoimmune rheumatic diseases. One of the hallmarks is the thickening or hardening of the skin. This is literally what the word means in Greek (sclera=hard, derma=skin).

Below is a list of 9 myths about Scleroderma

1. Scleroderma is the same for everyone.
2. Scleroderma only affects the skin
3. Scleroderma is easy to diagnose
4. Only few Scleroderma patients have Raynaud's.
5. Scleroderma is contagious
6. Only adults can develop Scleroderma
7. Sclerodermas only attacks women
8. Scleroderma is always visible to the naked eye
9. Scleroderma can be cured

Andreia Peixoto, in the Scleroderma Australia Newsletter Edition 6 August 2016, debunks these 9 myths.
[Read the full article on Scleroderma Myths Debunked](#)

Scleroderma Australia Now Has a 925 Member Online Support Group

We now have just over 900 members on our "closed" scleroderma Facebook group. The group has proven to be a great source of comfort. Not everyone can get out, some live in country areas, others are unable to get along to support groups. Many have gone years without conversing with like-minded people. Now sometimes within days of diagnosis, support, information and the feeling of shared concerns are possible. This group is monitored daily to ensure that all educational material is correct and the group runs smoothly and caringly. This groups provides, support education and awareness.

Join the closed [online support group](#)

NDIS Transport Funding is an Unfortunate Lottery

"The lack of consistency in how participants are treated around the country in their use of taxi subsidy schemes makes a mockery of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) as a universal program", writes Spinal Cord Injuries Australia policy and advocacy officer Tony Jones.



Tony describe how the 3 levels of transport funding have been inconsistently applied, and often do not cover what a participant actually needs. He show particular concern for those new entrants, or those who have recently transitioned to the scheme. Read the entire article at [Pro Bono Australia](#)

"Prolonged Illness Makes the Patient a Good Doctor"

(Chinese Saying)

THE BLAME GAME- IS IT BEING FAIR TO YOU?

-By Doctor Harmony, Psychiatrist (www.doctorharmony.com)

When things don't work out, it is easy to say, "It's your fault..." or "It wouldn't have happened if..." We may feel this way when life doesn't work out the way we want or when we feel unfairly dealt with. We may be struck with a debilitating illness, death of a loved one, an accident or unkind actions of others.

Why do we blame? Instinctively, with human nature we try to protect ourselves from getting hurt. When we blame, we try to protect ourselves: our egos. It can be challenging to think that we are fallible and make mistakes. It is difficult to think that we are not always in control and are imperfect. It is easier to see what others have done wrongly or how we have been unfairly treated in life.

Unfortunately, there are long-term unfavourable consequences of blaming others or situations. It can lead to arguments, damage relationships and make it difficult to work with others. This can lead to irreparable damage long-term. It is difficult to have a trusting, caring mutual relationship when the focus is on who is right or wrong.

It also makes it hard to learn from our mistakes because we fail to see how we could have acted differently. We are only able to see what others did wrongly or how the situation wasn't fair to us. This sets us up for making the same mistakes throughout life, having the same unfavourable consequences. This could mean a string of unhappy relationships, multiple house moves or short-lived and multiple jobs.

When we blame, we feel helpless, because we perceive that a situation is happening to us and we have no part to play in it. We have let go of any control in the situation. Helplessness often then leads to anger, frustration, fear and depression.

Who wins in the blame game? Clearly, there are no winners. Not only do we push people away, we end up feeling helpless, sad and angry.

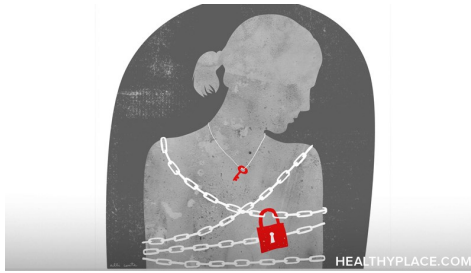
So, what can we do when we instinctively feel wrongly done by?

1. **Ask yourself, "Is there anything that I have done to contribute to this situation?"** For instance, it takes at least two sides to argue. Could you have expressed yourself differently to get a different reaction from the other person? Could you have been more understanding or accepting of differences?
2. **"What can I do to help this situation?"** It takes a significant amount of courage to admit fault and to reflect on your actions. A simple "Sorry" can go a long way.
3. **"What can I do to prevent this from happening next time?"** It may mean trying to see other people's perspectives before making assumptions or reflecting on the way you communicate. Does it come across as confrontational, aggressive or negotiating and assertive?
4. **"If I can't do anything about this situation, are there any lessons I can learn from this?"** It might mean learning about yourself, such as being aware of your vulnerabilities and how you react. It may mean accepting your flaws or feeling out of control. It could be a reminder to think about other people's perspective. Others may not intentionally try to hurt us.
5. **See the positives.** If you can see any positives of an unfavourable situation, then you are likely to feel less helpless, angry and depressed.

If you like the tips, check out series one of my Building Resilience books series www.doctorharmony.com. Although it is marketed as children's picture books, it has great tips for children and adults alike.

This column is intended to be general advice only. It is recommended that medical advice for individual circumstances is sought through your local health practitioner.





Do You Stigmatize Yourself?

Stigma is the prejudicial and negative treatment we face when others see us for our mental health condition rather than for who we are as a whole person. Facing stigma from others can be damaging and hurtful. But what about self-stigma? Do you ever stigmatize yourself? Can you recognize the signs of [self-stigma](#) in yourself?

Self-stigma is the biased, negative judgment that we impose on ourselves. You might have stigmatized yourself if you've ever:

- Paid more attention to the symptoms and effects of mental illness than you do on other aspects of yourself
- Caught yourself overthinking the words, actions, and nonverbal behaviour of others, "knowing" that you're not measuring up
- Noticed self-derogatory thoughts running through your mind
- Found yourself agreeing with your derogatory thoughts
- Felt that you're not good enough for someone or something
- Felt worthless

These are just some of the signs of self-stigma. As others do when they stigmatize you, when you stigmatize yourself, you're seeing yourself unevenly. ([A Guide to Overcoming Self-Stigma](#))

Begin to notice when you're self-stigmatizing, and intentionally shift your focus to something good about yourself. Purposefully keep track of your positive thoughts and actions. When you shift your focus this way, you will gradually stop stigmatizing yourself. Then, you just might find that you like yourself, mental illness and all.

(Source: Healthy Place Consumer Mental Health Newsletter <https://www.healthyplace.com/other-info/mental-health-newsletter/signs-of-self-stigma-do-you-stigmatize-yourself/>)



A Lesson from Nature

Every Zebra's stripe pattern is unique, no two are the same, yet they instinctively understand that inclusion and togetherness benefits all members of the herd. Like zebras, we too have many, many characteristics, interests, strengths and struggles that make us unique. For those on the spectrum, their Autism diagnosis is but one stripe, it does not define who they are or limit their potential, and our communities as a whole are stronger when we actively support inclusion.

By Letitia Daveson

Artwork: Intense Blue Zebra by Arti Chauhan

(Source: Mackay Autism Support Group Newsletter June 2017)

Psychosocial Disability, Recovery and the NDIS

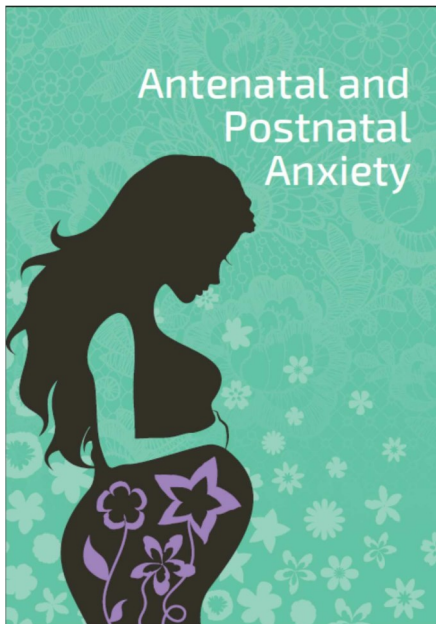


Psychosocial disability is the term used to describe disabilities that may arise from mental health issues. Whilst not everyone who has a mental health issue will experience psychosocial disability, those that do can experience severe effects and social disadvantage. People with a significant disability that is likely to be permanent may qualify for NDIS support. Some very helpful links below:

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/medias/documents/heb/h21/8799160959006/Fact-Sheet-Psychosocial-disability-recovery-and-the-NDIS-PDF-774KB-.pdf>

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/medias/documents/h2e/hbc/8800668221470/Psychosocial-Disability-Prods.pdf>

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/psychosocial/products>



New! Free!

Antenatal and Postnatal Anxiety Booklet

(A resource of Women's Health Queensland Wide)

Pregnancy and early parenthood trigger a wide range of emotions. During pregnancy (the antenatal period) and in the year following childbirth (the postnatal period), it can sometimes be difficult to know whether your feelings of stress, worry, and anxiety are normal, or whether you are experiencing symptoms of an anxiety disorder.

This booklet aims to help you recognise the possible signs of anxiety so you can take steps to potentially alleviate these or to seek help early if you already have anxiety symptoms or are worried about your risk factors. It also gives an overview of what anxiety is and the different types of anxiety disorders.

This booklet provides suggestions about where you can go for help, as well as evidence-based information about diagnosis and recovery, treatment and support options. In addition, it includes a directory of trusted websites you can visit to find out more about anxiety.

To obtain the booklet from Women's Health Queensland Wide you can:

- Download an electronic version
- Request a hard copy
- Queensland organisations can currently order up to 10 copies of the Antenatal and Postnatal Anxiety booklet for free.

Go to <http://womhealth.org.au/>

1800 017 676 (Outside Brisbane) 07 3216 0376 (local call)



Ice: Training for Frontline Workers

Ice: Training for Frontline Workers is a free resource for frontline workers who want to enhance their crystal methamphetamine skills and knowledge. It is relevant to a wide range of sectors, including health and welfare, education, criminal justice, and transport.

The training contains flexible content that suits a variety of needs. It has 7 independent but complementary modules:

1. About Ice
2. Effects of Ice
3. Communicating with Ice Users
4. Ice Users and Critical Incidents
5. Interventions
6. Preventions
7. Organisational Responses to Ice



Each module contains between 2-9 topics. You can work through all the modules, just one, or any number of individual topics. It's up to you!

Ice: Training for Frontline Workers is a free resource developed by the National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA)

To register go to: <https://nceta.androgogic.com.au/index.php>

Should Self Help and Support Groups Incorporate or Not?

At some stage in the life of a not for profit community group or organisation, the question of incorporation arises. Whether to incorporate or not requires careful consideration.

Taking on legal responsibilities is a big step, so it is vital to ascertain if incorporation is really needed. Generally, the issue of incorporation comes into play when members of a management committee seek to reduce their personal liability.

Other important factors such as set up costs, ongoing statutory fees, bookkeeping and audit fees and compliance with regulations need to be considered.

Good Guide to Whether to Incorporate or Not

The Caxton Legal Centre, Brisbane, has published an *"Incorporated Associations Manual"* by Professor Myles McGregor Lowndes which includes a simple one page list of questions to help you decide. If you answer 'no' to the questions, consideration should be given to whether incorporation is really the best structure for your group. Go to: http://websites.sportstg.com/get_file.cgi?id=2760387

Queensland Government Incorporated Associations Information

<https://www.qld.gov.au/law/laws-regulated-industries-and-accountability/queensland-laws-and-regulations/associations-charities-and-non-for-profits/incorporated-associations/>

Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (Queensland)

<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/A/AssocIncorpA81.pdf>



"Judge for Yourself"

It's Free! It's a Community Event! It's in Queensland!

The Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council is holding free "Judge for Yourself" events that help community members understand sentencing and the criminal justice system.

Every week in Queensland, our courts sentence people who have broken the law. But have you ever wondered how judges and magistrates decide what sentences to give?

Do you have a strong opinion about Queensland's sentencing process and the sentences given by our judges and magistrates? "Judge for Yourself" is an interactive program to help you better understand the complexities of sentencing in Queensland.

Community Session Locations:

Arukun	Coming soon	Mount Isa	22 & 23 June
Beenleigh	5 June	Redcliffe	7 June
Cairns	13 July	Rockhampton	27 & 28 June
Ipswich	12 June	Southport	8 June
Longreach	19 & 20 June	Thursday Island	10 & 11 July
Mackay	29 & 30 June	Toowoomba	14 June
Maroochydore	9 June	Townsville	21 & 22 June
Maryborough	15 & 16 June	Weipa	19 June

To Register for a Community Session:

<http://www.sentencingcouncil.qld.gov.au/news-room/events>

Click on the location > Click Select a Time (blue box) > Click Register (Green box) > Click Checkout (Green box) > Fill out the required fields > Click Complete Registration (Green box)

Phone: (07) 3224 7375

Scam Alert!

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) is aware of a potential scam involving people claiming to be from NDIA attempting to collect personal details via telephone.



The NDIA contacts people by phone for the purpose of completing a verbal access request to become a participant in the NDIS. Where this occurs, the NDIA will ask for certain personal information over the phone, but will only request this information after explaining the purpose of asking for it and seeking your consent to proceed.

If you are already a participant in the NDIS, the NDIA may contact you directly by phone or email to advise you that we required additional information or to update our records. In these instances we will explain the purpose of asking for this information and ask that you either:

- Visit your nearest NDIA office
- Contact the 1800 800 110 number

The NDIA will never require you to provide personal information or threaten to cancel your NDIS plan unless you provide personal details by phone.

If you are unsure about whether a person calling you is from the NDIA, you can ask for their name and number and call the Agency back.

If you believe it is a scam please report it to feedback@ndis.gov.au (link sends e-mail), your local NDIA contact or call 1800 800 110. They will be able to confirm whether the caller was from the NDIA.

Visit the [Privacy](#) section of the NDIS website to find out more to find out more about the NDIA's procedures for handling your personal information. You can also find out more about known scams via the Australian Government [Scamwatch](#) website.

For further information read the media release: [Beware of telephone scam - check caller's details.](#)

(Source: <https://www.ndis.gov.au/news/Protecting-your-personal-details.html>)

Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme for Queenslanders in Rural and Remote Areas

Travel Assistance for Patients

If you live in rural and remote areas of Queensland, and have to travel more than 50km for specialist medical services that are not available locally, you may be eligible for the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme (PTSS) to help with your travel costs.

Financial Help

Assistance may be provided for travel and accommodation costs. Subsidies are available for clinically appropriate and cost-effective types of transport (e.g. air, rail, bus or private motor vehicle).

Travel Subsidies

Commercial - Air, Bus or Rail	Fully paid at lowest available discount fare
Private Vehicle	\$0.30 per km

Accommodation Subsidies

Commercial	\$60 per person per night
Private (Family or friends)	\$10 per person per night

The PTSS is administered through public hospitals across Queensland.

To gain more information about eligibility, conditions and how to apply go to: <https://www.qld.gov.au/health/services/travel/subsidies/> or call 13 43 25 84



Answer to Question on Page 8 of this newsletter!

For the fifth year running, Guide Dogs Australia has just been named the nation's most trusted charity as part of the annual Reader's Digest's Trusted Brands survey.

The survey was carried out by Roy Morgan Research. [Read More](#)

Good News for SHOUT!

In our last newsletter we urged support for our sister organisation facing closure in the ACT. Self Help Organisations United Together (SHOUT) was facing closure at the end of May.

However, the ACT Government is to be congratulated for reversing its decision, and continue to fund SHOUT to carry out its vital work in the Self Help Sector in the ACT.

Self Help Queensland is similarly thankful to the Queensland Government for its decision to continue funding our work in the Sector here in Queensland, now in our 34th year.

Both SHQ and SHOUT, along with Collective of Self Help Groups (COSH) in Melbourne and Connect Groups in WA are the only organisations of their kind in each State.

Myasthenia Alliance Australia Conference 2017

Saturday 29th July 2017

Concord Medical Education Centre
Concord Repatriation General Hospital
SYDNEY

To enquire or register please email info@mgag.org.au or Phone 1800 802 568
www.myastheniaallianceaustralia.com.au



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

3 Ways to Keep a List of Your Medications

1. MedicineList+ smartphone app, so your medicine list is always with you in your phone.
2. Keep a Medicines eList on your computer and printing or emailing it when you need to.
3. Write a paper Medicines list and keep it with you in your wallet or handbag.

Using MedicineList + smartphone app

Using the free MedicineList+ smartphone app means you will always have your medicines and health information with you. It can also:

- Remind you how and when to take your medicines so you can get the most out of them
- Help everyone involved in your health care to know which medicines you use so medicines mistakes are prevented
- Help your doctor and pharmacist to check and review your medicines so they can make the right decisions about your health
- Provide vital information about your medicines in an emergency, helping to ensure your safety.
- Enter and update your information, and set alarms to remind you when to take your medicines.



Download the app from [Google Play](#) or the [App Store](#). It's free.

Jetstar's Flying Start Funding Program

Jetstar's Flying Start Program invites community groups and organisations across Australia to apply for a grant to fund a project that will enrich the lives of people in their local community.

Tell us your project story and you could receive a \$30,000 grant.

Applications close 30 September 2017.

<http://www.jetstar.com/au/en/flyingstart>

Next Round: 1 Oct 17 – 31 Mar 18



Never in the history of calming down, has anyone ever calmed down by being told to calm down.

Anonymous