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Supporting Groups, Supporting You

Chip in to help our support groups here

May 2022 Edition:



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[Opinion: I believe my work with SGQ, and my Support Group help keep this man healthy](#)

I am less than impressed by the (lack of) usefulness of Men's Health Week, which passed quietly last week between the 13th and 19th of June. I'm not sure who noticed?

I'm a 66-year-old grump, so I believe I'm allowed to be a little blunt.

[What's up with the men?](#)



some [excellent resources](#). Here are some facts and figures that stood out to me:

- Boys and men are at greater risk of suicide.
- Lack of self-care is normalised in a way that prevents them from being proactive about their wellbeing.
- Indigenous people and people with mental illness were markedly more vulnerable.

In the USA, a lot of work was done on “diseases of despair” such as substance abuse, suicide and death linked to alcohol and liver disease. Vulnerability to these conditions was linked to **poverty, depression, loneliness, and hopelessness**.

This resonates with me and makes sense to me. I worked with people with mental health diagnoses for many years. Many people, mostly men, died by suicide and self-neglect, but none of them, as I recall, died because they were “mad”.

It was because their lives felt unliveable: poverty, depression, loneliness, and hopelessness.

An additional factor is a lack of access to medical services, and with the recent changes to Medicare, I fear we are heading in this direction as well. We are not engaging men to be proactive and engaged in their individual and collective wellbeing. I face many barriers to affording tests, medicine, nutrition, and gym.

I know I am not unique in this, but I wish that I and those who share this experience could find commonality in something more hopeful.

[What has worked for me](#) is having something to do like volunteer at SGQ. I think most men are like that. We need to be useful. Being able to connect and be around others has helped me.

At SGQ, I host my support group of carers in our meeting room; every third Friday of the month. We meet, listen, and support each other over a cup of tea. One of our participants even occasionally gifts us delightful vegetables from her garden!

We focus on supporting people whose partners are declining because of dementia and other neurodegenerative conditions. I don't have a partner with dementia. I supported my mother through her decline.

[So that's my conclusion](#)

- 1) Find something useful to do, no matter how small.
- 2) Join a support group. Support Groups Queensland can help you with that.
- 3) Get some exercise every day, I know that's hard as arthritis starts to dig in, but there are alternatives. Walks in pools, take a short walk on soft ground or join groups like [60 And](#)



I am certain that our government needs to get into action, increase the pension and the dole to at least the poverty level, fix Medicare and stop chucking old people on the scrap heap. That would be a good start.

It might be apparent, but I am very dubious about Men's Health Week, pills and potions, bright posters, and this epidemic of positivity and platitudes. I want us to have deeper conversations that result in more extensive action.

Roy,

[Volunteer at SGQ](#)

If you'd like to reach out to Roy or discuss this topic further, email:
support@supportgroups.org.au

[Singing: Mind, Voice and Community](#)

While many might associate support groups with a lot of talking or discussion, groups can engage in many different ways.

Group singing encourages people to engage with each other through musical dialogue, and building self-expression collectively.

Singing groups and choirs give people a sense of belonging and help boost their mood. Being in sync in a large group requires emotional connection which results in much faster social bonding among participants.

There are a number of choirs in [SGQ's database](#) that support people with mental health and neurological challenges.



Sing To Beat Aphasia
Community Choir

Do you live with Aphasia?

Singing can help aphasia. Repeat and practice language skills by singing. It's great to sing together and share.

Join us every Tuesday at 10 am

SINGING | TEA | CHATS
All welcome! No experience needed.

Venue (Alternating): Logan Central Library, St. David's Neighbourhood Centre

Contact: Britney
Chair Director | Music Therapist
0400 670 770
britneyparamackay@hotmail.com

ndis [Sing To Beat Aphasia](#)

[Sing To Beat Aphasia](#)

[Sing to Beat Aphasia](#) is a choir for people with Aphasia and their carers.

The choir, led by a registered Music Therapist, wants to empower people with Aphasia to:

- take leadership positions
- build community
- support language rehabilitation
- educate the public about Aphasia

They use singing to create community and connection, strengthen our communication skills, and express ourselves. They even wrote a song titled "Song to Beat Aphasia".

*I am still bright
I am not stupid
I can get lonely!
So, treat me the same
I'm still the same person
Don't forget about me!*

Stay in touch with [Sing To Beat Aphasia on Facebook.](#)

Sing To Beat Aphasia meets every Tuesday morning. They alternate meetings between Logan Central Library and St. David's Neighbourhood Centre.

[Sing Sing Sing: Brisbane's Very Own Dementia Choir](#)

The Bulimba Community Centre is partnering with Melissa Gill of Sing Studio to deliver a choir program, **Sing Sing Sing**, for people living with dementia and their caregivers.

Members of the choir socialise, share stories and experience the joy of singing with each other and for our audiences. Singing together can improve physical and emotional well-being and social connection.



One member said, "The choir is an opportunity to take time out, meet with friends and sing songs that bring back wonderful memories of special moments."

The choir sings a little a bit of everything including songs from movies, musicals and TV shows and folk tunes from all over the world. If you'd like to find out more about joining Sing Sing Sing or volunteering with the choir [click HERE](#) to register your interest or email dementiachoirsqld@gmail.com.au.

Stay in touch with [Sing Sing Sing on Facebook.](#)

Sing Sing Sing meets at the Bulimba Community Centre on Tuesday mornings each week during school terms.

[Somali Day Celebration 2022](#)



Every year, the Queensland Somali Community gather to celebrate Somali Day.

It's a day for their community to showcase and celebrate their culture and history. The event is attended by community members, including Somali elders and leaders, families and young people, and guests and leaders from a range of cultures across the broader community.

There will be special guests, cultural performances, songs, child-friendly activities, fireworks and many more.

Date and Time: Saturday, July 2, 2022; 10 am – 7:30 pm

Location: 174 Mortimer Rd, Acacia Ridge

To learn more and RSVP, click [here](#).

SUPPORT GROUPS QLD

**The greatness of a
community is most
accurately measured by
the compassionate actions
of its members.**

– Coretta Scott King
(author, activist, and civil rights leader)



Reflective practices are a way to build awareness of our own state of being. Mindful reflection brings us back to ourselves, allowing us to come closer to our body, emotions, thoughts, and spirituality.

While many people immediately think of sitting **meditation** when they hear the words reflective practice, there are many techniques for reflection and contemplation.

Reflective/contemplative practices allow us to:

- Pay attention to what is happening right now—not what we remember or are anticipating
- Become aware of how we are truly feeling in this moment, whether it be happy or sad, anxious or at ease, sleepy or alert
- Cultivate an understanding that this place where we sit right now, whatever our thoughts and emotions, is the point from which we can always begin again
- Recognize the great gift of simply being in the present moment – alive and aware.

Group Journalling

Journal prompts offer specific **themes and topics to reflect** on, which can be helpful when you have a lot of conflicting thoughts to sort through.

Some prompts can even help you collect your thoughts on a recent conflict with a friend or partner. For example, writing about specific relationship challenges can help you get more clarity on your emotional needs and how to make sure they're met.

Get into small groups with your question prompt and some paper and reflect together on the question. Note the thoughts, feelings and insights shared. Take a moment to scan the notes and reflect on the collective information.



Get Involved

We are looking for community members and organisations in the multicultural space to collaborate with us on information forums and to connect with multicultural community members. We welcome your insights into this exciting project.

If you are looking for support or want to be connected to cultural leaders and networks, please get in touch with us at info@supportgroups.org.au.

Let us share your group and stories!

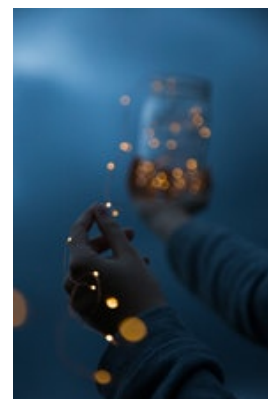
invite you to share about your group with others, through our newsletter, Facebook or website. Please let us know how your group is going.

We are currently building an image bank to brighten up our newsletter and website. We invite you to share your photos with us. Please ensure the photos are high-resolution, captioned, and have been consented to by those featured. If you know anyone or group that'll be interested please let us know, we would love to have you featured on our page.

We look forward to your submissions at admin@supportgroups.org.au!

What to DO when someone discloses suicidal thoughts/self-harm

- Take the person seriously; do not ridicule, minimise or negate their thoughts and feelings
 - Stay respectful, patient and calm.
 - Let the person know that you care about them and do not want anything to happen.
 - Ask them if they are currently having those thoughts
-
- Listen non-judgmentally; accept what they are saying without agreeing or disagreeing with their behaviour or point of view
 - Let them know before you move on to another person that you'll connect with them at the end of the group to support them accessing crisis services or professional help
 - Remind the group at the end of the support available to them and if you're contactable after the session or at any time.



Source:

[QLS Information Sheet: Responding to threats of imminent serious physical harm](#)

SGO supports you to nurture your, and your groups' well-being. We connect people to support groups across a broad range of health issues, assist people in starting new groups and working with support groups to build their capacity.

121 Lister Street (PO Box 353),
Sunnybank QLD 4109
Hours: Tuesday to Friday; from 9 am to 4:30 pm
Phone: 07 3344 6919

We gratefully acknowledge the funding support of [Support Groups Queensland](#) by Queensland Health.



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Government

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