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# SOAPBOX SYDNEY

QUARTERLY

№03 - SPRING 2020  
FREE

Your guide to becoming  
kinder to yourself and  
others

# [ UNMUTE ]

BLESS YOUR SNEEZE





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UPLIFTING AND INSPIRING  
PHOTOGRAPHY PROVIDED BY

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# Soapbox

Quarterly

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### What we are:

Soapbox is an experiment in design: Mental health solutions through culture change.

Soapbox's principles operate when a resource exists and people volunteer their time or expertise to create something from it to benefit others.

We measure success by the quality of our every moment, and define it by sharing our success with others.

### What we want:

One conversation at a time, we seek to reinstate the humanity in our culture.

### Why:

Most current solutions alleviate the effect of our situation but do not treat the deep roots of the cause.

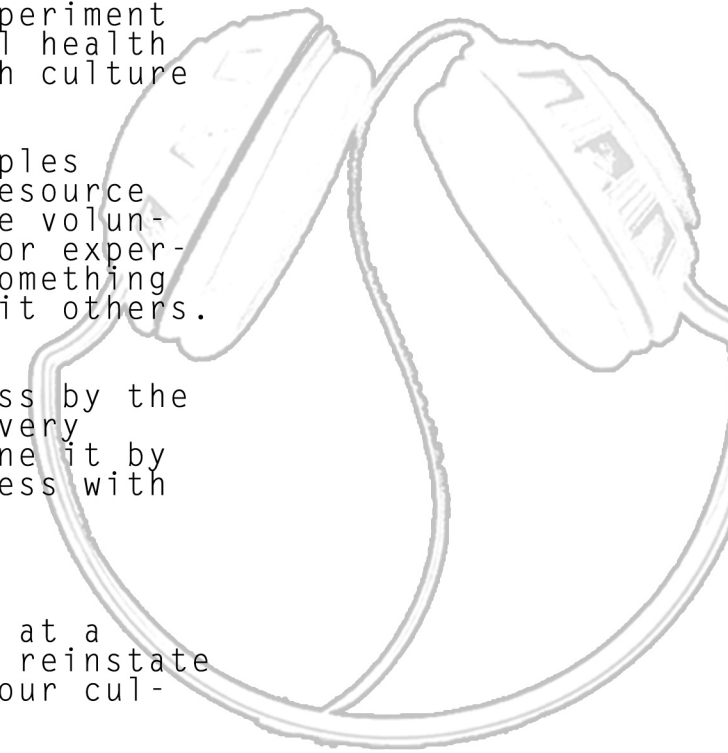
### How:

We don't claim to have the answer, but we wish to provide a space to safely create and test the myriad of solutions we dream up together. We will be curious about the problem and access or create independent research.

We will link those with the capacity to dream with those with resources, such as time, popularity or finance, to create evidence based changes in the most visible way. Through this we will re-empower, person by person, the ability to improve our home, our city, our common spaces.

### Your invitation

If you believe in this vision, We invite you to be passionate about it. Come to the party; @soapbox.sydney, and enter your email. Invite others to build the mic!





“Take ownership of the important things.”



Yearill Fam  
Editor

“I’m sorry, I have been slack. So much has been going on, things have been crazy around here, I’m flat chat, I missed it.”

Sound familiar? They are excuses, and, like most excuses, are insufficient.

Sometimes we get so full of activity that it is hard to see what is important. To me, soapbox is the most important, and, on this occasion, I wish I had taken time to zoom out and properly prioritise my passion.

How about this; It is my fault. We are 15 days late because I did not ensure things would come together, in a way that was acceptable to me. I could not compromise. As a team, we had to go back to the drawing board and make some big edits. This was our choice, and this late edition is my fault.

In retrospect, for the things that mean the world to you, do not stand by and be content that they exist. Proactive, passionately give to them, and they will continue to be, they will fade less fast, and will sustain you more than you spend on it. This is that nature of self-actualising.

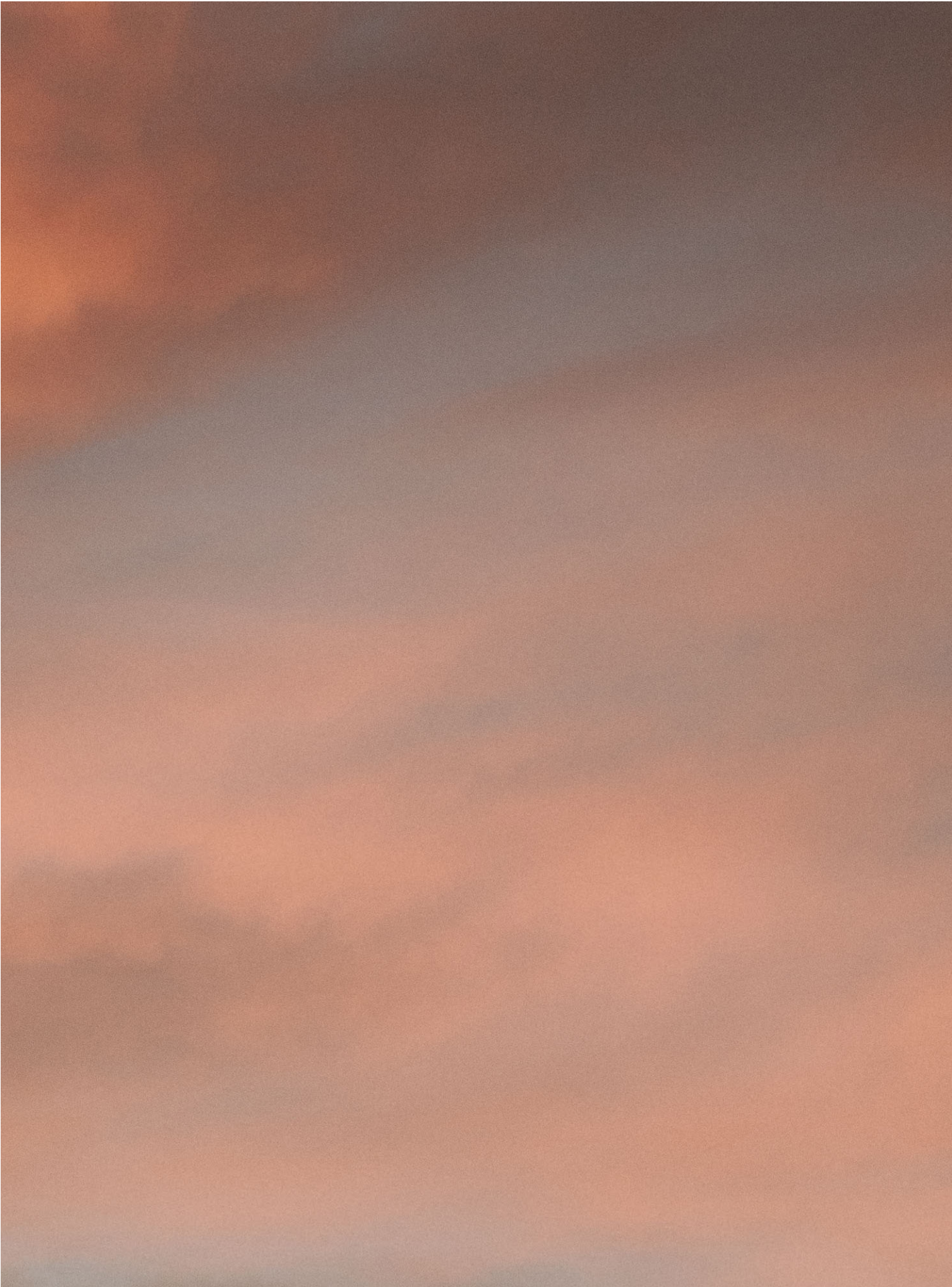
Many of us have task lists devoid of passion, and to that I say, infuse them with it! Are you putting the

clothes on the line for the fifth time today? Put on some music, and enjoy the fresh air while you’re outside. By engaging in passion, you will reduce your burnout, and increase your ability to select the activities that matter to you. That requires taking ownership.

Our students in this edition did a bang up job in my absence, and they took leadership where they needed to.

I was an absent leader and thought that earned me pride in my clever automatic creations. I was mistaken, this magazine is, like the soapbox endeavour, a living system. It needs life and love to exist in a meaningful way, and I use this letter to you to affirm this: I’ll provide them. I hope you do, too.

Yearill Fam







## HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOUR- SELF DURING A PANDEMIC

**Saleena Shrestha**

In the state of pandemic situation such as COVID-19 outbreak, earthquake, landslides and floods can make us feel highly anxious, stressed and worried. It is important to be aware about such feelings and look after yourself. During such challenging time, gaining information on mental wellbeing and looking out for those around you is significant. Here are listed eight ways to look after your mental health during pandemic situation:

### **1 . LOOK FOR LEGIT SOURCES FOR CORRECT INFORMATION**

Be well informed about the information provided from official sources such as the WHO, UNESCO or reliable national sources (such as government website). It is smart to utilize your few hours of daily life to read. Several confusions can be misleading in such situations therefore, the choice of reliable information sources is important (Mental Health Europe, 2020).

### **2 . LIMIT YOURSELF ON WATCHING NEWS AND USING SOCIAL MEDIA**

In situations like these, over exposure of news throughout the electronic media is expected. Try to avoid them and be updated with the facts only. However, gain information when needed only as constant information can be overwhelming, and increase anxiety. Limit boundaries to how much news you read, watch or listen. Take control of your focus on the information without wondering 'what if?'. Set your plans according to the factual information and protect yourself and people around you.

### **3 . GET ADEQUATE SLEEP**

Sleep and mental wellbeing are closely connected to each other. Sleep deprivation can affect your psychological state and mental health. It is a fact that people with mental health problems are more likely to have insomnia or other sleep disorders. Therefore, sleeping and waking up at a reasonable time can enhance your mental strength.

### **4 . EXERCISE REGULARLY**

Exercise is important for both physical and mental wellbeing. In situations like these, exercising regularly can be a good utilization of time as well. Access to different exercise ideas are available on the internet to get you started even when the gyms are closed. It helps controlling the adrenaline and cortisol that are produced in times of uncertainty. Not to forget the free relaxation session we get post the exercise.

### **5 . THINK POSITIVE AND HAVE A SENSE OF HOPE**

With all the negativity going around, focus on things that are positive in your life. This helps in stress management and eventually improve your health. Your thoughts will have a big impact on your physical and mental health. However, do not ignore the reality. Be aware and conscious of the situation and have positive energy into your body and keep you at mental peace (Mental Health Europe, 2020).

### **6 . SUPPORT AND REACH OUT TO PEOPLE AROUND YOU**

In one of the research it shows that outbreak like these may have reduced physical meetings but online Interaction with your friends and your relatives can make you feel better. Listening to each other's thoughts and emotions will guide you to solutions to resolve problems. Offer little extra love and kindness to people next to you.

### **7. ACCEPT YOUR FEELINGS**

Accepting things as it is can help grow in to the situations faster. During outbreaks, emotional responses such as exhaustion, depression and anger are expected. Provide yourself time to understand and accept it. calm yourself and understand the situations by doing what you like. Such as writing notes, taking to friends, practicing meditation.

### **8 . LOOK OUT FOR PROFESSIONAL/ CLINICAL SUPPORT IF NEEDED**

This is a final way to tackle the situation when all this does not aid. Find help from a qualified therapist. These sessions can be arranged locally or nationwide which can help you to continue the session anywhere. Try searching words such as "social reinforcement of psychologically ill health" or "consumer groups" to mental health programs to find right fit for you.



# SOARING EAGLES YOUTH

**PRESENTS: THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF USING ORGANISED TEAM SPORTS AS EARLY INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES.**

**O**rganised and team sports are the growing trend in young people in Australia in today's society. Organised sports provide young people with more advantages than simply being physically active. Young people who participate in organised sports learn many life skills that can positively affect their lives. Active young people benefit physically, psychological, and socially (Mitchell, 2012). Research validates that young people who participate organised sports during school years are more successful academically, socially, emotionally and professionally. Furthermore, research also suggests positive role modelling or mentoring other than parenting such as sport coaches have a greater impact than parenting alone. This paper will use media campaigns and relevant academic research to discuss the prevalence surrounding youth mental health and demonstrate the importance of early intervention together with testimony concerning psychological benefits of organised sport for young people and coach mentoring.

Adolescents is a stage of life when the rate of growing is equivalent to the first two years of life. It is a time of immense physical, emotional and social change. It is stage when young people assess their position or place in society. It is also a time when life brings adult-like challenges and associated stresses (Hungerford, 2017). The manner in which a young person reacts to stress and adversity, affects their ability to cope with adult life. With this in mind, it is imperative those working with young people develop support structures and programs to develop personal coping skills. While in some cases, stress can have a positive effect on young people, impelling them into action, it can also have a negative effect, leaving the vulnerable feeling anxious, isolated and insecure. As a consequence, this may lead to an escalation in mental health disorders for a young person. Research demonstrates mental health in young Australians is of great concern.

**T**he Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC, 2019), reported 24.2% of young people experience psychological distress. These statistics are 18.7% greater than in 2012. Supporting these statistics, Mission Australia's latest Youth Survey found, 1 in 5 young people living in Australia are likely to be experiencing mental health problems, with less than 40% of these young people feeling embarrassed in seeking professional support (Hungerford, 2017). A national survey of child and adolescent of mental health and wellbeing (AIHW, 2015), found virtually 14% young people aged 4-17 had a mental health disorder. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) was the highest percentage of just over 7%, followed by anxiety disorders of just under 7%, with major depressive disorder at 3% and conduct disorder at 2%. Of those with a mental health disorder, almost 30 % or 4% of all young people aged to 17 years, had experienced 2 or more disorders at some time in the 12 months (AIHW, 2016 and Hungerford, 2017).

**A**lthough the occurrence of mental health disorders in young people is relatively high, there is also a low use of specialised services. 15% of young people with mental health disorders will consult with a General practitioner, followed by 10% will consult with a psychologist, however, young people with AOD background will not seek help. The main reason 85% of young people do not use relevant service is they do not believe they need to seek help (Headspace, 2016). Headspace (2016), states, the current mental health system is not adequately resourced to deal with young people who have mild-to-moderate mental health disorders, therefore as a consequence, causing barriers to access services for specific needs.





It is relatively alarming of the role “stigma” plays in inhibiting young Australians in seeking help for mental health disorders. Research performed by Headspace (2016), revealed, more than half of young people between 12-25 years old, would not report mental health disorders because they were too embarrassed to discuss it with anyone, and were concerned of judgment. Young people who experience mental health problems are more likely to experience issues with their physical wellbeing and educational, psychological and social development. As a consequence, young people will resort to self-coping mechanisms which in a majority of cases, causing further harm to their well-being. For this reason, prerequisite for professionals working with young people across relevant disciplines such as teaching staff, medical and health professionals and organised sport coaches to become familiar and distinguish signs and symptoms of mental health disorders, plus know what services are available and how they can be accessed, especially in remote or regional locations, or young people from marginalised or disadvantaged families.

These alarming statistics motivate early intervention but preferably, prevention. Research suggests, when the early signs of mental health issues are acknowledged and attended to, outcomes for the young people are improved. The comparison of early intervention and prevention is not entirely transparent. Prevention and early intervention activities can transpire early in the development of mental health difficulties. Prevention refers to interventions that occur before the initial onset of a condition to prevent its development (Hungerford, 2017). The overall message that runs throughout research and studies indicates prevention is better than intervention. Furthermore, it doesn't necessarily take a lot to promote resilience, attachment and a sense of belonging in young people (Fuller, 1998), however, it does take a conscious decision to embark on a specific project. When looking through a critical lens, it is more than schooling or family, it is associated with creating a community and a sense of belongingness for the young people. In order to assist young people to build resilience and either stay or become mentally well, it is essential they are socially connected.

Fuller (1998) suggests, belonging is not concerned with governed, it is concerned with “feeling part of a place”, or “somewhere you feel recognised for who you are”, plus, where a young person can maintain sustainable relationships, with peers, and mentors and provided with opportunities to reflect on life's highs and lows with others. Fuller (1998) further states, the earlier

provisions are put in place for young people to belong, the less likely they are to conform into problem or risk-taking behaviours. Therefore, when working with young people, the focus of programs must include engagement, especially if it is a case of early intervention.

Whilst schools and families endeavour to create sense of belonging and purpose for young people, this paper it will specifically discuss the principles of organised sport supports and its positive influence on mental health for young people. Several studies suggest that sports participation is beneficial for psychosocial health. Research has shown that exercise and physical activity is constantly impacting the health and wellness of the individuals with mental health disorders (Guarin, 2018). Guarin's (2018), comparative research article exposed participation in physical activities outside of the school and home setting assisted with the release of any form of anger, frustration, depression or anxiety young people might have or don't know how to cope with. Through other teammates, peer support, plus coaching staff teaching them the “right way” to play the game, young people can acquire valuable information that derives from being part of a team.

Fortunately, national organisations such as The Black Dog Institute and Beyond blue support the above evidence, and recommend young people engage in organised sport outside of school settings. These organisations recognise the physical benefits of organised sport such as strong muscle and bone development, weight management, respiratory fitness and reduction in blood pressure, cholesterol and heart disease, they have further recognised the benefits of the following.

- Socialisation: referred to as fast tracking friendships (Beyond Blue, 2020) and human connection as important factor in maintain good mental health and establishing a support network that young people would not otherwise have.

- Stress Relief: obligates young people to apply to task at hand, allowing themselves to alleviate worries and negative thoughts, stimulating chemical release (endorphins) (Beyond Blue, 2020) often referred to as happy chemicals.




- Sense of belonging- organised sport educates young people the value of being a team player and teamwork, as opposed to being lectured, they put it into practice. Additionally, promotes leadership and the development of leadership skills.

- Resilience and self-determination – to educate young people on how to deal with setbacks as teams do not always win games. Coping with a loss or a poor performance, learning from it and trying again is all part of the journey. Resilience is carried over into everyday life, assisting with navigation during adversity (Beyond Blue, 2020 and Black Dog Institute, 2018).

- Improved sleep patterns – Young people with mental health concerns may suffer from sleep disturbances. Not only does physical activity cause fatigue, as previously stated sport increases endorphins, further promoting serotonin and melatonin. Balancing these natural chemicals improves a good night's rest (Beyond Blue, 2020).

Further research suggests it is well and good to promote organised sport as prevention or for early intervention for youth mental health, however, leadership and mentoring is also a contributing factor. As previously stated, young people are reluctant in seeking help from specialised professionals for their





mental health concerns. Fuller (1998) and Ferguson, Swann, Liddle & Vella (2019), affirm, young people developing through middle and late adolescence are more peer focused and looking for their niche. They will be more inclined look for a peer or a person of trust to share their troubles than a professional. As previously mentioned, this is closely associated with stigma surrounding mental disorders. Ferguson et al (2019), discuss the role of sport coaches as mentors. Their research exposed sport coaches adapt several roles.

**T**he authors recorded coaches play a detrimental role in the lives of young people in sport and can have a great impact on their mental health (Ferguson et al, 2019). The research suggested “coaches perceive their role to be diverse and inclusive of the promotion of mental health”. At times, young people will not console with peers, teachers or family when struggling, however, due to a mutual interest in sport, they will confide in their coach. Due to their frequent contact with young people, coaches are in a unique position to identify if a young person is experiencing difficulties and act as advocates for professional mental health services (Ferguson et al, 2010). Ferguson et al (2010), further noted, coaches believed they have a role in facilitating professional help seeking but were not adequately trained in the area of mental health. The diverse forms literature used for this paper supports the attitude of the author in that, coaches (or any persons) working with young people ought to have tailored training in some form of mental health literacy for young people.

**F**erguson et al (2010) suggest the implementation of Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training for coaches. When provided to coaches, MHFA training increased their capacity to recognize mental illness and improves their confidence to respond (Ferguson et al, 2010). Furthermore, coaches testified that MHFA training was effective because it built upon their existing skills and allowed them to fulfil their perceived social responsibilities. Further exploration exposed there are preconceived notions, that those who do play sport are mentally tough. However, organisations across the nation are campaigning to break that stigma and advocate the importance of mental health literacy for coaches. The ABC (2019) reported more young people are turning to sport coaches more than now than ever before. Basketball Australia Coaches (2019), supports the ABC’s findings, also affirming Mental Health specifically in sport is now far more openly discussed – behind closed doors and in public. Play By The Rules (PBTR) (2020) is a national sports social network organisation, which have further addressed the need for coaches to become mental health literate. ‘Adaptability, resilience, the capacity for problem solving — these are all skill sets that can be taught.’ (PBTR, 2020). Soaring Eagles Youth LTD is developing a pilot program to work in partnership with Sporting Associations for 2020 and 2021. The goal of the Soaring Eagles Youth LTD ‘Healthy Young Minds’ program will be to implement a proactive preventative approach to Mental Health issues for young adults in today’s society. Soaring Eagles Youth LTD is a NEW Youth Service in Sydney’s North Western Suburbs, Riverstone. Sessions will be run off the field after training sessions. The program is designed for the young people to recognise their challenges and

build resilience in and skills to overcome them, supporting the finding in literature mentioned in this paper.

**I**n Conclusion, this paper has highlighted statistics in regard to mental health disorders in young people and possible barriers including stigma in seeking help. This paper has further noted mental health disorders can be escalated due to normal adolescent developmental stages, especially if experiencing adversity at the same time. Factual evidence has verified, the benefits of young people connecting themselves with social, physical and organised sporting activities, as a means of staying mentally well. And finally, this paper used tangible examples in recommending existing positive role models such as coaches to help recognise and implement specific programs and support in partnership with specialised

services in order to reach out to the most vulnerable.

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You are not alone,

BY MARRIN WEEJALI ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

Tony Hunter, the Chief Executive Officer of Marrin Weejali Aboriginal Corporation, discussed with us the considerable problems in Blackett (the City of Blacktown and part of the Greater Western Sydney region), that include ice and unemployment. Many people in this area can find it difficult to get employment, and substance misuse and mental health problems could be a leading factor.

Many years ago, Marrin Weejali provided community aid services out of the Holy Family Church in Emerton including counselling, AOD weekly meeting, advocacy and supporting people who are trying to deal with substances misuse. In 1996, the NSW Department of Housing gave a three-bedroom house in Emerton as a center for providing services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (OAT-SIH) later funded Marrin Weejali and allowed them to construct a purpose-built center in Blackett. Marrin Weejali is delivering many new programs, with new relationships forged with the Local Health District and community-based service providers. Marrin Weejali has various services for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people which include Social and Emotional Health and Wellbeing, Health Outreach HUB and Alcohol and other Drugs programs.

What is the best solution for these complicated issues?

Tony believes it takes a network of people to help individuals or families that are not doing very well. Tony also believes that a strong team made up of substance misuse counsellors, mental health specialists and support workers, would help guide a treatment plan with specialist involvement, based on the person's needs. This strategy would have much greater effect on the whole treatment process. Tony cited the Mater Hospital in New-castle as having a treatment model for Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) and mental health, that sorts out the differences between mental health and substance misuse. Tony believes that this particular model should be used in all communities, and if not, our communities are being let down.

Marrin Weejali works very close with Mount Druitt TAFE to do outreach education programs in their center and some of their own clients have completed courses there including a Certificate 4 and Diploma in 'social and emotional wellbeing - alcohol and other drugs'. It is highly likely that these people would then seek employment in the field of social and emotional wellbeing counselling and continue providing education to the community.

Overall, if anyone is suffering from alcohol and substance misuse, they should communicate with supports, including friends, family or support workers, to guide them to find the appropriate support/services they need. This helps prevent negative effects on their health including mental health.

"You are not alone, seeking help from your families and friends is the first step"

Contact:

Marrin Weejali is located at 79 – 81 Jersey Road, Blackett in New South Wales Australia 2770 and their contact number is (02) 9628 3031.

Their Opening Hours are Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, Tuesday: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm and the centre is closed on Public Holidays.

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## BARRIERS TO access

Early in the year, we meant to reach out to ABC Family and Child Centre (name changed), who are meant to provide support to a vulnerable community who live among us.

Our intention with providing an article was to empower, you, the reader, with knowledge and skills to advocate for or support this community, however this job was difficult, and not because of the problems faced by the people themselves. They were more than willing to work with us, but the organisation helping them moved to stand in our way.

We got a chance to organise a meeting the the centre on the fifth attempt. Gratefully, we went to visit ABC (which is the venue provider of that meeting) after our four unsuccessful attempts. The meeting was professional, engaging and uplifting, with many community members expressing interest in being advocated for by the soapbox magazine. This friendly dynamic changed when the facilitator of that meeting (from a famous global care non-government organisation - NGO), joined the meeting and asked us to stop the conversation and even told the community members not to reply to our queries. Although we were in touch with ABC's staff since the past few weeks and they were aware about our position and the activity we wanted to do, the group facilitator from the NGO was suddenly and inexplicably unhappy with our presence over there and then she asked us to leave the meeting. She advised us there was a formal process of arranging a meeting (which we had done) and sent us out the door. Since then, we have been trying to phone that NGO to book an appointment for next visit but in vain. This kind of behaviour from the reputed NGOs is really not acceptable, but, sadly, may be normal.

Critically reflecting on this incident, we feel that the NGOs, who should have worked as a bridge between two commu-

nities, are the one being barriers and increasing the gap between health outcomes and access to health services. Based on our experience, they are pushing vulnerable communities to isolation and restricting them from being indulged with other communities. They have even violated their human rights to freedom, right to speech. Inequalities are created by the differences of humankind and the inequality in power and capacity (George, 1883).

Regarding human rights and anti-oppressive approach, all people should feel free to share their feeling and experiences with others. "Human rights recognise the inherent value of each person, regardless of background, where we live, what we look like, what we think or what we believe. They are based on principles of dignity, equality, and mutual respect, which are shared across cultures, religions, and philosophies. They are about being treated fairly, treating others fairly and having the ability to make genuine choices in our daily lives" (Australian Human Rights Commission, 1986). Anti-oppressive theory builds on social constructivist models of different races, ethnicities, genders, and others, which are created within the context of unequal social power relationships. The ability to critically assess the experiences of oppression of service users requires them to examine how personal, cultural, and structural issues and processes contribute to the difficulties that service users bring up with service agencies (Cree, 2003).

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**Research article**

**ANTI-OPPRESSIVE THEORY IN PRACTICE**

CAMELIA NOROOZI

Human rights include the right to life and property, the right of expression, the right to security from discrimination and the right to protection from physical and mental harm. Anti-oppressive theory challenges inequality in society by relying on human rights, and it is an essential driver of anti-oppressive practice. The awareness of human rights and adoption of human rights perspectives can help people to frame circumstances concerning oppression into those of violations of rights, thereby making governments and citizens accountable for addressing and resolving such violations.

Anti-oppressive theory and practice recognises oppression in communities, societies, and culture, and is meant to undo the sway of such abuse. The anti-oppressive method tries to offer more suitable, responsive, and alert services by reacting to the needs of individuals without considering their social status.

People, particularly mental health workers, should gain knowledge and understanding of their selves, different groups and cultures, social systems, and fundamental human rights to effectively face issues on personal and structural levels and pursue anti-oppressive practices.

An understanding of human rights and various cultural issues can also help people significantly in understanding themselves, and to realise the impact as well as the reasons for continuance of oppression in modern-day society, and in addressing such issues.

Social workers in particular must be considerate about the human needs of persons who are poor, vulnerable, and oppressed; they can improve their practice effectiveness significantly by understanding and becoming sensitive to cultural diversity and uniqueness. We know that large organisations have more power over small agencies, and have more access to support from the government.

Soapbox introduces several agencies and organisations that provide mental health services to people. When readers are more familiar with the services in their community or around Sydney, they have more options to select for getting help. On the one hand, Soapbox, by helping creating competition, gives power to people to have more choice to find the best services. On the other hand, Soapbox encourages agencies to upgrade their services and facilities to be more in line with needs of clients.

Soapbox wants to empower its readers through behaviour activation and hopes(- Soapbox, 2020, p. 36). We can find a relationship between anti-oppressive theory and Soapbox approaches. Soapbox is introducing lots of organisations and agencies which are providing different services for people who are suffering from mental health issues as well as giving some useful suggestions to improve people's mental health.



.....  
**“an understanding of cultural issues can help address such issues”**



# Kicked onto the streets

BY SHRADDHA ADHIKARI

Homelessness is defined as the state in which any individual tends to live in an inappropriate conditions without a permanent living place or being overcrowded or in any form leading to insecure accommodation (Chamberlain et al; 2015).

A study done among LGBTQI+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex) people shows that this group of people is twice more likely to experience the situation of homelessness than heterosexual people. LGBTQI + people comprise of an estimated 30-40% of homeless populations.

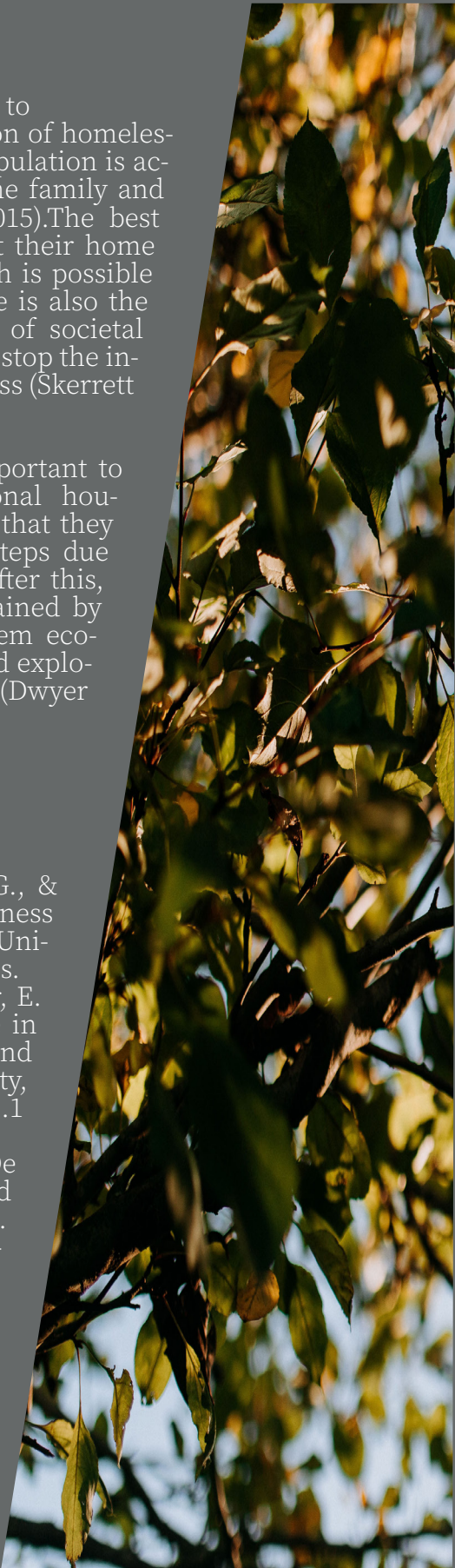
The main reason for this difference is due to rejection and fear from their primary supporter, their family. When forced out, these young people end up couch surfing, rough sleeping or in boarding houses (Dwyer et al., 2015).

The continual experience of rejection, bullying, discrimination and prejudice results in mental health problems varying from depression, anxiety, substance abuse to suicidal attempts as well. Sometimes being homeless is a choice to minimise discomfort, sometimes they are simply kicked out(Skerrett et al., 2016).

The key preventive strategies to reduce the increasing proportion of homelessness amongst the LGBTIQ+ population is acceptance of their identity by the family and friends (Chamberlain et al; 2015).The best place for them is to be back at their home with an accepting family, which is possible through family advocacy. There is also the need to change the dynamics of societal values, norms and structures to stop the increasing flow of the homelessness (Skerrett et al., 2016).

At the initial phase, it is important to provide independent transitional housing for the LGBTIQ+ youth so that they would not take any harmful steps due to lack of housing services. After this, social security must be maintained by building networks to make them economically stable by creating and exploring job opportunities for them (Dwyer et al., 2015).

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# Ownership as part of change

Ngallu Wal Aboriginal Child & Family Centre

Daniella is a Family and Community engagement officer at Ngallu Wal Aboriginal Child and Family Centre which is an Organized Service Centre for the Child and Family that provides children up to age 6 with childcare services and support services to children up to age 8, as well as support to their families.

### What are the main services provided by Ngalu Wal for the community and your role in organization?

Daniella: Probably, there are lot of support services available in Ngallu Wal. I work as crisis support provider and its important for people to feel safe in service centre. My background is domestic violence (DV). DV and Mental Health go hand in hand and I feel our colleagues should be trained about basic mental health training. Moreover, treating other people like human beings is the basic thing.

### Are children affected in DV situations?

Daniella: Yes, DV directly affects children’s mental health. Like not being able to sleep, not eating, over eating, not going to school and some certain behaviors of anxiety because of having DV cases in their families. We are also working in partnership with case workers in programs with children exposed to DV. Its really important to be aware about DV and mental health.

### Are males ever in need of support in DV situations?

Daniella: yes, we do have specific program for perpetrators of DV such as Wolkara Men’s group. It’s about the ownership that they could be the part of change. The first meeting for Wolkara men’s group was held on 3rd February at NgalluWal but the venue is scheduled to be changed each month and it’s a monthly program to be held on first Monday of the month. For booking a place in the meeting, one can contact Keeden at 0410125183.

### How does the government support your work?

Daniella: Working in this sector, I find biggest issue among Aboriginal community is trust of government structures. We are bringing police in to talk about the various programs in our sessions to build trust and we are also engaging psychologists in our programs.

There are also trust issues between communities because of the stolen generation history; Lots of the time, there is little child protection within the system as it exists. Thats where our work fits in.

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# SHARE

Share your  
story

[\(Click here\)](#)

## *a narrative life*

August 8, 2017 | YearIII Fam

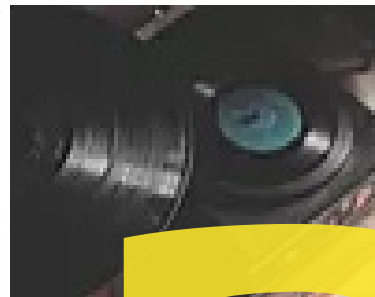


This journey to date has been as thought written by a terrible author (not me), there are too many fortunate coincidences and last minute saves. Lucky I'm documenting all this as it happens otherwise one might think I made it up. Long story short, life has magic if you...

[Read More](#)

## *Some things find you*

May 12, 2017 | YearIII Fam



Set you heart right,  
Some things find you,  
Point yourself up, align,  
And the creative guides you.  
Whose ties are to this land?  
Where circles meet with circles,  
that we trace meandering,  
In one way seeming lost,  
In all other ways, found?  
We're not here for long,  
Welcome to the horizon.

[Read More](#)

Set your heart right,

Some things find you,

Point yourself up, align,

And the creative guides you.

Whose ties are to this land?

Where circles meet with  
circles,

that we trace meandering,

in one way seeming lost,

in all other ways, found?

We're not here for long.

Welcome the sense of sky  
past clouds,

Sometimes found on a  
mountaintop,

Often granted in glimpses,

to those with eyes above  
the horizon.



# DIGITAL NUTRITION CREATING A HEALTHFUL RELATIONSHIP WITH TECHNOLOGY

WITH JOCELYN BREWER

## Can you tell us something about the concept of Digital Nutrition?

Digital Nutrition is a framework for considering our relationship with technology that uses the analogy with food to think about how the information we consume online can impact our overall wellbeing. Digital Nutrition is not about unplugging from technology or attempting to 'detox' from it – its about taking control of our technology habits so that we remain masters, not slaves to devices.

## What are the key challenges in the field of mental health in Sydney, Australia; why?

Stress, anxiety and depression are the main themes I work with – they might manifest in a variety of ways, and impact people in a range of ways but these are the general themes.

## The Three M's of



**Want to have a healthier, more considered relationship with technology?  
Keep these 3 principles in mind and apply them to your online activities.**

### // MINDFUL

Be present to your actions, have awareness of, and responsibility over your activities online. Try **pausing & thinking more broadly** about how what you do, say, click on & scroll through impacts your overall wellbeing.

### // MEANINGFUL

Have a **sense of purpose and clarity** in regard to what you're reading, commenting on or participating in. When you're 'screen facing' are you aligned to your goals and values?

### // MODERATE

Consider both using technology in moderated **amounts of time**, but also your ability to moderate or temper **what you say and how you react to things** that show up in your online world.





# Beyond ScreenTime



**Time online is just one (outdated, simplistic) way to consider the impacts of digital devices. Here are some other ways to think about the issues relating to technology use/overuse.**

## CONTENT

**What** information is being consumed or activities engaged in?  
Are they developmentally appropriate?

## CONTEXT

What is **the situation** the tech use is occurring in?  
Is it the classroom, bedroom, alone or with others?

## COGNITIONS

What **thoughts, motivations & intentions** are present?  
Are they adaptive, maladaptive, helpful or negative?

## FUNCTION

What is **the reason** for the tech use  
Is it to avoid social interaction, to study etc?



www.digitalnutrition.com.au

**Are the existing mental health services sufficient; like the limited 10 session of psychological therapy provided by the Australian government? What is your opinion?**

This is a very subjective question. For many Australians they will only have limited contact with mental health systems and services. I believe that a more tailored approach to assessing and addressing service provision for individuals would be a more effective model. I'd like to see funding provided for couples/relationship counselling and family therapy and parenting services to encourage these groups to access evidence-based interventions.

**What could be the initiative as an individual to eradicate mental health issues in our society?**

I am not sure we either are aiming to or need to 'eradicate' mental illness. We are not aiming to never be upset or sad, but to build our resilience and coping skills and the ability to support ourselves, or seek support in the variety of challenges that life can present us with.

**How do the services provided by your organization help?**

I offer a range of services in the 2 business streams that I run. I do presentations and consultations on digital wellbeing, screen-based media use and digital citizenship.

I'm a psychologist who works with adolescents, adults and families. I provide a range of interventions and strategies that are tailored to people's needs – this also includes skills in managing digital device use, overcoming digital dependency (for example to video games or using social media) and productivity, overcoming distractions etc.

**What is the most rewarding part of your job? Do you have any particular experiences you would like to share?**

I run my own show, I've designed a career and weekly routine that suits me and my family. I've never been the kind of person to just do one single job or work 9-5 (I was a high school teacher and school counsellor previously, I've also worked in social media strategy, independent theatre and film). I like the variety of what I do and how now two weeks or clients are the same, I am constantly learning.

**What can people do in their lives to improve on the specific issues you have mentioned above such as stress, anxiety, and other mental illness?**

There are many strategies that folks can employ to address challenges to their mental fitness - these really depend on what is coming up for them and how an issue is manifesting in their life. Generally, getting decent quality and quantity of sleep, moving your body regularly and maintaining hydration and a mostly balanced diet are foundations. We then might work on cognitive strategies to overcome the most common thinking traps.



Support each other simply through the power of shared-experience

# Better access

Easy access to mental health care is an essential driving force to motivate people to use mental health services. Often, it is seen that people in need of mental health services cannot easily receive the services due to inappropriate or untimely communication between the General Practitioner (GP), psychologist, and psychiatrist. In this period, mental health symptoms can worsen leading to severe consequences like relapse (Balaratnasingam, 2011).

There is a need to reduce the risks that are associated with inaccuracies, errors, delays, omissions or failure in effective communication and documentation which makes the situation worse for a person in need. As the GP is usually the first contact line with any individual they are more responsible to ensure the accuracy and validation of the referral documents within the appropriate timeframe. But, most of the time the need and the documents did not seem to be integrated due to inadequate knowledge about mental health issues among the GPs which needs to be advanced (Murray, 2019).

Medicare covers 10 face to face sessions with a psychologist or accredited social worker or occupational therapist for per calendar year for those eligible for a mental health plan. Often, 10 sessions are not enough for people who are seeking treatment for their mental health conditions especially for vulnerable groups like children, young adults, elderly people, people who have become the victim of domestic or physical violence. Besides, the unmet need might result in the increase the probability of the relapse cases as well (Williamson et al., 2018).

There is also the need to think about non-Australian populations including the international students who live within Australia and are the part of Australian community but are not eligible for Medicare. The out of pocket expenditure that they need to bear is quite expensive which makes mental health services inaccessible and often unaffordable for them.

There is strong support for running of peer-led groups that do not involve a clinician, where potential clients of a mental health service meet to support each other simply through the power of shared experience.

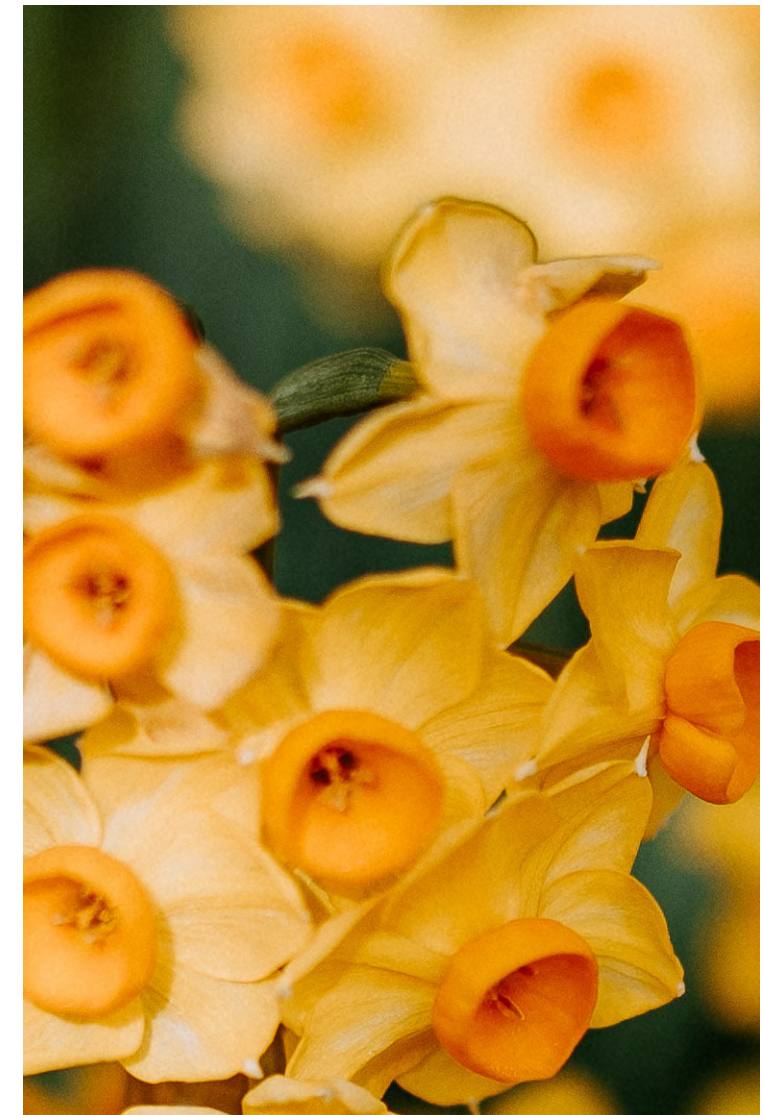
Wellbe Counselling & Psychology is doing some preliminary research on how such a free group might be put together. If you are interested in participating please email shen@wellbe.net.au

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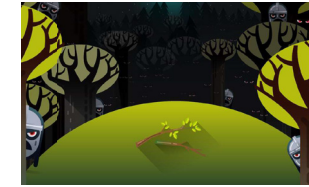
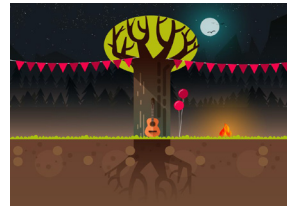




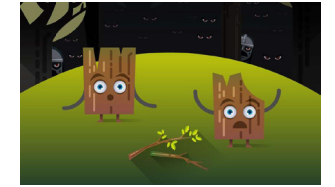
# THE TRAGEDIES 3, PART 1 BY ITWILLBEOK.COM.AU



We used to be free.  
We used to run and dance and sing.



"Its just a branch", someone said.  
"A small branch".  
So we left it.



We used to grow so many trees. Big trees, strong trees, tall trees.  
So many trees.

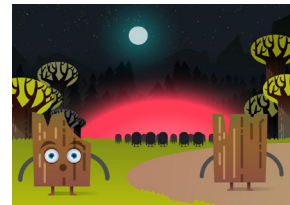


But then one night

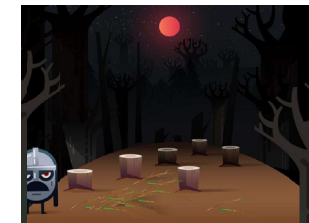
But then another branch was broken.



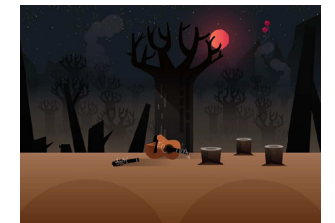
And then another  
And another  
And another.



The grey ones came, the Sons of the Red Moon.



We used to be free.  
We used to run and dance and sing.



They were quiet at first,  
And watched from afar.  
But as time marched by they grew in number.

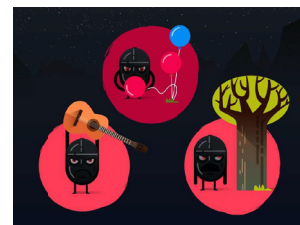


They examined us carefully,  
Our colours  
Our songs  
And our trees.

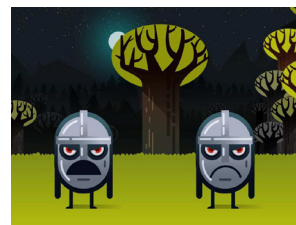


"Evil prevails when good people do nothing."

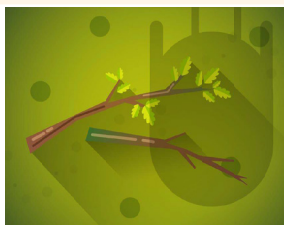
Edmund Burke



They really didn't like our trees.



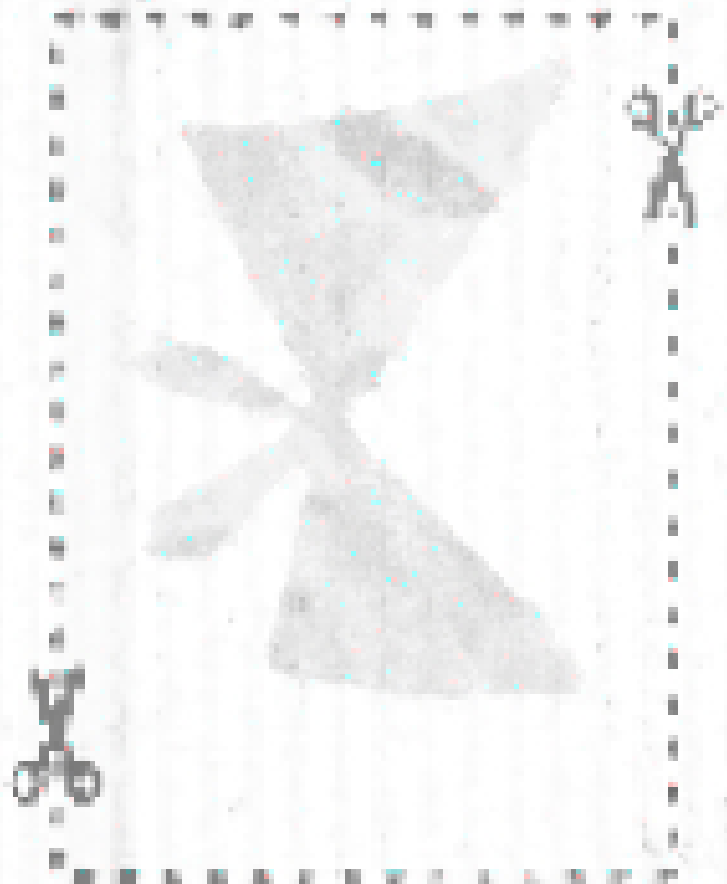
Then one day one of them broke a branch.



And they watched to see what we would do.



# Be a dYsrup tor



<https://soapbox.sydney>

## build the mic

## ~Pay it forward~

By Soapbox Sydney

Travelling books are romantic – “What is your story?” “Where have you been?” “Oh! The places you’ll go!” Consider their power, these little flattened pulps of trees, containing squiggles in ink that somehow transport us, teach us, challenge us and change us.

We all seem to want for a world where our words and our humanity are shared; by sharing our creative power ~ *our words and deeds* ~ we can improve our world.

Please accept the gift of this travelling book. Once it's read, consider what the experience was worth, whether \$1 or \$100, and donate it to something that creates this improved world. It might be a charity, it might be a meal to the guy downstairs on the street, whatever it is, keep this book rolling, pay it forward.

***Yours will be an act of creativity, just the kind we need.***

#soapbox

[illegible]

Card full? Print more at:

<http://Soapbox.sydney/pavittforeword>

## ~Pay it foreword~

By Soapbox Sydney

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This act of yours will be an act of creativity; just the kind we need.

#soapbox

[illegible]

Card full? Print more at:

<http://Soapbox.sydney/pavittforeword>





## Current projects:



**Wellbe Counselling & Psychology:** A bulk-billing mental health service that provides care to over 1500 clients per month across 9 locations in Sydney, at no cost to the client.



### Pay it foreword:

Turning second-hand books into units of social currency.



### Soapbox Quarterly:

A free magazine that serves as an open invitation for readers to take back agency over their mental health.

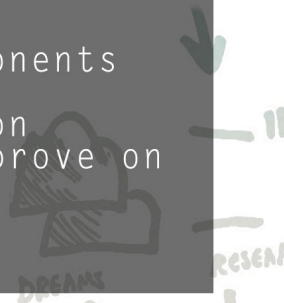
## Your invitation to Soapbox Quarterly:

Through the magazine you are provided, free of charge, a chance to extend your impact as an organisation.

This publication is designed to empower its readers through behaviour activation and hope. Its the news but systems-based, grass-roots and solution-focussed

An **article submission** will therefore have three components

- a. description of a current issue in Sydney
- b. How your organisation is contributing to a solution
- c. What can the reader do in their daily lives to improve on this issue.



## Planned projects:



**Soapbox Sydney Event:** A live edition of the above format, with additional content such as competitive project pitches, food stalls, guest speakers, community canvas, live music and giveaways

I, \_\_\_\_\_, will  
improve my city.