



Newsletter - July 2013

In this issue:

This issue of the Hope for Life newsletter focuses on an important issue for all of us. That is, knowing that there are times in our lives when we need to reach out and seek help.

In a society such as ours, where striving for success is a feature of daily life for people of all ages, whether it's striving to excel at school or in sports, striving to win that job or that promotion, striving to be the best husband, wife, mother, father, son or daughter or simply striving for attention in the very busy world that we live in, all of us, at some time in our lives have experienced the stress of constantly striving to do more or be better.

It is not a bad thing to strive to achieve specific goals in our lives, but there are times, when we might need to take stock and reduce the sometimes self-induced pressure and reach out to others to help us through when things seem tough either physically, materially, or psychologically.

Reaching out is can be a difficult thing to do and particularly for men. Often people struggle on, out of a false sense of pride or a concern that they may be judged in some negative way. We might feel that others are not interested in our problems and things will get better on their own.

The famous words of the great 17th century poet, John Donne ring true, 'no man is an island'. It is important to recognise that ALL of us need help at some time in our lives and acknowledging this is the first step to building and maintaining positive mental health and well-being. People want to help and there are many resources available, some of these are discussed below.

Help seeking

Help seeking is a positive step. Where do we go?

Family and Friends: For some people, family and friends are available to provide a listening ear and often that is all we need. Someone to talk things over with, to know that another cares and is prepared to share the burden and help through the difficult times.

Medical Professionals: The local GP is often a good source of help, particularly when we are experiencing physical or psychological symptoms during times of stress. Not only can they assist from a medical perspective, they will also be able to recommend other activities or resources that can assist.

Peer Support Groups: Support groups are available in most local communities and they usually consist of people who have experienced a particular issue getting together with others who are going through the same thing. The peer group approach is particularly helpful, as they provide to opportunity to discuss sensitive and personal issues with people who understand and have deep empathy as they too have lived experience of that particular distress. They include suicide support groups, mental health support groups, grief support groups, post natal depression support groups, gamblers support groups, alcohol and other addiction support groups and the list goes on.

Internet: There are numerous on-line resources that are easily accessible from anywhere in Australia. If you have no access to computer equipment, you may find that your local library or community centre will be able to provide you with access to a computer.

Helplines: There are a number of crisis support lines that are accessible for the cost of a local call to anyone in Australia. These helplines are staffed by trained, caring people, who are available to provide immediate support, by listening, talking through issues and/or arranging for emergency assistance. Some of these services target specific groups of people and have the skills and knowledge to respond appropriately to these specific groups for example, children, men, people experiencing perinatal depression etc.

We have provided a [list of Help Lines and major websites at the end of this newsletter](#); whilst this is not an exhaustive list, these resources will lead you to the full list of help that is available throughout Australia. By contacting one of these organisations directly, they will ensure that you get the help you need.

The Cup Analogy – Iris Bolton

The Cup Analogy helps us to better understand the impact of some of the stresses of life. This simple illustration was written by Iris Bolton whose son died by suicide. Iris experienced the pain, grief and disbelief that many people experience when they lose a loved one by suicide, in trying to understand why the person ended their life.

The key message in the Cup Analogy is that the events in life may cause pain, hurt, shame, humiliation, anxiety, remorse and we need to find a way of releasing the tension that can built up as a result of life's events. Pain, loss and grief are all part of the human experience and we need to find a way to release these emotions so that we can truly enjoy the positive things that life can bring, love joy, fun, happiness and fulfillment.

Help seeking is one way in which we can do this.

We cannot control what happens to us, but by acknowledging that we are not alone and that there are others who care will help us to get through the darkest times in our lives.

Knowing that others have also had these experiences can somehow make the burden seem lighter, it is also testament to the fact that you will get through.

All you have to do is reach out!

The Cup Analogy

"There is a cup of water sitting on a table. It is so full; it is rounded at the top.

One of two drops of water are added to the cup and it spills over.

What caused the water to spill?

We want to blame the last one or two drops, but in an empty cup it would not spill.

It was not the water in the cup prior to the drops being added, because if left alone, it would not have spilled. It was a combination of all the drops of water in the cup that came before and the last one or two drops that caused the water to spill.

In a person's life, the water in the cup is symbolic of all the hurt, pain, shame, humiliation, and loss not dealt with along the way. The last couple of drops symbolize the "trigger events", "the last straw", and the event or situation that preceded the final act of taking one's own life.

*Often we want to blame the trigger event, but this does not make sense to us. Like the water, these events all by themselves would not cause someone to end their life. It is the combination of everything in that person's life **not dealt with** and the last one or two things that caused our loved ones to lose hope.*

*For us, we must find a way to pour out the water along the way. This may be through **talking it out, writing it out, sometimes yelling it out**, whatever works for you. We must learn to deal with our pain in a way our loved ones could not.*

Hope for Life Tailored Workshops

A key goal for Hope for Life is to build the capacity of people throughout Australia to be able to reach out and help their neighbour, friends or family members.

We do this by providing free workshops that focus on raising awareness about suicide prevention and workshops aimed at training potential caregivers and ordinary citizens on how to be a support for people who have been bereaved. Hope for Life training courses are offered throughout Australia, we will come into your community and assist you to develop the skills and resources you need to support people who may be at risk of suicide. Our courses can also be accessed via our web site. By being informed you may help to save a life.

For more information please contact Hope for Life National Coordinator:

Stephanie Wilks.

Phone 02 9356 2120

Mobile 0435 967 265

Email Stephanie.wilks@aue.salvationarmy.org

Or to do the Living Hope course on line, visit the Hope for Life web sites www.suicideprevention.salvos.org.au



Resources for people seeking help in times of emotional or psychological distress:

Helplines

Salvo CareLine:	1300 36 36 22 (Crisis help line, open to all)
Lifeline:	13 11 14 (Crisis help line, open to all)
Mensline:	1300 789 978 (Crisis help line, focusing on support to men)
Kids Helpline:	1800 551 800 (Crisis help line, focusing on support to children)
Beyondblue:	1300 22 4636 (Information on mental health and well being)
Suicide Call back service:	1300 659 467 (Telephone counselling service)
PANDA:	1300 726 306 (National perinatal depression help line)

Helpful websites

<http://au.reachout.com> - National online youth mental health service

<http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au> - Nationwide professional telephone and online counselling.

<http://www.beyondblue.org.au> - Information on depression and other mental health issues

<http://www.headspace.org.au> - National Youth Mental Health Foundation

<http://www.lifeline.org.au> - Crisis support and suicide prevention

<http://suicideprevention.salvos.org.au> - Suicide prevention and bereavement support

<http://www.wesleymission.org.au/centres/lifeforce/> - Suicide prevention programs

<http://www.supportaftersuicide.org.au> - Bereavement support

<http://www.sane.org> - Support for people experiencing mental illness

<http://www.arafemi.org.au> - Support for carers of people experiencing mental illness

Support following the death of a friend or loved one

The Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement - <http://www.grief.org.au>

The Compassionate Friends Victoria - <http://www.compassionatefriendsvictoria.org.au>

The Compassionate Friends NSW - <http://www.thecompassionatefriends.org.au>

The Compassionate Friends QLD - <http://www.compassionatefriendsqld.org.au>

The Compassionate Friends WA - <http://www.compassionatefriendswa.org.au>

The Compassionate Friends SA - <http://www.compassionatefriendssa.org.au>

Grieflink - <http://grieflink.org.au>

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