

HONEYBEE



LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

BOUNDARIES & Rituals



Brand
New
Lifestyle
Website
NOW LIVE!



“DEARLY BELOVED...
WE ARE
GATHERED
HERE TODAY
TO GET THROUGH
THIS THING
CALLED LIFE.”

~ Prince (1958-2016)



Be your
own kind
of beautiful
♡



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EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to Honeybee



Editor-in-Chief
Melissa Dumitru

Boundaries and Rituals

Boundaries, I am fairly certain that all of us will agree that at one or more times throughout our lives we have either had our boundaries crossed or been the ones to cross them with another person or situation.

If you grew up the way I did in my house, you weren't really allowed to have any boundaries. My parents insisted on knowing everything and having an opinion about it. I was also taught from a young age to "people please" and put others before myself in all scenarios.

A consequence of this behaviour from a young age can mean that you have no real concept about boundaries as you grow up. You don't understand the need for them or why everyone doesn't think and act the same way as you do. This can lead to oversharing, feelings of inadequacy, anxiety, and a general feeling of loss of control over certain aspects in your life, relationships and work.

It has taken me many, many years to come to terms with what a true boundary is. That it doesn't mean someone doesn't love or care for you, it's not personal, it's a necessity that exists so we can protect ourselves from certain circumstances, situations, and people.

Boundaries are an integral part of our lives and need to be learned and practiced like any other skill. We have provided you with some great information within the Destination Wellness pages that may help you get a clearer understanding of how to do this.

Rituals are something mankind has been practising since the dawn of time! The definition according to google is: *"a religious or solemn ceremony consisting of a series of actions performed according to a prescribed order."*

Over the years creating rituals has extended into so many varied and interesting ideas and topics. As people who live with chronic conditions, mental health challenges and disabilities, creating rituals that we can achieve and enjoy is the key to our daily lives.

So why do we create rituals? They usually make us feel good about ourselves and add a special something to our day.

I know I have my daily ritual where I look forward to preparing and drinking my espresso in a favourite cup and eating a homemade cookie each day. It's so simple yet it brings me joy every single time I do it. It's a few moments to reflect, recharge and renew before returning to my workday.

We've included some ideas and tips about rituals in the **Destination Wellness section** so take a look and think about what you already do, or what you could introduce into your life. Anything to up the joy factor I say!

Rare Disease Day Short Film - ConnectGroups WA

Early this year I was asked to participate in the Rare Disease campaign as someone living with a rare condition and who sits on the committee.

It was a lot of fun getting dressed up, being photographed by a professional photographer, and then videoed talking about my story. Together with a group of amazing individuals they created a short film that is both informative, moving, and beautifully edited and produced.

I urge you to take a look at it on YouTube or our website: Blogs, Courses & Video's | Chronically Inspired



Love & blessings always



Meet the CONTRIBUTORS

It takes a lot of hard work to compile a lifestyle magazine and guide our readers to a more mindful and intentional life while living with all our extra challenges. The powerful stories and engaging content from our dedicated lived experience experts are so greatly appreciated.

TRC

Jacqueline De Grussa

Sociologist specialising in the area of Trauma, Addiction & Recovery, Founder Women's & Men's Recovery Community, Founder and Managing Director, Recovery Collective Ltd, Facebook.com/womensrecoverycommunity

Jacqueline consults for an indigenous organisation, developing various new culturally specific recovery-based projects. Her Women's Recovery Community and Men's Recovery Community offer 24/7 support in WA, interstate and overseas. Jacqui is the Managing Director of The Recovery Collective Inc. She is a mother to three children, and is a documentary buff. Jacqui is passionate about all things that empowers our most vulnerable on their recovery journeys.

Angela Famiano

Masters Social Science (Counselling & Psychotherapy) Grad Cert Disability Studies Bachelor of Arts, Psychology Family & Children Services Diploma Community Services/Child Services 0-15 yrs

Angela is an accomplished Counsellor specialising in alcohol & other drugs. She has a special interest in men's advocacy and believes that counselling is not so much about fixing things, but acknowledging them and working with your strengths. Her vision is to be part of people's journey to self-improvement and helping them find a place that makes them truly happy.

Helen Blanchard (Lifestyle Editor)

Lived Experience Expert - Registered Nurse Specialist (retired) Diploma of Arts Psychotherapy - Health Educator (Published)

Helen has a wealth of experience, knowledge and practical skills gained over more than 35 years working in a variety of senior roles within the health, community service and not-for-profit settings. She has a lived experience of chronic illness, and is passionate about creating and sharing health-related education information and resources. Helen is committed to advocating for a person-centred approach to health care and has a particular interest in the expressive therapies and art as a therapy for people living with chronic illness.

Dianne Murphy

Carer Representative (Palliative Care) Carer & Disability Advocate NDIS Carers Event Coordinator Business & Administration Manager

Dianne has worked in the Business & Administration field for over 40 years. She is also a Carer & Disability Advocate who supports her adult children (all with disabilities). Di is the Founder of Creative Carers whose focus is around art, craft, and nurturing mental health. Inclusion is very important to Di. She coordinates a social group called "Staying Connected" for those who care for others, and she is an organiser and coordinator for Retreats & Events to celebrate Carers in the community.



Jackie Rowe



Qualified Mindset Coach - Training Facilitator Advanced Psych K Practitioner - Motivational Speaker Certified Women's Circle Facilitator focus_coaching@outlook.com www.focuscoaching.com.au

Jackie is a University qualified Life Coach, Strengths Based Practitioner, Psych K Facilitator, and Women's Circle Facilitator. With a background in Early Childhood Years, Families and Community, Jackie now works predominantly with women to empower and inspire. Her vision is for all women to realise their amazing true potential, to speak their truth without fear and live a life they love.

Fay Bahemia (Copyeditor)

Winner "40 Under 40" & multiple Community Awards Cert IV Professional Writing & Editing Cert IV Community Services BSc (Microbiology & Pharmacology) Grad Dip Food Science & Technology Clinical Trials Coordinator in Radiation Oncology

Fay has worked and volunteered with peer-support groups and NFPs, helping them to reach their goals and visions through freelancing. She has held key industry positions in quality assurance, regulatory affairs, biomedical research and manufacturing, training, and communications in various sectors. Fay has a lived experience which changed her life trajectory in 2015. She is an avid dancer, lover of visual art and a fan of beautiful cars. She has a quirky nature that draws people to her. Fay is meticulous in all she does, and I am thrilled to have her on our team as our Technical Editor and Copyeditor.

Hayley Solich

Connecting Communities to make positive change Consultant Advisor Mental Health Sector linkedin.com/in/hayleysolich Website hayleysolich.com.au Blog goldenpen.com.au Blog The Gold Digger



A multi-award-winning community engagement and Lived Experience professional who is nationally active in advocating for change in the mental health system. Hayley builds capacity and awareness to create social change by listening to the perspectives of others, validating and uplifting them. She uses her creativity, communication, leadership, facilitation and engagement skills to influence change at the highest levels.

Marie Williams



Founder, The Platform WA Intellectual Disability Advocate and Change-Maker Mental Health Educator for WA Recovery College Alliance Certificate III in Education Support E: theplatformwa@gmail.com

Marie founded The Platform WA, a new community group focussing on intellectual disability for young adults like her daughter, Laura. Marie has been trained in Leadership and Mental Health education to become a WA Recovery College Alliance educator, where she co-designs courses aimed at people living with intellectual disability. She is a change-maker working at the coal face to improve perception and awareness. She has several years' experience working in non-profit charity sector, and the early childhood field as a teaching assistant.

Jaymee-Lee Farrelly

Bachelor of Primary and Secondary Education (Honours)
Former Disability Support Worker (2.5 years)
Facebook Blog: My Chronically Breathhtaking Sister

Jaymee-Lee is the creator of a Facebook blog called 'My Chronically Breathhtaking Sister' – a blog dedicated to her late sister, Rachael, who lived with a chronic lung condition. Her blog aims to bring awareness to often unspoken topics, to educate others on chronic illnesses and organ transplants/donation, to help manage her grief and to carry on her sister's legacy.



Kez Wickham St George



www.kezwickhamstgeorge.com
[linkedin.com/in/kez-w-stgeorge](https://www.linkedin.com/in/kez-w-stgeorge)

Kez Wickham St George is an award-winning author who champions people from diverse backgrounds to reveal the best of their creative side. As a leader in her profession, a public speaker, an accomplished author in magazines, Kez leverages her extensive travels, experience, and expansive authorship to encourage readers to think outside the box. It is not surprising that Kez is known globally as 'The Writers Consultant'. Kez has written work for two royal families, one in the UK, the other in Sweden. She has co-compiled an anthology on the lives of various women internationally. Recently Kez published a trilogy of poetry books and her dream of the big screen was realized when a movie was made from the prologue of her last novel Scribe in the trilogy Campfires. Kez is passionate about promoting high-quality growth opportunities for all.



Laura Williams



Founder The Platform WA Community Support Group
Certificate II Customer Engagement
Socials @theplatformwa
Lover of music, dance and TV medical dramas

I try to be a role model to my little sister and others in the intellectually disabled community. I was born with Down syndrome but that doesn't stop me from being who I am. I work in the city at a 5-star Hotel called Pan Pacific Perth. They support me through their open employment program. Please help us to grow the platform WA page and my support group page for young adults living with intellectual disability. Enjoy my recipes from Laura's Kitchen.



Mystery Writer

The Girl in the Silk Green Dress - Fiction

The writer behind the "Girl in the Silk Green Dress" is someone with many years' writing experience. This mystery writer studied Journalism and has a very good understanding of social justice and community. I approached this mystery writer to offer a fictional character storyline that we can all enjoy and look forward to. I hope you enjoy their work as much as we are enjoying sharing it with you.

Jenny Gleeson - Sharpe

Educator & Facilitator
Disruptor and Annoyer (In a caring way)
Expert Personality Dimensions Profiler
A person known to help people get their shizzle together!
Website: www.jennygleeson.com.au



Jenny started as a Secondary English Teacher but then became extremely disillusioned with the Education System (it didn't take long - less than a year), which led her into completing a Graduate Certificate of Career Development, leading her to work with youth at risk, people with disability, First Nations people and winning National and State Awards. Jenny was diagnosed with depression and anxiety (way before the terms were even heard of by mainstream Perthites) at the age of 11 and institutionalised at the age of 13. Although anxiety is still in her life, she keeps it in the periphery of her vision, accepting and acknowledging it is there but it doesn't control her anymore. Her drive in life is to assist people be the best they can be...warts and all!

Melissa Dumitru



Creative Director & Editor-in-Chief Honeybee Lifestyle Magazine and Website. Community Services Consultant. Mental Health Educator WA Recovery College Alliance. Support Group Facilitator for The Tastebuds Club. Lived Experience Patient Expert for Merakoi (PAH). LinkedIn - Instagram - Facebook: @chronicallyinspiredau Website: www.chronicallyinspired.com.au Passionate Changemaker & Influencer

Melissa has worked in the Community Services Self Help & Support Group sector for over 20 years. She is a multi award winning Patient Expert and Lived Experience Professional. She is a passionate changemaker and influencer representing inclusion, integrity, innovation and promotion within the fields of chronic illness, disability, and mental health conditions. Melissa loves interior design and decorating. She is an avid baker and home cook.

Letisha Living

Author of Finding Yourself After Stroke
Stroke Recovery and Empowerment Coach
Consumer Advisory Committee Gold Coast Health & Hospital Service
Diploma of Mental Health
Certified Integrative Nutrition Health Coach
Socials: @LetishaLiving @FindingYourselfAfterStroke
Email: letisha@findingyourselfafterstroke

Letisha is a survivor of stroke who is passionate about raising awareness for stroke and the challenges that arise adjusting to life after stroke. She uses her lived experiences to assist in improving outcomes for others by partnering with researchers, universities, stroke organisations, health and hospital services. Letisha loves being in nature, cooking and spending time with her children.



Your boundary need not be an angry electric fence that shocks those who touch it..
It can be a consistent light around you that announces: "I will be treated sacredly!"



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Daring to set
boundaries is
about
having the
courage
to love ourselves,
even when we risk
disappointing
others”

Brene Brown



Let's talk about Boundaries



Express YOURSELF to Better Health

Contributor Helen Blanchard - Lifestyle Editor



How are you going? Is your life flashing before your eyes as the demands of family, work, and your social life suck the joy out of your very soul? Do you feel increasingly frustrated, anxious, resentful, and overwhelmed in this fast-paced world? Are you also living with chronic illness, mental health issues, or disability?

Boundaries are a popular topic of discussion at the moment as more and more people re-evaluate their lives, work, relationships, goals, general happiness, and well-being. What are boundaries? For me, boundaries are an invisible force-field that I create and set in place that help to protect, support and assist me in my life, and my interaction with other people, activities, and things in my world.

The American Psychological Association (APA) Dictionary of Psychology defines boundaries as "A psychological demarcation that protects the integrity of an individual or group or that helps the person or group set realistic limits on participation in a relationship or activity."

Boundaries are an integral part of a happy, healthy life, and people who live with chronic illness, mental health issues, or disability, in particular, need them because they have to cope with far more challenges than others. Boundary setting is not an easy thing to do, it takes time and practice to feel confident in creating, communicating, and keeping them in place. If you feel like you might benefit from a review of your boundaries, listing them as I have done below is a good way to clearly see the pros and cons.

Here are a few examples of healthy and unhealthy boundaries that you might be able to relate to:

- **Healthy** – Make self-care, and time for myself a priority.
- **Unhealthy** – Give all my time to others, ignore my own needs, and end up exhausted.
- **Healthy** – Take responsibility for identifying and managing my problems.
- **Unhealthy** – Constantly take on other people's problems and try to fix things.
- **Healthy** – Understand who I am, what I want, and where I'm going in life.
- **Unhealthy** - Change me to fit in with other people.

I want to share one of the boundaries that I have struggled with over the years. Saying "no" to a family member, friend, or work colleague is never easy for me, and in the past, I have often done things that did not suit me or were not exactly healthy or in my best interest.

Unfortunately, like many people, I grew up in a home where my boundaries were not always respected, and as a result, I developed the habit of people-pleasing and never saying "no". It took me a long time to realize that a great deal of the frustration, resentment, and stress I was feeling was due to this and that I needed to change my behaviour for my health and sanity.

My experience of living with chronic illness is that it's a day-to-day balancing act that can change drastically depending on how things are going. I find this uncertainty very frustrating, and anxiety-provoking as it impacts the way I want to live, and how I want to be perceived by myself, and others. It has taken me a long time to realize and accept that on those occasions when I do say "no" it's an act of self-care, and not something to feel guilty about. A wise person once told me that I can't be of any help to others if I don't first take care of myself.

More and more these days I try to be my own best friend and not beat myself up when I do have to say "no". I try to communicate my "no" in a kind, but firm way, with a short explanation (not an excuse), and I have found that the people who care about me accept and understand.

If you are **struggling** with saying "no" or setting other boundaries in your life, I encourage you to read the following articles which are full of useful practical information.

Some helpful links to more information:

- How to Say No to People - (www.verywellmind.com)
- How to Set Healthy Boundaries & Build Positive Relationships (www.positivepsychology.com)
- How to Set Healthy Boundaries While Living with a Chronic Illness - Nurse Loves Essentials

Until next time
Helen

A Walk in my Shoes



Contributor
Dianne Murphy



Caring with Boundaries

This edition's theme really got me thinking about how I live my life. Being a Carer, I often stick to a daily schedule and try to support everyone I care for the best way that I can. Often this schedule is day in day out and there's not much time for other things.

These past couple of years I have really tried to concentrate more on me and creating boundaries has become a necessity in my life. Without creating your own boundaries you may end up a "mental mess" and this is how I would describe myself a few years ago.

Because I care so much, I was often taken for granted by people. I would put everyone's priorities ahead of myself. I would give and give and give to people and realised one day that some people just take and take! This had to stop and I needed to give to myself first.

Setting healthy boundaries for yourself isn't easy at first and requires self-awareness. The first boundary I created for myself was to get rid of the negative things in my life. It may involve declining anything you don't really want to do or not being around people who are selfish. Setting a healthy boundary for yourself often requires you to communicate well with others and being honest. You also need to be assertive. Although I am a strong advocate for my family, as an individual I've needed to learn to become more assertive. I now express my feelings respectfully to people and I also set myself small goals and priorities that enhance my life. Setting boundaries is good for you and especially your mental health.

When you hear the word "ritual", I wonder what you think? I initially thought of a rugby player wearing their favourite undies when playing a game, LOL! However, a ritual could be religious/spiritual, traditional, social, personal, etc. A personal one for me is to make sure birthdays are special for my family and loved ones. And my daily ritual, like many people, is having a coffee in the morning!

But seriously, creating some personal rituals would really benefit my life. I could start with the coffee, and after some of my caring duties I could incorporate a little exercise, which I haven't done for years, followed by some meditation time at the table and focus on mindfulness techniques. My journaling could become part of my weekly rituals as it helps me to visualise what I've achieved. Reaching out to someone once a week to say hello and ask how they are is another good one, as well as creating something because being arty is also good for my mental health.

Coming up with these rituals will enhance my wellbeing. I hope you consider creating some rituals and boundaries for yourself too.

Until next time, stay safe

Love Dianne 

The Community article this edition is also written by me, and it is all about one of my gorgeous son's.
Enjoy

COMMUNITY

KIERAN MURPHYS CAN COLLECTION



From our contributor Di Murphy

Kieran is my son. After leaving school, Kieran worked for a few different Disability Employment Enterprises that really didn't offer any work opportunities that Kieran would enjoy. Sadly, we would witness Kieran coming home sad, angry and not fulfilled in any way. He was being paid around \$2 an hour and was very unhappy.

We linked in with some great mentors who offered a more person-centered and flexible approach to seeking or creating an employment opportunity. After trying out a few ideas, Kieran decided he would like to create something for himself and do something that he enjoyed - like a can and bottle collection service.

Recycling 1 plastic bottle

Saves enough energy to power a computer for **25 MINUTES**

KIERAN'S CAN COLLECTION



Kieran's main support mentor (Marcus) assisted Kieran to develop a Business Plan which incorporated Kieran's ideas and goals as well as identified any risks. We were able to capture Kieran's vision on paper. Kieran's Can Collection was chosen as his enterprise name. It tied in nicely because "Containers for Change" started operating in October 2020 providing collection centres around Perth to assist the community with recycling. This was a great opportunity for Kieran as he likes to look after the environment and he would play a small part in helping this great initiative. He could also earn a bit of money for himself to achieve some of his goals in life - like moving out of home. We had some T-shirts made; purchased a few bins and some business cards. Kieran's Can Collection was officially launched on Kieran's birthday in November 2021.

Kieran's Can Collection vision is a recycling microenterprise that aims to play a part in improving the local environment by offering its customers an easy solution for recycling.

We are so proud of Kieran. He works really hard to build up his business and support our local community.

Kieran's Can Collection is on Facebook and Instagram. If you live in the northern coastal suburbs of Perth and would like a regular collection of your cans and bottles, please send us a direct message on **Facebook at Kieran's Can Collection**.

“

Kieran's Can Collection is a recycling microenterprise that aims to play a part in improving the local environment, by offering its customers an easy solution for recycling.

Kieran Murphy

A LITTLE ABOUT KIERAN..

Kieran is 23, lives locally in Hillarys and has Autism.

Kieran and his family like to focus on everyone's abilities in life rather than disabilities.

As Kieran gains more independence to live his best life he is now learning about the work & life balance.

Kieran is very focused on his Can and Bottle Collection business, but also enjoys being out and about his local community.

He enjoys doing fitness down at the stairway at Whitfords Nodes, beach walks along Pinnaroo beach and the coast pathway as well as having lunch down at Hillarys Boat Harbour.

One of his favourite things to do is a coastal walk around Mullaloo followed by a cuppa at the Dome.

Kieran also loves anything vintage, especially cassettes and cassette players, walkmans, video's and video players. Kieran also likes watching motorsport, solo bikes as well as the V8 supercars along with attending car shows to check out the Ford and Holden classics.

Kieran loves going to the Movies especially at the Drive-In or the Community outdoor theatres. Most recently, Kieran has an interest in a couple of the radio stations and we hope to organise a visit to a couple of the Perth radio stations soon.

HAVE YOU EVER HAD AN ADVOCATE TO HELP WITH HEALTHCARE?



SHARE YOUR LIVED EXPERIENCE & CONTRIBUTE TO THIS STUDY

WHAT IS THIS STUDY ABOUT?

Why patients and health consumers use an independent advocate in healthcare; how independent advocates support healthcare clients; if there is a benefit to having an independent advocate.

PLEASE NOTE:

Experiences related to mental health care and treatment are not being included - please call if you would like more information).

WHAT WILL I NEED TO DO?

- Talk to us about your lived experiences with an independent advocate (may take 1-2 hours).
- You will be reimbursed (\$40.00 gift card) for your time and contribution.

WHAT ABOUT MY PRIVACY?

- Participation in this study is private and confidential. Your personal details will not be shared.
- Your information will be re-presented anonymously.

AM I ELIGIBLE?

YOU ARE ELIGIBLE IF YOU ARE:

- ✓ Over the age of 18.
- ✓ Have worked with an independent advocate in Western Australia.
- ✓ Able to provide consent.
- ✓ We can provide interpreters or accessible communication tools.

I WANT TO SHARE MY STORY!

If you, or someone you know would like to participate, or would like more information please contact:

Kirsten Hird (PhD Candidate)
Kirsten.Hird@research.uwa.edu.au
6648 1790

(Or) Dr Susan Young
Susan.Young@uwa.edu.au
6488 2998

(Or) Prof Colleen Fisher
Colleen.Fisher@uwa.edu.au
6488 2193

Approval to conduct this research has been provided by the WAAHEC (Ref 989), and University of Western Australia, in accordance with its ethics review and approval procedures.

Advocacy &

My name is Kirsten and I am a Social Worker with a passion for advocacy, health equity, and person-centred principles of healthcare. I worked for several years in the mental health space where there is a formalised independent advocacy service. This made me wonder - what independent advocacy services are available for consumers and service users in the general healthcare system?

After speaking with people, I found that there are some great advocacy services that can help, and that these services are very busy. I also learned that not a lot is known about what exactly advocacy is, what the experience of using an advocate is, how advocates practise, and how beneficial advocates can be in supporting health equity. This led to developing the research project 'How does independent, individual advocacy contribute to the patient experience of healthcare in Western Australia?' alongside Professor Colleen Fisher and Associate Professor Susan Young at UWA.

This research will help us understand who uses independent advocacy services, what working with an advocate is like, and how advocates can help people within the health system. By hearing from people who have used an advocate, and people who work as advocates, we will be able to understand how advocacy supports people's experiences in health services. It is also hoped that by looking deeper into advocacy we can be clearer about what good practice looks like.

Health Care

If you have a lived experience of working with an advocate for an issue regarding healthcare* and would like to contribute to the research project by sharing your story, please reach out. Participants are asked to meet with me to tell their story in an interview style conversation. Your privacy and anonymity are protected, all information is treated confidentially, and interviews can be held at a time and place that suits you. You will also receive a \$40 gift card as a thank you for your time and contribution.

If you are unsure, or have any questions please feel free to contact me for a confidential chat- Kirsten.Hird@research.uwa.edu.au. Your story can make a difference!

***Please note, experiences involving access, treatment or complaints around mental health services are not being included in this study.**

Your story can make a difference!



MAXINE DRAKE *Advocate*

All about Max...

Maxine is a professional advocate in the community sector, working with people to access services and their Human Rights. Maxine grew up in Sydney but made Perth her home where she has raised two sons with their mother Jane.

Maxine rides a bike for transport, spiritual health and for travel beyond the city and says that this helps her to 'stay fearless' for her advocacy and her life.



Being an advocate is a great job and for some reason I seem ideally suited to it.

Advocacy is about standing up for, or standing beside someone who has an entitlement that is not being met. The role of advocate found me many years ago when I was at the Health Consumers' Council. People would call in to talk about something that was happening for them, and we would explore strategies. Sometimes I needed to get involved through letter-writing or going to a meeting and that's how it started.

The health system usually involves one-to-one clinical encounters, and the power sits with the doctor. Add an independent third party like me, and the dynamic shifts and the outcome can be different. It has always fascinated me how this can be so. It is something about the patient being 'vouched for' by someone else as well as the doctor or clinician having someone there as witness. And because advocacy is about Human Rights (the right to take support in with you) it tips the power imbalance more towards the patient.

I have been an advocate in many settings over the years and I am still learning all the time about how power is used and abused. I am also always learning how to better call out bad behaviour and name it, and to be strong and fearless when I should be.

Another surprise for me as an advocate has been to recognise how fragile I can be in my own self-advocacy - standing up for myself. When I am in a conflict situation in my personal life, I can be embarrassingly awkward about speaking out. I realise that being aware of how hard it is to stand up for myself (as opposed to doing it for others) helps me to be a better support to the people I work with.

Strong, brave, smart, experienced people can still end up feeling powerless and overwhelmed and need someone beside them. It isn't all the time, just sometimes, and it doesn't mean it is a personal failure to get some back-up in some situations. It is good self-care to recognise when you are fragile and having someone with you could make the difference between getting more of the same poor treatment or shifting out of a stuck situation.

I work at Developmental Disability WA now, with parents dealing with schools and in other situations for people with intellectual disability. The settings are different from Health, but the power issues will always be there in varying degrees. I need to find ways to deal compassionately with all parties while also speaking clearly to power on behalf of a person or a family, while also supporting creative problem-solving to move the situation forwards.

It is important to say that anyone can take up this "independent third party" role and it is always best to avoid going to meetings and appointments alone if you can. A friend or family member who is fair-minded with a good heart can always stand beside you and that magic feeling of support can flow between you. Then, if it gets stuck or things just don't feel right, an advocate can be the next level supporter, to help escalate the concerns and take your side.

Max

NEXT TIME

ISSUE 11 - 2023

“—————
**See Me
Not
My Disability**
—————”

Lets normalise
people with
Disabilities being
experts in things
beyond Disability.



Creating an Inspired Life

Contributor Letisha Living

Give Yourself Permission to Shine

It was a cold winter's night and I had been woken from my sleep by what I thought was a severe migraine. It turns out it wasn't a migraine. Multiple blood clots had lodged in my brain, resulting in 3 ischemic strokes.

My life changed in an instant. I went from being employed and independent to unemployed and uncertain about my future.

Early on after my stroke, someone from my family of origin had told me not to talk about my stroke or the challenges that I now had, that no one cares about "my problems" and by discussing it, I was just pushing everyone away.

I began people-pleasing. I wouldn't speak up just to keep the peace and keep everyone else happy.

After a year or so of doing this, I realized I was miserable. My own needs were not being met. I needed social and emotional support. I needed to be seen, accepted, and valued for who I was, not what other people thought I should be.

I needed to be true to myself.

I found connection in online groups, and by discussing my post-stroke challenges I felt connected and accepted. I realized that by sharing my lived experiences with others, I was helping them remove barriers and they were helping me feel like I belonged.

I began to talk openly about my stroke when out in public or whenever the opportunity arose. I soon realized the difference between emotionally healthy and emotionally unhealthy people and that people's perceptions of me had very little to do with me. I realized that people who are judgmental and negative are unhappy and will not respect your boundaries. People who are emotionally healthy will rarely judge; they will ask loads of questions and seek to understand you and your needs.

One of the hardest things I have ever had to do was accept that there were people in my life that I needed to let go of.



I had to put boundaries in place that supported the life and the relationships I deserved to have.

Once I did that, I was able to give myself permission to shine. I was now living in my truth and speaking my truth.

In 2022, I compiled and published a book titled Finding Yourself After Stroke.

The book has gone global and is well respected not just by survivors of stroke, but by medical and allied health professionals too!

I have partnered with researchers and universities all over Australia to create better outcomes for people who have survived stroke.

In 2023, I was nominated and became a top 3 finalist in the National Stroke Foundation's Improving Life After Stroke awards.

Every day I receive messages from people all over the world thanking me for creating the book, for allowing them to feel relatable and inspired.

I created purpose in my life after stroke by speaking about my lived experiences. This is all because I gave myself the ultimate self-care gift of knowing my worth, put healthy boundaries in place and sticking to them.

Kindness Empowers. Love Letisha

The Chronically Proud Sister



From Jaymee-Lee Farrelly
Attention - Possible Triggers

"As I attempt to fall asleep, I dream of a day when breathing becomes easier. The piercing pain of a somewhat deepish breath prevents the eyes from closing and the body from resting. Eighteen years long seems like it should make things increasingly bearable, but sometimes that is not the case.

"As I grow older, and some may say wiser, the recognition of a chronic disease and its impact on my continually developing life as a young adult becomes clearer and clearer.

"Depending on a person's level of optimism, twenty four percent could be seen as a small or large number. As this is a representation of my current lung function and their ability to carry me through life at this very moment, I am overwhelmingly grateful for this statistic".

As I attempt to fall asleep I dream of a day when breathing becomes easier. The piercing pain of a somewhat deepish breath prevents the eyes from closing and the body from resting. Eighteen years long seems like it should make things easier increasingly bearable, but sometimes that is not the case.

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Depending on a person's level of optimism twenty four percent could be seen as a small or large number. As this is a representation of my current lung function and their ability to carry me through a life at this very moment, I am overwhelmingly grateful for this statistic.

To me, this beautifully written piece authored by my late sister, Rachael, radiates the pain, fear, strength and gratitude that she felt day in and day out. Despite the difficulty, creating and ensuring a balance between her pain and fear, and her strength and gratitude was how Rachael coped.

Although she'd kill me for saying it, the way she navigated through life facing the challenges she did, was inspiring. The negative experiences and emotions that she would endure were often, sometimes even subconsciously, counteracted by doing or experiencing something more positive to help regain that balance. For example, Rachael being admitted to hospital was almost always met by her buying or receiving a new pair of comfy pyjamas. Having to go for a specialist appointment would result in going out to eat as a family afterwards - whether that meant sitting in a cramped hospital cafeteria as our dad ordered "the best lasagne [he'd] ever had," or going to a pop-up donut shop down the road where Rachael would joke that her doctor had ordered for her to have 10ccs of Nutella STAT! When Rachael wasn't feeling well enough to leave the house, lying in bed or on the couch watching episode after episode of Grey's Anatomy or All Saints was the way to go. And to be honest, I think her introverted personality almost preferred that alternative.

Upon reflection, my parents and I also developed little quirks to make some of the tougher situations associated with Rachael's condition as light-hearted as we could. Every single time we'd park in a Disabled Parking spot, you'd hear us all jokingly exclaim "Thank you, Rachael. Love you, Rachael!" for that also meant that we didn't have to walk as far! My personal favourite though was probably associating Rachael being admitted to hospital with me being able to cheekily steal pockets full of jelly cups from the ward's kitchen fridge. I have to admit, there definitely was some disappointment from me when she graduated to the "adult" hospital!

Over time, doing all these things did become somewhat ritualistic in nature and undeniably posed as an essential form of self-care and self-preservation, not only for Rachael, but for us all. Although we would have loved more than anything for Rachael to live with two healthy oxygen-filled lungs, where hospital appointments and admissions weren't the norm, we are eternally grateful for the memories that we were able to make out of such unfavourable circumstances.

Jaymee-Lee x



BE Nourished

Contributor Jackie Rowe



You are a master creator,
Of the life that you live
With moments to take and moments to give
When we give to our self
Its not selfish at all
In fact, it's important
To feel topped up and whole

As the artist and creator
You get to choose each moment in time,
You get to paint a picture
Of your journey,
Your lifetime

Moment by moment
You add colour and flow,
Creating each new day as you grow.
From the framework of rituals
Your story is told,
Rituals can be passed on from journeys of old
Or created new and designed
Meeting the needs of your soul, your body, and mind.

Rituals hold us in grief and the hardest of days,
They give us steps to follow
And show us the ways.
Forward again through the days and the night
From out of darkness
They can guide us to light.
They create gentle ease when life feels too rough,
They allow us to soften
When life feels too tough

Rituals help us feel safe
As we speak out the words
Of songs or verses
Of stories often told
We repeat loving ritual actions.
A beginning a middle and end,
Until this right, of passage
This ritual is repeated again.

You are
the
Creator



Jackie



Chronically Booked

With world renowned writer Kez Wickham St George



Kez is a highly gifted writer, a best-selling award-winning author, and a global writer's consultant. She is passionate about championing people from diverse backgrounds to tell their stories and write with passion. As a leader in her profession, she has spoken nationally and globally, sharing her wisdom and knowledge about the process of writing, editing and producing all forms of written communication.

Kez contributes to a number of regular magazines, sharing her insights. She has also coordinated and compiled a number of anthologies.

Across her Western Australian community, she is known for her work empowering people to write, heal with art therapy, and gives back via her volunteer work.

Kez has co-produced and co-hosted a weekly international show highlighting the work of authors and artists across the world. She has since gone on to produce a short film from the prologue of her trilogy **Scribe**, shown across theatres in Australia.

Kez is consistent, dedicated and has incredible creative energies and refreshing idealism.



Att: Possible Triggers

Once again, the author Kez Wickham St George proves her skills as an incredible storyteller that draws you into a hidden world of parental childhood trauma. As a young child her one thought was to escape the abuse from the ones she should trust. Her Mum with her deep angry emotional trauma, and her sibling, who would quite happily have disposed of her existence.

More often than not she was told *'she should have been a boy; she was not welcome in this family'*. No one could help, Why? Because it was secreted away, hidden within the family home.

Married off at seventeen to a narcissistic alcoholic to appease the demands of the cult her family belonged to, she soon discovers no one cares. Not the cult leaders, her family or the police. In the late 1900's it was termed as a domestic dispute. Poverty of mind, spirit and body become an everyday occurrence in the naïve child's life.

Knowing escaping this life that there were only two ways, the first to imitate her maternal peers in her family before her by suicide, or by running as far away as possible. But where? *Jigsaw* is not only an escape story, a love story, plus a story of modern-day sadistic insurgency of the patriarchal system, it is an awakening as she fights for her rights as a woman.

Jigsaw is a story of a woman rebirthing in all ways to be who she is today. It is also a paranormal story that cannot be explained nor be navigated.

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KWSTG
AUTHOR & EDITOR



Boundaries, not a dirty word, but an essential life dance.

As a counsellor, one of the most difficult discussions I engage in is that of boundaries. One way I describe it, it can be one of the most difficult dance we negotiate in our lives. Particularly with those we share our lives with and interact with in one form or another.

Boundaries are important, as it can be easy to become enmeshed into others' lives and circumstance. I see my role as an honour and privilege to be able to hold space for others showing resilience. I see my role as a keeper of people's significant, heartbreaking and life altering experiences.

We all, myself included, have that person, groups or personalities we find difficult to separate ourselves from. If we don't, we may become engulfed by others. This is likely to result in an unbalanced dance with the other.

Resulting in:

- Difficulties in setting up positive and purposeful emotional boundaries
- Becoming lost within the relationship
- Finding ourselves self-sacrificing own needs to appease or nurture others.

Does any of this feel or sound familiar? Yes, so why do we do it? It could be because:

There is a fear of rejection:

- A struggle internally of how we may be perceived by the other
- Feeling like we may become a burden on another
- A strong desire to strive to perform or in to meet the expectation of the other.

It could be difficult to achieve due to

- The goal post being moved constantly
- A lack of understanding and clarification from the other person
- The other person just doesn't have the same vested interest as you.

At times it is difficult to set healthy boundaries and we find we build inappropriate boundaries, usually as self-sacrificing behaviours which lead to further struggles within the dance.

If you read the literature, they often will spell out for you to voice your boundaries. Seems simple, doesn't it?

- We were robots
- Had no history or attachments
- Had years of experience with each other
- Had no connections - blood, love, life activities and positive periods together.

The literature then proclaims, if boundaries are crossed or disrespected

- Set up consequences
- Limit engagement
- Be persistent
- Be patient
- STAY CALM!!!!

How do we stop sacrificing our own needs in the dance of our relationship with others, particularly when introducing, setting up and maintaining boundaries?

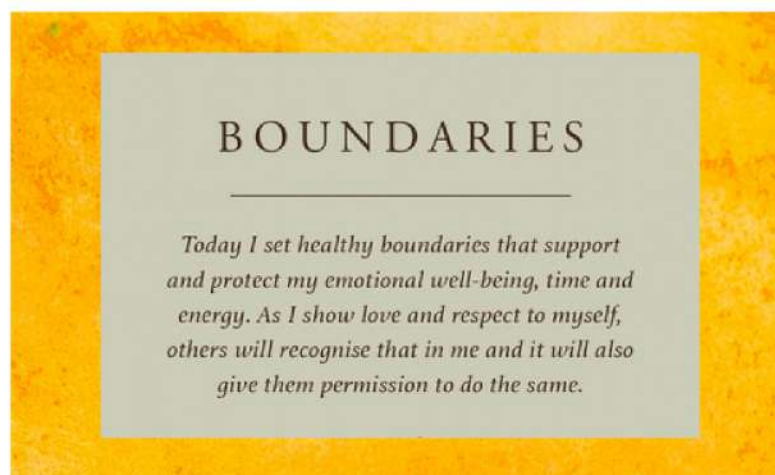
Firstly remember, like most learnt behaviours, they do not occur within an isolated incident. We often learn many behaviours unconsciously; in this case we may need to become more mindful.

Three avenues to consider:

- Continue with the same relationship, despite identifying the behaviour. With this, there is the reminder we need to take responsibility of the consequences
- Stop the relationship, particularly if it takes too much energy, time or effort
- Change the relationship, particularly when you can see a way you are able to reach a sense of equilibrium within the relationship.

No one can tell you which one of these would be the right one. Only we know when we can continue to engage in the dance with the other.

Take care, Angel



HUSTLE ALIGN

Destroy the idea that you have to be constantly working or grinding in order to be successful. Embrace the concept that rest, recovery, and reflection are essential parts of the progress towards a successful and ultimately happy life.



Your trial starts now, Miss Samiels.

A million panicked thoughts rushed through my head before I realised there was no time to think. No time to even consider the consequences of what I did next. The accelerator hit the floor before I even registered my foot moving, and I sped through an orange traffic light just as it changed to red.

I knew immediately that I had two advantages over my pursuers. One: my car was faster than theirs. And two: they had safety regulations to abide by.

I glanced at the rear view mirror and, just as I'd expected, both police cars slowed, checking that traffic had stopped for them, before powering ahead through the lights.

Safety first. It was drilled into us at the academy from day one. The police force had enough negative press to deal with without the added drama of an avoidable hit-and-run during a high speed pursuit. All I had to do was focus on intersections and avoid killing anyone in the process. **Easy enough, right?**

I dropped two gears and took a sharp right turn onto a main road which I knew hosted a collection of traffic lights. I planted my foot. My tails followed. To my dismay, there was little traffic on the roads at this time of day, which meant I had a clear path and so did they. It was the first time I'd ever cursed a series of green lights.

Each set flashed as I flew through them at double the speed limit, and I felt the shocked eyes of pedestrians watching on from the footpaths.

The sirens blared. **Shit.** I needed to lose these guys before they called in for back up. Or **worse**, the Air Wing. I'd have no chance of outrunning a helicopter. But then, I'd completed the training. I knew they were likely already making the calls. In a matter of minutes there could be police cars blocking every street around me.

I was quickly starting to realise that Merrick and his crew had set me up to fail. There was no way they actually expected me to outrun the police. The bastard hadn't even given me a chance.

My breaths started to come hard and fast. I was going to get caught. My chest heaved. The academy would never take me back. I could end up in prison. **Martin** could end up in prison. I was inhaling too quickly, each breath too short and too quick. **Must. Calm. Down.**

As I changed to third gear and rounded another corner, flashing lights ahead caught my eye. But not the ones I'd been dreading. **A train?** I let out a sigh of relief and thanked the heavens. Someone up there must be rooting for me.

I urged the car forward, ignoring the lights behind me and focusing only on the ones ahead. If I could make it through the crossing in time, I'd be able to lose both police cars and make it back to the garage. The job would be mine.

My left foot hit the clutch and I changed to fourth gear. The train approached the crossing, but I was closer; I was sure.

"Come on, come on!" The engine roared and I changed to fifth. Adrenaline pulsed through me as my brain fought between fight and flight. It was going to be close, but I would make it. *I had to*. The horn of the oncoming train vibrated through me, and my heart was in my stomach as I flew through the barrier and over the railway line, mere moments before the carriage made impact.

I watched in the rear-view mirror, and let out a manic laugh as the long locomotive barrelled through, blocking the path of the police cars. I shook my head in disbelief. I'd actually made it.

It took less than five minutes for me to make it back to the garage, and I spent every second trying to regain a normal breathing pattern. My next 6 minute walk test review was going to be a complete disaster.

As I pulled into the driveway, I was greeted by the very man who'd sent me on this self-destructive mission. Standing in the doorway, his phone to his ear, he glanced up at me, a look of surprise crossing his features.

"**You son of a bitch!**" I hurled the keys at him as I stumbled out of the car on wobbly legs. My heart was still pounding furiously against my chest, and I was struggling to catch my breath again. Despite all of that, I powered forward, storming up to him until there was only a few inches between us. I had to strain my neck to look up at him, but I held my ground.

"I'll call you back," he spoke into his phone before slipping it into his pocket.

"You set me up." My voice shook, not with fear or adrenaline, but with undiluted anger. "You knew it would be impossible for me to make it back here."

His right eyebrow rose. "And yet, here you are." He glanced at his men who had all wandered outside to see what the commotion was about. "What are you all looking at?" he barked. "Get the car cleaned up."

One of the younger lads quickly scrambled to collect the car keys from where they'd landed on the gravel floor, and the rest of them busied themselves, some heading back into the garage to continue their work.

He tilted his head to the side, considering me for a moment, before holding out his hand with a twisted smile. "You start Friday night. 8pm sharp."

I stared at him for a moment. I'd expected some push back, but he was offering me the job. I cleared my throat and took his hand. "Thank you, Mr Merrick."

He barked out a loud laugh that made me step back.

"You think Merrick interviews his own men?" He squeezed my hand tightly, drawing me back. "**I'm Ryker.**"

Not Merrick? My heart sank. But then, had I really thought it was going to be that easy? I smiled lightly, trying not to let my disappointment show, and he released his grip.

"I'll see you Friday." I turned to leave.

"Oh, and Lydia?" Ryker's voice stopped me in my tracks. He was lighting a cigarette, his hands cupped around the flame. He inhaled deeply and then exhaled a slow cloud of smoke before his dark eyes met mine.

"Speak to me in front of my men like that again, and the cops will be the least of your concerns."

*The Girl in the Silk Green
Dress Will Return...*

writers

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Honeybee Lifestyle Magazine exists to reinforce the purity of one message: "The Lived Experience and Patient Expert!" We want to hear your voice and publish your words and story. Apply to be considered to join our vibrant and growing team.

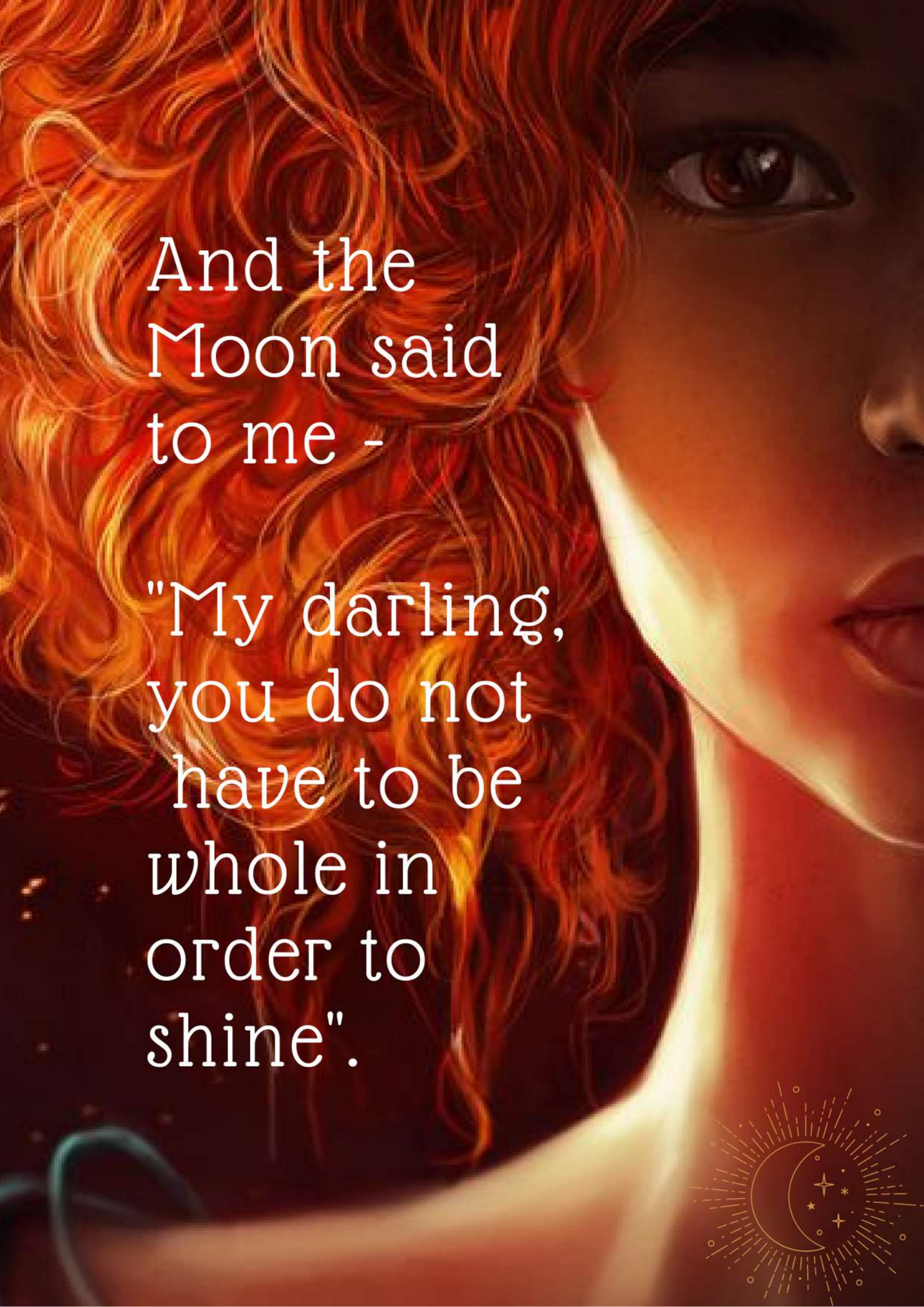
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We are looking for experienced or aspiring writers to add to our amazing team from multiple backgrounds. If you are someone who is caring for, or living with chronic illness, intellectual or physical disability or a mental health condition, your lived experience story may be exactly what we like to feature and share with our readers.

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If you are an organisation or business that works in any of these industries supporting others, then we would like to feature and showcase your services and/or products with our growing community. To be considered send us an [email: chronicallyinspiredau@gmail.com](mailto:chronicallyinspiredau@gmail.com) we look forward to hearing from you. you can also become a valued partner and receive many benefits.





And the
Moon said
to me -

"My darling,
you do not
have to be
whole in
order to
shine".





Welcome to Laura's Kitchen

Dessert recipes through the seasons*

Hello

My kitchen is all about fun, colourful food, and eating for enjoyment. In 2023 I will be following the seasons with my recipes, and I hope you enjoy them as much as I do. With the cooler months now here it is a perfect time to do indulge in something warm, sweet and comforting. I am a huge fan of chocolate brownies, so I did some research and decided that this recipe from Donna Hay is the best. Why? Because it's a chocolate overload! Perfect for a warm dessert served with ice-cream and cream, or at room temperature for morning or afternoon tea.

» love » Laura x

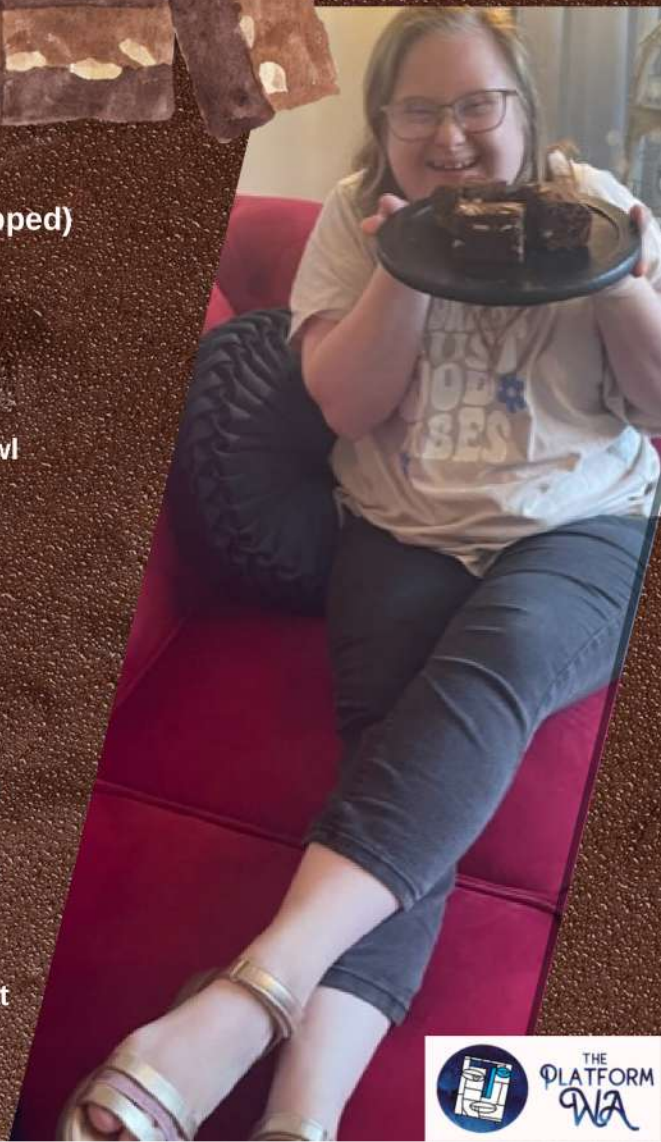
INGREDIENTS

- 200gm dark chocolate (buttons or chopped)
- 250gm butter (room temp)
- 265gm (1 and a half cups) soft brown sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 35gm (third cup) cocoa powder, sifted
- Half teaspoon baking powder
- 100gm dark chocolate, chopped (extra)
- 100gm white chocolate, chopped
- 100gm unsalted macadamia nuts (or other nut, chopped)
- Vanilla ice-cream, cream to serve

METHOD

- Preheat oven to 160 celsius (320 fahrenheit).
- Place the chocolate and butter into a microwave safe bowl and melt in 30 second bursts, stirring in-between until melted and smooth.
- Place the sugar and eggs in a bowl and stir to combine.
- Add the cocoa, flour and baking powder and stir to combine.
- Fold through the extra dark chocolate, white chocolate and nuts (if using) and gently combine.
- Pour mixture into a lightly greased and lined slice baking tin and smooth out evenly.
- Bake for 35-45 minutes depending on how fudgy you like your brownies.
- Mixture will be wetter the less time you cook it. This results in a fudgy, gooey brownie that remains very moist
- Cool in the tin and then pull out and cut into bars or squares. Serve with ice-cream and cream.

Triple Chocolate Brownies



this is me

Contributor Marie Williams



Boundaries



THE
PLATFORM
WA

Boundaries are the separations that humans need - mentally, emotionally, and physically - to feel safe, valued, and respected.” Carla Marie...

However, when you have a physical or intellectual disability, boundaries tend to be ignored/forgotten. Let me explain it in a simple way and start the beginning with

“We’re going to the zoo, zoo, zoo...”

Most of us have been to the zoo at some time in our lives, as a child, a parent or both. We go around the zoo, looking at the animals in their habitat, looking, staring, pointing at them, laughing at them; it is a fun day out.

So how does this relate to the disabled community?

It relates to this community because it is how many people with intellectual disability and physical disability feel going out in public. Unfortunately, due to this negative experience, many of them retreat into their private worlds by staying home where they will not be judged/ridiculed for being different. Hopefully by writing about my experiences and that of others, it will give you an insight of what unconscious bias has done to this marginalised and most vulnerable group of people.

My daughter Laura, who was born with Down syndrome, has been stared at, pointed at, and laughed at because she looks different. As soon as she was born the medical professionals ignored her. They didn’t even bother to complete her baby book, or even physically examine her. All because she had Down syndrome. She was ignored and so were we as new parents.

Then came the inappropriate questions. Did you know she had Down syndrome? Would you have terminated if you did? (I personally want to say to these people, if you knew your kid was so ugly, would you have terminated? But I don’t dare). These are questions from complete strangers.

Next you have the people who are condescending: “Isn’t she wonderful catching public transport, it is wonderful for her to have a job, she’s doing so well”. Well compared to what? Her own cohort? No, not really. Most people in her age group are independent, have friends, relationships, able to drive a car. A simple way to explain this is, imagine she is a lemon, she wants to be an orange like her cohort – but no matter how hard she tries, she will never measure up to the oranges, because she is viewed as a lemon.

When I took Laura to vote for the first time, the electoral officer took one look at her and said she doesn’t have to vote she has an intellectual disability. I didn’t know what to say – I still don’t. (I felt like saying, because you’re fat and ugly, you don’t have to vote either, but I didn’t.)

One of my friends who needs oxygen takes off her mask when she goes shopping. A good day for her is if she only gets one pat on the back. People come up and ask if they can pray for her, (she tells them to go ahead if it makes them feel better), and they tell her how brave she is even to leave the house.

Another person I know tells me that strangers come and push his wheelchair and touch him without asking. They think they are doing him a favour – one Good Samaritan even caused an injury.

Another family can’t go away on holiday because they’re too embarrassed to ask the hotel to provide a mattress protector and extra sheets. Their adult daughter still wets the bed.

Other families may need to take medical supplies, equipment, and even a support worker if they want to go on a holiday. They may need equipment such as a hoist, but few hotels offer this. So they end up staying home.

Another friend has decided to confront people when they stare and look at her son. She goes up to them and says, “My son is not a teachable moment”.

There are many other stories that could be told. But no matter how many stories are told, nothing changes. We are still viewed as being a community that is to be pitied, shunned, stared at, when all we want is to go about our daily lives, have dreams, the right to employment and education like most people without disabilities do.

The courage it takes to go out to the shops, to go on public transport, to participate in the community is daunting as every day we know that someone will cross the invisible boundary and make us feel that we are unworthy to be seen, or to even be alive.

The change that needs to happen, does not have to be mandated from government/organisations or institutions. It can start with you, the reader of this article. So, the next time you see someone with a disability please don’t comment or ask any questions, unless it is “What can I do to help?”.

Marie x

BOUNDARIES CREATE FREEDOM

I clearly remember what life used to look like when I did not understand boundaries.

As a child it was taking other people's possessions without permission.

As a young adult it was borrowing my brother's car, then driving it further than I had permission.

As a young mother it looked like allowing my children to be with me every waking moment of the day... I couldn't even go to the toilet without a child sticking their head around the door and I allowed it.

As a worker it looked like taking work home or taking liberties at work... not staying in my lane, not honouring breaks, not doing what was expected because I had to carve out my own path.

In my relationship with my husband it looked like not asking for what I needed and staying when I probably needed to vote with my feet.

It also looked like letting other people into my life who judged me and wanted to change me with no real regard for me. It was my people-pleasing at the cost of my dignity and that of my family.

Thank God, I learned about unhealthy relationships and why we need boundaries.

And although I mentally bucked against the thought of submitting to a system of limits, what I discovered was that instead of feeling trapped, I obtained my freedom.

You see it truly is a paradox. Limits create freedom. Boundaries enable safety and security, and these both create the conditions for experiencing freedom.

If you can say no to opportunities that you don't really want, then you are free to say yes to opportunities you really want.

Knowing where you end, and another person begins, is also important. Respecting others' space, desires, needs and wants creates the conditions for reciprocity.

You may be oblivious to where you are not respecting another person's boundary, but they will not be. They will feel your disrespect deeply, even if they do not voice it. And just as deeply, they will feel it when they see your sacrificial honouring of their boundary.

This looks like desiring their possessions but not taking them. Like driving their car just where you asked to drive it. Like honouring work policies and saying no to working outside of paid work hours, so you can be present to yourself and those you love.



freedom

I recently started a new job after almost two years of working remotely. The first day my boss said, you start at 8am and end at 4pm. You work only in the office. I lost some flexibility in this arrangement, as my previous role had a lot more flexibility, but I quickly realised how valued I felt as an employee when I clearly knew I was not required to contribute in my own time.

If you struggle with boundaries, I highly recommend seeking some training or mentoring. Your 'no' is as empowering to others as to hear you say 'yes'. Your 'no' will cause them to reconsider, to explore and find a different source for their need - and who knows what wonderful opportunities might present themselves that would have been missed if you had said 'yes'?

Understanding what creates a functional life – the understanding of why we need systems, and ways of being and doing – rituals if you like – can be a very liberating experience. Continuing the same behaviours can cause distress and can rob you of freedom, however, choosing to change your behaviours can bring great joy and lessen stress. I am so grateful that I came to understand boundaries, that by embracing them I was able to save my marriage, to model a healthier way of being to my children and to create the conditions for success. I truly have come to understand that boundaries create freedom in my life, if I honour them for myself and for others.

For reflection:

- Do you say 'yes' when you know you should say 'no'?
- What do you fear in that moment?
- How could you reframe your thinking around this?
- Do you honour other people's boundaries?
- Do you respect other people's rights and hear their 'no'?

Hayley



**Promoting gratitude
while not first
validating someone's
pain and experience runs
the risk of just being
another form of
gaslighting.**

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Things



3 WAYS TO MAKE YOUR DAILY RITUALS REALLY

Powerful

When you think about rituals what comes to mind? Chanting, peace offerings to exotic gods, weddings, full moon celebrations? Many of us think of something connected to religion. While this is true, rituals go beyond prayers and ceremonies.

They are more present in our everyday lives than we may have noticed and it's our ritualistic nature that nurtures our wellbeing. We often overlook rituals and take them for granted simply because we do them mindlessly.

However, rituals are incredibly powerful when performed on purpose. They allow us to experience everyday life with a deeper meaning and enjoyment. Water is just water until you choose to drink it every morning, warm and infused with lemon; with every sip, silently and gratefully considering how it nurtures your body.

Rituals are quite different from habits and practices, but all three can be woven together to create a framework for living well.

Unfortunately, modern culture may make you feel that life needs to be constantly satisfying, happy and perfect. But rituals can help you to enjoy the ordinary elements of life and sprinkle them with magic.

Rituals are quite different from habits and practices, but all three can be woven together to create a framework for living well.

Habits, practices and rituals

Habits are behaviours or actions that are repeated so often that they become automatic. For many of us they may have manifested as a morning meditation, writing in a gratitude journal before bed or flossing our teeth. They are great because they conserve energy by reducing our cognitive load, and become mindless action.

A paper published by a Duke University researcher in 2006 found that more than 40 per cent of the action people performed each day wasn't the product of well-considered decision making; it was habits.

Habits can have negative or positive effects on our wellbeing. So, we can use our compassionate self-awareness to examine our habits and consider those that bring a greater sense of fulfilment and wellness into our lives. We can choose to regularly reflect on our actions and habits to make sure they are supportive.

Ask yourself, "Which habits support my health and wellbeing right now?"

Although habits can sometimes seem insignificant on their own, the very nature of continuously repeating them can impact on our health, productivity, relationships, finances and happiness.

Practices are a set of actions taken to acquire or improve skills.

It's through repeated practice that connections get established in the brain that support the new skill. Mindfulness, gratitude, optimism and a positive relationship with money are all learned skills.

We can use practices strategically by considering what skills would bring greater fulfilment to our lives. Then we can create practices to cultivate these skills. Practices strengthen our wellbeing "muscles".

Ask yourself, "Which new or improved skills would support my health and wellbeing right now?"

Rituals are symbolic actions that have a deeper purpose than just the actions themselves. They usually follow a system and contain a sequence of actions. You can use them to anchor and enhance your wellbeing experiences. Mindless rituals are just habits.

Ask yourself "what aspects of my life do I really love and care deeply about and would benefit from connecting with deeply?"

Know what brings you fulfilment? Then make it a habit. Need to improve? Create a practice. Want to connect deeply? Design a ritual.



Why are rituals so powerful?

Essentially, rituals are supercharged habits with heart. Naturally, most of us think habits are important. Most self-help books like Charles Duhigg's *The Power of Habit: Why we do what we do and how to change* will show you lots of examples of good habits.

And, yes, habits are important, but rituals are more powerful as they combine multiple habits, follow a system and emotionally connect you with why you are doing what you are doing. They connect you to something larger than yourself.

The power of rituals doesn't come from a particular belief or involve luck. It comes from what the rituals symbolise. They represent something significant to the person performing them, such as a professional athlete preparing before a game.

Rituals provide comfort

Most parents can attest to the power of family rituals and their ability to provide comfort to their children, particularly in unfamiliar circumstances. A simple song and a bedtime story can create a great sense of connectedness and belonging, and lets everyone know how important they are to the family. This ritual can help to provide feelings of security and predictability when you are travelling or working late.

Of course, rituals can provide the same sense of comfort to adults. Having your own bedtime rituals can help you to destress from work and can assist with sleep when you are working away from home and in unfamiliar places.



Rituals give us comfort and a sense of control when life gets challenging. They support our need for structure and balance. When we embark on a new exercise regime, we often begin to feel a greater sense of wellbeing and safety knowing that we are doing the best we can for our health.

Anne Lamott, author of *In Stitches: A Handbook on Meaning, Hope and Repair*, considers how rituals can cast an anchor of stability in turbulent times, "Daily rituals, especially walks ... around the neighbourhood, schedules, work or meals ... can be the knots you hold onto when you've run out of rope."

Whatever ritual you decide to embrace into your daily life, as long as it supports your health and wellbeing you will have the added benefit of increased feelings of inner balance and safety.

Rituals transform the mundane into the sacred

The Japanese tea ceremonies (the "way of the tea") are the perfect example of rituals imbued with the deeper meaning of inner quietness, purity and tranquillity. They allow us to find the magic in the mundane.

In our own lives, rituals can allow us to pause, take a breath and reconnect with our inner needs. Whether connecting to the sacred means getting back in touch with nature or the divine, rituals are the perfect way of integrating that into your daily life through seemingly mundane acts.

Rituals don't need to be elaborate or spectacular to be effective; what matters is that they are meaningful to you.

The amount of time you spend conducting your rituals is not important; rather, it's the intention you put into them. They can be really short and done anywhere, as long as they mean something to you.

Rituals foster a greater connection with ourselves and others



When we create a ritual to purposely fill our minds with loving kindness through meditation, write in a journal to connect with ourselves or sit around the dinner table and talk to family, we feel more connected with ourselves and those we care deeply for. It's through rituals like these that we can experience how powerful they are at filling our days with love, purpose and meaning.

Rituals encourage self-love

Rituals can help to remind us that we are valuable, and our needs are important. Most of us find it difficult to make time to care for ourselves among the busyness of everyday life, but rituals can remove us from the ordinary flow of life and place us in a sacred space.



Whether it's soaking in a warm Epsom salt bath, listening to your favourite music or painting your nails, these self-care routines don't have to be empty. Infuse them with personal meaning and significance.

3 ways rituals can boost your wellbeing

1. They help you shift your awareness and energy at particular times of the day. Rituals can be particularly helpful with transitions throughout the day; from morning rituals to a lunchtime pause to the bedtime wind-down. They can powerfully signal to your brain and body that you are ready to make a shift in mood and energy and move with intention into the next activity.

- Use a morning ritual to set the tone of the day.
- Take a lunchtime pause to release morning stress and prepare for the afternoon's work.
- Use the family dinner ritual to share experiences and show gratitude to each other and for the food prepared and shared.

- **Have** a bedtime ritual to help to relax and disengage from the day with meditation and writing in your gratitude journal.

2. They help to release negative feelings and setbacks

Rituals allow you to acknowledge and release negative and challenging emotions. If there are feelings you are hanging onto or not coping well with, create a ritual such as writing down your worries and ceremoniously burning them with a candle or burying them in the garden.

3. They create meaning around the things we care about most

Rituals add deeper meaning and awareness to what matters most and bring greater appreciation to what we have.

If you **value nature**, you may choose to create an autumn tree-planting ritual that allows you to celebrate nature with a few mindful steps. Whatever rituals you choose to create, remember to include a few personal, symbolic and repeatable steps.

Sometimes it helps to have a special place to go or actions to take for specific rituals to work, like journalling, stretching or meditation.

How to create a ritual

We can choose to incorporate rituals into all aspects of our lives that need care. A well-designed ritual can nourish our bodies, emotions, financial lives and relationships. One of the easiest ways to create a ritual is to redesign one of your existing tasks and get ready to enjoy the pleasurable rhythm that rituals create.



- **Identify** your most challenging time of day and describe the sequence of activities you are already doing. Are you happy with the results?
- **Decide** how you would like to feel after the ritual is completed.
- **Set an intention** for the ritual: anything from more energy to healing to a good night's sleep. Choose a power word to reinforce the focus of that intention when you do it.
- **Redesign** this task so you can achieve the outcome and experience the desired feelings.
- **Consider** sounds, scents and light to bring soulful energy to the ritual.

Often we take the power of rituals for granted, associating them only with religious ceremonies or empty daily tasks. But when we aim to live lives full of connection, meaning and balance, then creating our own rituals is the best way to get the most out of each day.

3 things to make your rituals even more powerful

LIGHT - Soft lighting from candles and lamps automatically creates a calm atmosphere and allows you to connect to your deeper self. If you are creating an energising ritual, consider the use of direct sunlight to reinvigorate your energy.

SOUND - Use music to help support the purpose of your ritual. Choose soft and relaxing for self-care, silence to enjoy nature, popular music for creating togetherness, or fast-paced rhythms for action-oriented rituals like cooking.

SCENTS - Use aromatherapy essential oils to balance, harmonise and promote the health of your mind, body and spirit. They can be incorporated into your unwind, meditation, study and exercise rituals.

Remember to be flexible - Some people might consider rituals to be too controlling and think they inhibit our ability to act spontaneously and creatively. However, it's actually the stable platform that rituals create that helps us to manage and enjoy the messiness and unpredictable aspects of life. As Lamott says, "It's discipline that leads to freedom." Remember to check in with yourself and not become too attached to your rituals, either. Your definition of meaning and purpose will most likely change throughout your life. So too will your rituals.



If I'm disrespecting your boundaries, let me know.

If I talk to you and I'm unintentionally draining you, let me know.

If there was something I said that you didn't like, let me know!

Don't be afraid to speak up for yourself when you talk to me. But please be kind.



THE WELLNESS SOCIETY

HOW TO SET BOUNDARIES IN RELATIONSHIPS

WHAT ARE BOUNDARIES?

Boundaries are limits or rules that you maintain in relationships with other people. The purpose of boundaries is to preserve your physical, emotional, and psychological safety.

WHAT TYPES OF RELATIONSHIPS NEED BOUNDARIES?

All types of relationships need boundaries!

That includes relationships with your co-workers, bosses, teachers, children, parents, extended family, friends, romantic and/or sexual partner(s), acquaintances, and strangers.

These factors will help determine how you go about setting boundaries in relationships:

- Type of relationship (personal vs. professional or distant)
- Depth of trust in the relationship
- Length of time known the person
- Previous trust violations in this specific relationship
- How the people involved have tried to amend harms done or damaged trust
- Personal preferences
- History of trauma
- If you've been hurt in the past, you may have stricter boundaries than others
- If very flexible boundaries have been modelled for you, they may feel more familiar and safe

Can boundaries become more flexible over time?

Absolutely! Boundaries becoming more flexible isn't necessarily a bad thing. In fact, it can mean that you are feeling safer and developing more trust in a relationship. Often, boundaries loosening up happens naturally. But if you are someone who has difficulty with opening up or being vulnerable, it may not 'just happen.' Read on to learn about the signs that you're ready to make boundaries more flexible, and how to do so.

➔ signs that you may be ready to make boundaries more flexible



- Doing so would be appropriate for the nature and context of the relationship
- Feeling safe with the person
- Trusting that they care about you
- A pattern of behaviour that demonstrates they care (for instance, they check in on how you're doing, are interested in your life, remember things about you, and go out of their way to help you)
- They are able to open up to you (if appropriate for the type of relationship)
- A desire to be closer to the person

➔ how to make boundaries more flexible



- Suggest spending more time together
 - Offer and/or ask for help more often
 - Talk to them about things that are harder for you to share with people
 - Ask them deeper questions about themselves
- Assess their reactions to your efforts to loosen up boundaries, If they say "yes" but seem uneasy or hesitant, you may need to back off or take it slower
- On the other hand, if they seem relaxed or even enthusiastic about looser boundaries, you know you're on the right track



SUMMARY

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Want to improve your relationships and can't afford therapy?

Our self-help toolkit combining several therapeutic techniques is like 10 therapy sessions in one.

Check it out at our online store www.thewellnesssociety.org

BOUNDARIES

9 SIGNS YOU MAY NEED TO STRENGTHEN BOUNDARIES WITH SOMEONE:

1. Feelings of irritation, anger or resentment towards them.
2. Frequently venting to others about them.
3. Wishing they would change or act differently.
4. Making special accommodations for them that you wouldn't make for others.
5. Worrying frequently about how they perceive you.
6. Feelings of dread when you know you are going to talk to or see them.
7. A sinking or flip-flop feeling in your stomach around them.
8. Purposefully avoiding contact with them.
9. Daydreaming about them moving away or having a good reason not to have to see or talk to them.

THINGS TO SAY ABOUT BOUNDARIES

- "I wish I could help, but I'm not available right now to support you."
- "I can't commit to that right now. Can we work to find a compromise?"
- "I have made up my mind about this."
- "I don't want to discuss the matter."
- "I trust that you will be able to find a solution to this problem."
- "I have nothing planned, but that doesn't mean I'm available."
- "I need some time and space to think this through."
- "I hope you will find a way to solve this problem."
- "I'm not able to take on additional work right now."
- "I'm not interested in talking about this person when they're not here."
- "Please do not"comment on my (weight, appearance, etc).



A photograph of two young women embracing. The woman on the left has long, wavy brown hair and is wearing a grey top. The woman on the right has short, wavy blue hair, wears glasses, a white t-shirt, and a gold chain necklace. They are both smiling and looking towards each other. The background is a light-colored wall with vertical lines.

What is **BOUNDARY**

Be aware

Of what is

Unacceptable and

Normalize saying no.

Do what is best for you

And know that it's not your

Responsibility to sacrifice

Yourself for others.

@artofpoets

Gabrielle Worthington

Gill McGimpsey-Evans



Honeybee Lifestyle Magazine - professional printing & postage is proudly supported through the generosity of our incredible long-term sponsor Gabrielle Worthington, Managing Director Dependable Laundry Solutions.

Chronically Inspired - Life.Beyond.Disability, and Honeybee Lifestyle Magazine are proudly supported through the generosity of our beloved member and friend Gill, who passed away in 2021 from Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension.



DEPENDABLE
LAUNDRY SOLUTIONS

TESTIMONIAL from our sponsor..

As a Sponsor of Chronically Inspired - Life.Beyond.Disability we are very proud to support Founder Melissa Dumitru in her endeavours to provide an excellent resource for people living with chronic illness, disability, & mental health conditions. The HoneyBee Lifestyle Magazine would have to be one of the most helpful, informative magazines that absolutely inspires those with health challenges to live their best life. Melissa speaks and informs from a lived experience... a very powerful insight into individuals suffering chronic diseases... a fantastic read for sufferers and their Partners, Friends, Supporters alike. One day, this fabulous magazine will be in all sorts of Medical Practitioners offices as a little Life Saver for those afflicted in so many ways.

Acknowledgement to Country: Chronically Inspired would like to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First People and Traditional Custodians. We value their culture, identities, and continuing connection to country, waters, kin and community. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present, and are committed to making a positive contribution to the well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, by working on providing services that are welcoming, safe, culturally appropriate and inclusive. We are committed to embracing diversity and eliminating all forms of discrimination in the provision of health services. We welcome all people irrespective of ethnicity, lifestyle choice, faith, sexual orientation and gender identity.

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Last words



from the Divine Ms. M



Too many people think unconditional love means unconditional tolerance.

You can love someone to the moon and back and still have boundaries.

Boundaries don't diminish the amount of love you have in your heart.



I hope you have enjoyed this edition prepared for you with so much love from our team. We sincerely thank you for all the amazing feedback about Honeybee, and we look forward to sharing so much more with you in the coming editions.

As I close for this edition, I would like to share a little about my friend and colleague **Simone McMahon who passed away suddenly in early April at the tender age of 41.** Simone and I bonded over both being very active advocates for people living with our personal diseases. Simone formed ODAT (organ donation & transplant) many years ago and worked tirelessly on multiple levels to try and improve **transplant** conditions, treatments, and support for those living with **severe kidney disease** like she was.

Born with only one kidney **her battle to survive started very early.** I used to think of Simone and her parents as the three Musketeers because they were always together. They overcame so much diversity, disappointment, and hardship, but through it all they continued to support the community with fundraisers highlighting the importance of organ donation in Australia. They had as much fun as they could. Every Christmas they entered their house in the Christmas lights competition and we all voted for them. Their displays were magnificent.

Among Simone's many achievements she was also the **'Young Australian of The Year'**, she sat on the Board of Directors for Transplant Australia and was nominated for many other awards over the years. Simone is what I considered to be a quiet achiever. As a qualified lawyer she was very adept at keeping up with the medical professionals and holding her ground. She was a true advocate and leader in her field and they are the poorer for losing her.

I spoke to both of her beautiful parents shortly after Simone passed, and naturally they are devastated and completely lost without her. It is up to us to keep her memory alive and share all the wonderful things about her that made her so unique.

I would like to acknowledge all her hard work, and contributions to the many people, and organisations she worked alongside. She will be missed so very much.... God Rest her Soul.

Love + blessings always. Melissa x



Daughter of
Jennifer & Patrick McMahon
Born to this life: 9th June 1982
Born to Eternal Life: 11th April 2023





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Our Vision

Chronically Inspired envisions a community where individuals, with chronic illnesses, mental health issues & disabilities both physical and intellectual, are accepted into our society exactly as they are. Recognised as having the same qualities, talents, flaws, and challenges as anyone else. And given the same advantages and privilege without exception.



Our Mission

Chronically Inspired exists to reinforce the purity of one message: the lived experience and patient expert stories. We empower through inspiring storytelling, informative content, and supportive collaboration of the unique journeys and lived experiences from our collaborators, and through our networking to highlight the incredible lives so many in our community are living despite their many challenges.