

A Collection of Life Stories

The Brilliant Foundation

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memores acti prudentes futuri

- mindful of what has been done, aware of what will be -

A Collection of Life Stories

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A Collection of Life Stories

An eclectic mix of insights, moments, events and life stories captured reflecting the spirit, culture and thoughts of our global brilliant community.

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The Brilliant Foundation

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Our Story

Co-Founders, Dr Renée Ralph and Alrick Dorett established The Brilliant Foundation in 2019.

Our mission is to support the youth and younger generation with an inspiring platform of life stories, in the view of offering alternative outlook of lives lived. When we were younger, we realised that if we had a mentor early on in our lives, perhaps, our careers and personal lives may have turned out differently.

Instead of learning by experience, we would have insights from established professionals, mentors or coaches that could have help provide a different decision making perspective in our lives and careers.

The Brilliant Foundation is a social enterprise celebrating ordinary individuals who have dealt with lives extraordinary challenges. It seeks to do things differently by recognising that change can be made by the youth and old when they collaborate together.

Earlier this year in March, The Brilliant Foundation held its inaugural music event “The Music That Moves Us” in partnership with Local & Aesthetic and Foundation of Indigenous Sustainable Health (FISH) to raise funds for First Nations. WAAPA graduates and Perth musicians came together, hand-in-hand to support a worthwhile cause.

It was a successful event with full house attendance that took a year of organising with music rehearsals included. It was so good to have so many young ones and musicians volunteering.

The Brilliant Foundation has held complimentary sundowners for undergraduates for the past three years. The youth and students have listened to industry guest speakers and academics; widened their networks and engaged with professionals in a comfortable venue overlooking the Indian Ocean.

In building our global brilliant community, we have reached countries across the world including France, United States, China, Taiwan, Germany, Switzerland, Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, and of course, Singapore and Australia

Over the years, we are extremely grateful for individuals who have authored their life stories or shared with us. It is our belief that every contribution has somehow helped the youth or hopefully, resonated with us, as individuals to do better and live a meaningful life with purpose.

We are immensely thankful for the Founding Members who believed in our vision – Elizabeth Richards, Dr Vanessa Aitienza-Hipilito, Fifi Mondello, Dr Sandy Chong, Dr Amy Wei Tian, Don Bosco, Phd, Charlotte Goh, Alba Gomez, Dr Karen Sutherland, and pioneer members Alexander Circosta, Marina Mikula and Josh Galvin, our youngest member. These members have volunteered their time in support of The Brilliant Foundation.

From our small group based in Perth, Queensland and Singapore, we have grown our global community members to over 2,000 on LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook. It has been tremendous to see the traction and change we have achieved from an idea to reality.

We hope you enjoy reading the e-Book titled "*A Collection of Life Stories – The Brilliant Foundation Volume One 2023*" from ordinary extraordinary individuals. It is an eclectic mix curated from our website of articles, interviews, opinions, experiences, perspectives, events, achievements and moments that have contributed to the organic growth and spirit of our community and brilliant members since 2019.

The stories are not in chronological order, we have featured the individual narratives first, followed by the authors reflecting their thoughts and involvement in their passion and interests in music, books, travel, art, science, sport, multiculturalism, entertainment, mental health, culture, entrepreneurship, innovation, various events and more. It is the doing that matters and creating an impact that is positive, encouraging, significant and meaningful.

A life story represents a new culture that exists when a community comes together and creates their own tribe.

It has been heart-warming to see the holistic expression of our life stories, unique culture and spirit accomplished through our members and community of The Brilliant Foundation.

Every contribution counts. Every life has value. Every life inspires. Carpe Diem.

Gratefully yours,



Dr Renée Ralph is the Co-Founder of The Brilliant Foundation and an educator at the Faculty of Business and Law, School of Management and Marketing, Curtin University and at Edith Cowan University, teaching undergraduates and postgraduate students. For over 20 years, she has worked at a senior level, publishing creative works, managing brand and communication portfolios for new start-ups and established multi-national companies.

Renée's research speciality and curiosity lie in how organisations and individuals arrive at their decision point - in particular, how these decisions impact on the overall strategic cross-cultural communications, employee engagement, stakeholders, international partnerships and the wider community.

Renée is a Scholarship Recipient sponsored by Curtin Entrepreneurship and Commercialisation Ignition Scholarships 2023 from 3-8 September 2023 for The Brilliant Foundation. She's a Finalist 2023 for the Multicultural Business Excellence Award; Finalist 2022 for Online and Education Communities Excellence. In 2023, she was nominated for Teaching and Learning Excellence at Curtin University.



Alrick Dorett is the Co-Founder of The Brilliant Foundation and has been in the advertising industry for the last 25 years. A Certified Practising Accountant (CPA) by trade, he is currently the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of TBWA Singapore and Malaysia,; the Chief Pricing Officer (CPO) for TBWA Asia and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) with TBWA..

Alrick has been part of the transformation team and operationalising those outcomes with the companies that he has worked for. His interest lies in incorporating technology into businesses, B2B pricing, and coaching and mentoring start-ups and troubled businesses.

A BOOK OF BRILLIANT JOURNEYS

By Don Bosco

Welcome to this book of personal stories, filled with uplifting insights about life, work, health, success, challenges, growth, relationships and more.

All the contributors in this book, they're basically sharing stories of how they've made their amazing journeys through life. By navigating not just the external, material world, but also the inner landscape of self-awareness and emotional growth.

This journey starts when we realise that something needs to change.

Our head might be telling us one thing, but our heart will want something else. And to complicate matters, the path in front could seem to meander in a completely different direction.

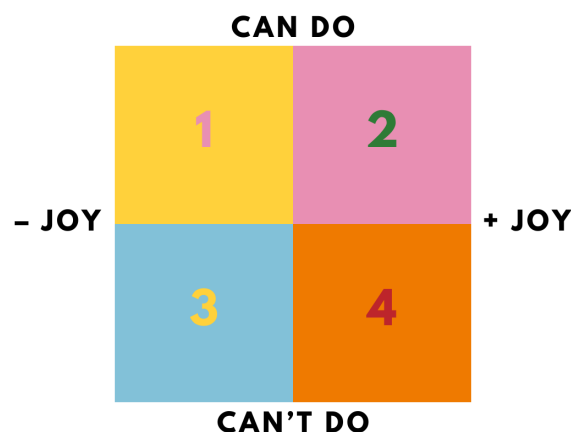
As these stories show, this is the time to make changes, take risks, and rediscover what we're really about.

All sorts of happiness and fulfillment await.

*

As varied as these stories might seem, they reflect the same internal transitions that are relevant to all of us.

Consider this simple diagram:



BOX 1 — Can do, no Joy

This box contains the stuff you might have skills for, or the education, but they don't actually bring you satisfaction. Time to REFLECT: do you need to keep doing them for any good reason? Do they serve any higher purpose in your life? How could you transition from this to Box 2, or Box 4?

BOX 2 — Can do, with Joy

Here, you have the skills or training for these activities, and it brings you so much happiness to be engaged in this manner. Congratulations! You THRIVE here. Don't get too attached, though. You'll wake up one day and realise that you've somehow drifted into Box 1. But for now, enjoy. And use your gifts to benefit others around you.

BOX 3 — Can't do, no Joy

This stuff is difficult for you, and unpleasant. It may even be bringing you down. If you DITCH the stuff here, this might bring quick improvement to your quality of life. You could also try moving to one of the other Boxes. Sometimes though, a situation that appears utterly impossible and unloveable might actually lead to a miraculous transformation. Don't struggle alone: speak to mentors, learn to discern.

BOX 4 — Can't do, with Joy

You can't easily do the stuff here, it feels new and strange and challenging, yet it brings you joy. This is the zone where you LEARN. And GROW. Your innocent joy will keep you blazing through the learning curve. And in time you'll inevitably shift to Box 2. It'll feel sweet.

*

As you read on, make a mental map for each contributor.
Identify and chart their awakenings and journeys from
one Box to another.

And note how actions that seemed random or futile at
first, even to the writers themselves, ended up
developing momentum and unfolding in a purposeful
direction.

You might get an idea or two to apply to your life.
Perhaps not immediately, but one day.

May your own journeys be as rewarding.

May you feel Brilliant.

—END—

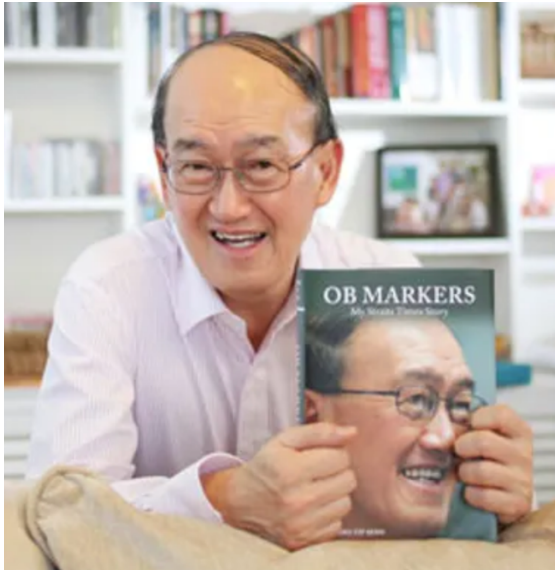
Partnership and Life after Straits Times

Cheong Yip Seng

Contributing Member

Singapore

by Renée Ralph, 2020



SINGAPORE - In an up close and personal exchange, Mr Cheong Yip Seng reveals his tenacity as the former editor of The Straits Times, out of 43 years, 19 of them as the Editor-In-Chief, a legacy that is revered in Singapore. He attributes his hard-earned success in remaining focussed and the passion that fuelled him to craft stories with his professional team of journalists all those years.

Cheong Yip Seng acknowledges his zealousness and perseverance in Straits Times is made possible, by his partner-in-life and soul-mate, Cecily. Cecily and Cheong Yip Seng have been married for 50 years and are celebrating their Golden Wedding Anniversary in 2020 - an admirable

achievement to reach this significant milestone in life.

In his personal life, Cheong Yip Seng states that he is blessed with a fairly large family: "My wife, three children and their children; nine grandchildren in all, ranging in age from 20 years to 11 months. They all live nearby, so regular get-togethers are for me some of the best things in life." These family precious moments are treasured by Cecily and Cheong Yip Seng, enjoying the fruits of their labour together.



Photo credit : Cheong Yip Seng

By nature, Cheong Yip Seng is a logical and methodical individual. He confronts each issue, life and news with steadfast rationality, common sense and lucidity. In his spiritual awakening, Cheong Yip Seng explains: "Without faith, life is robbed of its meaning. Without it, you lose your sense of what is right and wrong. As scripture puts it, you cannot live on bread alone. You can, but life will be dry and quite tasteless. Your faith gives you

an anchor, and underpins your relationship with God, family, friends and society at large.”

Cecily and Cheong Yip Seng have been an accomplished couple to their friends and an exemplar in parenthood for their offspring, in balancing their family and professional work life. In reality, it has not been an easy path to maintain the equilibrium in their hectic daily lives and the source of their strength is secured on their spiritual journey.

Their faith binds their souls and connect life’s perspectives on a different paradigm for Cecily and Cheong Yip Seng. Both individuals have lived life to the fullest, at home and at work, their union grounded on values of loyalty, respect, commitment and love for each other. Their concept of love is in essence of two minds and souls entwined, having the same vision and working towards a similar direction in life, leaning and learning from each other.

No doubt every partnership has its vicissitudes in life, which both have managed to overcome by establishing routine, trust and a strong foundation at home. With their sanctuary settled, Cheong Yip Seng goes to the Straits Times equipped and is prepared for the intensity of the newsroom and extra hours worked at his desk.

Cheong Yip Seng recognises his blessing of having a partner and confidant that he can fully rely on. He

says: “My wife is an excellent home builder. Cecily built us a house of love.” It is hoped that their children realise the partnership and sacrifices that he and his wife have made in giving them a loving home.



Photo credit : The Straits Times

Reflecting his career as a journalist, Cheong Yip Seng expresses in fondness: “I spent most of my career watching and covering the birth and early decades of Singapore. It was an awesome privilege. It was a dirt poor city in the early 1960s; very few people had flush toilets and life was hard. However, the spirit was gritty because we were mostly poor and full of determination to give life a go. Work gave me many opportunities to be in touch with people from all walks of life - the policeman, fireman, people who went to the courts for all kinds of reasons, from violent crime to million-dollar frauds, to political combat.”

The Straits Times is the heartbeat of Singapore.

The clarity in communications is vital for Singaporeans to understand the

policies of the Singapore government and the direction and future of the tiny island.

It is riveting to witness how the formation of Singapore unfolded and to cover those epic moments in a daily story is essentially creating history.



Photo credit : The Straits Times

On 9 August 1965, Singapore is annexed by Malaya to survive on its own, its citizens are made up of foreign bound immigrants from South East Asia and Europe. The leaders in Singapore and its citizens had the foresight and insurmountable challenge to shape their tiny island, their home into a remarkable nation as it is today.

Cheong Yip Seng reminisces that “The politicians were the most memorable. They were the pioneer political leaders who conceptualised and navigated Singapore's rise. It gave me a close-up look at how they make and implement policy.

They ruled with a firm hand, too firm for some, the tensions generated were a constant challenge for the media: how to cater to two competing needs.

On the one hand, little tolerance for dissent on the grounds that too much of it impeded national development and on the other, the yearning of an increasingly well-educated electorate that rightly believes that diversity of opinion eventually produced the better results.”



Photo credit : The Straits Times

After stepping down from his editorial duties at The Straits Times, Cheong Yip Seng continued to pen his thoughts and journalistic experience in his book titled "OB Markers – My Straits Times Story" in 2012. Lee Kuan Yew, Prime Minister of Singapore from 1959 to 1990 stated the book is a must read. "*Cheong Yip Seng was a most reliable news editor, later Chief Editor of The Straits Times. He spent over four decades with the papers, from British times right up to the present day with it under Singaporean ownership. He has written of Singapore's travails through merger, then independence, and the obstacles that had to be overcome with independence without a hinterland. He was a witness and reported these challenging and game-changing events and has written vividly on them.*"

It is logical to deduce that under the leadership of Cheong Yip Seng at its helm, the stories at The Straits Times

present itself as a medium of consistent communication as well as a catalyst for what Singapore is today – immigrants that have validated Singapore as their homeland, strengthened by stable governance and visionary leadership.

In his retirement, Cheong Yip Seng walks every day and weather permitting, enjoys a game of golf once a week with Cecily and friends. He shares: “I spend many hours watching what is going on in Singapore and around the world, a habit of a lifetime, by reading The Straits Times, Channel News Asia, Financial Times, New York Times, and South China Morning Post, the Hong Kong newspaper where I did part-time advisory work until 2020 for just over eight years, based mostly in Singapore. Reading books takes up the rest of the day. I read Henry Kissinger quite a lot, and books on China, Japan and India. I am now reading a book called Bending Adversity, by a Financial Times correspondent, David Pilling, about the Japanese art of surviving war and never-ending natural disasters.”

In relation to traditional print media and the rise of digital media, Cheong Yip Seng provides an insight of today's journalism where quality and integrity may be compromised.

Cheong Yip Seng observes: “Social media is both a blessing and a curse. You can imagine how much poorer we will be without it - connecting with family and friends via WhatsApp and

other platforms, wherever they may be around the world or in your neighbourhood.

How quickly you are on top of what is happening around the world? There is a price and opportunity cost though - it is a much noisier world, with less time for contemplation and plenty of bandwidth for mischief. Many lives have been lost in racial and religious strife which thrives on the technology that touches raw nerves instantly.”

For the current generation, storytelling takes a different turn where readers have to be mindful in weeding out sensationalism and proactively seek quality news digitally.

Cheong Yip Seng explains: “It has also devastated the traditional media platforms, forcing hundreds of media companies to shrink or close and many more to lose their livelihoods. Information is now easily available at little cost - it has also forced the more competent ones to raise their game.

Those who can provide quality succeed; by helping readers make sense of the news, a service they are prepared to pay for. It can only be produced by writers with a firm grasp of their subjects and the communications skills to convey content in a compelling way, like a great storyteller who will always find an audience.

So on balance, social media is engineering a flight to quality, which can only be a plus for those who need

to navigate an increasingly complex world.”

For now, Cheong Yip Seng is relaxing and revelling with his loved ones in his twilight years. His keen mind and reflections in his life, will be an ongoing story that will have a happily-ever-after.

Living An Authentic Life And Escaping the Comparison Trap

Fifi Mondello

Founding Member

Perth, Western Australia, 2021



Theodore Roosevelt famously said - "*Comparison is the thief of joy*". And yet, comparison seems to be the basis upon which modern life is built. Social media bombards us with images of how our lives "should" be - how we should look, what we should wear, what car we should drive and what handbag we should be carrying. And yet these seductive glimpses into the life we *could* have - the life that is waiting at the end of a checkout (real or virtual) - leave us feeling empty, unfulfilled and with a sense of having failed. We constantly compare ourselves with others, who invariably seem to be living better, more exciting and more successful lives than we are.

This pervasive sense of dissatisfaction has been highlighted by the current

state of the world, but has the global pandemic been the wake-up call that it should have been?

It seems to me that we have lost sight of what is authentic and what is truly important and have instead bought into the lie that the more stuff (and status) we have, the happier we'll be.

It was this realisation that 13 years ago led me to the decision to walk away from a promising career as a corporate lawyer and instead listen to the truth that was in my heart.

After graduating as Valedictorian of my year and with First Class Honours in Law, I strolled straight into a job in a large national law firm. I was naïve and idealistic and had no idea of what lay ahead of me. I worked relentlessly hard - the days and nights were long, working weekends was par for the course and at first, I just accepted the terms of the job and knuckled down and did what was apparently necessary. I had no time for family, friends or pleasure.

After eight years, the nature of the profession took its toll. By that stage, I had been promoted to Senior Associate (the level below Partner) and was considered to be on the partnership track. I was good at my job, but I hated it. A naturally optimistic, animated and happy person, I had become angry, depressed and despondent. The astronomical stress levels resulted in insomnia and anxiety and I was constantly in tears. The thing

that struck me the most was that nobody in the Institution seemed to care – as long as the work was being done and hours were being billed, that was all that mattered.

I started to see the moral vacuum for what it was and was scared that I was becoming a part of it. I realised I wasn't living an authentic life and that all the money in the world wasn't worth what I was enduring. Ultimately, it took me several years to finally make the decision to walk away and stop denying who I really was.

Fundamentally and elementally, I have an artistic soul. I am a Creator. My life has been steeped in music, theatre and dance. I have been on the stage since I was a small child and performing – particularly singing - has always been my great love and a warm and reassuring constant throughout my life (while studying Law, I also completed an Arts degree with a major in Theatre Studies). I started dance lessons when I was 3, piano when I was 5, speech and drama lessons at 8, formal singing lessons as a teen. I have written volumes of poetry, essays and songs. I always wanted to be a singer and performer in general, but I never thought it was a realistic dream.

Somewhere along the line I was convinced, partly by myself, that I should pursue the life that was “expected” of someone like me – someone with my grades, intelligence and aptitude for learning. A life that

would be financially lucrative and with a status that was befitting of someone with my abilities, and which certainly made me a Poster Girl for children of immigrants (my parents were both born in Sicily, but that's another story).

Over the past 13 years, I have learnt a lot of very valuable lessons. I took the leap off the treadmill and followed the road less travelled and am now living a simpler, more honest, authentic and happy life. I feel extremely grateful and privileged to be able to live my passion. Every time I am booked for a gig, every time I get up on that stage, every time I get to perform a show I've written, or somebody casts me in a show they've written, every time I sing to a warm, appreciative audience, every single time I get to do what I love – I say thank you.



There is a certain tendency to devalue Art, to say that Art is not work. This is a stunning failure to understand and recognise the value of Art in our society. A society without Art is culturally, spiritually and emotionally bereft. Art enriches our existence, helps us make sense of this thing we call life and has the power to change our world for the better.

NEW DATE · NEW VENUE

FIFI MONDELLO
DEFIANT
WOMEN

Voices of protest and change

FRINGE WORLD
FESTIVAL 2021

TUES 23 FEB
AT 7.00PM

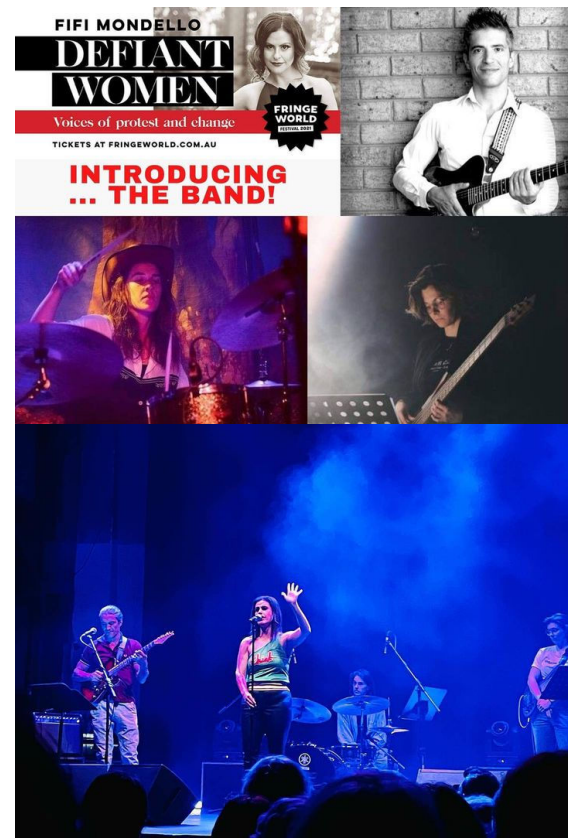
THE RECHABITE

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Living an artistic life requires a certain amount of grit and determination. There is constant rejection, self-doubt, regular bouts of impostor syndrome. Hours of work and devotion in the face of constant uncertainty. There is also a lot of vulnerability – you are constantly laying yourself bare for your audience. Artists are often perceived as vain and egotistical, but the reality is, what we do isn't about us, it's about our audience.

If I can impart something to a person sitting in that audience – make them feel something, connect with them or touch them in some way, make their own personal journey or their inner

struggles easier, bring them joy, then that is the best reward.



With each passing year, I've learnt to be humbler, less judgmental, more patient and empathetic and also a lot easier on myself. I've realised that I am my own, harshest critic and the reality is that, more often than not, the way people perceive us is completely different to (and more positive than) how we perceive ourselves. I try not to fall into the comparison trap and measure myself against others.

Sometimes our egos motivate us and inform our decisions, whereas instead we need to live our own unique lives, be true to ourselves, travel our own paths and be brave enough to do something different.



I've certainly learnt the importance of refusing to conform, of standing up for what you believe in and, more importantly, standing up for others. Instead of hiding in a cocoon of privilege, we should take notice of other people's suffering and do our own small part to try and make the world a better place, rather than engaging in a never-ending competition with those we perceive as better off than us.

Jealousy is a pointless, wasted emotion and uses up energy that could be better applied to more important pursuits. You never really know what's going on in someone's life and beneath the veneer of a charmed life, you may find real pain and suffering. People are often hiding their battles, drowning in unnecessary shame and fearful of persecution and condemnation.

In a gentler world, we would be honest about what we're going through, instead of trying to pretend everything is ok all the time and perpetuating a lie that becomes a self-imposed prison.

Part of the problem is that kindness is an undervalued commodity. People can be so cruel, especially behind the shield of a device. Ironically, I've seen so much abuse and ill will that has come out of the events of the past year or so. Instead, we should always try and put ourselves in other people's shoes, rather than engage in aggressive attacks. Kindness and compassion are always a better response than anger and vitriol, accusations and recriminations.

And so, I continue to learn and grow, succeed and fail, stumble and conquer. Sometimes I still have to quell that negative and naughty voice in my head, inciting rebellions against hard-fought peace and harmony. I thought I'd have it all figured out by now, but I don't and that's ok.

Life continues to surprise, challenge and sometimes - just sometimes - delight me. And in those quiet moments, when I sit and catch my breath, I reflect on everything I have to be thankful for and, well, there is nothing in the world that compares to that.

<https://fifimondello.com>

An Extraordinary Violinist

Madeleine Antoine

Pioneer Member

Perth, Western Australia

By Renée Ralph, 2022



Childhood

At a tender age of 4, Madeleine Antoine first brush with music was the piano, a percussionist instrument. She laughed wistfully remembering how she was "fired" as a student from her piano teacher because she just couldn't sit still on the piano bench. She wriggled and swayed whilst playing a tune. Madeleine says: "I was impatient to play and would interrupt my teacher."

Her mother who yearned for Madeleine, her youngest of six children, to learn ANY musical instrument, finally

found an instrument that she could move and dance to – the violin.

As destiny would have it, Madeleine's mum located Phillip Noer, an American violinist based in Albany. He started teaching Madeleine the Steiner Method for violin when she was six years old. As Madeleine was home-schooled, the lessons took place every week on an hourly basis and by the age of 9 years, she was able to play a Concerto.



Photo : Madeleine Antoine with her first violin teacher, Phillip Noer, his wife and her mum in Albany.

Madeleine and Toffee

Her mum would encourage Madeleine to busk solo in the local town of Albany to practice her violin from 7 years to 9 years of age.

Madeleine simply states: "My mum knew that was one of the ways that she would get me to practice my violin was to perform in front of people."

When Phillip Noer returned home to America when Madeleine was nine years old, her mum made the decision to move to Perth to pursue Madeleine's passion, talent and innate musicality.

By now, Madeleine can play by ear and

create music to define her emotions and feelings.

When Madeleine lived in Fremantle (Freo), they had a family dog, named Toffee.

Madeleine and Toffee were an adorable duo basking in Freo, performing classical music on strings. As Madeleine explained that it provided a base for good practise and learning how to perform and interact with her audience.

"I would have my little doggie, Toffee tied around my ankle. Toffee has the same hair colour as me. Thinking back, I suppose that was the cute factor, as passer-by would toss a gold coin or two in my violin case."

I asked: "What did you do with the money you earned when you were 7 years old?" Madeleine responded: "I gave it to my mum so that I could help contribute and pay for the violin lessons."

From a young age, Madeleine understood the value of saving money and helping out where she could for her family. Her mum helped set up a bank account for her to understand how an enterprise works and the meaning of having her own financial independence. Jacek Slawomirski was her next violin teacher from Poland and he remained her teacher for eight years. He was an influential teacher and made an impact on her teen hood years till she reached university.



Photo : Madeleine Antoine performing with Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra (MetSO) with her teacher, Jacek Slawomirski.

She remembered when she saw Philip Noer again in Tasmania, when she was 25 years old. She was still nervous playing a piece in front of him, in hope that the music was perfect!

During her high school years, Madeleine received a music scholarship from Methodist Ladies' College (MLC) and the highlight of her education there was the two week music tour in Europe. To her, it was an experience that was etched in her memory and led her to orchestra music.

In 2011, she went to the Prague Conservatory, at least 50 MLC students travelled there to play music. She was taught by a Professor there for a couple of months.

Madeleine achieved a 98% TEE Score in Music Performance - the highest in the State for Music. In 2012, she was on the Dean's Honour Roll for achieving a high distinction (95%) for her graduation recital.



Photo of Madeleine Antoine by Rebekah Wilson Photography

In her early twenties, Madeleine worked as a violin tutor for 5 years at Methodist Ladies College. She is now teaching at John XXIII College for the past 9 years and she loves her role. Madeleine encourages her students and makes sure that they have a positive experience with music. During this time Madeleine studied at WAAPA (Bachelor of Music) with Peter Tanfield and then at UWA (Higher Degree Preliminary) with Paul Wright. In 2018, Madeleine enrolled in Masters of Performance with Western Australian Academy of Performing

Arts(WAAPA), studying with international soloist Alexandre Da Costa.

Her love of music reached a greater and deeper level, where she had to rehearse a recital and commission a piece of music. She worked with award-winning Australian composer Rebecca Erin Smith, a Fulbright Scholar to develop her own piece of music.

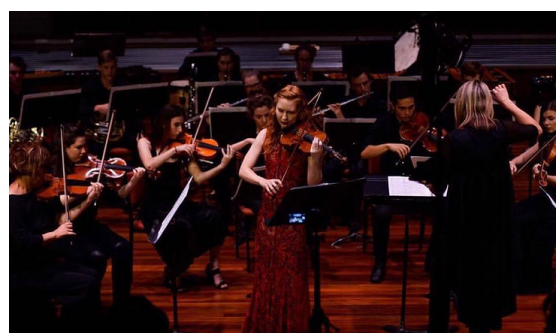


Photo: Madeleine Antoine performing "Maninyas" Concerto by Ross Edwards with orchestra in recital at WAAPA

Madeleine felt her piece needed to reflect the environment and her inspiration came from Ross Edwards Maninyas Concerto for Violin. The music represented the natural world that needed to be preserved and protected. The sound of insects in the bush, birds fluttering in the trees, just listening to these sounds in nature is pure delight. She performed The Dying Sun with Setsu Masuda, the pianist. The Dying Sun is a work for violin and piano in four movements.

A collaboration between Rebecca Erin Smith and landscape photographer Andrew J Clarke in each movement. *Photos were projected behind the performance of the difference*

landscapes - Sugarloaf Rock, the Milky Way, a canola field or in the bloody red backdrop of the setting sun. Each movement is a distillation of an iconic Western Australian image into musical form – titled Blood, Milk, Nectar, Salt.



Underwater photo by Nik Babic, photographer with ballet dancer Gen O'Keeffe and Madeleine Antoine



Photo : Madeleine Antoine is at Brookleigh Estate.

By combining music, environment and study, Selfless Orchestra was created. Selfless is a Post-Rock Orchestra that creates spaces in which hope and despair co-exist to inspire social and environmental justice. Influenced by Post-Rock acts that fuse classical and contemporary styles, founding members Steven Alyian (Injured Ninja, Usurper of Modern Medicine, Doublethink Prism), Ray Grenfell (Last Quokka), Madeleine Antoine and Jerome Turle (The Weapon Is Sound). Selfless challenging conventions of traditional music in immersive shows that break the fourth wall, with their album called 'Great Barrier,' a composition designed to educate and empower audiences to become part of a movement to help protect Australia's Great Barrier Reef. Selfless played in the Pines Festival at University of Western Australia, Fairbridge Festival and Nannup Festival. Selfless' album was launched by Raymond Grenfell, who manages Perth company Stock Records and plays the bass in the band, Babayaga with Madeleine (violin) with Cameron Potts (Drums), Cara Teusner-Gartland (Piano), Nicholas Pratt (Guitar). Babayaga concentrates on classical melodies, heavy rock rhythms and punk sensibilities.

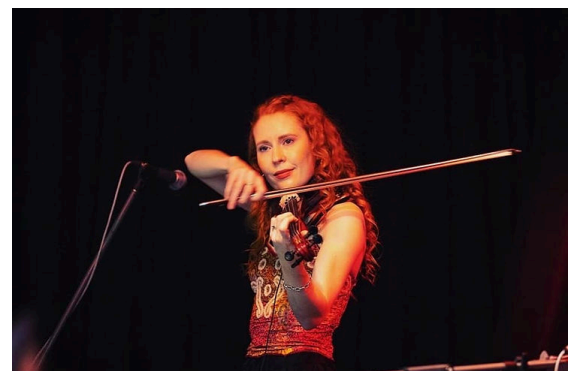


Photo: Launch of Fieldsy

Madeleine is a chameleon with her music, she is portrayed as one of the Goddesses of *Mousai* (Muses), the source of knowledge embodied in the poetry, lyric songs, and myths that were related orally for centuries in ancient Greek culture. Madeleine creates her own music to be listened to.

Horse-riding and Ray of Sunshine

In 2017, her sister took Madeleine horse-riding at Hamilton Hill, there she bumped into Raymond (Ray) Grenfell. They started chatting, he invited her to join a new music project, however she had to go away to Canada for a six week tour with the L'Orchestra de la Francophonie, an orchestra based in Montreal. When she returned, they formed a partnership and began writing music together in Selfless Orchestra, sparks flew and three years later, both of them are engaged to be married.



Photo : Horse-riding is another passion of Madeleine's

Making Her Own Music and Violinist Extraordinaire

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, performances were halted and it gave Madeleine the time to create her own solo album, with Stock Records. She is extremely excited as her music has been pressed on vinyl record. Her pieces of music will be launched shortly.



Eskimo Joe, Stella Donnelly and Madeleine Antoine with Perth Symphony Orchestra in the new WA Museum Boola Bardip. Check out this breathtaking first-time collaboration of 'From the Sea' under Otto, the 123-year-old blue whale skeleton. [Watch video clip here](#)

Madeleine is a family member of the Perth Symphony Orchestra (PSO). PSO was founded in 2011 and is known as the orchestra that breaks the rules. It was launched by Bourby Webster and her company North Street Music. Bourby, a viola player from the United Kingdom, was encouraged by many of WA's outstanding classical players to start an orchestra.



Photo : Perth Symphony Orchestra celebrating their 10th Year Anniversary playing AMADEUS Live at Crown Theatre.

With Bourby Webster at the helm of Perth Symphony Orchestra, she created INNEKA – Electric, Edgy, Extraordinary. Madeleine Antoine is one of the four strong women with their stunning electric instruments, igniting the senses with a shared passion to perform. The electrifying team comprising Sasha the Cellist, Pascale the Violinist and Jasmine, the violinist who also plays the saxophone.

Since the birth of INNEKA in 2020, the electric quartet has performed for the launch of WA Museum Boola Bardip. The Western Australian Museum is the State's premier cultural organisation, housing WA's scientific and cultural collection. INNEKA's debut was at the Telethon Western Australia 2020, featured live on Channel 7 Telethon Trust. Musical Guru Madeleine's love for music is shown in her willingness to

experiment with all forms of genre with her art form – from classical, pop, punk rock, electric, soloist and freelancing. Her music involvement can be found in the following social media platforms:

1. [Perth Symphony Orchestra](#)
2. [Selfless Orchestra](#)
3. [Babayaga](#)
4. [Stock Records](#)
5. [INNEKA](#)
6. Soloist with [DJ Shann](#)
7. [Fieldsy](#) with Nicki Agnosti
8. [Madeleine Antoine](#) - freelancing with Little Birdie Band and Katie Steele



Photo : INNEKA the opening act for Eurhythmics at HBF Stadium with Perth Symphony Orchestra. (Watch their [performance video clip](#) here at another event, Gala Dinner, REIWA Awards May 2021)



Madeleine Antoine has played in the orchestra with Michael Bublé twice, the legendary Rod Stewart, James Morrison, Diana Krall and Australian's icon, Olivia Newton-John.



Photo : Madeleine Antoine in the orchestra with Sir Rod Stewart



Photo : Madeleine in centre stage with the Western Australia Ballet at the Quarry Amphitheatre with WA Ballet "Strings 32"

One of Madeleine's highlights would be her involvement with the Western Australia Ballet at the Quarry Amphitheatre and at the Sydney Theatre.

She was dressed in a beautiful ornate costume in the middle of the stage, playing her violin with the ballerinas dancing and swerving around her. She said as a soloist, it was magical to have the violin music and another art form collide to create a memorable performance with the setting sun and the stars twinkling in the still night.

Values and Causes

Madeleine is a strong supporter of the environment, action on climate change, homelessness and the First Nations Peoples in Australia.

Through her music, she has raised funds for Maiti Nepal Charity for women and children that have been trafficked, experienced domestic violence and part of the flesh trade and are now trying to make a living and have a fresh start in life. They have raised \$8,000 so far for the charity.

Words of Wisdom For budding musicians, Madeleine shares the following five points:

LISTEN to music as much as you can. It is as good as practising when you are learning at the same time.

CREATING music. Think of what you are trying to express. How do you convey that? Write your music down. Sometimes, just press record and create your mood, feeling and thoughts.

COLLABORATING with others. People inspire. Work with people that inspire you. Take that energy. Create music together. Think about who you are working with.

ENJOYING and having fun with the whole experience. Embody the whole experience, immerse yourself in the experience, and value above all else freedom of expression.

WORKING HARD. Continue to work hard on your craft.

When I am studying at WAAPA, the hours are long - we are working 5 days a week and are playing 9 hours every day. We work in chamber music, orchestra, and solo practise. It is hard work but I am very grateful for the experience. Before you can break the rules, you must learn the rules in order to INNOVATE and CREATE. Musicians can learn the classical music, then learn how to create from this and apply it to all genres of music. Above all, Madeleine says that she is grateful for her family supporting her all these years. Her mum attends all her performances and concerts.

www.madeleineantoine.com



Photo of Madeleine Antoine by Nik Babic, photographer



Photo: Madeleine Antoine with Selfless Orchestra Planet Royale Theatre on Friday, 8th October 2021



Photo: Madeleine Antoine with Perth Symphony Orchestra celebrating their 10th Year Anniversary playing AMADEUS Live at Crown Theatre.



Photo: Madeleine playing with BABAYAGA



Photo: Madeline Antoine at PS Art Space



Photo : Madeline Antoine with her mum, Colleen 25th Anniversary Awesome Arts Closing Festival 2021 with Perth Symphony Orchestra.



In The Face I Fear, I Find My Courage

Charlotte Goh

Founding Member

Singapore, 2020



I am of the age when I am more comfortable with fear and recognise the truth- that courage takes place in the face of fear; not the absence of it. Born with Tourette Syndrome, I grew up feeling highly insecure, always feeling not good enough, fearing what others think of me, fearing I wasn't up to scratch. I overcompensated with my extension of myself, to 'make up' for what I was not.

And I realise that no matter how much inner work I do on myself, the fears, the insecurities still rears its head, even after all these years. That's when I realise, like an old friend, when they come to visits me, I am reminded of how much stronger, aware and more insightful I can be, to learn how to

speak to it, process it and quell it. Then, I try to respond, not react.

In my late teenage years, as a coping mechanism, I became bulimic and struggled with this eating disorder for the next 20 years. Stuffing myself with food comforted me somewhat, then purging it, allowed me to release all the uncomfortable feelings I had within. As you can imagine, it was more than vanity, it was a way to cope, a way to live and to survive.

In my 20s, I started smoking when I was in university. Another way of coping or numbing my fears.

Fast forward to year 36 of my life. I married my husband Hannes who loves me regardless of my eating disorder and all my complexities. This secure space of love started to slowly nourish me. I was trying to get pregnant, and my dear friend Visha told me that it is hard to retain a pregnancy if I am throwing up 6 times a day. That might have been obvious to anyone else, but it was an AHA! moment for me. This fateful day started my inner work journey.

At 38, I became bulimia-free. At 39, thanks to Pam Oei who did the Allan Carr magic on me, I became smoke-free (after years of hypnosis, patches, pills, and countless attempts).

At 40, Jonas was born. Jonas, our son is now 10 years of age. He is a beautiful, sweet-hearted boy that warms my heart every day when I look at him.

Also at 40, I started looking within; at my fears and at the self I had come to hate for so many years. I recognised that it would take some work to face my insecurities, fears and learn to love myself. You could say my life lesson was to love myself.

It was a hard journey that threatened to bring out more emotions like anger, resentment, unforgiveness, guilt, and more fear. It required courage. Each step of the way, I understood more about myself. The process brought healing; inner healing, peace and liberation.

If I can share three points that helped me in my journey, these would be it:

The Power of Inner Work and Self-awareness

When you work on yourself, you become more self-aware about who you are- to yourself, to others and to your environment. Self-awareness is one of the most powerful aspects of living a fuller life. Self-awareness allows me to hold space for myself, it allows me to reflect and respond- not react to situations and people. It allows me to create. It allows me to be more compassionate and to practice empathy. It paves the way for better decisions because I am able to be more centred, to know my source of strength, my challenges and navigate them. Self-awareness is powerful. Leadership at any level starts with knowing yourself. With that knowledge, you have the ability to navigate your

limiting beliefs and use your strengths to create and respond.

The Power of Relationships Built on Trust

I admit I am an extrovert and I thrive on the energy exchange I have with people.

I have many friends that are introverts. While they draw positive energy from spending time with themselves, they cherish the power of close relationships, built on trust and authenticity.

Trusting relationships empower us. The energy exchange from these genuine relationships fills our buckets.

I have close friends from primary school, secondary school and university. Visha and Limi journeyed with me when my many low moments of my eating disorder hit. They got angry with me for harming myself. They wrote letters to me to stop damaging myself. They were equally desperate that I stop hurting.

Limi lived with me in university, and she could hear the retching in the bathroom repeatedly, feeling helpless. Over the years, we experienced bouts of anger and lies from both sides (the lies were on my side, hiding the truth and then openly falling apart). Ultimately, these invaluable supportive friendships and long-term relationships healed me.

My family was in denial. While it was hard to speak to them about it, the fact

that they accepted me was such a blessing. Maybe a part of this stoic Asian culture “lets-not-speak-about-it” helped me feel accepted somewhat. I knew I had a home, and I knew I was welcomed there.

Giving Back, Helping and Volunteering

I started the first eating disorder support group in Singapore ‘Support for Eating Disorders Singapore’ (SEDS) with two other sufferers and a medical professional from Institute of Mental Health.

While I was still grappling with the illness, we supported others on their journeys. (I must admit, at one stage, it got a wee bit tough for me to be a pillar of support while I was falling apart myself.) I moved on to help others informally – those with eating disorders and those with Tourette Syndrome.

Whether you see giving as altruistic or not, it allows one to take the focus off yourself for a while, and exercise love towards another. The energy exchange, or some say karma, fills your bucket.

Who is Charlotte?

Then

Charlotte was a high-functioning insecure person, who on the outlook, had an aura of confidence which allowed her to perform to perfection in school, and at her job. She was a trained social worker who served as a medical social worker before she

entered the corporate scene. She rose to many professional challenges and personal opportunities to shine. Then, she was the Director of Marketing for a media outfit for 14 years. Together with the team, she launched, CLEO Malaysia; The Singapore Women’s Weekly; The Malaysian Women’s Weekly; Harper’s Bazaar Singapore and Malaysia; and Cosmopolitan Singapore and Malaysia. All this time, dancing between an aura of confidence, and a feeling of helplessness – living in fear of constantly not being good enough.

Now

Charlotte is now still a high functioning person living with Tourette Syndrome, loving life, taking on new challenges each day (as the world presents its uncertainty). She is the executive director of an IPC Charity, loves scuba diving (now limited to Singapore waters), took up mountain biking during COVID19, and most importantly, loves herself and has the courage to face up to her fears, process them and overcome them.

The journey of self-awareness and respond-vs-react is not over. We are human and there are times when insecurities, anger, guilt rears its head.

I acknowledge and recognise these emotions and feel them fully. In doing so, I take a moment – I breathe, I observe, and I proceed with love.

Running a Breast Care Practice and Reaching One's Potential

Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito

Founding Member

Perth, Western Australia

By Renée Ralph, 2021



Sixteen years ago, Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito came by herself from the Philippines with only one piece of 20kg luggage and a hand carry bag to start a new life in Perth.

Vanessa had to borrow money from her younger sister for a one way air ticket to Western Australia. It was a defining moment, to leave Philippines, she felt adventurous to start her own life and yet to nervous to leave her home at the same time, the security and emotional support from her mum and family.

As it turns out, in 2005, she was introduced by a friend to Glenn

Hipolito and they had a friendly banter. According to Vanessa, nothing really happen till she bumped into Glenn Hipolito again at Plaza Arcade Mall. At that point in time, Vanessa was hoping to book a ticket back home to Philippines for four days as she missed her family. She remembered seeing Glenn's friendly and caring smile and finding a boyfriend was the last thing on her mind when she moved to Perth. Glenn and her starting dating and he proposed to her a couple months later that year which she joyfully accepted.

In 2014, she acquired ownership of Women and Breast Imaging (WBI) business together with her husband Glenn. WBI is a boutique breast imaging centre based in Cottesloe. It is a 40 years old business, the first in Australia providing breast imaging service in private practice. It is the only private imaging centre in Western Australia sub-specialised in breast imaging.



In the field of medical sciences,

Vanessa chose health breast care. She was particularly interested in this field because Breast Imaging and Intervention specialty is a unique niche.

Vanessa recognises there is a lack of education and expertise in this field, in particular in breast health and imaging awareness.

She sees her practice as a calling – helping women. She says symbolically: "I am honoured and privileged to be of service to the women of Western Australia."

Vanessa is very passionate in educating General Practitioners and women with regards to their breast health. She says: "It is rewarding to talk to patients and see their happy tears when you tell them they have no breast cancer or when they say they appreciate the personalised breast care service provided. It is heart-warming to talk to women after their breast cancer diagnosis and the gratefulness received for saving their lives."

Before COVID19, Vanessa represented Australia as an expert Breast Radiologist at the largest International Radiology Conference in Chicago. She was one of the speakers together with the international leading experts in Breast imaging, who are authors of many Breast Imaging books and international research articles with Dr Daniel Kopans, Harvard Medical School

and Dr Paula Gordon, University of British Colombia.



Speaker: Breast Imaging Update. The Importance of Breast Screening and Technological Developments. "Health, Your Superpower" 100 Women Event. Hyatt Regency, Perth. February 2020.



RSNA 2019 Chicago USA with leading international experts in Breast Imaging Dr Daniel Kopans and Dr Paula Gordon

Dr Renée Ralph: "Vanessa, coming from the Philippines, how has your life been working in Western Australia and making Perth your home?"

Vanessa replied: "As an immigrant doctor, it has been challenging to find a training position due to competition against local trainees. I was blessed that Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital offered me the training position as fellowship position in Vascular and Interventional Radiology 16 years ago.

It was my stepping stone to study and train overseas."



Millennial Achiever Award presented by Filipino Australian Club of Perth Inc (FACPI) during Philippines Independence Day Gala Night. The Crown Towers, Perth WA. June 2019

Vanessa explains: "After having my first born and taken a few months maternity break, I was fortunate to be offered a short-term advanced trainee position at Princess Margaret Hospital.

As a new mum, it was heartbreaking to meet sick kids and distressed parents. It gave me a lot of anxiety and sadness to see their sufferings and illness.

It was personally disturbing at that stage of my life because my eldest was just 3 months old at the time. I was then offered a 2-year training position in Breast Imaging at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and Royal Perth

Hospital. Since then, I met a lot of consultant radiologist who supported my preparation for the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists (RANZCR)."

"During almost 5 years of training and studying in preparation for the college exams, I have to manage my time to do on-calls working night shifts, weekends and public holidays while being a mum and wife. I am very thankful and grateful for the support of my husband Glenn Hipolito, my mum and my in-laws who looked after my family especially my kids during the busiest and challenging stage of my life."

"I thought to myself, I already completed a degree - four years of study in radiology back in the Philippines and it will take another six years to complete my college exam in Perth."

Vanessa shares: "After passing the college exam and being a qualified Fellow of The Royal Australian & New Zealand College of Radiologists (RANZCR), another challenge was looking for a job. According to the Australian Government Department of Health, I didn't realise at that time that as an immigrant doctor, we are all subjected to a 10-year moratorium which means we are only allowed to work in a district of workforce shortage. This means that I could only work in remote areas until I complete my 10 years here in Australia. "

"Global Diagnostics which is now Apex Radiology (Australia) gave me the break and opportunity to flourish as a junior radiologist. It gave me the opportunity to travel in remote areas like Bunbury, Kwinana, Mandurah, Esperance, Kalgoorlie and Northam. It sparked my interest in interventional procedures. I would fly or drive to remote areas these sites to perform joint and spine procedures which I truly enjoyed."

After completion of her 10-year moratorium, Vanessa was given an opportunity to work locally at WBI, Cottesloe and BreastScreen WA. She felt immense relief that all her hard work came to fruition and she could work in Perth.

On balancing family life, Vanessa explains: "It is challenging to balance work and family. I am thankful and grateful that I have a very supportive and loving husband who understands and respects my vision of becoming a qualified radiologist in women's health and breast care."

In her spare time, Vanessa is an Adjunct Senior Lecturer at Curtin Medical School, Curtin University and University of Western Australia Medical School. Vanessa describes herself as a passionate, hardworking and goal-oriented person.

She says: "I am thankful and grateful that I know my mission and that I love what I do and I know I do it well. I love to teach and share my time and knowledge with the students. It is also

important to give the medical interns in my clinic an entrepreneurial, innovative and business perspective so that they can have the option to either work in a public hospital or private sector or both. As we are aware, medical degrees do not offer commerce advice or insights to undergraduates."



San Lorenzo Ruiz Choir at St Mary's Cathedral

Vanessa is a practising Catholic, she shares: "I believe that my work is my destiny and I pray for every mini and major milestones in my life, studies, work and family."

In her busy life as a doctor with her breast care practice, Vanessa makes time to sing in the church choir weekly with her husband, Glenn who plays the organ, keyboard or piano. For Vanessa, the spiritual commitment binds the family, children and her Filipino migrant community, it also allows Vanessa to reset and clear her mind for the week ahead.

She says: "It is wonderful that we are rostered in three different Catholic churches to sing throughout the year. We would even take a trip up to a

Catholic church in Geraldton to sing at mass."

Vanessa respects both corporate women and stay-at-home mums. She states that being a stay at home parent is not an easy task. Every person has a role in the community whether at home or at work.

FIVE Tips of Wisdom for Today's Generation – *in reaching your potential*

1. Put Your Heart in Your Mind and Soul

Vanessa believes: "Every person has a potential to be great and to achieve their dream job and goal. One should be persevering. You could achieve anything if you put your heart, mind and soul 101% of the time. Aim to be 1% better version of yourself everyday as part of your personal development. It is also important to practice self-care by setting time for yourself to enjoy the moment and the present."

2. Read and Up skill

Vanessa loves reading personal and professional development books and audiobooks. She attends webinars on professional, leadership and personal development session.

Her favourite authors are Rhonda Byrne, Hal Ehrod, Melinda Gates, Jeff Olson, Robin Sharma, Maggie Dent.

Currently she is reading High Performance Habits by Brendon Bouchard, From Boys to men by Maggie Dent, Atomic Habits by James Clear, The Greatest secret by Rhonda

Byrne, Act like a leader, Think like a leader by Herminia Ibarra. (all audiobooks)

3. Apply Oneself

She likes taking action every day to apply what she has learned from her book readings and webinars. For instance, collaborating with other leaders at The Brilliant Foundation and not-for-profit organisations like 100 Women, Ladybird Foundation, Pink Hope.

4. Get Fit and Keep Well Mentally

Being physically fit provides clarity to Vanessa's day. When the weather is good, Vanessa rides to work from home and back. She says: "It is an amazing start to the day to have a dose of endorphins, seeing patients and interacting with her team. When cycling home from work, it provides the mental break to focus on family life and cooking dinner." For Vanessa exercising and keeping fit offers wellness and mental health.

In recent years, she has participated in Ironman 70.3, triathlon, marathon, half marathon, running, cycling, gym strength training and conditioning, open water swimming and tennis. She loves singing, dancing, choir singing and the simple things in life like watching the sunset.

5. Connect and Give Back to Community

Vanessa raises funds for charitable organisations and by getting fit at the same time. She completed her first marathon and fundraised for Ladybird Foundation | Supporting Breast and Gynaecologic Cancer Research in Western Australia.



She enjoys completing triathlon events Triathlon Pink | Triathlon Pink Series and fundraising for National Breast Cancer Foundation (NBCF). With her full life, Vanessa hopes to surge on with daily activities filled with positive, energy and service.



Vanessa is a huge supporter and fundraise for Breast Cancer Care WA every year for their purple bra day.



Speaker: Breast Health and Wellness Awareness Campaign. FACE WA. The importance of breast screening and technological developments. Bayswater, WA. October 2019.

www.drvanessaa.com

Featuring Elizabeth Richards: An Oil Painting Artist

Elizabeth Richards

Founding Member

Perth, Western Australia

By Renée Ralph, 2021



AUSTRALIA - It has been an exciting journey to have Elizabeth Richards (Liz), a successful oil painting artist to create the brand and logo for The Brilliant Foundation that we have today.

Liz, Founding Member of The Brilliant Foundation shares her life as a mum of three kids and how she manages to find time to be an oil painting artist.

Dr Renée Ralph (Renée): "You are an alumnae of University of Western Australia (UWA) and Curtin University? Why did you decide to complete two degrees? What did you study?"

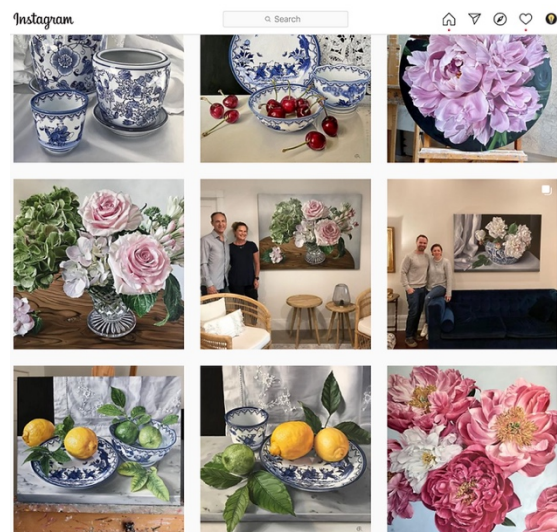
Liz : "I wanted to study Art history at UWA, because I love Art and wanted to know all about it throughout history. I

finished my honours degree in 1991, and went traveling for 3 years looking at all the Art I had studied.

I didn't really enjoy gallery work or writing about art as much as I liked being creative myself.

So I finished a second degree at Curtin University in 1995 (I only had to complete 3rd year) majoring in Graphic design, which had good job prospects.

It was good as I learnt to use computers just as they were taking over the graphics industry. And now I use computer software for my art practice."



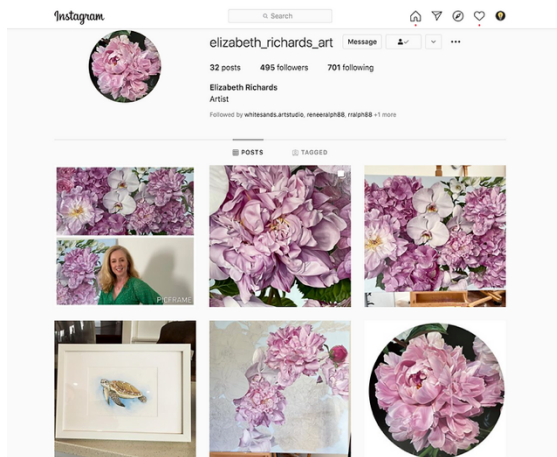
Source : [Elizabeth Richards Instagram](#)

Renée: "Why and when did you decide to become an oil painting artist?"

Liz: "I have always used oil paints as my favourite medium, and I have always painted from a young age. When I had children I was able to still do graphic design jobs from home, but I also became more involved in my painting practice.

This evolved when my 3 sons grew less dependent and I had more time to paint. I started to sell my work and get commissions so my art practice grew from there.

Oil painting suits the realist high detail work that I do as it doesn't dry quickly and allows for a slow work process."



Source : [Elizabeth Richards Instagram](#)

Renée: "Can you give five tips to become an accomplished artist?" (for aspiring artist)

Liz: "I'm not sure I have tips to give...the only thing I would say is to paint as much as possible because you get better the more practice you do. It is also good to have an online presence, lots of people then see your work and for better or worse you get a lot of feedback on what you are producing."

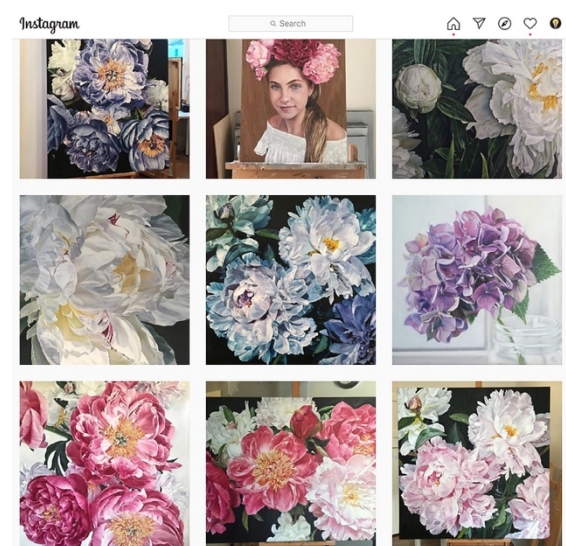
Renée: "You have three children – did you go to work? Why did you decide to be a stay-at-home mum and for how long?"

Liz: "I have 3 sons, my husband and I made the decision for me to be the at-home parent. I was very lucky to have the opportunity to do this and enjoyed

bringing up my boys. I was also lucky as my profession as a Graphic Designer that meant I could also do part-time work from home, doing various small design jobs while the boys were at school. I then began to paint and sell my work so that has just continued."



Oil Portrait of Lizzie painted by [Elizabeth Richards](#)



Source : Oil Paintings by [Elizabeth Richards](#)

Renée: "What are the hardest times raising children? What are the best moments?"

Liz: "It was hard when the kids were small and into everything, just being tired and waiting for my husband to come home and help.

But there was always something wonderful happening as well, a new word, a hug, laughing at a TV show.

Now the boys are older (16, 19, 21) it is hard in a different way, school issues, adult issues, you never stop worrying about them. But seeing your boys grow into men and having dinner together, chatting and having fun together is great."

Renée: "What is your favourite home cooked meal made by you? Or hubby?"

Liz: "My husband Dan has taken up cooking a lot more in recent years, which is great because I am not a huge fan of cooking. He built a Pizza Oven during the first COVID-19 lockdown and now he makes the best wood fired Pizza."

Renée: "What is your value in life? How do you see life? What is most important to you?"

Liz: "As I have gotten older I see life as short and precious. I want to get to see and do as much as possible...traveling will hopefully happen again. My family and friend are most important to me. I also value a creative life that sees

beauty in the world and tries to capture it."



Commissioned Artwork - painted by [Elizabeth Richards](#)

Renée: "What is the balance in life? Is there any?"

Liz: "It is hard to balance everything, but I do think as a mum you cannot always put yourself last when dealing with work and family. You need to have some time to find your own joy and respect your own needs so you can be a happy, healthy and interesting person to the people around you."



Oil Painting by [Elizabeth Richards](#) - Keeping busy - for all the Italians...lemons and limes for better times.

Renée: "Can you describe your 3 top moments in your life? If you have more what is it?"

Liz : "My wedding was great and I married a really fantastic man, who has been my friend, partner and biggest support throughout everything. And obviously the births of my three boys Finn, Rory and Dominic...can't beat that."

Renée : "What is your best childhood memory?"

Liz : "I had a great childhood, there are too many memories to choose from. I did always like visiting New Zealand with my family to stay on the dairy farm my father grew up on, myself and my 3 siblings got to be country kids for a few weeks, milking cows and feeding turkeys."

Renée : Who do you look up to?

Liz : "I admire a lot of people. All the friends I have, there is something that I think is brilliant about all of them. My Dad (passed now) and my mum were/are great people who showed me a good way of viewing the world and appreciating people and places around me. They taught me to live my own truth and not judge anyone else on theirs."



*Painting by Elizabeth Richards -
Commissioned Work*

Thank you Liz for creating the iconic brand and logo for The Brilliant Foundation. It is BRILLIANT!



BRILLIANT
FOUNDATION

International Human Rights Lawyer- Part 1

Doreen Chen

Contributing Member

Reims, France

By Renée Ralph, 2022



In a charming town of Reims, populated with 187,000 people, lives Doreen Chen from Australia. She is happily married with two boys who have learnt how to adapt and converse in French fluently.

From a young age, Doreen identifies herself as a tom boy. After her high school education, in 2001, she decided to study law at the University of Sydney.

Five years later, Doreen graduated with a double degree, majoring in Economics and Science) specialising in Government and International

Relations; and Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) with First Class Honours.

At University of Sydney, she was the recipient of the Zoë Hall Scholarship for Academic Merit; recipient of the University of Sydney Exchange Scholarship.

She completed Winter School at the East China University of Politics and Law, Shanghai, Republic of China; and did an Exchange Semester at Utrecht University, the Netherlands; and achieved first place in "Chinese Laws and Chinese Legal Systems."

Initially, Doreen worked as lawyer practicing Corporate and Commercial Dispute Resolution at a national law firm for a couple of years.

New York, United States of America

Doreen went to Columbia Law School in New York and pursued her Masters of Laws (LL.M) with Honours, majoring in International Human Rights Law, International Criminal Law and International Humanitarian Law.

During this period from 2009 -2010, she felt the financial pressure of not earning and was worried when her savings were being depleted.

She said: "Some of my peers were doing so well financially. Here I am, trying to complete my Masters and every dollar counted for me and I had to be prudent with what I spent."

True to her cause, she was recognised as the Harlan Stone Scholar, she was the recipient of the Parker School Certificate in International and Humanitarian Law and the recipient of the Boulton International Scholarship (from the University of Sydney).

With all the accolades that she has gained, Doreen finds her place in balancing and celebrating the human spirit, elevating human life against the oppression and injustice faced in this world. Profitability is not her vision in life, she finds her space, comfort and solace in doing right.



Phnom Penh, Cambodia

From 2011, she started working in Phnom Penh, Cambodia as a Project Coordinator for over a year and a half before taking a role as Consultant with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Doreen gave back by contributing as a seasonal lecturer at Aix-Marseille University Institute of International

Humanitarian Studies, Royal University of Law and Economics, Cambodia and University of Sydney, Australia.

She is a cheerful, joyful and warm individual. She remembered before one court case started, she was in the gallery chatting to everyone and they were totally surprised that she was part of the legal counsel and held a position of responsibility. Doreen says: "I decided long ago that this is me. I am a positive and cheerful person. There was no point hiding it."

Thus, she naturally breaks down the old construct of a lawyer as aloof, off standish and frosty; as she prefers to be authentic, approachable and be true to herself.



For almost six years, Doreen worked as a Senior Legal Consultant initially and later established herself as an International Lawyer for Nuon Chea Defence Team.

She expressed that this period was the most challenging and treasured moment in her life, history was being rewritten as she provided United Nations Assistance to the Khmer

Rouge Trials and Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia.



offs and pick-ups at school for her kids. It is a new routine that she is enjoying with her family. It is also knowing that time with the young ones will pass swiftly... Rodolphe and her want to be there for them.

Mongolia

In 2021-21, she continued to do good work as an International Expert with the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) for the Strengthening Gender Based Violence Responses in Mongolia Project funded by Global Affairs Canada.

Reim, France

Doreen and her husband, Rodolphe Prom have two young children and she finds her role expanding from an international human rights lawyer, to a mum and wife.

Before married life, the hectic work-life for the past 10-15 years was spent in law courts, preparing the legal narrative with her team were time consuming. It was relentless, non-stop and round the clock.

With the two new lives before her, she has made changes in her life to be there for her children.

She says that she is loving her life. She is still working as an international human rights lawyer on a part-time basis and she can be there for drop-

International Human Rights Lawyer– Part 2

Doreen Chen

Contributing Member

Reims, France

By Renée Ralph, 2022



1. What did you do as a child? What were your favourite past times?

I had an idyllic suburban childhood. With an older brother close in age, I became a natural tomboy. We explored and experimented, filled in holes our dog dug up in the garden, rollerbladed, and watched cartoons. And since my older sister was a big reader who'd take us to the local library,

I became and remain a proud bookworm.

2. Your favourite food? Recipe to share

I live to eat and keep detailed lists of favourite foods, so it's impossible to choose one. My desert island list of food is dumplings, strong tea, mee goreng, Vegemite, and cherries. I cook Asian food more than anything else, partly as it's generally quite average in France, and also as it's emotionally resonant for me and my husband. My parents are Chinese by way of Indonesia, Taiwan, Myanmar, mainland China and Hong Kong; my husband's family is Cambodian-French; and my husband and I worked and travelled in Asia for years.

Through food, we transmit memory, culture, tolerance, and adventurousness to our kids, so it's a big priority for us.

Life with young kids is full, so we try to cook well, fresh, and fast. We adapt elaborate one-pot Asian meals that usually take hours so that they can be done in a pressure cooker in an hour or so.

Staple dishes we regularly cook this way include Hainan chicken rice, Vietnamese pho, Singapore style laksa, Cambodian *num pachok*, Fujian style *la mian*, Chinese egg drop corn soup, and Burmese *oh no kauk swe*.

3. Your special or favourite family moment?

Food! Dumplings and spring rolls evoke memories of sitting around the dining table chatting with family as we wrapped them ourselves. Spending time together pouring our collective energy into our nourishment -- that's priceless.

4. How many languages do you speak? Do you play any musical instrument?

I speak English and conversational French and Mandarin (though I can't read or write Chinese). I learned piano briefly as a child but my teacher gave up as she was frustrated that I squandered my talent by not practicing. It took me 15 more years to become willing to put full effort into something.

I used to coast by on talent and marginal effort, which I've since realised is the approach not only of the lazy but more importantly of those afraid to put it all on the line in case they fail. Allegedly, I also sing well enough for karaoke.

5. What is Destination Justice? Your role is extremely challenging - why do you feel the need to work in this area? Why human rights? How long have you been doing this?

Destination Justice is an NGO focusing on advancing human rights and rule of law. My husband Rodolphe Prom and our friend and my LLM classmate Silvia Palomba and I established it back in

2011 and we've done a wide range of different work to create positive impact.

For example, we support human rights defenders across Asia who've been persecuted for their work.

We've mentored and supported many budding social changemakers, including through a Justice Café and Library we ran in Cambodia for several years.

I've worked professionally in human rights for 20 years, and held leadership roles and did community service throughout primary and high school. Our parents and ancestors were all teachers, activists, community leaders, so the value of service and of human potential is hardwired for me and my siblings.

It makes intrinsic sense that we should devote our skills towards improving the lives of as many people as we can. Human rights happens to be the organising and intellectual framework that for me, fits best with this world view.

6. How do you manage your role as a mum and work in France? What do you tell your children what you do? What is their reaction?

Since having kids, my husband and I have switched to primarily remote consulting practices, moved to a house with a home office in a more affordable area, and splurged on a nanny.

All of this is to maximise the time we spend with our kids while maintaining our careers. I also go on occasional work trips, and pre-COVID we would frequently go as a family to show our toddler the world.



Our kids are too young to understand what we do right now, but we are laying a foundation so that it will make sense in time.

For example, I spend time with our toddler reading books that explain the core values of service and human rights, including kindness, compassion and anti-discrimination and anti-racism.

7. How did you feel when you represent the vulnerable? Were you ever afraid of your job? Is your life at risk?

I have worked with many different vulnerable populations, for example human rights defenders, youth, women, First Nations people, Rohingya.

Whenever I do, I am constantly reminded of how ill-fitting the term

vulnerable often is -- how resilient and empowered people can be. Yes, there are some safety risks in my job, and it's important to me to evaluate those carefully, take the necessary precautions, and consult others (particularly my family) when the risks may extend beyond me.

At the same time, many of those with whom I work face far greater risks than I do, and I am privileged in this sense for many reasons, most obviously nationality and passport and the mobility these enable.

8. Could you tell me about the Khmer Rouge trials? (When you were working with Nuon Chea) What did you see? How did you feel? What was the outcome?



Working on the Khmer Rouge trials in Cambodia was like participating in an historic moment on a daily basis, for six

years straight. It was momentous and always felt like a privilege.

It was also enormous, both in terms of the sheer scale and the gravity of the events we were dealing with, namely allegations of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.

As you might imagine, this could be very heavy stuff that was sometimes difficult to process and required time away to reflect and recentre. Nuon Chea was convicted of the alleged crimes and died at the age of 91, while we were in the midst of working on his appeal.

9. How do you find your centre each day? Your balance? Peace, Calmness? Do you meditate? Exercise?

Balance is essential to me. Unless it's a true emergency, I no longer work around the clock.

I devote several hours each day to non-professional pursuits: 100% family time, cooking, leisure time (books, movies, TV, music, podcasts) and exercise (Pilates, Yoga, Zumba).

10. What are the values that you hold dear?

Justice, integrity, dignity, equity, courage.

11. Which organisations would you encourage students to volunteer in?

I would strongly encourage students to reflect on what impact they might like

to have in the world and then volunteer in any organisation which presents an opportunity to gain skills and experience that may be relevant to that. I would also encourage students in particular to see whether there are any structured volunteering opportunities available to them, for example clinical/practical classes at school that enable them to volunteer in a guided way, with skills-based and reflective classes alongside the work.

12. What are the 5 tips to become a human rights lawyer? How do you relax?

Human rights law is a very diverse area. My main tip for people interested in a career in this field is to look at the job descriptions of potential dream roles down the line for them.

What skills and experience do those roles require? Make a list, and start to find ways to gain each of them.

Remember though that there is no one way to get to the destination, so don't stress and try to create a path that works for you.

Butterflies in my Heart

Christina Chia

Contributing Core Member

Melbourne, Australia, 2022



'Kia, kia.'

I said those words a lot when I was a little girl – only 11 years old.

I didn't really have any other way of communicating the horrible feelings within me.

I was upset, nervous and scared. I just kept waking up feeling so bad. There were some days where I didn't even want to get up at all.

Eventually, I found the words that best described how I felt, and to this day, they resonate with me still.

I have butterflies in my heart.

Anxiety.

It wasn't a word that my family knew. In fact, there wasn't even a word for it in my language.

Mental health wasn't much of a factor in life. As a concept, it was in its infancy, if that.

The 1980s was a period of great technological advancements, but mental health was an area that struggled to be anything other than barbaric. Not just in Australia, but also where I grew up in Malaysia.

'Mum, -wa sim kia kia' I would say in Hokkien, which means my heart 'flutters' again like butterflies in my heart. (The direct translation from Hokkien means my heart is SCARED) When I told my mum how I was feeling, she didn't know or understand what was wrong with me. She told her mum who didn't know what it was either.

However, they didn't take it any further. They couldn't - because the stigma in Malaysia was bad. So, whenever I told my mum I had butterflies in my heart, she took me to temple. The priest would do little ceremonies to get rid of the evil spirits within me.

Flash forward thirty to forty years later, and I realise what I was feeling all those years ago was anxiety.



When I try to trace what caused my anxiety, these butterflies in my heart, I can see that there were a number of factors; such as bullying at school, school exam stress and my personality factors on lack of self-esteem and seeking to control everything.

The butterflies in my heart stuck around during University days. I suffered through horrible feelings of isolation when I first came to Australia. I was 19 years old. I didn't know how to integrate with the people here. There were very few Asians in Australia in 1991.

When my daughters were born I started to get a better grasp on things. My daughters are my heart of hearts. I realised somehow, that I wanted to break the cycle and give my children a good childhood.

It is important for my daughters and future generations of women that I break the mould for female Asian migrants – the need to own the vision of women can be successful in business, contribute to their community and retain their independent spirit.

I have made so much progress over the years. I have tried to invest my energy in individuals and relationships that really matter to me.

I have created joy and love for myself and those around me. I made sure that every moment counts – particularly living through the COVID-19 pandemic. When I do that, when I look after myself, the butterflies in my heart don't really bother me. Anxiety becomes just a passenger.

I am an optimist—I always see my negatives as a gift- because I learn from them. I have finally come to a place where I think my essence is beautiful. That took years and a lot of courage. This journey of my anxiety, depression—all these butterflies in my heart gives me strength.

Whether it's anxiety or depression, I think the critical component we need to think about is - how we can reach out and create awareness. How do we help those in need? Creating kind conversations. Be part of a solution. Contribute and serve.

I don't have all the answers. I think we best help our communities when we

lead by example. We need to take decisive and empathetic action. When I got tapped on the shoulder to be the Multicultural Ambassador for Mental Health Foundation Australia (MHFA), I couldn't really say no.

After serving MHFA for the past 5 years as the Deputy Leader VIC for Multicultural Ambassador Program and especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a greater need for mental health advocacy, wellbeing, and support for our vulnerable community. We need to keep the conversation going to help others in this space.



We all take different paths to heal ourselves. Everyone can speak their own truth.

There is no shame in saying that I've had anxiety.

I think it's also important to remember that anyone can have butterflies in the heart. Whether you're young, or old, whether you are wealthy, Chinese or whether you are educated — it can happen to anyone.

When I accept my 'butterflies' and when I look after myself, the butterflies in my heart don't really bother me. Anxiety becomes just a passenger.



Life is an ongoing journey, and while the butterflies in my heart have never left, they no longer confuse me. I understand their purpose, just like I understand my heart.

Culture and Education

Dr Sandy Chong

Founding Member

Perth, Australia

By Renée Ralph, 2020



Being A Female in Chinese Culture

Sandy is a quiet achiever. A tomboy at heart, running around in her childhood days climbing trees, she was told not to spend too much time in the sun as it would make her skin dark – making her look unattractive. In Chinese culture, a Chinese girl should be demure, seen but not heard, and her skin should be porcelain white to attract her future potential husband.

Education is only meant for boys, a girl should not be educated or be too intelligent. The husband is the dominant partner and the breadwinner of the family.

Her Chinese name is 张依玲 (zhāng yī líng) – with the family name associated with archers back in the ancient times and first names meaning dependable, adorable, and linked to the hometown of her father. Her namesake was given to her at birth, having been selected with care from her Chinese family tradition. The Chinese characters describe her character from birth, and Sandy has taken ownership of those symbols and been her own steward in her life.

Education and Life-Long Learning

Culturally, Sandy has defied the Chinese way of what a woman should be. She worked hard to win scholarships and achieve her First-Class Honours in her first degree in Marketing, a Ph.D. in Information Systems, and was awarded six times on the Vice-Chancellor's Top 1% List. She also earned alumni status from the prestigious Harvard Business School when she completed its Executive Education program in the United States. A feat that both genders will find hard to reach in their lifetime – as it takes focus, resilience, sacrifice and mettle to do so.

She prizes education and life-long learning as the way to elevate oneself to a higher thought process and reach one's fullest potential. She shares that the Harvard Leadership Program was a gruelling and enlightening experience that provided a new perspective on leadership and life – her peers were majority male and there were less than

20% women in her cohort. However tough it was, it was a worthwhile venture.

Academically, Sandy has blazed through brilliantly, and in the corporate world her acute business sense radiates to help her clients grow their business sustainably and profitably in Asia Pacific, Europe and the United States.

Her Business

Sandy is currently the Principal of Verity Consulting, National Board Member of United Nations Association of Australia based in Canberra, State Director of Australian Harvard Women, and Ambassador for Valuing Children Initiatives, the GameChanger Award, and the Inspiring Rarebirds.

In addition to being appointed the Chair of the ASEAN Alliance Council, Sandy is the first Asian to be elected as the President of the United Nations Association in Western Australia, appointed the Independent Board Director of WAITOC, and the Advisory Board Member of the Graduate School of Business at Curtin University. In Singapore, she serves the business community as accredited Advisor for the Intellectual Property of Singapore and IE Singapore.

Chinese Culture and Her Own Voice

As we sip our sparkling mineral water, Sandy said that she wanted more out of life and reflected: "What do I want to

be now? How can I lead better?" With that mindset, she realised that she wanted to give back to the community and planned her business around volunteer work to serve others.

Sandy sees the cycle of life within Chinese culture, where the experienced and older generations guide the young – learning how to collaborate, respect, cultivate patience, and valuing the meaning of relationships and connections – values which are dear to her. It is a stark contrast to the Western business world, where corporate philosophy takes over and does not marry well with the Chinese way of doing business. She has learnt how to speak up and speak out in the corporate world and in business networking events but it is not a trait that came easily.

Sandy said: "I realised from past experiences that when attending business functions, I would listen more than talk in order to be polite. I would wait for the conversation to end before introducing myself or my work to others. However, most of the time, the conversation would gravitate towards those who are keen to talk about themselves and the opportunity to present my perspective was lost due to my politeness." This situation happened several times and she realised that the change had to come from within.

"I learnt that I had to do something about it. How could I articulate my thoughts effectively and find my voice?"

Sandy started to take a less reserved approach while still maintaining her down-to-earth demeanour. She engaged support from her assistant to build her personal brand and Sandy started to speak up.

I asked: "Why?"

She said: "If one doesn't speak up and just wait for things to happen, it will never occur. No one would know of all the good work that one has done. I had to come out from my comfort zone and share my story and success. It was the only option."

As her business thrives and stabilises, Sandy looks towards a successful future by surrounding herself with positive and smart people who have the same vision and focus as herself.

Her Father - Her Role Model

Sandy is immensely grateful to have an amazing role model; her father who supported, nurtured and believed in her. Her father was a military man – discipline, teamwork and serving others were his core values. These principles and standards were passed on to Sandy during her upbringing in Singapore.

She reminisces that she used to wake up every weekend at 5am with her brother, led by their father to a full day of sports and hobbies such as jogging, basketball, badminton, stamp collecting, painting, and handicrafts. "It

was really fun learning with our dad. He taught us a lot" says Sandy.

Serving is an essential part of leadership - it is also an esteemed characteristic within Asian culture that has lasted for centuries. Sandy embraces wholeheartedly, recognises and reveres the elderly for their experience and wisdom. There is much beauty and value in being mentored and mentoring others. She shares her observations about Western culture where younger generations are usually left out on a limb to strive for their own independence and survival. There tend to be less guidance as compared to those from Eastern cultures.

For the past 10 years, Sandy has been leading, doing pro-bono work for more than 12 organisations – with the vision of helping those in need and the youth,

It is in the hope that with her giving back, she is making a difference in the world we live in.

Flying High

Christina Ho

Contributing Member

Hong Kong

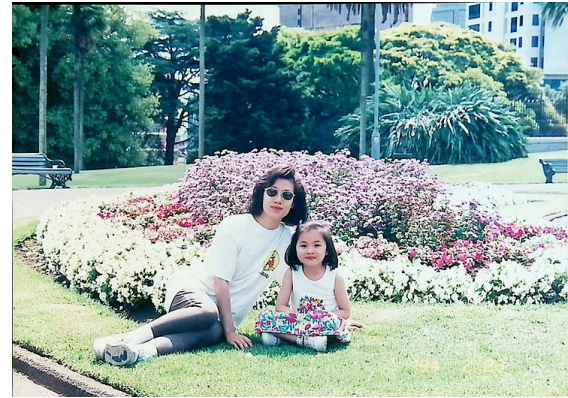
By Renée Ralph, 2023



HONG KONG- Christina Ho is fluent in Mandarin, English and Cantonese and she loves creating things as a child and still does, drawing her cartoon mascot cat, *christtina_meow* offering positive messages to the world.



Christina HO at TEDx TinHau Women 2022



Christina with her mum

As a child, her curiosity, whims and fancies were nurtured by her mother. Christina acknowledges that her mother is her strength who continuously supports her in her teenage years and adult life.

Renée: "Your parents are quite unique in this sense especially from the Asian culture."

Christina replied: "Saying that.....my parents are still traditional parents. As a child, I asked "Why?" a lot. I always took a while to do my homework. I am their eldest daughter, their number one in the family."

"My Mum is a nurse. I am very proud of Mum serving the community during SARS and COVID-19. Dad is retired already. My Mum gave me a lot of support and confidence to do whatever I wanted to do."

When her high school was coming to an end, Christina shared that her close relationship with her mother and her mother's kind hearted nature, gave her the courage to ask whether she could go abroad to study. "My Parents

thought I was joking about it and maybe they thought I was too young for it. However, my parents were too poor and they didn't have the money to send me abroad."



Christiana found other avenues for her quest to study abroad. She started researching on the Internet for other schools and universities overseas.

Finally, after several applications, Christiana went for an interview and a presentation and was awarded a scholarship to study in the United States.

Remembering the moment when she got the scholarship, she said: "I asked my mum whether I could go. As traditional parents, it was hard for them, but they finally said "Yes". I am very grateful to my parents that they said yes. If they said no, it would have

changed my life and I wouldn't be who I am today."

Fashion Designer at United States of America

Christiana decided to pursue a career in the Arts in America. "I did something different," says Christiana. "I enrolled in an Arts degree and it took me 5 years to complete. I graduated in design, fashion design and fashion industry. I completed fashion illustrations, tried different classes and when I completed my degree, I went into the workforce for a couple of years". It was a vast juxtaposition to the usual medicine, law and commerce as all Asian daughters are meant to pursue.

She explains: "You see... Life is more meaningful to me where life can connect life – that is why I went into design. I can create a dress...I can create a mug and communicate life in an art exhibition too."

Exploring the World as a Flight Attendant

Christiana wanted to see the world and thought the next best option to travel was to become a flight attendant. Christiana applied for a job at a major airline in Hong Kong and worked as a flight attendant on all fleets.

One trip, she was on her way to Kuala Lumpur for a friend's wedding and she had to sit in the cockpit for the entire flight from Hong Kong as it was completely full.

She remembered sitting in the cockpit, she expressed that it was such an amazing experience and that magical moment when dawn approached, “all the instruments lit up like a Christmas Tree.”



Christina said: “I remember that feeling... ..my heartbeat was beating in time with the lights. I was especially touched because the male pilots were professional in their communication and explained to me what they had to do when flying.”

Christina’s Mentor – First Flying Trip

“I had a mentor, and he was a retired training captain at Mid-West Airlines. He had a Piper J3 Yellow Cub, a vintage aircraft which had no side window, and it was totally open.”

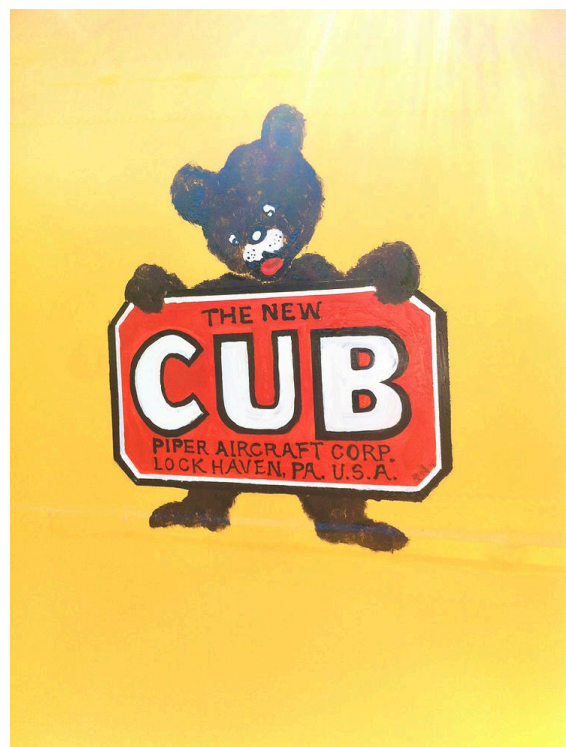
“He requested an artistic sticker on the tail of his vintage plane. Instead of a sticker, I painted “the cub” on the tail of the plane.”

“He was grateful for my artwork and hoped to compensate by giving me a \$20 note.” Christina declined and

asked instead whether he could take her up in the air. Christina said: “I was holding the camera afraid of it falling down. I was sitting in front and he was flying behind in the back seat. That was the first time I flew in the sky but at this point in time, I didn’t think I was going to become a pilot.”



The plane that Christina painted in Kansas, Piper J3 Cub



The bear that Christina painted on Piper J3 airplane

Not until many years later, I discovered

my passion for being a pilot. I went back to the United States and became a volunteer in his airfield. I wanted to be a volunteer to experience being around the plane. I cleaned the plane and he taught me all the technicalities about the aircraft and I even had the opportunity to fill the aircraft with petrol."



Whilst Christina was working as a flight attendant, she decided to study hard in her spare time, and she finally received a placement in the Cadet Pilot Program after a six month interview process.

"Not a single one of my family members are in the aviation industry" said Christina.

"Were your parents shocked?" I asked.

Christina said: "My parents didn't really understand. Why am I not married?"

Why am I not having kids? Why am I not settling down and start my own family?"

"I also realised that friends don't tell you that they don't trust you in your career choice. However, they can only support you with encouraging words."

"I remembered I had a friend who taught me mathematics and really questioned my ability if I didn't understand the basics. I persevered till I understood everything, I had a different mindset when it came to learning and achieving my goals. I believe that anyone or a child can do anything with a positive and growth mindset."

Pilot Training

The training entails six months of cadet pilot selections, 55 weeks of residential flying and ground school in Adelaide. Six months ground training, studying 17 subjects and six months of flight training to get most of the licenses needed.

Christiana said: "Preparing yourself to get an Airline Transportation Pilot License and Commercial Pilot License takes at least 55 weeks. The airline wants to know whether that this person can work under pressure and solve problems. I studied 17 subjects – air law, methodology, principles of flight, engines, radio communication and navigation."

"Each class had 10 people wanting to be a pilot. An estimate of 10-20% will

not make it and they will have to take a different career path."

"I had 13 people in my class, two girls. My class was a good class as everyone passed. One of them was a Captain switching to commercial license, one third of the class already had a pilot license.....some were fresh graduates, some were engineers."

"I could tell on their faces what they thought about me, 'Christina' 'Will she be able to make the mark?'"



Simulation flying

"I remember the first solo take-off and landing I did, without my instructor, and my first, solo navigation flight. I was responsible for everything in that flight. Even with the night flying as well...when I could not see in the dark night sky. It was truly a spectacular experience."

"I learnt about aerobatics in flying and how to recover the plane from topsy turvy positions when it's not listening to you."

"I was learning about one engine [and] two engine planes, how to use the rudder and how to control and land."

"We first learned to fly single-engine aircraft, then learnt how to fly a twin-engine aircraft. Additionally, the challenges in rudder control when one engine is out on a twin-engine aircraft. And in landings like that, the rudder control needs to be adjusted with all other factors."

"We went through multi-crew training in a simulator and on live aircraft - how to fly the Airbus A320 simulator and what different colours of light mean."



Christina flying with her mum

Finally, after 55 weeks of cadet training in Adelaide, "I flew my mum down to see my cadet graduation." in early April 2019.

Christina explained that her mum did not really understand what job she would be doing. So when she came to

her cadet graduation, she arranged a flight for the two of them.

She said: "I was so happy, I took my mum up in a little plane and flew her around. My mum loves adventure and she is brave. I planned a 2 hour trip (instead of the usual 45 minutes) and I explained to my mum it will be bumpy."

"It was lovely that I could bring my mum up in the air. I will always remember that moment where my mum was enjoying herself. She was so happy, and she saw the coastline. She loved it."

"I then came back to Hong Kong to do ground school again plus simulator training to receive a type-rating on the Boeing 777, which was assigned to me by the major airline. I then started line-training, which is training on live aircraft; passed the line-check and became a qualified pilot."

"It is a challenging environment, and every six months, since I graduated, I am tested for the entire profession-keeping my skills sharp and up-to-speed."

Mindset

Christina has an amazing mindset; she believes in herself and the capacity to achieve whatever she wants to do and become.

She says: "I am happy that I tried different classes during my teenage years. I learnt how to cook in nutrition class and I learnt how to be a librarian.

It opened my mind to a lot of things and that made me stronger. I didn't question myself when I saw other people becoming a pilot, as I thought a career as a pilot suited me. It fits me, as an individual. I wanted to go for it. If they can do it, I can also do it too."

"I am so grateful that I have become a pilot. It is my dream accomplished. The best time to fly is spring and autumn. It is not pleasant to fly in summer and winter.

"When I am flying, I focus on the flight itself, and I empty my mind when I fly. It is a huge responsibility."





*Christina in Jungfrau, Switzerland
Advocacy*

According to ISA 2021 data, there is only 5.8% of pilots who are female worldwide and 4.5% in Hong Kong in 2021. Only 5%-10% of commercial pilots in the world are women. It is estimated that 4.5% is the percentage for Hong Kong in 2021 and the rate has remained the flat for the past 30 years.



TEDx Talk by Christina Ho on Aviate, Navigate, Communicate

"Currently I am single, and I am passionate about advocating to young kids, girls and women that they can be who they want to be," says Christina.

"I keep asking myself constantly *"What can I do now? How can I help the*

aviation industry, the young girls and women?"

"So I am involved in the Parent's Group, Hong Kong Youth Aviation Academy primary and high school visits! I would like to show the kids – no matter what – I used to be a teenager, and I have struggled just like you. I have been there and I understand what they are going through. Not everyone has the courage to say YES to these challenges and overcome the hurdle within oneself and societal expectations."

Female Pilot Advisory Group

"I am part of the Female Pilot Advisory Group and help with policy making to look after kids and family in the workplace. We really only had female uniform three years ago. These changes are being made. Is it policy change? Or is it education? For instance, minute changes on the Menus, Guides and Catalogues, it used to say "he" – now we use the word Pilot to acknowledge both male and female pilots."

"We have worked on issues such as Mandatory Leave for pregnant female pilots. It is essential working with the committee on mandatory leave of at least 10 months for women pilots. The other issue is when female pilots are pregnant and are working on the ground, *how can we help the female pilots? Who are on the ground to support them? What can they do and contribute?* It is important to listen to other people's stories and it helps me

to be more purposeful whilst I strive for advocacy for my female colleagues. It is good that I can understand better the role of a pilot who is a parent or becoming a parent for the first time."

"I am also on the Peer Support Network to help pilots support other pilots. There are courses on how to be a good listener – and not give advice. I learn more about people and that helps me to be a better person."

Encourage, Inspire and Self-Belief

Christina is straightforward individual and she says: "I am not superman, superwoman or anything. Being humble is the key in bringing things forward. I hope to inspire individuals or women. I want to show them we, I can be different kind of pilot. We can break the stereotype that pilots are only suitable for guys – especially for me, an Asian woman. I want to inspire them to live a life that they want, instead of just the usual career talk that does not resonate with the youth or individual."

"I have set aside my personal time and I really hope to have more school visits – as I know that all a child really needs is just that encouragement – "You can do it."

If someone else say: "You can do it" that external force is the Chinese culture of human expression of love rather than the literal saying of "I love you" which is more of a Western thing.



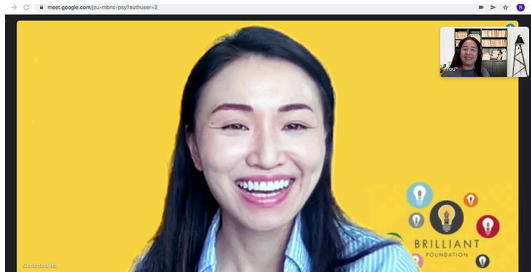
"I did not use social media till last year. I had to learn to talk in their young language and understand the youth that uses these social media platforms. So, I created a cartoon series called Life Lessons from the Sky with Christtina Meow – a flying cat, my mascot and she teaches aviation stuff and her challenges in life. If you feel a little blue and down – the flying cat is like a "pick me up". Just to keep the vibes positive."

Christina's motto is to "Always try something to see if you like it or not. Try it and rate it yourself. Do not just depend on other's judgement or experience alone. It is important to just taste the apple yourself and that helps your decision making and your own journey in life."

"You know, I didn't plan this story, my life as a female pilot – as the challenges came, I ran with the noise in my heart, it wasn't a dramatic change, I just followed my gut instinct and believed in myself, every step of the way."

“At this juncture in my life, I feel that to inspire others, I will have to communicate to others and reach out to kids and girls either at face-to-face events or school visits.”

“It is not about my achievement as a female pilot, I feel it is more than that now, there is a fire within me and it is how I can make meaningful impact for others. I am excited with the next phase of my life doing this advocacy work.”



Christian and I having a conversation online where she created a special background of The Brilliant Foundation logos – how considerate and wonderful!



Christina participated in Fly Pink Hong Kong and raised funds and awareness for Hong Kong Breast Cancer Foundation.



Actually boys can fancy pink and dance.
Girls can be interested in engineering or be a pilot.

其實……

男孩可以愛跳舞，可以愛粉紅，
女孩可以愛工程學，可以是飛機師。

Life lessons from the sky 038 @christtinah

Christtina Meow, her mascot that she created

Alba Gomez - From an Engineer to a Presence & Personal Coach and Media Commentator

Alba Gomez

Founding Member

Perth, Australia

by Renée Ralph, 2021



Seventeen years ago, Alba Gomez made the decision to move from Colombia to Perth, she did not speak a word of English. Alba was an Engineer for fourteen years, before she decided to transform herself to a Presence and Personal Coach, First Expressions Expert, Body Language Specialist, Media Commentator and Keynote Speaker. It has been an exciting and challenging journey, embracing the Australian culture, her new home and learning the English language. In her younger years and even now, Alba shared: "I am a geek at heart and I love reading books."

Alba wants to work with people, be engaged and help people to find a

positive change within themselves. Hence, she left her engineering career to pursue her next passion in life.

Success for Alba is not defined as a monetary goal, rather, her satisfaction in seeing her clients believe in themselves and to articulate and communicate in their professional work environment confidently. In the work that she does, Alba seeks to find a comfortable space for her clients to push their boundaries to reach their potential.



Three and a half years ago, Alba appeared on the first time on Live TV. Since then, she is a regular contributor on Channel 9. It symbolises a significant milestone in her life and career where she pushed herself out of her comfort zone to grow and flourish. Alba has conquered her fears and feels comfortable presenting on Live TV. In her journey of self-discovery, she realises that she can help others to find their confident self and to pursue their dreams and achieve their goals.

Alba is now happily married with an Australian husband for four years and both, made the decision not to have children. She misses her home where she cannot return because of COVID-19 restrictions.



Alba's dream is to help build a school in Colombia for the children. She says the education is the key to elevate one's life out of poverty. Instead, Alba's aspiration is on the children of Colombia back home, where poverty and homelessness is wide-spread. With education, children are able to expand their minds and develop a skill that is essential for life.

How was your teenage years?

Alba shares: "I wore thick glasses and braces and had messy hair as a teenager. I felt geeky and inadequate and that I didn't fit in. I was bullied at school the entire primary school and less in secondary school years."

How did that impact you?

"Massively. I had a challenging relationship with my mum and that make me feel even more inadequate with my life. I kept thinking that it was

really something wrong with me," says Alba.



How did you overcome that?

"It is a whole life journey that cannot be explained in one sentence. With the work that I do, I help people understand people where they come from. Working with diverse cultures, opening up to a spiritual approach to life, to able to heal all of those hurts and experiences," shares Alba.

Alba stated that she is fortunate and blessed to have a group of girlfriends from school in Colombia and a close group of friends in Australia that are Colombian too. Connecting with her Colombian culture and embracing Australian culture give Alba a rich and diverse life experience.

Where did you learn English from?

Alba learned the basics of English Colombia of English. She said: "The Australian accent was so different from the American one that I was used to and that was the biggest shock. On a conversational level, it was really

difficult to understand and speak the Aussie English.”

How did you overcome the conversational level for the English language?

Alba went to Cambridge English School in the city for nine months. She said: “I was 26 years old surrounded by 15-16 years old learning English.” It was rather a surreal experience.

The Switch from Engineer to Image and Presence Coach Consultant – Why?

From there, Alba went through a laborious and intense process to be recognised as an Engineer in Australia. She had to write three small thesis, provided her academic results and proof of her credentials. It was a time consuming process and was given a certificate as an Engineer and a diploma at the end of the program. Alba worked for five years in Perth for Sumitomo, a Japanese multinational company.



Scary and Brave

Ten years ago, Alba changed career. Alba realised that she had a great career and opportunities and great

salary, however that wasn't enough for her. She felt that her calling was to transform people and impact people's lives. Alba wasn't passionate with what she was doing with her engineering career. She admitted it was really, really scary and yet she took a great leap of faith and jump. It was the most courageous and bravest thing that she ever did in her life.

How did it come about? Her life change?

Alba kind of knew that she had to do. Alba said: “I have been passionate with a person's image on the side as an image consultant, working with elements of personal branding. Dealing with image is like a band aid. I had to delve deeper – it was like an evolution and it took five years, for me to establish a more holistic approach to personal branding and presence.”



What does that entail? What are the elements of personal branding?

Alba said: “Who you are and how you show up in the world. And then, when you are able to bring your best version out there, you will get your opportunities and potential when you allow people see the value, skills in body language. In communications, how you carry yourself, how you speak

in public, how you run a meeting with confidence – it all boils down to how you become masterful in managing relationships with business and in life. In life everything is about relationships.”

How big is your current business and a team?

“I am the front line with my business, working with a team of 3-4 in the background, helping me with marketing, social media and administrative duties,” shares Alba.

With your calling – how do you describe it now?

Alba exclaims: “Exciting and challenging journey. Running your own business it is challenging and it has been the best ever. I do what I want, how I want it and it was the best decision and the biggest learning curve.”

Can you describe in statistical terms how many people you can help?

Alba shares for one-to-one consultation, it would be hundreds of individuals that I have helped and coached. With group presentations, that will be in the thousands. “So there is growth in what I am doing,” says Alba.

What do you do to relax?

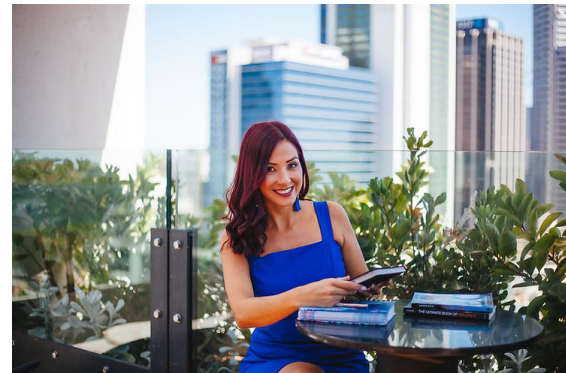
“In summer, I love going to the beach, love catching up with friends. More eating – not cooking haha Colombian dishes, dancing and watching movies. I am an avid reader for work,” shares Alba.

What type of books do you read?

Alba states: “Personal and Business Development books. I am always wanting to learn. When you coach people, you have to consistently learning new things and upgrading, and keep developing myself.”

How did you get into that role for presenter with Channel 9?

I was seeking publicity for my business and reached out to my media sources. Channel 9 gave me a spot at 5pm news and I have been contributing regularly over 2 years now.



As one of the Founding Members, why are you supporting The Brilliant Foundation?

I wish I had known so many things when I was younger. To have had the guidance of people who overcame the difficulties I had, both in my personal and professional life.

I feel honoured to had been asked to support **The Brilliant Foundation** and to be able to share some lessons with the younger generation. I have been challenged in many ways during my life and I love being able to help others by sharing what I have experienced and learned.

Jewellery by Ellé Charlotte

Elle Owens

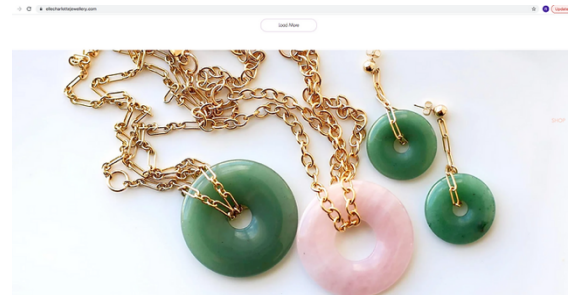
Contributing Member
Perth, Australia, 2021



AUSTRALIA - Since I was a little girl I have always been obsessed with jewellery. I would admire my Nan with a ring on every finger, rummaging through her jewellery box as she told me stories about where she got each ring from, or whether it was one passed down from her Grandma.

Every piece seemed to have a story. My mum was never without her favourite big retro gold hoops, and I remember as a baby I would want to reach out and hang on. I was drawn to anything sparkly and that addiction has never died down.

Now at 25 years of age, I appreciate the special memories each piece of jewellery can hold, from a passed down heirloom, to a new memory made from a gift given from a loved one. I wanted to create an affordable luxury brand, made from quality materials that will last the test of time, but still be on trend with the fashion of today.



Using high quality Gold Filled and Sterling Silver, [Jewellery By Ellé Charlotte](#) is hypoallergenic and tarnish resistant, to wear occasion after occasion, year after year.

Creating unique fashion forward designs, partnered with semi-precious stones such as quartz and aventurine to give it that modern edge and authenticity.

I started my label in 2017, it started of as more costume jewellery with materials I could find from local stores or online websites. My materials were inexpensive, so I could play and discover my favourite designs and practice my skills.

Over the next few years it was tough, as the product I was making still did not sing to me, they tarnished after a few wears, just like similar fast fashion labels in within the same price point. Looking back into my jewellery box

filled with nan’s exquisite rings and chains, each with decades of wear were all still in great condition. That was it.

I wanted to give that feeling to my customers, I want my customers to pull my jewellery out and tell their daughters stories about these special earrings they wore to certain occasions.

But, being in a low income full time job I understood the struggle of wanting to by solid gold and not being able to afford it. I hated the fact I would spend money on costume jewellery that would tarnish after one wear and I felt like it was a waste of money.

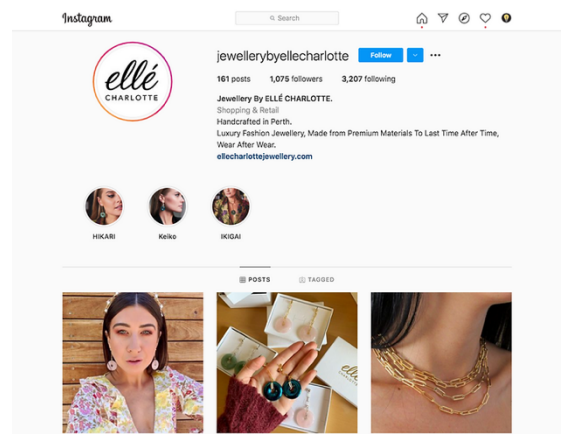
So, I wanted to create a brand that would be the middle ground. Creating statement jewellery that is unique and fashion forward, that would last wear after wear. I launched my current collection ‘Ikigai’ which is Japanese for ‘finding your purpose in life’.

Using high quality materials and natural stones, such as jade and rose quartz tying into the Japanese inspiration. I ended up shooting all new imagery for my brand in Tokyo on a trip, and relaunched my website with a new look.

I now had a target audience, with a vision and direction I wanted my label to go. I have had my business for a few years now and I hope each year it continues to grow.



Photoshoot in Japan : Model wearing Jewellery By Ellé Charlotte



I get a lot of exposure through Instagram Oh! The power of social media! Jewellery By Ellé Charlotte is now stocked in a boutique here in Perth, and I have had my product in two pop- up stores as well.

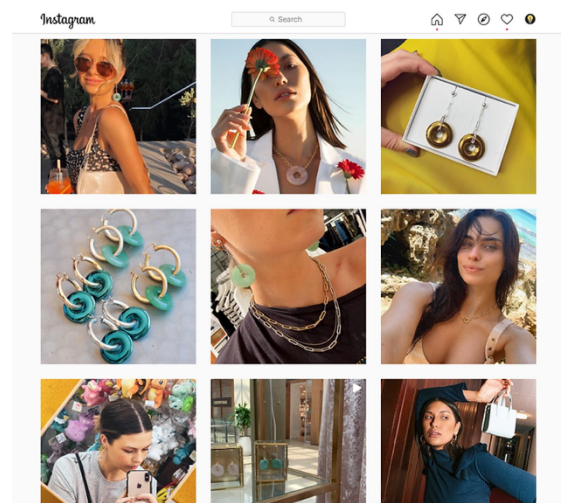


Photo : Ellé wearing her own jewellery

I have been working full time in retail since I left high school. Design and fashion has always been in the forefront of what I thought I would want as a career. However, I was fresh out of school, I simply could not afford any down payment for a student loan and my parents could not help. So, I made the decision to get a job with the plan to save up and put myself through Fashion School.

Years ended up passing by and a full time wage was hard to sacrifice as I got older I had more financial responsibilities, I felt stuck. I had recently rediscovered jewellery from my nan, as she kindly gifted me special heirlooms from her collection, ones I so deeply admired as a little girl.

The love and joy from wearing these pieces reignited my passion for jewellery. I took the plunge after a few years in the same old routine, and I enrolled for a night course at TAFE in Jewellery Making for Beginners. From there I made jewellery at home just as a hobby and it just unravelled from there.



My friends started asking me where I got my jewellery from, and asked if I could make pieces for them. After a bit of encouragement and assurance from people that liked my designs, I started up a website and thought I would give this a go...and *Jewellery By Ellé Charlotte* was born.

I continued with my classes for a while, learning skills such as soldering, setting and polishing. It was fascinating to see how a piece of jewellery is made from start to finish. From the very first pen to paper, dribbling down your design ideas. To the final polish of your finished product.

The classes were not planned, everyone bought in their own work, so it was hard at times to seek help and assistance from the teacher as all of the students were going at their own pace on a variety of different projects.

It was tough to grow my skills without a structured curriculum but it was such a great way to learn from other students and problem solve for myself.

These short courses worked well for me, I could test out my strengths and weaknesses. I could discover what I was good at, and what part about the whole jewellery manufacturing industry I was passionate about.

These courses gave me a chance to learn something new, get me out of my routine and revitalise my creativity and imagination I felt like I had been missing.

It is all about learning and being open to growth and change when going out on your own to start your own brand. I realised I was not happy selling product that wasn't authentically me, cheaper fast fashion accessories were great to buy and sell but I have found much more happiness and success now I am crafting jewellery that I am proud, and passionate about.

I am confident in my designs and materials, that I know my customers will appreciate a locally made, and sustainable brand.

I am excited for the future, to keep being creative and making new designs, growing as a business and as a person.

These past few years have been tough in this COVID-19 world but it just is so important, now more than ever, to have a creative outlet.

Whether that be a hobby that turns into a business or not, if it makes you sparkle from the inside out, that's all that matters.

An Unconventional Path: My Life Story

Rutchi Kaushal

Contributing Member

Perth, Australia, 2023



From London to Perth, Western Australia - It was mid-morning. I was in my London apartment intensely waiting for a life changing text message to appear on my Samsung feature phone – it was still the 2000-era so there were no apps for checking information and receiving updates.

I remember that nervous, churning stomach feeling, and telling myself, 'It will all be okay.'

The text message arrived with a heart-stopping buzz, and I opened it.

"Congratulations! You passed...."

Everything else in that message was a complete blur. I was now a fully qualified chartered accountant ('CA'), and I felt this huge surge of emotion - mostly filled with relief!

My parents were the first people I called. They recognised how hard I had been working and studying to complete my qualification, so I knew it would be a fulfilling and proud moment for them.

When I reflect on this time of my life however, I now see that it was ultimately all about making them proud of me. With my sister having followed my dad's footsteps to becoming a doctor, and my stubborn rejection not to, I knew my parents were worried about what I would or could achieve. Following an accounting career was the next most agreeable path.



I was raised in an Indian family in England. My parents had relocated from India in the seventies, and we grew up in Kent. I have two siblings - an older sister and younger brother. My sister was the model student, I on the other hand, am a typical middle child! Deeply different, opinionated, and a little rebellious (well, as much as one could be in a strict household).

I moved from Kent to London, and whilst studying for my CA, I realised that I had this deep-rooted desire to travel and see the world. I felt that living and working abroad would be the perfect way to start that global journey.

I remember telling my family and friends, who were mostly supportive, but they never thought it would seriously happen – and neither did I for that matter! However, a job offer came up and I took the opportunity.



I had never visited Australia, nor had I heard of Perth, but I packed my bags and made the solo journey to follow this 'yellow brick road' despite all the disappointing and judgemental comments.

As I write, it's been over 15 years since I relocated, and it's been one of the most eye-opening experiences of my life. Creating a new existence in an unknown place, with complete strangers, was a true challenge – especially as an introvert.

I forged my way through the emotions, trials, and doubts, but am also grateful for all the memories, knowledge, and self-awareness I've learnt along the way.



During this time, I've made new friends and connections; had the opportunity to travel across parts of Australasia;

participated in a TEFL course to teach English in Cambodia; positioned myself as a diligent and conscientious individual in my career and industry; and most recently met my, now, husband.



My profession brought me to the other side of the world. It has taught me vital skills and given me invaluable opportunities from, working as an auditor, a financial controller, and a chief financial officer, to travelling the world, and meeting and connecting with people from various backgrounds and industries.

I will forever be grateful for my corporate career and experience, however deep down I had always felt there was something missing.



For a long time, I've aspired to work for myself. For years I had pictured myself working in the food or hospitality industry. Whether it was setting up a restaurant, bar, or café, or being able to share my knowledge and love for food, culture, history, and travel. I've always enjoyed researching, reading, and discussing these topics - and even though they're so entwined in our everyday life we often take them for granted.



Having grown up in a home where cultural food and traditions were a part of daily life, I've been wanting to share my perspectives on how these topics play a vital role on humanity and the world we live in.

In 2020, I finally gained the courage to leave my stable, corporate career to follow a path that was more in line with these interests. It's led to plenty of questionable looks and confusion from family and friends – looks, in fact, that weren't dissimilar to when I left England.

Being a person of colour, and living in western countries, I feel we experience things from a different lens. Growing up we are automatically put into a box. A box that we must fit into by following, not just societal norms, but also cultural norms. Expectations that are not always in line with our personal goals and desires but are easy paths to follow for fear of being singled out, dismissed, or losing that sense of security, and so it takes courage to stand up for what we believe in and to break the mould.

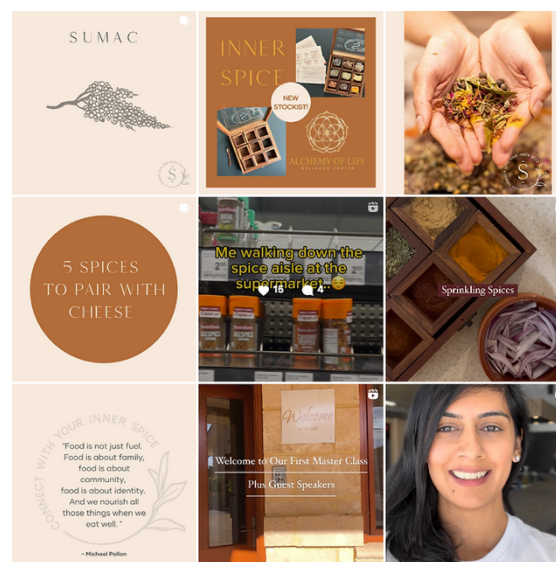
Drowning out the noise and expectations is a feat. I've had to learn to step into the discomfort, and believe in myself and my choices, with or without support.

With this belief, in 2021, I founded Inner Spice. A platform for connecting people to culture through food, with a focus on spice. Spices have had far-reaching influences on the foods we

eat – foods that are saturated in history and diversity, yet we couldn't be more disconnected.

Through my classes, events, and workshops, we reimagine the use and importance of spices to improve diet, everyday cooking, and wellness, to live a healthier, more sustainable lifestyle whilst appreciating these different cultures.

Setting up a food business in, not just a niche, but also a novel market within an industry that I had no knowledge of, has been, and still is, a scary ride. It continues to be full of surprises, but I'm learning each day. I'm acquiring new skills, honing-in on established practices, and extending my business acumen in challenging and unfamiliar areas.



Rutchi Kaushal on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and at [Inner Spice](#)

The business and industry obstacles aside, it's been personally terrifying to leave behind that corporate person

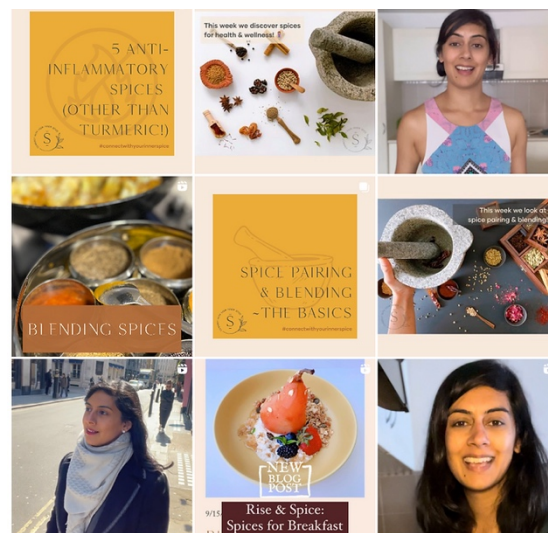
and past character I was for over 20 years.

Whilst I now navigate this new identity and sense of self, I grieve for that previous version of who I was. It's been a surreal journey of self-growth and personal development that have led to deep shifts in my mindset, perceptions, and relationships, and is still an ever-changing work in progress. I'm continually shedding layers and setting boundaries that have been tough both mentally and emotionally.



Rutchi in her recent trip back home to London

Although I no longer live that tick-box life of doing what's expected, nor am I following the path of 'normalcy' where there's familiarity, safety, and certainty, I am living more of who I want to be by embracing those fears and strengthening my mindset – for me, that is true fulfilment and success.



Rutchi Kaushal on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and at [Inner Spice](#)

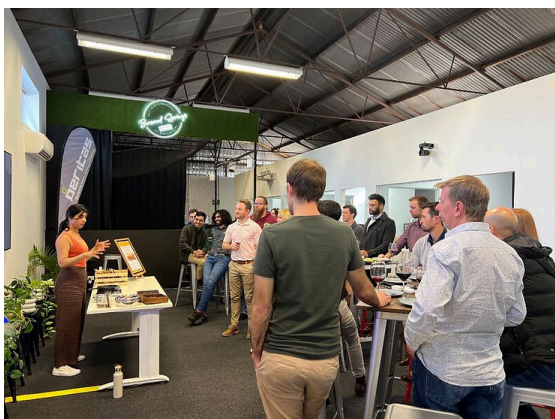
Rutchi's five key ingredients in life are:

1. **Lean into your fears and discomforts** - taking risks and living outside 'the lines' (without harming others) is liberating, empowering, and life-changing
2. **Change your circles and upgrade your relationships** - who you spend most of your time with affects you deeply; build a community of positive, emotionally intelligent, respectful, and understanding people
3. **Spend time alone** - feel the discomfort of doing things independently and not relying on others; travel, go to cafes/restaurants, the movies - embrace the unsettling feeling of it and do it anyway; it's fulfilling and provides a powerful sense of self awareness
4. **Say 'no' to things that don't feel right** - listening to our gut and instincts can be tough, but if we start to get into

a habit of noticing how our bodies feel towards certain things, whether it's people or tasks or activities, take note - this helps with believing and trusting yourself when it comes to tough decision-making

5. Develop good habits and routines for health, mind, and body - without good foundations we're not functioning as our best self, health and wellness should be top priority

If you would like to reach out to Rutchi Kaushal, she is contactable on [LinkedIN](#), [Instagram](#) and at [Inner Spice](#)



Rutchi's Spice Masterclass with engineering group [Peritas](#)



Rutchi's award winning spice dips, developed for [Mette is Baking](#).



Rutchi's clients loving the conversation and spice mix

Why I never practiced law and instead sing, dance and present on TV.

Alexander Circosta

Pioneer Member

Perth, Australia, 2022

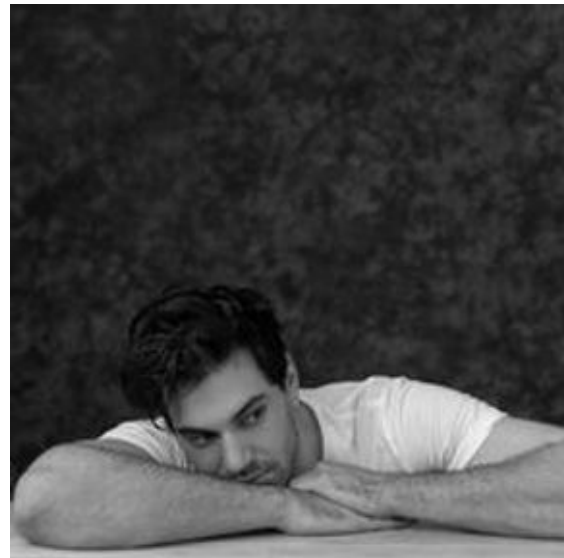


Alexander Circosta on *The Couch* - Local television for the whole of Australia! Airs Sunday nights at 730pm WST on Aurora Channel 173 only on *Foxtel*

AUSTRALIA - When I graduated from Law school in 2014, the unimaginative questions came fast and fervently "What area of Law do you want to work in?" "Do you have a graduate position?" "Oh Law, Lawyers make so much money, don't they?"

My answers fittingly were just as uninspiring: "I don't know or no...I'm looking... and yes, but the hours are terrible." Somewhere within the prestige of studying to join a profession which often piques peoples interest with the idea of court trials, glistening offices and power suits, I had found

myself simply not that interested in being part of any of it.



The idea of being placed at a desk reading through mounds of legal documentation and keeping a clean log and ledger, in case your client sues you, just did not appeal to me in the slightest.

I wasn't and am not against the profession by any means, it is so necessary in our society for the development of our legal system and the law permeates throughout every aspect of our lives.

To this day, I myself often find a great deal of satisfaction in espousing legal terms and rhetoric in general conversation "misrepresentation, the "chain of causation" and the concept of "vicarious liability" being my current personal favourite phrases.

However, I realized very quickly once I had commenced my Practical Legal Training that this was quite simply not

the profession for me. A realization which came with a career trajectory decision, in which I then had to ask myself - *What do I actually want to do?* And the more important question - *What do I give myself permission to want to do?*

When I was younger, my love for the Arts was absolutely fostered. I danced, ballet first then jazz because it was cooler, sung in the choir and played the clarinet. And of course, followed by the many drama classes and inevitable school performances.

I truly loved this! As an introverted shy person, it is not uncommon to express oneself through the Arts and I was definitely no exception to this.



Alexander Circosta's first appearance presenting on Channel Seven program Home in WA Saturdays at 5:30pm before the news.

Once, I was at university, I finally could explore this part of my personality in a more focused way surrounded by so many other creative individuals and experiences. We performed everything from Shakespearean plays to contemporary post-modernist pieces, my personal favourite was children's theatre. When university was over, the dreaded questions returned.

I reluctantly enrolled into my Practical Legal Training course to become admitted to practice as a Lawyer in Western Australia or a "string to my bow" as a lecturer told me when I said I was unsure of continuing with further legal study.

When we do things reluctantly, we are not truly giving of our self, we are not present nor are we that engaged in the work. Throughout my course I learnt very quickly I was definitely not the most intelligent or dedicated but I was the most dramatic in the most positive sense of the word.

When discussing what a lawyer would need to do to put a client at ease I very aptly suggested that: "We should serve coke zero in the meeting room, because it has all of the flavour with none of the calories." This got a warm response from my peers and I found myself performing once again. This continued and I relished any role play opportunity to perform as a lawyer cross-examining a witness or being admonished by a judge for not adhering to proper court etiquette or decorum.



Billboard of Alexander Circosta at Perth Underground Train Station for a WA Housing Campaign.

I was getting closer, but it would still be a few more years before I would fully embrace the idea of not being a full time lawyer but instead being a performer and entertainer.

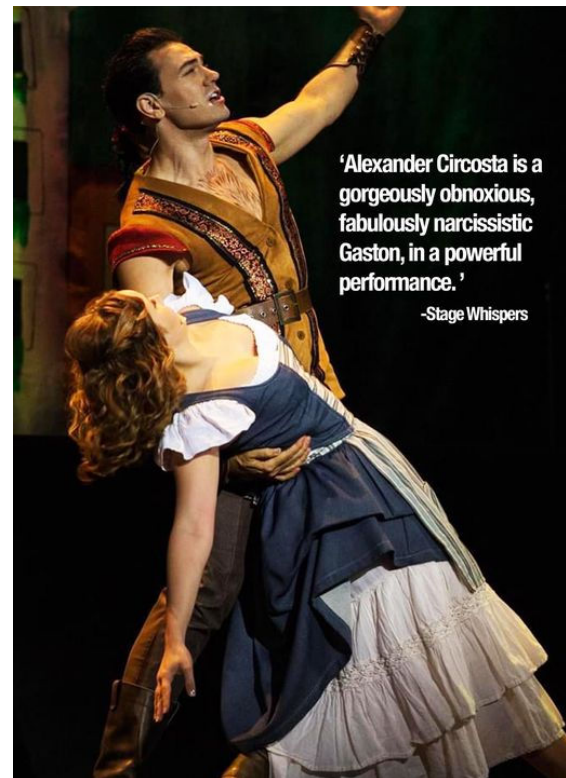
For 3 years I ran a comedy company, improvisational teaching and performing to be specific. After the initial grace period, I quickly learnt that you actually spend a lot of time managing not just the day to day tasks but also the emotions of the people who work there.

Unfortunately, I struggled to maintain a clear structure and felt like as the company grew and more individuals became involved I was essentially building the bridge as we crossed it.

This led to an understanding that you will inevitably make decisions as a leader that will make you unpopular with some of your team. The other thing I noticed was, as I worked behind the scenes trying to grow opportunities for the collective, I began to lose sight of my own goals as an individual.

In June 2018, I gave myself permission to dedicate my attention and time to pursue an individual career in the Creative Arts. It came at a moment where, having sold, essentially given away, the comedy company I was passionately but naively running, it was time to really own my own skillset and begin to do work that mattered to me. The only part I kept from that comedy company was the improvisation class I

taught in Mandurah at the Youth Centre, which I still teach every Monday till this day. It is a privilege to be a mentor to young people and share my experiences in performing that I do not take for granted.



'Alexander Circosta is a gorgeously obnoxious, fabulously narcissistic Gaston, in a powerful performance.'

-Stage Whispers

Alexander Circosta performing as Gaston the "gorgeously obnoxious" villain in the Musical Beauty and The Beast at The Regal Theatre

Since then I have performed comedy routines across Perth, I have dressed as Superman many times, appeared in TV commercials, in films, presented on Channel 7 and recently acted as Gaston in the Beauty and The Beast Musical.

Most importantly, I have experienced the joy of being part of something creative an intangible, deeply rewarding privilege that I do not take for granted.

In life there are many paths, often we yearn for purpose and meaning and the social pressure that comes with living a comfortable life which minimizes as much hardship as possible.



Hanging out with the superheroes at [Perth Children's Hospital](#)

I am privileged in my life in that I was able to give myself permission to pursue my "dream" whether it's for just one more year, a decade or my whole life - I have loved the journey and all the experiences.

Now the questions I get asked have changed: "Did you go to WAAPA?" "Do you want to be on Neighbours?" and "Actors don't make a lot of money, do they?"

I respond candidly: "No, I didn't go to [WAAPA](#)." "Sure, do you know the casting director of Neighbours?" "Finally, I didn't become an actor for the money, I became an actor because when I am engaged in a creative project. I can't think of anything else I would rather be doing."

Here are my 5 insights to pursuing a career and profession of your choice.

1. Identify what you enjoy by giving yourself permission to try new things, start with your hobbies by dedicating a small amount of time each week to explore, it doesn't have to be an all or nothing approach.

2. Reverse the steps from your goal, distill the skills within the locus of your control and remember even the positive changes we make in life can have negative emotions attached to them.

3. Be direct with your communication as humans we struggle to infer what someone else wants, tell people explicitly using examples and if they don't listen talk to someone else.

4. Experience doesn't equal expertise, don't be scared to find mentors who genuinely believe in you and will advocate for you.

5. Bringing Joy is a special thing, do things that matter to you, if you find your mind constantly wondering elsewhere while you are at your current job then you are not where you are meant to be!

<http://www.alexandercircosta.com>

A Visual Artist Breathing Life into Stories

Allan Chen

Contributing Member
Sydney, Australia
by Renée Ralph, 2022



SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA – Earlier this week, I had the pleasure of interviewing and chatting with Mr. Alan Chen, who graduated with a Masters of Arts in Production Design in Film and Television from the Australian Film Television and Radio School. He is a delightful and cheerful individual who has worn many hats as a filmmaker, an illustrator, art director, graphic designer, director, producer, writer, comic artist, head of department, and a teacher. He says: “A long time ago, people gathered around fires to listen to and tell stories. I believe that this tradition is what brings us together and

can help inspire us to reach our greatest potential.”

Organisations who have called on Alan’s services include Fox Films, Nintendo, Universal Music, YouTube, Screen Australia, NSW Health, Transport for NSW, BPay, Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS), and the Australian Maritime Museum.

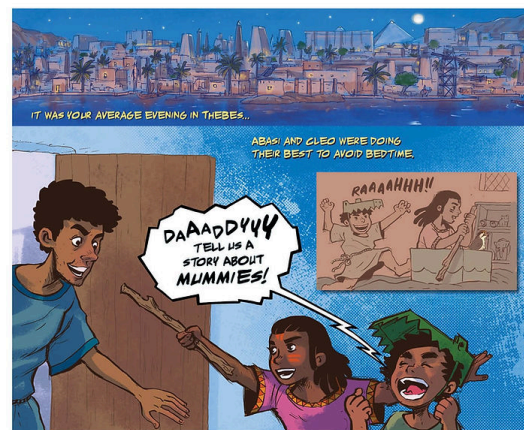


Photo : A sneak preview to the new book "The Mummy Daddy's Book" by Alan Chen

Over the last 24 years, Alan has been on a quest to acquire the skills to become a master storyteller. Especially now, he is a father to his 5 year old daughter, Arya who is learning fast to be a narrator, illustrator and storyteller herself. The proud father says that she is an articulate conversationalist who is clear on her instructions and artistic ideas.

Alan with his Chinese heritage and Macedonian wife, Aneta have created Arya, their daughter, is a wonderment and gift in itself. The trio have embarked on a magical journey of discovering, nurturing, laughing, chatting and playing.

For their daily family activity, Alan and his wife spend time together drawing with Arya – they share stories, delight in each other’s company, draw and paint on paper and dabble with digital art.



Photo : Arya drawing and learning the Macedonian language.

Alan shares when he was little, he never thought he would be a teacher. As a student, he would always skip school, it wasn’t because he was deliberately playing truant – he felt that the education system did not provide for his creative or artistic needs. When he wasn’t in the classroom, he would travel to the Art Gallery and visit various art studios to get inspiration and learn more about art and history.

He remembered that he was told at school to write neatly on the lines in the book. Alan would tell his teachers: “Why can’t I write or draw differently? I see things in a three dimensional form and

not something that is flat on a straight line.” The teachers could not offer him any solution.



Photo : Alan live scribing with his clients

Now he sees real value in teaching and as an accidental teacher – he has been a guide to hundreds of students for the past 14-15 years. Alan comes from a family of teachers – his mother, his father, his wife are teachers. His elder sister who has a Masters in Education specialises in helping Autistic children. His other sister lives in France and works as an international lawyer defending for human rights. He has two young Asian nephews that speaks French and Alan finds life fascinating.



Photo : Alan’s work involving culture, diversity, inclusion and de-colonisation

It is clear that his family’s heart is in the space of kindness, respect and giving – of finding value in life through elevating one’s self through education and being

in a world that is optimistic, bright and ethical.

To Alan, the categories of art changes and cannot be stereotyped through nationalities or defined solely to which country you are born in. Art is seen through individuals with different lineage or cultural heritage; and their mixed bloodlines becomes an artefact of one's culture, innovation and identity. Alan has become less judgemental of individuals, he has become more accepting, more understanding and appreciates a human being for who they are.

Currently, Alan runs his own company Sh8peshifters which specialises in visualising conversations and ideas for organisations with Diana Ayoub. The other company, Project Midnight allows him to create whatever he wants and he finds joy in seeing his art come to life in a form of a book, a simple illustration or digital work.

In Alan's words, he shares his artistic journey as a visual storyteller.

1. What do you do? How did you become a visual storyteller?

I am a visual artist and storyteller. I run my own company Sh8peshifters which specialises in visualising conversations and ideas for organisations. I have always worked in industries that make use of visual storytelling. I got my first job by accident.

I was sixteen, and drawing during a school excursion when a teacher from

another school gave me a job drawing environmental themed imagery for the Observatory Hill Environmental Education Centre.



Photo : Alan Chen with Aneta and Diane

Since then I've spent many years working in illustration, advertising, graphic design and filmmaking. I've also spent a long time teaching drawing, storytelling and design in tertiary education.

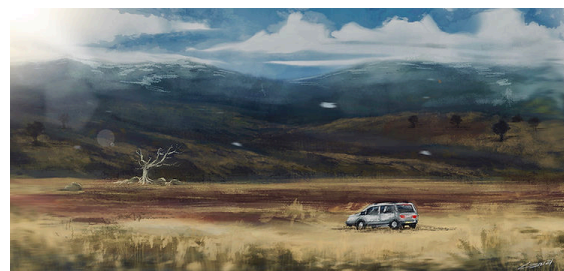
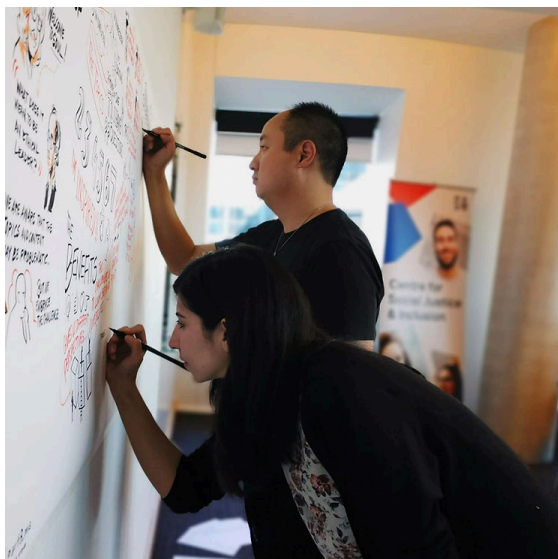


Photo : Alan painted this picture whilst his family were on holidays recently

2. How long have you been in this role as a visual storyteller?

I've been in my current role for two years, but I feel like I've been working my way up to this point my whole life. I've spent 24 years in visual storytelling industries, hopping from job to job,

working in different countries, trying to understand what my calling is.



3. When did you start drawing as a child? Where did you come from? What's your ethnic background? How long have you been living in Australia? According to my mother and father, I started drawing since I was 1 year old, and haven't stopped since then!

I grew up in Rockdale, a suburb in Southern Sydney. I was born in Sydney and am a second generation Australian Chinese. My mother was born in a refugee camp in Victoria during WWII which itself is another epic story.



Photo : One of Alan's works to stop domestic violence

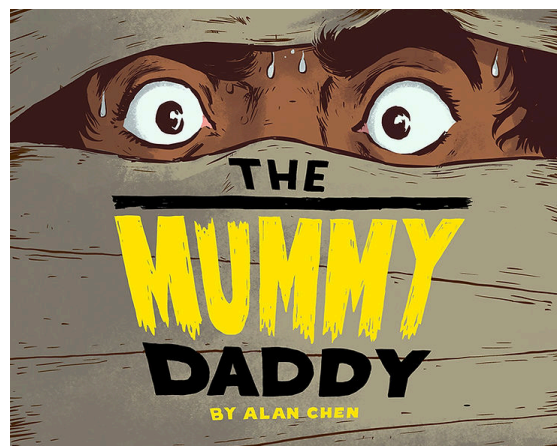


Photo :Introducing The Mummy Daddy's book that will be launched on 31 October 2021

4. What prompted you to write and draw a children's story book? What is the story about?

I was prompted to write this story 'The Mummy Daddy' because of the nightly routine my daughter and I have had since she was born. I tell bedtime stories to Arya and the vast majority of them are made up by me.

This one came about when Arya asked me what the difference between a Mummy and Mummy?

So I came up with a comedic way to help better define it. The story is about a dad trying to put his kids to bed, and recounts a fantastical tale of how he became a mummy in order to become a daddy. I have many more stories in my head, so I like to think that this is only the beginning.

It's where the phrase "seeing is believing" comes from. It is the most dominant form of communication we currently have, because it combines our deeply ingrained bias for storytelling with the lasting power of visuals.



6. How will you encourage other youths or students who want to go into this career? What are the 5 main tips that you will give?



Photo : Alan's work with Karen O'Connell, Associate Professor, UTS Law for the People that Fall Through The Cracks in Society

For anyone who is interested in visual storytelling, these are my top five tips:

1. **Don't wait for permission:** As the famous Nike slogan goes "just do it." It's so important to just be part of it, to get your hands and feet wet.
2. **Develop your craft:** Education is important, but it doesn't always come in the form of school. Look for ways to deepen your skills and keep practicing.
3. **Be open to new experiences:** Every aspect of our life feeds into our work. Go and experience the world. Be part of it.

4. **Learn to accept feedback:** Feedback or criticism is a gift. Listen to learn.

5. **Collaborate creatively:** Working with others is one of the great super powers we have access to. It can push us to new heights, and helps to push us out of our comfort zone.



Tough

Unemployment Benefits

Trudi Sampola

Contributing Member

Melbourne, Australia, 2021



If you've ever lost a job, you'll know what a shit thing it is to go through. If you've ever lost a job you loved, you can 10x that feeling.

That's what happened to me last week when I lost my job as the General Manager of Marketing at Placie.

I work hard and I'm not embarrassed to say I enjoy that. When you have a sense of purpose at work, doing things that are challenging and interesting, what's not to love?

Now, I realised, I would be looking at approximately fifty free hours in my week ahead. What the hell would I do with myself?

Suddenly there was no budget to manage, no data to analyse, no campaign to launch, no creative to think about or copy to write. Also (the hardest bit), no team to collaborate with.

I had forgotten how much admin goes into leaving a job! Devices, mobile contracts, paperwork...it really adds up. To be specific, it added up to 12 hours in those first days after I left Placie. Still, that left me with about 38 spare hours.

Want to know how I filled in week one Post Placie?

I loved and lost my job at Placie a week ago.

When a huge chunk of your identity suddenly disappears overnight, it feels like a blow to the body, heart and soul. It's a strange experience to realise you will now have 38 hours in a week that are unscheduled.

Here is my account of what I did in my first week Post Placie (PP).

I wasn't sure what to think, feel or do after waking up on Day 1 PP. Admittedly, my head and heart were really hurting. Was it due to the 127 gins I had dehydrated myself with? The family size triple cheese and pepperoni pizza I had single-handedly inhaled? Or was it that suddenly a huge part of my identity working on a business I loved had just been deleted. Probably a combination of all three.

My friends and loved ones wisely recommended taking a little time to digest and process everything.

After all, I had been working at carsales for 4.5 years, with the last 2+ years on Placie, a carsales start-up business.

Here's how my week rolled.

Exorcise (no, that's not a typo)

2 hours

I thought I had better flush out all the evil spirit I'd been guzzling so I kicked off Monday with a new personal trainer. We did a marathon two-hour session together (I know: the stuff of gym bunnies)! I was smashing those weights and boxing like a boss and geez I felt strong and really awesome!

I admit I was probably trying to a little too hard to show off to my new PT. The following day, I discovered I had overdone things and was mildly crippled for the next 48 hours. As a health precaution, I steered right away from the gym for the rest of the week just to make sure I was fully recovered.

Note to self: I'll be going daily with my exercise habit. I love the BJ Fogg's Tiny Habits method for life, so it'll be far smaller and more manageable time blocks, but fitness and happiness are proven to be good friends.

Therapy

8 hours

I racked up about 8 hours on Instagram and given it's EOFY, have been receiving all sorts of essential deliveries since – active wear, scatter cushions, avocado hair treatment (it rated 4.8 on Google with nearly 7K reviews!).

I nearly bought the Smart Planet Soft Pretzel Maker but I restrained myself

as I kept hearing my Dad say, 'You are going broke saving money, Trudi!'

Note to self: stick to reading books. My hair is fine, and the couch is very comfy as is. I've got a pile of great books to get cracking with and I have to finish reading Essentialism by Greg Mckeown which I can only describe as a life changing read. Thanks to my friend Amantha for this loaner.

The crib

10 hours

I watched literally hours of Masterclass and off the back of a two-and-a-half-hour interior design series, I spent about four hours rearranging every vase, picture frame, and chachka in the house. My husband was empathetic but quite confused.

I then watched a heap of YouTube videos on rose pruning before proceeding to channel my inner Costa Georgiadis onto my much-neglected rose bushes. I am now expecting a rose display this September to rival Spring Racing Carnival at Flemington.

Note to self: I've always loved gardening and find it incredibly satisfying. Right now, it also feels a like a metaphor for my working life. Over the coming weeks, I'll be planning out my garden renovation, clearing out the weeds, making sure the soil is in good health, planting the right things and as all good gardeners know, you reap what you sow. I'll be patient, trust the process and will be looking forward to Spring.

Community

18 hours

My bucket went from empty to overflowing last week. Awesome people leant in and in all sorts of different ways and put their proverbial arm around me. Some came as great listeners, some brought wisdom, and many simply sent me messages with wild expletives and an invitation which included the two beers emoji.

Note to self: If there is one legacy, I'll be proudest of from my time at carsales, it won't be my web copy or marketing campaign. It will be the community I have created and will be keeping with me wherever I go. How lucky am !!

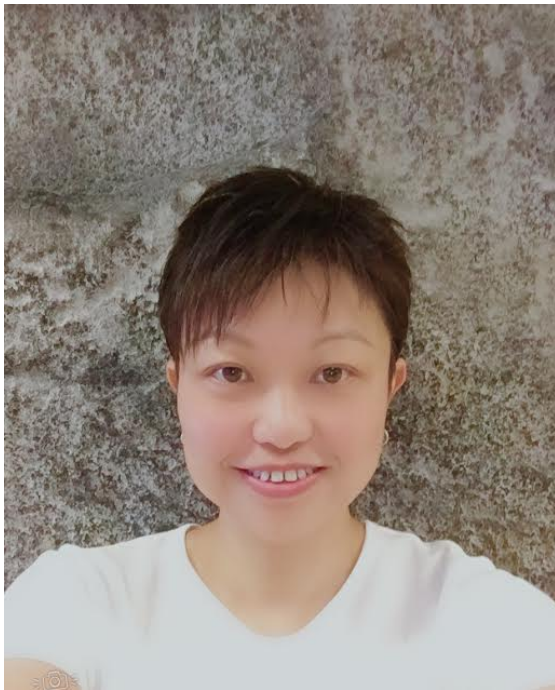
So that is how I spent 38 hours last week.

-END-

Hiding and Seeking Peace- A Personal Reflection

Lu Ann Ong

Contributing Member
Singapore, 2022



Running Away From Peace

Peace is flowing like a river, flowing out from you and me, flowing out into the desert, setting all the captives free...

SINGAPORE - The lyrics flowed as I knelt at the Church of St. Bernadette, in attendance at the funeral mass of a best friend. Through the First Reading; Responsorial Psalm; Second Reading; Gospel Reading; Homily, I felt nothing except for the incessant pain flowing out of me.

My friend had chosen the hymn *Peace is Flowing Like A River* as her own

send off, perhaps as a consolation to those of us she had to leave behind. On that day and for years after, I did not grasp her final gift to me.

Not only did I reject it, I ran away from it.

From the suddenness of her diagnose to her death, nothing prepared me, or us for it. We were discussing career switching plans, plans to have children, the Olympics in Beijing for the first time, the US elections. Little did we know that in less than 48 hours, all we had left to contemplate was which treatment, blood counts, survival chances and what next.

I ran away from God, church and the peace it promises after she died. For I thought that sometimes to gain something, the best way was to run away from it.

*Flight was flowing like a river in me,
Flowing out though work and routines
Spreading to every organ of my being
Setting my heart free by caging it tight*

A False Peace

Depression manifests differently in everyone and at different times. To overcome the loss of a best friend, Time turned out to be not proof positive. Since I was not able to count on Time, I had to find a way out.

I took to holidays. Everyone had the same idea, work and take some holidays. The way to more peace was

more luxurious holidays as a mental break during designated times of the calendar year. Holiday planners marketed images of peace – mountains, landscapes, glaciers, nature – and people signed up earnestly, in search of peace.



Leisure travel became an escape, a search and pleasure rolled into one. I took pains to plan, overcame distance and time to stand in front of rivers and mountains with a firm believe that these moments were flowing notions of peace nourishing my soul. Furious and unrelenting waves, viewed from an “in search of peace” lens, turned these into wonders of nature.

With each wave, my well-being improved. People are more alike that different. Regardless of culture, race and origin, in search of peace and tranquillity was the common theme. Each in their own world, letting the peace work through them on the beach, in the midst of mountains and rivers. Awe and peace came hand in hand.



But as easily was this peace could be bought, it easily dissipated.

A waiter delivers a wrong cocktail and the peace found on the beach instantly turns into irritation. The same peaceful wave watching, the same family peacefully hugging each other as they stared in awe of the mountains, were the same characters showing their angst when the lift button failed to light up at touch, or a wrong dish came, or the buggy was late in showing up.

Still, it was an easy notion of peace and one worth the pursuit.

Robbed Of Peace (again)

11 years after, I found myself in a déjà vu situation. This time, with my husband; my other remaining best friend and soul mate. A cancer tumour, an emergency operation, Intensive Care Unit and the same hospital routines.



The first time it happened, I turned away from God in search of justice. It took me years to reconcile with God, that for all the divine mercies and rosaries we collectively and faithfully prayed with every minute we had, it fell on His deaf ears.

This time, I was going to turn the other cheek to God.

In my brokenness and helplessness, I spoke to my husband about God. I confided that I had not the courage, or strength or fortitude to do it alone, or even with us together. We need God on our ship. I cannot remember if I prayed or I just wept daily but clearly, someone heard us.

My husband was baptised.

His baptism did not immediately return us the peace we craved, but it did to a large extent explained *"the mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace"*. (Romans 8:6)

From which it gave us an avenue to search for peace in scriptures. Though the dark and frightening months in

and out of the hospital, the tests and scans, I found myself repeating like a broken recorder - *Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.* (John 14:1)

Making Peace with Peace

In the midst of our struggles, the entire world was suddenly thrown into chaos. Peace was overturned, livelihoods lost, despair and an air of hopelessness prevailed.

My pandemic merged with the global pandemic. I was no longer alone.



Peace could no longer be found in jet setting escapes, hotel stays away from home, eating out at your favourite restaurant, an evening at a concert or exotic holidays. Not could it be found with a mask over your face, at the vaccination centres or news of travel bubbles.

In a pandemic, the situation is in flux. What is certain today can turn into uncertainty tomorrow.

Through the quiet and stillness of the lock down months, my pressure to search for peace was exonerated. For there was nowhere to go, nowhere to search except inwards.

As I read the scriptures, I am reminded that the root of peace is none other than God at work. That when I think of peace, I should not first look at travel brochures, think of my naked body dipping into *onsen* against mountain views, or the liberating feeling of skiing down a slope.

I should think of God making a way for me to make peace with peace and be reconciled to him.



Today as I write this, I am not crouching my heart in pain and crying uncontrollably.

To my best friend with God, this is for you.

To everyone searching for peace, listen to the hymn to start your own journey... *Peace is flowing like a river, flowing out from you and me, flowing out into the desert, setting all the captives free...*

160 Year Old Warring Spear in the Rightful Hands of Barladong Elder

Dr Marion Kickett

Contributing Member
Barladong, York, Australia
By Renee Ralph, 2023



*Left to Right : Alisha Ashworth, Dr Marion Kickett and Tracey Kickett
Photo credit : Bradley Kickett*

BARLADONG, York, Western Australia – In National NAIDOC week, the theme FOR OUR ELDERS, we respect the wisdom and love the Elders who have nurtured and encouraged us. In the spirit of conciliation and walking together, The Brilliant Foundation brings you a tremendous moment of Western Australian history from Dr Marion Kickett, a Barladong Elder and the good-hearted Alisha Ashworth who returned the spear to the family. The Aboriginal culture is 75,000 years old, one of the oldest living traditions in the world, as far back to the Ice Ages.

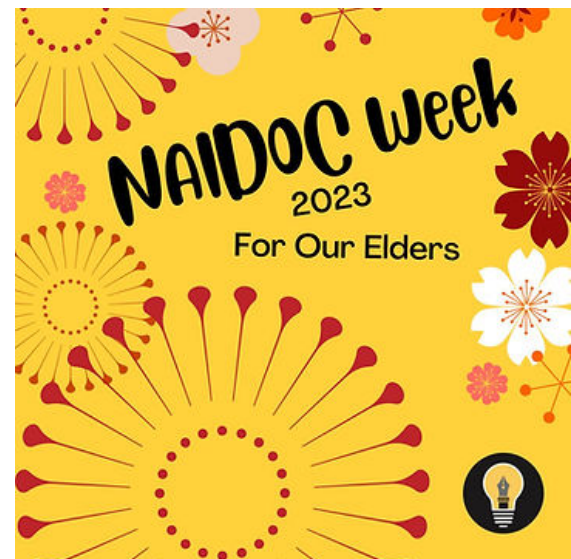
The First Nations Peoples in Australia are connected to the land, Mother Country, *Boodja* and they have studied

the stars, the seasons and how to live a sustainable life with nature harmoniously.

To give it context in a distinct period of time, the Pyramids in Egypt is around 4,600 years old.



Guest-of-Honour Dr Marion Kickett, Barladong Elder and Shire President Denise Smyth celebrating with cake that she made for NAIDOC celebrations 8 July 2023 in Barladong, York, Western Australia



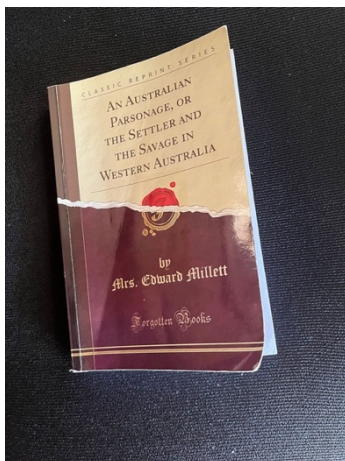
Instagram Tile NAIDOC Week 2023 For Our Elders- designed by Josh Galvin, The Brilliant Foundation

It was surreal chatting to Dr Marion Kickett, a Barladong Elder sharing her experience with Alisha Ashworth, her twin brother Alex and her mother,

Shelley when they visited her younger sister, Tracey and her at their home in York on Wednesday 19 April 2023 (*The Total Solar Eclipse occurred Thursday, 20 April 2023 in Exmouth, Western Australia*). Alisha gifted the 160 year old spear to Marion and Tracey, the wooden spear that was made by their great-grandfather, Tommy Tracker.

Dr Renée : Dr Marion, thank you so much for having this conversation with me. First up, is Barladong spelt Barladong or Barlladong?

Dr Marion : It is Barladong. The name can be traced back to the book in 1870s that I love reading titled *An Australian Parsonage, or the Settler and The Savage in Western Australia* written by the Reverend's wife, Janet Millet. My dad, George always called it Barladong and that's how he always pronounced it Bar-la-dong, all his life.

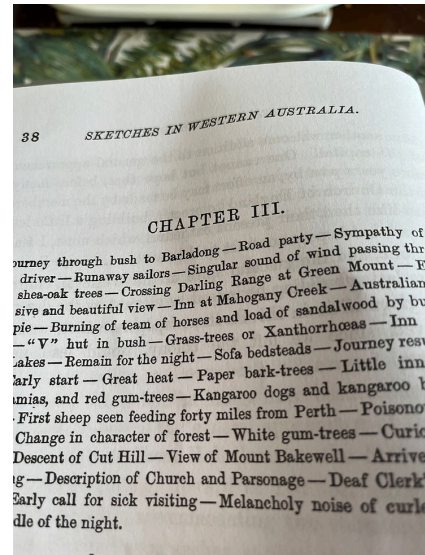


An Australian Parsonage, or the Settler and The Savage in Western Australia by Mrs Edward Miller - printed in England Edward Stanford, 6&7, Charing Cross, S.W. 1972
Photo credit : Dr Marion Kickett

It was her journal written in old English and I have read it four times. Jane Millet referred to York as Barladong as how

the First Nations Peoples pronounced it. Janet went back to England in 1872 and printed her book under the name Mrs Edward Millet.

BARLADONG (now known as YORK, Western



Australia) - Excerpt from *An Australian Parsonage, or the Settler and The Savage in Western Australia* by Mrs Edward Miller - printed in England Edward Stanford, 6&7, Charing Cross, S.W. 1972

Photo credit : Dr Marion Kickett

There were blood stains on the spear. I thought. The bullet was faster than the spear – My great-grand father, Tommy Tracker (that is how the Early Settlers or non-Aboriginals referred to him) was killed because of it.

My father, George Kickett told me the bullet would have hit him, knocking him off balance; therefore, when he let go of the spear, he missed his target. He died then and there at the hill which is now called Mount Tommy, named after him.

In those days, Aboriginal Peoples were usually killed when they were warring. My great grandfather and Edmund

Ashworth or his son, Ralph went in knowing that they were going for a fight and for a purpose. He knew that was going to be altercation and he went with his warring spear.

They don't mess around in those days Renée. The spear was made to be used as a weapon.

Dr Renée : What is your relationship with the Ashworths today?

There's a historical connection between the Kickett-Ashworth families over the last century. Dr Marion explained that it went way back to the 1850s.

The Kickett-Ashworth Connections

Dr Marion : The current generation with the Kicketts and Ashworths goes way back into the 1850s because my great-great-great grandfather, Cowitch (no surname then) was the First Native* Assistant Police Officer here in York in 1942 documented in the colonial secretary records in Perth's magistrate.

We know of Yaran and Winmar, a well-known Barladong Noongar surnames in Western Australia. They never had surnames, as that was their names. My great-great-grandfather's son, name is known as Thomas Kickett (it sounds like Cowitch as written by the non-Aboriginal records officer). He never had the name Kickett, it is known as Cowitch. We only had one name, not two names for the Aboriginal culture. For instance, Yagan is known as Yagan, that's it. It isn't like English when you

have a name and surname and what they did was to give the natives the names.

Edmund Ashworth came in the late 1840s to Barladong and as a former soldier, he was given work as a guard and he transported people from York to the Round House in Fremantle. He was from the British Army and he would be given land if he worked for it. Edmund was called the "Red Coat" that was what my dad called him. He paid 7 pounds to get out of the Army. Edmund did what he had to do to get land and he had to work really hard for it. In 1852, Edmund was married at 32 years old and he had nine kids with Ralph as the oldest son.

Today, our family still have the connection with the Ashworths. Today, we have a positive relationship and we are friends.

You see, Brian Ashworth went to school with Tracey Kickett, my sister in Year 1,1974. Brian is the youngest son of Norm Ashworth. The spear was held in Norm Ashworth's house in many years. Brian still comes around to see Tracey when he visits York and spends time with her.

I worked with Brian's sister, Dale Ashworth and we both worked as nurses at the York Hospital and that's my connection that I had with this family. To me, Dale is a really nice person, as of Brian and their beautiful mother, Mrs Shirley Ashworth.

Josephine (Josie) Kickett, my older cousin was and is still remains really good friends with Lorraine Ashworth (Brian's older sister). Lorraine is her best friend. I remember that they worked in the hospital together in York too.

I remember Josie saying that she went to the farm with Lorraine on the weekends. That's pretty amazing to have a weekend with a non-Aboriginal girl – during those times, that was not normal, that just didn't happen. It was not the done thing.

Non-Aboriginal people didn't have you staying with them unless they are missionaries or strong Christian people. People expected that in society. Lorraine is a pretty amazing girl and a very strong individual.

Josie and Lorraine are still good friends today. Josie named her first daughter, Lorraine after her best friend. They are in each other's lives and are still reconnecting today.

I remember when Lorraine was trying to contact Josie. Josie didn't have a mobile phone or land line at her home. Lorraine contacted me and I would put her in touch with Josie's son so that she could reach her.

Lorraine always made the effort to contact Josie through her relatives in York. When I look at Norm Ashworth's family, I connected with Dale Ashworth at the York Hospital. My sister, Tracey connected with Brian Ashworth as

Tracey went to school with Brian when they were five years old.

My cousin, Josie connected with Lorraine Ashworth. We are all still friends today.

Dr Renée: How was the spear returned? When did it start?

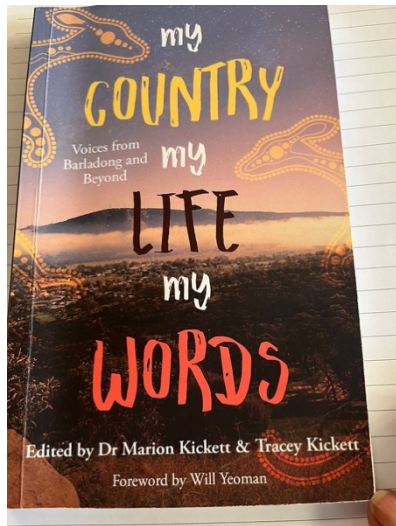
Dr Marion : Clive Ashworth passed away in 2017 and his daughter, Alisha Ashworth received the spear left to her in his will. She talked to her dad about the spear before he died. She was working in an organisation at Northam. and she met with several Aboriginal Elders.

Alisha asked them about the spear and they told her that the right thing to do was to return the spear to the Aboriginal Peoples. At that time, Alisha didn't know what to do with the spear and she didn't know the story of what happened to my great-grandfather, Tommy Tracker. She didn't know who to return the spear to and she didn't know us.



Dr Marion Kickett at The York Heritage Week with her book April 2023

Alisha's mother, Shelley was trying to make contact with me. I was very busy with the book launch March 2023 and I did text her back and could only meet after.



My Country, My Life, My Words - Voices from Barladong and Beyond - March 2023

Shelley turned up at the book launch and my school friend, Kellee Hooper introduced her to me. I said to Shelley that after the book launch I will contact her and I did.

She said she wanted to talk to me about something that was rather sensitive.

Shelley and her twins, Alex and Alisha came to my house in York and I could tell they were feeling rather awkward.



Photo : Dr Marion at the York Residency Museum with the 160 year old warring spear

The spear was a sensitive subject. In the 1970s, my father, George and Alisha and Alex's grandfather, Norm debated the spear several times at the Castle Hotel in York.

It was my great-grandfather's cousin who made the spear. Both Norm and his brother, Ron knew that the maker of the spear, was my dad's grandfather. My father, George was very angry because his relative had been killed back then.

It brought me back to the conversation I had with my dad. I remembered when I asked my dad, George: "Will you get it back? The spear back?"

My dad said: "I don't want it back. So, I will never get it back."

I think my dad was so angry and pissed off about the situation that occurred.

Alisha didn't know that my great-grandfather had been killed as she asked me: "Did he die?"

I said: "Yes, he did when he was shot."

Tracey and I were at home, when Alisha brought the spear in and put it on the dining table.

Alisha said: "When my father died, he left the spear to me. I want to gift it to you – you and Tracey because that's where the spear belongs. I could see that Alisha was so happy and relieved as well when that important moment happened.

I thought WOW – that blew me away.

Alisha and Alex are such beautiful kids and they were over the moon when that happened.

Alisha said: "I know that this is the right thing to do, both my grandfather and my dad didn't really want to talk about it."

I just sat there feeling amazed, really. Then Tracey and I, we both said : " Yes, we will accept the spear."

Dr Renée : It is interesting in itself that they kept in in their family for 160 years and not burnt the spear or destroyed it?

Dr Marion : I take it as a positive that they kept it for this time without destroying it as most of the spears found or collected back then were destroyed. I remember saying to them that that the first thing we have to do is to frame the spear and the spear has to be loaned to the York museum. I told them I will be in touch with the museum.



Dr Marion Kickett with Alisha Ashworth holding the 160 year old spear

On Healing and Education

Dr Marion : The story of the spear to me is about our healing. To me that education is the key and the story has to be told for people especially the younger generation to be educated. The spear is about conciliation, not reconciliation, as I believe, we have nothing to reconcile.

The spear story is conciliation, which is a true meaning of all of us, coming together and connecting as all Australians.

Dr Renée: Thank you Dr Marion for your time today. It has been wonderful chatting with you.


Dr Marion: You are welcome, *Renée*.

Celebrating My Golden Jubilee – Celebrating A Half Century of Joy & Life Treasures!

Christina Chia

Contributing Core Member
Melbourne, Australia, 2023



 Christina Chia, Celebrating Her Half Century Milestone.

Where did the time go? How is it that I am 50 years old? I do not even see myself as that 'old'. I still clearly remember when my mother turned 50, I said to my 20 year old self, 'she is old'.

But was she 'old'? If I'm not old now, was she then?

Let me look at the time that has passed.

Reflecting back to my childhood days in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, I can still remember walking into class as a 'Standard 1' student wearing my white Bata shoes, navy blue pinafore and crisply ironed white shirt. I remember the familiar smell of blackboards / white chalk, the 'butterflies in my stomach' (feelings of excitement yet uncertainty) to meet new classmates.

Before I knew it, I was walking across the hall to attend my graduation ceremony from RMIT University. I felt a depth of gratitude to my parents. I remember taking professional photos in the photo studio proudly wearing my mortarboard and graduation gown.

Not long after, my father walked me down the aisle as I got married. I remember the joy and love I felt when my daughters were born, and the feelings of accomplishments and pride as both my girls completed their VCE.



Changing circumstances led me to Australia as a single mother with two toddlers in tow, two suitcases, limited support & little finances. From humble beginnings I have worked tirelessly to create opportunities and a better future for myself and my family. I wear many hats, from a senior executive in the education sector, to a community champion who believes in the joy inherent in serving, leading, and building meaningful connections to strengthen our communities.

Fast forward, I am a *golden jubilette!*

I am happiest.

I am grateful.

I am happily married.

I am very proud of my daughters.

I am living in my truth.

I think age is a number.

I love my friends and the connections I have.

I have broken the mould for the next generation.

I am aware not to compare.

I see life full of opportunities.

I rise by lifting others.

I continue to learn - do better & be better.

I am open to new things and experiences.

I continue to follow my intuition & passion.

I am fitter than ever!

I am living to my true potential.

I am living my life by design.

I am living my very best life!

I am in joy.

I am me!



🌟: Immaculate Table Setting for the Big-0 Birthday

My big-0 party!

I embraced and celebrated my big-50 milestone birthday with boundless grace, gratitude & joy!

Oh yeah! I always love a party! I had the best time and "Living my very best life" continues to be my mantra.



🌟: Luxury

A most memorable and magical night ever!

Held at James Said (JS) Melbourne, my family & dearest friends, who are my chosen family, were seated in the spectacular European styled ambience. We were served pre-dinner drinks upon arrival and a European inspired 3-course dinner.

It was a delight to enjoy the luxurious JS furniture, statement chandeliers & extravagant interiors themed with Phalaenopsis white orchids & yellow dancing orchids, crystal candelabras & white table cloths.

It was a treat to enjoy the customised 3-tiered Belgian cheesecake with strawberry filling; pink champagne sponge with rose water butter cream & raspberry coulis; matcha chiffon with black sesame buttercream & lychee & fruit ...all made by my dear friend, Huey Chew.

The emcee of the night, one of my best friends, Tony Hanlon made sure the night flowed as easily as the champagne and speeches from my loved ones, present and via video, filled me with gratitude and joy.

To top the night off, my daughters, Zoe and Ashley ended their speeches by getting everyone to sing a 'rap song' about me! WOW! We had Chrissy Dore of Vocrock Magazine and Lexi Zhou take photos and captured memorable moments of the night. We had a social bouncer, David Davis to ensure all guests felt 'loved'. And my 'door bitch', Rachael Haack made sure my party kicked off with the right glam!

We danced the night away with live music by musician extraordinaire, Ron Kingston. And yes... being a fashionista, I had two outfit changes during the night.



👑: Christina Chia- Bespoke outfit, Asher & Archer

My first outfit was a dress complemented with a beaded cape to start the night. The dress was a metallic palette of gold, silver and copper to mark the celebration. Using a sheer pleated fabrication made from lurex thread, the fabric was draped in different directions to catch the light.

A V-neckline drew the eye to an embellished bodice with straight-cut glass beaded strands to catch the light and flatter my frame; and a mix of metal embellishments on the shoulders made the gown shine.

Being on a chilly Melbourne night, the gown was complemented with a long cape to finish the look. Asher & Archer's vision was to ensure that I shone on the outside as much as my heart does on the inside. Deepest

gratitude that it all came together so well!



📸: Christina Chia- Two-piece Couturier, Joe Halabi

Luxurious modern two-piece by couturier, Joe Halabi.

The couturier created a demi-romantic two piece, looking to make a statement, without feeling like I had gone over the top. With Middle Eastern influences of intricate, hand-sewn beading and embroidered detailing, Joe created an innovative, sensual, modern, edgy & feminine one shoulder top with feathered sleeves & a wrapped sarong skirt in cream sequined fabric.

The outfit gave me flexibility and a special touch to finish the night dancing with my friends.

I felt very spoiled throughout the entire process from planning until the end of the party.



📸: Christina, Daughters and Husband Roger

Flouting the stereotype, debunking the myth, not ready to be put out to pasture, not ready for the rocking chair, but rocking with hot abs & bikinis, reaping the rewards of my hard work & achievements of my professional and community careers, both daughters driving and working, a great marriage & genuine friends - my heart is filled with deep gratitude and joy.

Being 'Golden' is such a blessing!

I certainly am not afraid to age – let's continue to live our very best life!

PS: I am still celebrating – having a great birthday season and every excuse to celebrate!

The Wounded Child Within

Alrick Dorett

Co-Founder
Singapore, 2023



Life has a way of leaving deep imprints on our hearts and souls, particularly during our formative years. The wounds we carry from our childhood or young adulthood can shape our lives in profound ways, impacting our relationships, self-esteem, and overall well-being.

However, it is crucial to recognise that we hold the power to heal, forgive, and move forward from the wounded child within. By embracing self-love, cultivating forgiveness towards ourselves and others, we embark on a transformative journey towards personal growth, acceptance, and love.

Famous people from various walks of life have contemplated the concepts of healing, forgiveness, and love. Their

words serve as guiding lights, inspiring us as we navigate our unique paths to self-renewal.

Throughout this extended article, let us draw upon their wisdom and allow their profound quotes to illuminate our personal journey of healing and growth.

Healing: Reclaiming Our Inner Light

"Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it." - Rumi

Healing begins with a courageous act of self-discovery and introspection. It requires us to confront the barriers we have constructed within ourselves that hinder our ability to experience love and self-acceptance fully. By acknowledging our pain and tending to our emotional wounds, we gradually dismantle these barriers, allowing our inner light to shine through.

Engaging in therapy, engaging in self-reflection, and prioritising self-care all contribute to the healing process, helping us mend our wounded inner child.

Forgiveness:

A Pathway to Freedom "Forgiveness is not an occasional act; it is a permanent attitude." - Martin Luther King Jr.

Forgiveness is an act of profound liberation, freeing ourselves from the weight of resentment and anger. While forgiving others may seem daunting, it is crucial to recognise that forgiveness is primarily an act of self-

empowerment. It is not about condoning or forgetting past actions but about releasing ourselves from the bondage of negative emotions.

Through forgiveness, we create space for healing, growth, and genuine transformation. It enables us to break free from the shackles of the past and move forward with compassion, empathy, and inner peace.

Love: Embracing Our Wholeness

"Love yourself first, and everything else falls into line." - Lucille Ball

Authentic love for others can only flourish when we have learned to love ourselves unconditionally. Embracing self-love requires accepting ourselves with all our flaws and imperfections. It involves nurturing our inner being, practicing self-compassion, and prioritising our own well-being.

When we genuinely love ourselves, we cultivate a positive energy that radiates outward, enhancing our relationships and interactions with others.

By becoming our own greatest source of love and support, we break free from the chains of the wounded child within. Through this transformation, we embark on a path of genuine connection, fulfilment, and actualisation.

The Power of Forgiveness in Relationships:

"Forgiveness is the final form of love." - Reinhold Niebuhr

While forgiveness is essential for self-healing, it also plays a crucial role in our relationships with others. By practicing forgiveness, we create an environment of compassion, understanding, and growth.

It allows us to let go of grudges, release the pain of the past, and foster healthier connections. Remember, forgiveness does not mean forgetting or excusing harmful actions; rather, it is a conscious decision to move forward without carrying the burdens of the past. Through forgiveness, we open the doors to deep, meaningful connections and the possibility of nurturing love-filled relationships.

"Forgiveness is the ultimate form of healing, as it allows love to flow freely, mending what was broken and nurturing the soul."

The wounds we carry from our past need not define us. They are not permanent shackles, but rather opportunities for growth and transformation. In our journey of healing, forgiveness, and love, we possess the power to transcend our wounds and embrace a brighter future.

As we navigate this transformative path, let us remember the words of Rumi, who reminds us that seeking love is not about external validation, but rather about dismantling the barriers we have built within ourselves. Through introspection and self-awareness, we uncover the layers of protection we created and open ourselves to the

possibility of receiving and giving love unconditionally.

Martin Luther King Jr.'s words echo the timeless truth that forgiveness is not a sporadic act but a permanent attitude. It is a lifelong commitment to release the chains of resentment and anger that hold us back. Through forgiveness, we reclaim our power, reclaim our freedom, and make room for healing and personal growth.

Lucille Ball's wisdom emphasizes the significance of self-love as the foundation for all other forms of love. When we love ourselves, we radiate positive energy and become beacons of love and acceptance. By embracing our wholeness, embracing our imperfections, and nurturing our well-being, we become capable of forging genuine connections with others, free from the insecurities and wounds of the past.

In our quest for healing, we must not overlook the power of forgiveness in our relationships. Reinhold Niebuhr's words remind us that forgiveness is the ultimate expression of love. It bridges the gaps between individuals, heals wounds, and allows relationships to thrive. By practicing forgiveness, we create space for compassion, empathy, and understanding, fostering deeper connections with those around us.

The wounds we carry from our youth or young adulthood do not have to define us. We have the power to heal, forgive, and love ourselves and others. Through self-reflection, therapy, and

self-care, we embark on a journey of self-discovery and self-acceptance.

As we break down the barriers within ourselves, we unleash our inner light and embrace the power of forgiveness, liberating ourselves from the chains of the past. By loving ourselves unconditionally, we radiate love and create space for meaningful connections with others.

Let us embark on this transformative journey, guided by the wisdom of those who have treaded this path before us, and find solace in knowing that healing, forgiveness, and love are within our reach.

The Human Face of Employee Engagement

Dr Renée Ralph & Alrick Dorett

Co-Founders

Perth, Australia | Singapore, 2020



COVID-19 has brought to light that human kindness and giving can go hand-in-hand in business. Companies can still be profitable and yet develop goodwill through values that matter. The capitalistic goal of maximising shareholder value is not the only purpose to run a business.

As employees play a major role within any company, decision makers have the opportunity to lead compassionately and strategically with their team.

The global community has witnessed the big-heartedness of multinational brands such as food manufacturer Kellogg, iconic toy factory, Lego and musical legend, Sir Andrew Lloyd Weber. Through its Kellogg's Better Days initiative, Kellogg and its charitable funds have donated more than US\$10 million in food and funds to global COVID-19 hunger relief efforts, affirming its mission statement – 'Nourishing families so they can

flourish and thrive'. Kellogg's contributions are aiding the following organizations around the world – Global Food Banking Network, sustaining food banks across Asia, Europe and Latin America; European Food Banks Federation, sponsoring food banks across Europe; Feeding America, supporting 200 food bank locations across the US and Food Banks Canada, financing 500 food banks across Canada.

Lego, through their 'learning in play' philosophy, has donated US\$50 million to charities such as No Kid Hungry, which feed children who stopped receiving free or subsidised lunches during school closures. Lego is also helping parents who are juggling their jobs, trying to educate and accommodate their kids from home during the pandemic. The majority of the funds will support charities that provide remote learning tools. Lego will also donate 500,000 Lego sets globally to families in need. In an Instagram post, Lego modified toymaking machines at its Billund factory in Denmark to produce Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), churning out 13,000 masks a day for Danish healthcare workers.

In March 2020, Sir Andrew Lloyd Weber (ALW) created his own YouTube try-out video playing All I ask of you in C major (*avoiding the sharps and flats in D Flat because of his arthritic fingers*). Sharing his own lockdown experience brought so much joy worldwide that in April 2020, a new YouTube channel

called *The shows must go on* began offering a different Andrew Lloyd Webber musical every week on a complimentary basis. The unique aspect of this streaming is Sir Andrew Lloyd Weber's personal and intimate insight to each piece of musical before it airs. Each show begins streaming on the channel at 2pm (EDT) and remains accessible for 48 hours. [Universal Productions](#), in collaboration with Andrew Lloyd Webber's production and publishing company [The Really Useful Group](#) created this initiative. Music lovers under lockdown can enjoy ALW hit musicals including *Cats*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Evita*, and *School of Rock* at home with their family via [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Spotify](#), and ALW's official website and videos.

Unfortunately, not all companies work in an empathetic way. According to a [commentary](#), staff of scooter-sharing start-up [Bird](#) unceremoniously let go 406 employees in a modern *Black Mirror* style. The affected workers were asked to log into a one-way [Zoom](#) call with a clinical voice informing them that they had been fired. Their [Slack](#) and other accounts were abruptly shut down and given termination dates. The unfeeling way of letting go of employees during these challenging times do not reflect well of the company's decision-makers, brand and values.

With all the remarkable experiences and outpouring of humanitarian efforts

– are we expecting things to go back to normal? Life as we know it will never quite be the same, and ground sentiments have pointed to a new normal.

Likewise, so will the businesses – we cannot return to the “same old, same old”. So what can we do in our own business to help support human kindness and giving?

We turn to AirBnB, Singapore Airlines, KPMG Australia as three companies that look into the heart of their business – their employees – and find out how the decision makers move forward strategically and compassionately with their team.

AirBnb A great example of an organisation that put its people at the centre of its business. Letting go of 25 percent of its workforce was one thing, but doing it with compassion, dignity and empathy is rare. Businesses that survive will need to rethink their entire value chain, internally as well and externally. In a [message](#) to employees, [Airbnb](#) co-founder and CEO Brian Chesky announced: “Some very sad news. Today, I must confirm that we are reducing the size of the Airbnb workforce.”

By being forthright, clear and communicative, Chesky explained to his employees: “We are collectively living through the most harrowing crisis of our lifetime, and as it began to unfold, global travel came to a standstill. Airbnb's business has been hit hard,

with revenue this year forecasted to be less than half of what we earned in 2019. In response, we raised \$2 billion in capital and dramatically cut costs that touched nearly every corner of Airbnb.” Chesky told his employees that he would be transparent and offer details, so that everyone was fully aware of all that was happening in the hospitality industry.

Singapore Airlines (SIA) In the absence of a vaccine for the pandemic, the travel industry would find it difficult to get back on its feet. On 14th May, national carrier Singapore Airlines reported the first annual net loss in its 48-year history. In a filing to the Singapore Exchange, SIA Group registered a net loss of S\$212 million for the 12 months ending 31 March, a reversal from the S\$683 million profit in the previous year. SIA’s CEO Goh Choon Phong said that SIA is setting up an internal task force to re-examine its operations and how it can emerge from the ongoing pandemic. SIA has, where possible, redeployed some of their staff to other areas of the business as well as other positions within the airline.

KPMG Australia Majority of KPMG’s 8000-strong workforce in Australia have accepted its COVID-19 salary reduction scheme as the firm organises for a phased transition back into the office. As lockdown restrictions ease around the country, KPMG said the scheme required employees to accept a 20 per cent pay cut without a reduction in hours, in response to

declining revenue during the pandemic. KPMG will slash the salary of equity partners by almost 17 per cent in response to the plunge in client demand. In a decision to keep most of their staff, KPMG Chief Executive Gary Wingrove praised the firm’s employees for backing the short-term measures and the proposed pay cuts.

From the above examples, we identify five questions that we should ask to move our business ahead and they are:

- 1. What is our post-COVID-19 business going to look like from the employees perspective?*
- 2. What percentage of the workforce will take up the part-time role or have a shorter workweek?*
- 3. To take the business forward or even to leapfrog ahead, what skillsets do employees need?*
- 4. Identifying the missing skills, that the business requires, can it be off-shored or right shored?*
- 5. Has the company looked at possible partners and strategic alliances instead of employing?*

With businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative for teams to be involved in strategic change. Communicating with employees realistically and clearly articulating the decision-making process is essential. Informing and involving employees every step of the way is a critical component in navigating the new normal, and it will pave a positive road ahead for your organisation.

Our New Mask Culture – A Symbol of Change

Dr Renée Ralph & Alrick Dorett

Co-Founders

Perth, Australia | Singapore, 2020

Mask wearing is a necessity in 2020. Who would have thought? As we walk the streets with masks on, we pass by people and occasionally, we may think we recognise someone, but we are unsure. We look into their eyes, and notice a raised eyebrow, or a smile forming with their eyes.



*“The eyes are the window to your soul”
- William Shakespeare*

Gazing into their eyes, we can tell whether a person is sad or happy. As the mouth behind the masks curls up, the eyes are smiling. If one is feeling sad, another person can view the melancholy state of mind, even if you are covering up. We become better

observers and listeners when our mouths are concealed as the rest of our visual and audio sensory abilities take over.



Mask as a primeval human practice



For over 7 millennia since men have walked the earth, the ancient world use masks in rituals or ceremonies. It is a primeval human practice. Masks have been connected with hidden identities, nestling in the realms of good and evil.

Mask protects from transmission



For decades, the law decreed that bank customers are not allowed to wear sunglasses to cover their faces as full facial identification is required. This rule prevented bank robbers from barging into the vicinity. Now the new directive for masks to be worn at all times when entering the bank hoping to curb the spread of COVID19. A mask in these times is a key measure to suppress transmission and to save lives in America, France, Italy, Singapore and some states in Australia. Masks reduce potential exposure risk from an infected person. A mask protects you as well as it protects others.

Mask gives confidence

Sporting a mask can also offer relief to the person that is not comfortable with their looks, like a birthmark perhaps on the face or other forms of deformities. A mask removes the physical discrimination of an individual. Everyone looks more or less the same. Uniformity in appearances except for the eyes that becomes the blueprint of your being.



A parent shared that her son who has a cleft lip, was elated with wearing the mask when it became a compulsory

ruling in Singapore. Her son became confident as everyone looks the same and hiding behind the mask gave him strength. He feels normal when speaking to others as their eyes are not pinpointing to his cleft lip that was stitched up badly. His superpowers will be lost once the mask is off and he is left with his humanity to manage the discomfort he faces daily. We all wear masks, our true identity is often hidden behind the masks we wear, with ourselves safely concealed beneath, to hide our true self even from our family.

"Man is least himself when he talks in his own person. Give him a mask, and he will tell you the truth". Oscar Wilde



Mask as a symbol of action and change

In this tide of change, a mask is not merely an accessory, it becomes a shield to an individual. Symbolically a mask becomes a caption representing an individual's armour and valour. We have masks that demonstrate a value

proposition linked to a human being or a cause.

Masks become the revolutionary flags of democracy that spurs the spirit of human decency and survival. Masks are also part of a creative process titled "Mask Art" initiated by [UNESCO](#). Individuals who can sew have fashioned home-made masks to be used personally or sold [commercially](#).



At present, masks are worn for security, protection, in hunting, in sports, disguise, arts and entertainment.

It seems to be comfortable in one's skin, wearing a disguise seems to be the norm – just like the superheroes that some of us grew up to idolise – [Superman](#) vs Clarke Kent, [Wonder Woman](#) vs Diana Prince, [Batman](#) vs Bruce Wayne – the alter egos are necessary to shield themselves from the unknown. Don Diego de la Vega masks himself to become [Zorro](#), an ethnic hero who is wise and brave with his horse, Tornado.

Zorro represents the vigilante spirit of doing good that supports his Spanish and Mexican people. It offers the anonymity to do good as a human. By wearing a mask, we too can use our superpowers to do good.

Mask divides the rich and the poor



In the fashion industry, [Chanel and Louise Vuitton designer masks](#) have arrived for the sassy and a catalyst for fabricate the fake designer marks craze. The mask is also a mark for only the citizens of this world who can afford it or have access to it.

So where the masks protect some, it leaves open for discussion the rest of the [communities](#) that do without. India has recorded [7.6 million people](#) with COVID19 and there are not many masks to go around of that quantity even though [WHO](#) has recommended the use of masks. Imagine the health infrastructure supporting these millions of people and children

deprived of help during this pandemic? It is a diabolical circumstance. Covering up can only do so much as the reality of situation is grave. COVID19 does not choose who or what it reaches and infects – the gap between the haves-and-have-nots widens in our world.



The minority, poor and marginalised communities may not have accessibility to masks, let alone clean water to drink, put food on the table, sanitise their hands frequently and implement physical distancing in overcrowded squalors - an issue that us, global citizens have to address together.

Hopefully, when we wear our masks, it is a call to action towards supporting our disadvantaged communities.

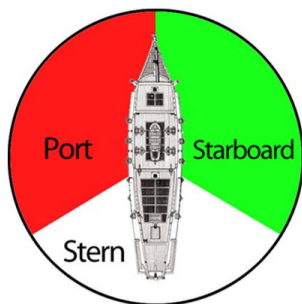
Port and Starboard

Alrick Dorett, Co-Founder
Singapore, 2020

What now seems like eons ago, I was on a family holiday in Los Angeles in June 2019 at the Malibu Pier, and like any other tourists, we wandered down the pier and ended up at the store, Malibu Beach Supply Co. It was my birthday and my wife bought me a pair of reading spectacles, Miklos, by CADDIS.

What attracted me to the spectacles were the words engraved on it, "*Port*" and "*Starboard*".

To be frank, my knowledge of nautical terms was limited, and a quick google search made me slightly aware. For those of you like me, this is a simple illustration.

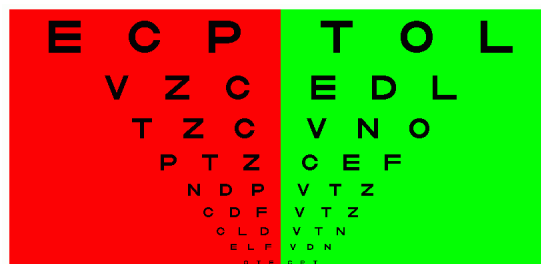


But what struck me upon learning this, was the connection between sight (vision) and the nautical terms, both of which share the same colours.

When you visit the optometrist to have your eyes tested, you are often asked to look at something similar to

the below, known as the Snellen screen.

The premise behind this test is those green wavelengths of light focus in *front* of the retina while the red wavelengths focus *behind* the retina.



When looking at the red/green (duochrome, or bi-chromatic) chart, the patient is asked to decide which side is clearer or sharper. If the response is green, then the Rx needs additional plus (+) power. If the response is red, then additional minus (-) power is needed.

"Trusting the vision without forcing the way is a lesson worth learning in every port." - Colleen Mariotti

For me, this was a reminder for an important life lesson i.e. what is your personal vision? Do you have a personal vision? How committed are you to living it out?

A clear vision provides clarity like a map to help *chart* your way and choices you make to achieve that vision.

These choices will shape and affect your:

- personal development;

- values;
- goals;
- development of your skill and experiences;
- spiritual and physical well-being;
- family and the choice of friends that surround you

But in the end, it should help you maintain or even achieve some balance in your life.

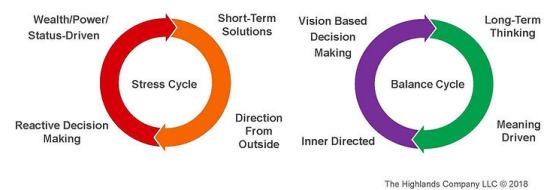
"Balance is not something you find, it's something you create." - Jana Kingsford

Your vision is not a one-size-fits-all, but it is uniquely fashioned to fit you. A clear vision enables you to keep your eyes fixed on your desired objective, and it allows you to look not just at the *FORWARD* but it allows you to adjust your vision either to *Port* or *Starboard* as you navigate your life when you hit challenges or obstacles along the way.

Studies consistently show that this one factor, personal vision, is more important in both success and satisfaction than any other factors – ranking it more important than intelligence, socio-economic background, or education.

This simple but powerful chart here by [The Highlands Company](#) illustrates that with a personal vision, you will be able to work within something they call the balance cycle rather than in a stress cycle.

In the balance cycle, you will be more satisfied, more productive, and experience more meaning and enjoyment. In comparison, without a personal vision, you could end up in the stress cycle where you experience more burnout and often feel as though your efforts are wasted and lack meaning.



These days with the pandemic showing no signs of slowing down, we are surrounded by family, friends, peers, colleagues, maybe even ourselves, who are burnt out, stressed, and displaced. We need to stay focused and stay the course or re-evaluate and make the decision to change as necessary.

*"Life is just a blast
Its Movin really fast
You Better stay on top
Or life will kick you in the xxx" - Limp Bizkit*

If you need to start somewhere, this great resource by Trudi Griffin, who co-authored with WikiHow on [How to Change your life around](#) is a good start.

Once you start on your plan, you need to make sure, you bound all aspects of your life to this plan so that you know

that you are developing in whole, not just parts.

This means that you do not look only at your career but your family, your spiritual life if you have one and even your friends.

Now that we are in a period of uncertainty, we should strive to change, because as we have been told so many times, getting back to pre-Covid19 normal is just not going to happen.

The businesses we are in and are a part of, have also changed and will continue to change; this only means that we are expected to change too.

So, now, is the perfect time to get our own houses in order to ensure that our own *rudder* has a clear direction that we can steer it to. I'd encourage you, whether you have been affected or not, to relook at your personal/business situation and make the change.

"I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination." - Jimmy Dean

Special thanks to my Editor: Sylvia Cheo

The 3 Digit Score- PSLE

Alrick Dorett

Co-Founder, The Brilliant Foundation
Singapore, 2020



SINGAPORE - If you are a parent getting your son's or daughter's PSLE results yesterday, you would now be feeling between extremely happy and overjoyed to perhaps, extremely sad or worried and the many parts in between.

I didn't do well at my PSLE either, some 37 years ago. I sat at McDonald's at United Square with my late father, wondering what would happen to me. I had a score of 271 and I was going to be in the normal stream. The top PSLE score in 1983 was 420.

My father said nothing as we looked at the results and the posting on the back page, to a school I didn't even know existed. I was from St. Michael's Primary School (now SJJ) and like every other boy in my school, we all wanted to go to Saint Joseph's Institution (SJI). One of my best friends, Leonard Yip sat across the table with his Dad, and as both fathers spoke, I was extremely sad, confused and scared. My father said

nothing till we were alone and simply said, just do your best.

Tuan Mong High School (TMHS) would be the best thing for me in Secondary 1. Till this day, I have kept in contact with friends that I had made there in Sec 1. In fact I was inspired to create a Facebook Group for THMS

in 2007. THMS, opened the diverse world to me in my sheltered primary school. I was exposed to a co-ed school, many classmates and schoolmates from diverse backgrounds, something I would not see till NIC and later in the Army.

I began to realise that I needed to change, to be clearer of what I really wanted, what my goals were and what I wanted to do with my life. Even then, I knew, I had the power to effect change. Initially, I was more worried what my friends would think about me; and at 12 years old, when everyone around you is moving in one common direction, you desperately feel that you too want to share and be a part of the same direction too. #FOMO comes to mind here.

I grew up fast in 1984 and made conscious personal choices to change my character, my attitude and my outlook on life. My parents only encouraged me to do my best, to study hard and make the most of the situation I was in.

I did.

My academic journey was far from over, and it wasn't as smooth after either, but I always knew I was capable of more. Don't let a score determine your kid's future.

"Your life does not get better by chance. It gets better by change."

Jim Rohn

Our kids need to know that only, they can make the change. But change requires one fundamental important ingredient, that is help. Help is important, and they may not be able to know how to ask for help, but as parents we should be there to help.

"Don't be afraid to ask questions. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it. I do it every day. Asking for help isn't a sign of weakness, it's a sign of strength. It shows you have the courage to admit when you don't know something, and to learn something new."

Barack Obama

As parents we ourselves need help, and if we get over the hurdle of asking for help, we ourselves are on our journey of change. Help is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of courage, bravery and strength.

Our kids are watching us, watching how we behave and are learning from us. Let's lead them so they can help themselves in the future.

Special thanks to my Editor: Sylvia Cheo

Chinese New Year 2021 – The Year of the OX – Family Reunion and Guanxi

Dr Renée Ralph & Dr Amy Tian
Co-Founder | Founding Member
Perth, Australia, 2021



Friday, 12 February 2021 is the day where millions of Chinese and Asians are looking forward to celebrating. It is the Year of the Ox where families and loved ones reunite in feasting and merry making for 15 days. The second animal of the Chinese zodiac, the Ox represents hard work, positivity and honesty in all of us.

Jupiter Lai, a Hong-Kong based Chinese and Western astrologer, says the ox is “grounded, loyal, gentle and trustworthy.”

Following the Chinese calendar, which rotates in 60-year cycles based on 12 earthly branches, each represented by an animal year, and five element years — wood, fire, earth, metal and water — 2021 is the Year of the Metal Ox. On a deeper level, each earthly branch is characterised by a yin or yang force and an element.

Chinese New Year vs Lunar New Year
When speaking English, most Chinese people refer to the holiday as “Chinese New Year,” or the more inclusive “Lunar New Year.” In Mandarin, the Lunar New Year is also called Spring Festival (pinyin: *chun jie*, traditional Chinese: 春節/simplified Chinese: 春节) or *guo nian* (traditional Chinese: 過年/simplified Chinese: 过年).

During Chinese New Year, individuals can say Happy New Year (pinyin: *xin nian kuai le*, traditional Chinese: 新年快樂/simplified Chinese: 新年快乐) or wishing you prosperity (pinyin: *gong xi fa cai*, traditional Chinese: 恭喜發財/simplified Chinese: 恭喜发财) to Chinese.

The Top 8 Traditions of Chinese New Year

1. Spring Cleaning

It is truly an auspicious event, where preparations are made at home. Cleaning the home, getting it spick and span, getting rid of stuff that is no longer require and keeping the home – neat and tidy. It is not good to clean the house during the Chinese New Year Period from 12-25 February, as it means the luck and fortune will be swept away.

2. Personal Grooming and New Outfits

On a personal front, grooming is important prior to the Chinese New Year, getting haircuts is vital and wearing a new set of brightly coloured

clothing, in particular red to bring prosperity, wealth and health for 2021. Cutting the hair during this period is also not feasible, as it represents cutting your wealth or good fortune away.



Qi Pao now known as Cheongsam

Females have the option to wear the traditional Qi Pao (pinyin: qí páo, traditional Chinese: 旗袍, simplified Chinese: 旗袍). The Qi Pao entered mainstream Chinese culture during the Qing dynasty. The modern styles are very different from how it was originally. It began as a conservative dress with straight and loose cuts. Intricate designs were embroidered into the fabric. Through colonization, the Qi Pao became westernized is now known as the Cheongsam. (pinyin: cháng shān, traditional Chinese: 长衫, simplified Chinese: 长衫).



Tang Suits

Males have the option to wear the Tang suits. A Tang suit (pinyin: táng zhuāng, traditional Chinese: 唐装, simplified Chinese: 唐装) originated from the Tang dynasty. The "new" Tang suit is a jacket that combines the man riding jacket (Qing dynasty) and the Western suit. It has an upturned collar and straight lapels. The suit features traditional Chinese knots and the material is in silk brocade, a luxury fabric in ancient times.



3. Chinese New Year Eve - Reunion Dinner

The custom of having reunion dinner dates back to as early as the 5th century and has been passed down to this day. Every New Year's Eve dish has an implied meaning. For example, a "whole chicken" symbolises togetherness of the family. The character "fish" has the same sound as the word "abundance", so by saving some fish until the next day (next year), it represents a year of abundance for the family.



In Singapore, before the main meal begins, the entire family will seat at the round table and have *Yu Sheng* as an entree. The raw fish salad has been the speciality of China's Guangdong province for centuries. It was brought to Singapore by Cantonese immigrants in the 1940s, and became a popular Chinese New Year dish by families and chefs from notable restaurants. Over time, the salad has become a rainbow of colours and flavours, with red-and green-dyed radish strips, candied orange peel, including raw salmon sashimi. The practice of eating *Yu Sheng*, complete with the high drama of tossing the ingredients into the air while loudly declaring auspicious wishes during Chinese New Year, is said to be unique to Singapore and Malaysia. It serves as an auspicious occasion for family bonding.

4. Lion Dance



Lion dance (pinyin: wǔshī, traditional Chinese: 舞獅; simplified Chinese: 舞狮) is a form of traditional dance in Chinese culture and other Asian countries in which performers mimic a lion's movements in a lion costume to bring good luck and fortune. The lion, a symbol of power, wisdom and good fortune, chases away evil spirits and brings happiness, longevity, and good luck. The lion dance is also performed at many business locations during Chinese New Year celebrations as the lion brings prosperity and good luck to the business for the upcoming year.

5. Firecrackers



In traditional Chinese culture, firecrackers were originally used to scare away evil spirits. Today, lighting firecrackers and fireworks is a custom to celebrate the coming of Chinese New Year, and a way to enhance the festive atmosphere. Right after 12:00PM on Chinese New Year's Eve, fireworks will be launched to celebrate the coming of the New Year as well as to drive away the evil. It is believed that the person who launched the first firework of the New Year will obtain good luck. However, despite the tradition, in mainland China nowadays, with the ongoing efforts to reduce air pollution, many major cities have

imposed bans or restrictions on the use of fireworks and firecrackers (For instance, where and when to set them off).

6. From Hong Bao to eHong Bao



Hong Bao (red envelope, or red packet, or 红包) is a Chinese tradition where money is given to the little ones, unmarried individuals or the elderly and red envelopes. The red colour symbolises good luck and is a symbol to ward off evil spirits. You are supposed to put crisp, new bills inside a Hong Bao.



eHong Baos. A contemporary interpretation of traditional Hong Bao comes in the form of virtual Hong Bao. For example, the Singapore Government has advised not to physically give the traditional Hong Baos, and an electronic transfer to the bank account is preferred. Thus, the new term “e-Hong Bao” is born and a

positive spin that it is more environmentally friendly.

In mainland China, since 2014, it has increasingly become popular among people to send WeChat e-Hong Bao via its e-payment platform (WeChat Hong Bao, 微信红包), a mobile application which allows users to send or received from friends and family.

The flow on effect is the social activities for Chinese New Year has changed, the long queues at established banks to receive complimentary packets of Hong Bao and collecting new paper money are non-existent.

Good Luck Even Numbers - \$2, \$8, \$10, \$88



According to Chinese tradition and custom, good things come in pairs, an even number is preferred. The number eight represents good luck, as the number sounds like prosperity in Mandarin. Do not ever give \$4, as it is the Chinese homonym for death and it is extremely offensive.

7. Paying Respect and Gratitude to Parents and Elderly



On the first day of Chinese New Year, a pot of tea and mandarin oranges are prepared. The child of each family will kneel in front of the parents, holding with two hands, a pair of mandarin oranges to present to their mum and dad. The mandarin orange is an important symbol of the Chinese New Year. The small citrus looks like the sun, and because the sun is aligned with the yang (positive) principle, it is a symbol of abundance and happiness. They are used as decorations and given as gifts when visiting family and friends as a symbol of sharing abundance and good fortune.



In return of their show of filial piety, the parents will give to their child or children a Hong Bao for good health, happiness and prosperity.

Changing Family *Guanxi* and Tradition

It is a shame as some kids miss out on this personal exchange from the elders – where some families still honour the tradition of children kneeling down in front of them offering the elders two mandarin oranges as a sign of respect. In return, the Hong Bao is given to the young - symbolising good health and prosperity throughout the Lunar New Year.

Culturally, the shift of this giving to electronic, cuts out the face-to-face contact and the significance of this exchange. The guanxi element of this familial tradition has changed remarkably in the modern Chinese society.

8. Lantern Festival



The 15th day marks the first full moon after the Spring Festival and of the New Year, also known as *yuán xiāo jié* 元宵節 meaning "first night of the full moon". The day is well known as Lantern Festival day.

Another reunion dinner is held with lanterns and oranges being a large part of the Chinese New Year celebrations. It is customary to eat special sweet dumplings resembling the shape of the full moon. These round balls are made of glutinous rice flour stuffed with sugar fillings, symbolising reunion.

Impact of COVID19 on Chinese New Year

With COVID19 , restrictions and travel ban in various parts of the world, Chinese New Year Celebrations will start off differently, as physical contact and face-to-face large gatherings are not advisable, most families have opted for video-conferencing with dear ones to celebrate the auspicious season.

In a normal year, China and other parts of the ASEAN countries see around three billion trips during the Lunar New Year period. However, COVID19 has halted this tradition. The message is clear - there will be no travelling for the Spring Festival this year. No face-to-face reunions and large gathering to celebrate this auspicious period. Family reunions, an anticipated auspicious gathering with loved ones are limited to only 8 per household in Singapore.



Homesickness

Most Asians will feel homesick as they are not able to travel to catch up with their loved ones, aging parents and children. Hospitality business is at an all point low – no one is travelling and staying in hotel accommodation. The buildings and resorts are empty of human habitation in Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia.

In Mainland China, authorities have encouraged people not to travel ahead of the country's mass annual movement of people to celebrate Lunar New Year. However, hospitality business in mainland China has fortunately returned back to normal for many months. During the Chinese New Year holiday, most large malls, tourist attractions, public transport, hotels, and restaurants will open as usual, or even stay open longer.

Perth, Western Australia

Compared to various parts of the world, Western Australia has been blessed with no COVID19 cases for the past 10 months.

Christmas and New Year gatherings were able to continue smoothly.

Australia Day was different this year, public fireworks were cancelled for health and safety reasons. Most families celebrated quietly at home, having barbecues in the backyard or picnics near the parks, rivers or beaches.

In spite of the strict measures taken, Perth is not immune to COVID19. The recent emergency lockdown on 31 January 2021 for the initial 5 days, highlights the grim reality of COVID19. The Perth streets were empty for 5 days and in the long term view, it is better to comply – so that the freedom of mobility and life can return swiftly.

It would be the first for many Western Australians adorning masks as a compulsory accessory when going out to purchase essential items. Due to panic-buying frenzy, rationing of goods and toilet rolls were reinstated by major supermarkets during this period so that the elderly will have access to these items.

The COVID19 State of Emergency in Perth will be extended to 18 February 2021 right in the middle of Chinese New Year Celebrations. West Australians have been law abiding, in support of the government's decision to clamp down the tenacious viral strain of COVID19.

The New York Times applauded the leadership move and 2 million West Australians that cohesively work together to stop COVID19.



Chinese Reunion

Chinese reunion for most families may have changed, however, as individuals we find ways to reach out and connect. For now, even if loved ones living in different countries and regions are physically unreachable – the virtual connection is the way to go. Culturally, the new way of communication illustrates the changing era and for now, it will have to do for now.

Cohort 2020 graduates in February 2021 at Curtin University – The COVID19 Chapter

Dr Renée Ralph

Co-Founder, The Brilliant Foundation
Perth, Australia, 2021

Dedicated to Professor Richard Ladyshevsky, Curtin Fellow, Graduate School of Business, Curtin University - you are a fabulous supervisor, professional mentor and compassionate guide.



Australia – More than 340,000 higher education students graduate each year in Australia, with international students accounting for more than a third of those enrolled at universities. Australian borders have been closed to all non-citizens and permanent residents since March 2020.

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced in November 2020 that foreign students will not be allowed to return. Priority is given to the return of locals stranded overseas.

With international students worth about A\$35 billion (US\$25.3 billion) annually to the Australian economy, Canberra hoped to gradually allow overseas students to return in 2021.

The education industry faces a crisis level of staff cutbacks and redundancies across the nation with buildings, lecture theatres and classes are left vacant without foreign students.

Western Australia

In Western Australia, Curtin University postponed the graduation ceremony twice due to the COVID19 State of Emergency lockdown in earlier February 2021. Graduands have been experiencing anticipation fatigue, hoping to finalise their undergraduate and postgraduate achievements with a celebration of this significant milestone.



Setting the Scene

Two weeks ago, Curtin University started preparations where the stage was set up at The Forum - truckloads of chairs and lighting equipment were being set up by tradies without wearing masks on. It was unbelievable to see the activity – where workers were busy setting up the marquees for photography, food and regalia hire.



Being mindful of the COVID19 restrictions, some regalia hire and tickets were to be picked up a week earlier. A sensible compromise so that crowd anticipation were minimised and physical distancing was adhered to. Every graduand had to either check in via the SafeWA App or sign in on a hardcopy sheet provided.



Graduands on Campus

Finally, on Monday evening, 22 February 2021, the School of Management and Marketing graduands from the Faculty of Business and Law, starting streaming in onto Curtin campus at Bentley, Western Australia with their regalia, mortarboards and Phd Bonnets. It was a sight to behold with all the young and old faces smiling from ear to ear looking forward to the graduation ceremony with their families and loved ones. Families and relatives who were unable to attend physically, joined in

the celebrations online via live-streaming.



At the VIP Chamber Council, the doctoral students adorned their Phd Bonnets and regalia, ready for the stage party. As they walked down the winding stairs, they lined along the corridors for the procession to begin.

The smoking welcome was initiated by Ingrid Cummings, Noongar Cultural Advisor, Curtin University, followed by her acknowledgement to Country (Boodjar). Ingrid addressed the gusty Cohort 2020, wishing the Curtin mob a "strong, deadly successful and bright journey ahead."





Reflections of 2020 – Learning, Challenges, COVID19, Resilience

Professor John Cordery, Vice-Chancellor acknowledged the graduation ceremony was even more significant due to COVID19 lockdown in Semester 1, 2020. Face-to-face lecturers, seminars, workshops and tutorials had to go online for physical distancing and safety measures. Academic and professional staff had a steep learning curve, up-skilling in video-conferencing training via Blackboard, Collaborate Ultra and Zoom to provide lessons and services to the students.

Working From Home (WFH)

The students had to do the same, some borrowing, hiring or buying laptops to attend online classes from home. The untold stories of several students losing their jobs, paying rent, buying books or paying for university courses during this period added the challenge of completing a degree even more admirable. For international students, who were unable to return home, they found themselves in a dislocated space, not being able to see their parents and loved ones. Foreign students living in a different culture,

communicating, trying to make new friends and learning in a new environment showed new heights of resilience and focus.

It isn't an equal playing field for students, when broadband or internet access is limited for those who live in the country or for those who cannot afford the fast speed connection. Communication online would be patchy and classes were interrupted with some students some dropping in and out of connection. Yet, the online students persevered, there were moments of engagement, frustration, humour and a sense of respect, patience and kindness when using technology.

At the end of the semester, everyone agreed that face-to-face classes were missed – the interaction and communication on campus with other students and educators were vital. A university is not a university, if the building is not filled with life and laughter. As one teacher said: "A school is not a school, without the students' pitter-patter of feet running through the corridors. Teachers cannot be teachers without the chitter-chatter of the children's voices."

In Western Australia, Curtin Chancellor Dr Andrew Crane was given the honorary role of presenting the testamurs to the graduating Cohort 2020. The students have been blessed to be able to graduate without masks and to proceed with their graduation compared to their interstate

counterparts based in Melbourne or Sydney.

Sydney

In accordance with state-specific bans on large gatherings, universities have been postponing mid-year graduation ceremonies since March 2020, with many students graduating 'in absentia' - meaning they will still receive their qualifications, without attending a ceremony. The graduation certificate will be sent through the post office to be delivered to student's residence. The University of Sydney says on its website:

"Despite our most optimistic wishes, unfortunately we will not be able to host any replacement ceremonies on campus for students who graduated in 2020. While we are aware that there are changing health guidelines regarding gatherings in New South Wales, replacing all events that have been cancelled due to COVID-19 will not be possible. We share your disappointment about not being able to celebrate at a traditional graduation ceremony in the Great Hall."

However, an online celebration was held for the graduating cohort 2020 to have closure and celebrate their achievements hosted by celebrity and mathematician wizard, Eddie Woo.

Japan

In Japan, due to COVID19 restrictions, universities in Japan have cancelled all face-to-face graduation ceremonies. In an innovative initiative, Business

Breakthrough (BBT) University graduate students in Tokyo, who weren't allowed to have a traditional graduation ceremony due to coronavirus concerns, have used Newme telepresence robots to stand in their place.



A Zoom conference allowed graduating students to access the ceremony remotely. The students appeared on tablets that were placed over the robots' 'faces' and these robots were dressed in black graduation gowns and caps in this important ceremony. When a graduate's name was announced, the avatar robot moved to the university's president who stood on stage to receive their diploma, much like a more traditional graduation ceremony. The university hopes its initiative can be implemented by other education institutions looking to avoid mass gatherings.

Learn, Change, Connect and Give

Through it all, Curtin University graduates recognise that in spite of these unexpected twists and turns brought forth by the COVID19 pandemic, the life skills of achieving an academic degree is enhanced through

these challenges. Mr Stephen Scudamore, former Chair of Amana Living and long-serving member of Curtin Council, received an Honorary Doctorate of the University for his outstanding contribution to Curtin University and to the Western Australian community, particularly in the area of corporate governance.

In his occasional address, Mr Scudamore, a Chartered Accountant, who holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree and a Master of Arts in History and Economics degree from Oxford University, emphasised the following four key points:

1. Learn

Always keep learning, achieving this degree is the start of a life-long learning journey. Keep retraining and up-skilling. Learning never stops.

2. Change

Be adaptable. Embrace change and life is filled with the ordinary and extraordinary – not just the theories and concepts learnt at university and textbooks. It is through change that real learning, life experiences, breakthroughs and innovations are achieved.

Dr Scudamore shared an aspect of his career experience when he was delegated to work in KPMG Papua New Guinea for three years. What was he to do? He was thrown into a foreign country with a vastly different culture and had to find ways to make it work. There was an incident where his local

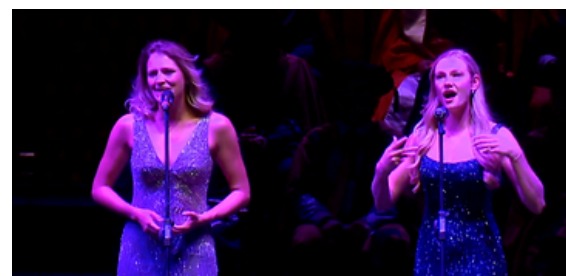
colleagues took leave from corporate work to take part in a cultural tribal warfare. He stated that no textbook or corporate governance could be applied in this situation. Life has its surprises and one has to embrace it fully and make the most out of it.

3. Connect

Keep widening and reaching out to your network to support your professional growth. Stay in touch with your Curtin alumni and strengthen that foundation. Listen to what your peers have to say, hear their story and connect.

4. Give

Return what you have received from this education. Give back to the community to lead a holistic and full life. Get involved and be passionate about it. As Oprah Winfrey once said *"To move forward, you have to give back."* It is about expecting the unexpected. Always learning, building the networks and getting involved." It enriches you as an individual and those around you.





The graduation ceremony ended with two young talented opera singers, Samantha and Amy enchanting the audience with their rendition of "Never Enough" from The Greatest Showman. As the academics and doctoral graduates walked down from the stage party, fireworks were launched, lighting up the night sky. A spectacular and wonderful way of celebrating graduation night.



Back at the VIP Chamber Council for nourishment and celebratory drinks, Dr Scudamore (pictured above with his wife, Anne Last) said he was extremely

humbled and honoured to receive the Honorary Doctorate of University from Curtin University. Smilingly, he simply said that his wife, Anne and him have a wonderful partnership that contributed to each other's success in life.

With the support from our academic leaders and colleagues from the Faculty of Business and Law - Vanessa Chang, Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor, Sonia Dickinson, Dean, Learning and Teaching, Professor Julia Richardson, Head, School of Management and Marketing congratulating and rejoicing with the doctoral graduates - Dr Antony Mullins, Dr Subhadarsini Parida, Dr Israel Nai and I, soaking in the excitement of this memorable night with all the happy graduates – in gratitude – looking forward to the future. Carpe Diem!

Photography credit from here onwards : Renée Ralph



Photography credit below : Anne Last



Our Brilliant Catch-Up

Perth, Australia

by Dr Renée Ralph, 2021



Photo (From Left to Right) : Elizabeth Lang, Madeleine Antoine, Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito and Dr Renée Ralph, Co-Founder, The Brilliant Foundation

PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA (WA) – We see the world in brilliant colours, a kaleidoscope of light radiating from individuals that we interact with daily. The Brilliant Foundation Sundowner Catch Up was attended by industry professionals, academic leaders and students from Curtin University, University of Western Australia (UWA), Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) and Murdoch University at Hamptons City Beach, Thursday, 18 November 2021, 5pm-7pm.

VIP Guest Speakers include Elizabeth Lang, CEO, Diversity Focus, Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito, Director and Principal of Women's Breast Imaging (WBI), Cottesloe and Alexander Circosta, TV Presenter, Actor and Master of Ceremonies, a former law graduate from Murdoch University.



Photo (From Left to Right) : Elizabeth Lang, Madeleine Antoine, Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito

From Sudan, Egypt to Perth

Elizabeth Lang shared that at a young age of 4, her family had to flee from Sudan to Egypt due to political unrest, and again seeking asylum and refuge in Perth. Through her father's teachings, she was taught not to give up her values and her moral conviction to stand up for what is right in the world. Poverty stricken, their family had to start at ground zero.

Through sheer hard work, she established Diversity Focus, a consulting company that has been in operation for the past 4 years. She and her team have successfully trained and workshopped with companies in concepts of diversity and inclusiveness, unconscious bias and being aware of different cultures. Her clients include Legal Aid, Refugee Council of Australia, Government of Western Australia, Department of Communities, Lifeline, Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence, The UN Refugee Agency, local councils and universities in WA and Melbourne. Her work is her calling and as a mother of two young children,

she is also currently pursuing her doctorate at Curtin University. She strives for a better, equitable and kinder world.



Photo (From Left to Right) : Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito, Dr Renée Ralph, Elizabeth Lang and Alexander Circosta

From Philippines to Perth, WA

Seventeen years ago, Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito came with only one luggage from the Philippines to Perth. Vanessa had to borrow money from her sister for her one way air ticket WA. She did her medical exams and passed, thinking that she now had the right to practice in Perth. Not realising that WA had a moratorium law that decrees all migrant doctors to work in the country for 10 years before being allowed to practice in Perth. As a Filipino, Vanessa had to learn how to drive to various

country towns to provide medical advice and patient care including overcoming cultural issues and acceptance.

She now owns Women's Breast Imaging (WBI), a heritage building in Cottesloe; with her team who specialises in breast care. Vanessa is focussed on preventive medicine and hopes to help patients overcome breast cancer with her work. The message she gives to us is to keep a positive mindset and to improve oneself 1% every day.



Photo (From Left to Right) : Alexander Circosta, Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito, Dr Renée Ralph



Photo : Alexander Circosta sharing his perspective in life. Brilliant!

From Perth, WA

At six years old, Alexander Circosta was asked what he wanted to be when he grew up? He jotted down – A Lawyer. Hence, he studied law at Murdoch University and realised very quickly that this was not the dream job that he envisioned it to be. He finds his happiness in the Arts and Entertainment and shares with us that it is really important to give “ourselves permission” to achieve what we really want in life. It is easier to subscribe to society's conditioning and standards, however, more courageous to step up and carve a life of our own.

By nature, he is an introvert and shy person. He had to overcome his reserved ways through singing, acting, keeping healthy and seeking mentors that will guide him to his career in the media, arts and entertainment. Recently, he has acted and sung for two weeks in the Mamma Mia Musical at Regal Theatre, Subiaco, playing the role of Bill with Fifi Mondello, Serasi Entertainment and producer Chris Dobson. He also emceed with Tina Altieri for Telethon 7 Kids, raising over

\$60 million with the team. A cause he truly believes and value in helping children that are ill.



Multiculturalism under One Roof

After the speeches, an eclectic mix of individuals from diverse multicultural heritage were chatting and mingling at Hamptons overlooking the Indian Ocean. Individuals from Sudan, Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia,

Mauritius, Colombia, Singapore, India, Italy, Brunei, France, England that have made Perth their home, watching the calm ocean and enjoying the sunset.



Photo (From Left to Right) : Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito, Alba Gomez, Dr Renée Ralph, Alexander Circosta, Josh Galvin - Our Brilliant Members



Photo : Alba Gomez, Founding Member, The Brilliant Foundation

From Colombia to Perth, WA

It was fabulous to see Alba Gomez an Engineer from Colombia who came to Western Australia without speaking a word of English. Alba took an intensive course in English amongst teenagers in a school and had to sit her exams to re-qualify as an Engineer in Perth. She continued to work as an engineer in a multinational Japanese company for 5 years.

After 14 years as an engineer, Alba decided on a career change. She is now a successful Presence and Personal Brand Coach and commentator on Channel 9. She believes in helping and transforming a person from within to communicate confidently and present their best self.



Photo (Left to Right) : Dr Renée Ralph, Co-Founder and Elizabeth Richards, Founding Member, The Brilliant Foundation

From Perth, WA

The giving and loving Elizabeth Richards, an amazing mother of three, balancing her life as an oil painting artist. She is instrumental in designing The Brilliant Foundation logo that we have today. Elizabeth Richards graduated with two degrees – one in Fine Arts from UWA and the other in Graphic Design at Curtin University. Her value is to live one's life fully and not to judge others.



Photo (Left to Right): Madeleine Antoine, Extraordinary Violinist from Perth Symphony Orchestra and INNEKA with Scott Delamott, a talented student from The Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) studying Guitar Composition.



Photo (From left to right) : A budding violinist with Madeleine Antoine

From Albany to Perth, WA

We are grateful that Madeleine Antoine, an extraordinary violinist came to support The Brilliant Foundation Sundowner and to chat with the students. Madeleine is an introverted and shy individual,

however, on stage, she is electrifying, edgy and her passion for music is alive. She is a strong supporter of the environment, action on climate change, homelessness and the First Nations Peoples in Australia. Madeleine is a family member of the Perth Symphony Orchestra and INNEKA.

Through her music, she has raised funds for Maiti Nepal Charity for women and children that have been trafficked, experienced domestic violence and part of the flesh trade and are now trying to make a living and have a fresh start in life. They have raised \$8,000 so far for the charity. She was awarded a scholarship at Methodist Ladies College and was trained in Prague Conservatory of Music. She achieved 98% TEE Score the highest in the State for Music Performance and a former WAAPA graduate. She is continuing her Masters in Music Composition with UWA.

In her recent solo feature performance at zero2hero's Red Cape Ball in November 2021, Madeleine Antoine was invited to perform at this event, which raised \$450,000 towards youth mental health.

What is the common thread of these inspiring individuals?

They are grounded in their daily work and are passionate in their cause to do better every day in their chosen field and lives – be it parenthood, singlehood, medicine, music, arts, entertainment, personal branding,

diversity and inclusion, business, science, sports, social impact or academia. The main aim is human connectedness for a better, kinder and respectful world.

For the university students that attended this sundowner – Thank You so much for coming! All of you you inspire me every day to do better!

Remember that these amazing individuals are no different to you and I.

They are Resilient. Diligent. Hardworking. Focussed. Passionate.

They find meaning in what they do every day.

Ordinary individuals, doing extraordinary things – in their roles, they seek to work on initiatives and projects that have value to make life lighter, more enjoyable and liveable.

True grit to do better, overcoming adversity and challenges through hard work, positive action and self-awareness.

Not the fake news that we see every day in social media, sensational news, reality TV or influencers touting wares.

They have continued their personal development and life-long learning through education.

They have done the hard yards to lead a fulfilling life. You can do the same.

So please start getting organised.

Make a Plan.

Read your academic journal articles. (do not roll your eyeballs at this stage)

Do your research.

Update your Endnote.

Attend your lectures face-to-face and attend all your tutorials.

Find your friends and your tribe.

Feedback from the students about the Brilliant Catchup

It was great to chat to individuals that are from different cultural backgrounds.

We didn't expect professionals to be presenting at the sundowner. It was really, really good to hear their life-stories. A nice surprise!

Love the fact that we are catching up in a different environment and with other students from different universities.

How lovely to see the ocean and chat with friends - old and new.



Photo (From Left to Right) : Elizabeth Lang, CEO, Diversity Focus with Athina Hilman, Rose Pigga and Kyla Matthews.



Photo (From Left to Right) : Matthew Hayden, Tom Sargent, Marion Harel, Rose Pigga, Dr Renée Ralph and Nikki Coleman



Photo (From Left to Right) : Corey Wise and Nikki Coleman



Photo (From Left to Right) : Josh Galvin and Corey Wise



Photo : Dr Renée Ralph with The Brilliant Dr Mike Baldwin and his wonderful girls.



Photo (From Left to Right) : Jack S, RC Su and Jesse R.



Photo (From Left to Right): Dr Catherine Archer, Senior Lecturer, Murdoch University with Elizabeth Richards, Founding Member, The Brilliant Foundation

Feedback from the professionals

I feel as if I belong and found my new tribe – The Brilliant Foundation.

I really feel comfortable and am inspired by my peers.

I am glad to be able to talk about other things that interests me besides, work.

What a great evening. The speakers were all fantastic! Thank you so much for inviting me.



Photo (From Left to Right): Allan Sim, President, Good Deeds and Louisa Cotter, Secretary, ASEAN Business Alliance.



Photo (From Left to Right): Dr Renée Ralph and Susie Staton, Judgment Index

Background - How did The Brilliant Foundation come about?

Through conversations with Alrick Dorett and I, we realised that if we had a mentor or coach in our earlier part of our professional careers, our lives would have turned out differently.

There isn't a go-to-place that we can find someone to talk to (outside our family network to rely on) or to help us make better decisions in our career and personal lives.

It is even harder because of our Asian cultural heritage to seek or ask for help, as we are supposed to be stoic and we have to deal with our challenges in our professional careers on our own - quietly. There is a clear distinction between personal and professional life. *Is that truly the case?*

We also realised that there is more to life than just your job within your industry. There are so many individuals who are leading different lives from us.



Photo : Alrick Dorett, Co-Founder, The Brilliant Foundation

Alrick is an accountant by trade, I am a teacher at university. How do other professionals and academics live their life? We were curious in this aspect.

In my teachings for the past 5 years at Curtin University, I realised there was a huge gap in terms of concepts, academic theory and real-life scenarios.

I am not talking about concepts tied to industry networking seminars in the chosen degree by the students.

In reality, some students are trying to navigate their life by balancing multiple casual jobs to pay the rent, university fees, utilities and groceries.



Photo First Row (From Left to Right) : Madalena Granado, Dr Renée Ralph, Athina Hilman, Kyla Matthews

Photo Second Row (From Left to Right) : Corey Wise, Jack Veasey

Not all local university students come from privileged backgrounds and are assisted by their parents.

And certainly, not all international students come from wealthy backgrounds, especially in developing countries where some parents back in Asia have taken a hefty loan from the bank - in hope for their child or children to succeed as an overseas graduate.

The English language is their second language – the lingo and jargon in Australia or any other foreign country is a cultural semantic that any overseas student has to overcome.

So, there are misconceptions, communication and existing cultural issues that need to be addressed. How does oneself benefit from university life?

There are many students that go through university life, not making life-long friends because there is the need to balance work and to pay the bills. The financial pressure is great and even greater if the student is removed from family (if living in a country or living in a new country).

Let alone a young person who just completed high school and is thrown in the world of theories, theories and more theories in lecture theatres and tutorials.

We may have the best tools in pedagogy, video-clips and class materials. However, if we do not understand a student's point of view or positioning – we, as teachers and their guide will not be able to engage and achieve the potential of each student.

In order to do so, a reliable network support needs to be built for the younger community. The question is HOW?

Thus, Alrick and I co-founded The Brilliant Foundation in April 2020 to give back to our young community.

It is a small start for us to do something good.

A global online publishing platform

highlighting the issues that we faced when we were younger, could be identified and reconciled in the human stories that we seek and write.

They are real. They are truthful.

This vision is shared by our **Founding Members** – as a collective we are able to assist and help where we can for our younger generation.

Life is meant to be lived. Endured. Enjoyed. With Your People. Live Life Well. Live Life Fully.



Photo : Hampton City Beach overlooking the Indian Ocean - a calm and serene evening



Photo : Conversations taking place with the setting sun

Our Story

The Brilliant Foundation was established to bridge an existing gap between academic writing and the world of professionals and individuals with multi-faceted life experiences.

The Brilliant Foundation is a space for professionals and non-academic individuals to have a voice for their thoughts, insights, opinions and reflections.

A platform for the older generation to give back to the younger cohort and future leaders, a go-to-place to understand the life challenges from these human life stories.

From the mature tribe, the positive challenges and decisions that have been made from teenage years, academic life, working life, the chosen career in sports, arts, music, drama, health, education, business or science.

A place to share your authentic life - be it embracing parenthood or remaining single. Reveal your thoughts of how you have grown and how you are continuing to learn and give.

Hopefully, these stories resonate and connect with the youth, providing insight to make better decisions in their life and career choices.

For the young ones who are currently working or studying, it space for you to participate, write and offer your life perspectives and experiences too.

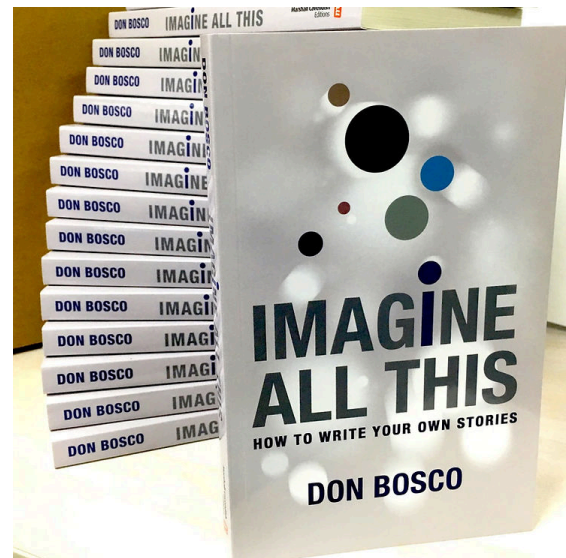
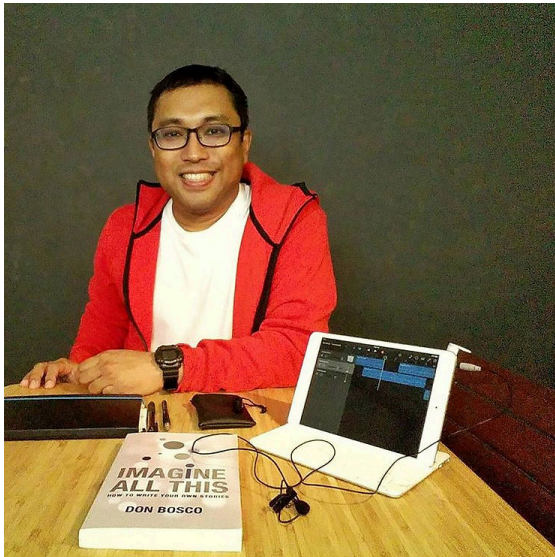
In our giving, we are hoping to create a global online community that nurtures self-awareness, leadership, creativity, life-long learning, kindness and respect.

*- memores acti prudentes futuri -
mindful of what has been done, aware
of what will be*

IMAGINE ALL THIS - How to write your own stories

Don Bosco

Founding Member, The Brilliant
Foundation
Singapore, 2022



You know how to use your imagination.

It's a natural talent.

Perhaps, you need a few reminders and my book titled [Imagine All This - How To Write Your Own Stories](#) is about helping you with that.

It starts when we're very young. It's the same for all of us.

Imagine your childhood.

As a child, you were extremely good at using your imagination. So were your friends. And when you played together, you basically agreed to imagine the same things. You imagined stories.

Children appreciate fairy tales and folk stories in particular, because these are especially suited for imagining. The story elements are often simple yet vivid. Children quickly learn to use their imagination to bring these stories to life. They imagine the characters, the events, the dangers, the solutions, the feelings that run through each character.

A child judges a story not by how complicated it is, not by what it is about, but by how quickly and vividly and satisfyingly it engages her imagination. Also, how it makes her feel.

Whatever you can imagine, you can write.

Like young friends playing together, the job of a writer is to suggest to readers some fascinating things to imagine. So that they can have a good time.

There's a natural process that powers your imagination.

Spiders create webs, birds create nests. Human beings create stories.

Webs, nests, stories. They're assembled carefully, according to certain rules of nature, and they're an essential part of our lives.

*

As we listen to a story, as we imagine it, our brains are kept busy on so many levels. And when a story is really powerful, when it triggers the right neurochemicals in our brains, we can become addicted to it.

As we write a story, we create a bundle of information that will activate the different areas in the reader's brain, basically the parts that handle our awareness, concentration, language, new information, old information, reasoning, relationships, what our senses experience, and more. All at the same time.

Imagine that.

The word "fiction" originally meant something that was created, or thought up. A product of the human imagination. A story. But here's the interesting thing: once a story is shared, it can feel very real indeed.

Use your imagination in fun and clever ways. Arrange your ideas to create a story experience that will delight your readers.

*

Ideas are the tiny building blocks of a story.

We make up stories by assembling many ideas.

An idea is basically something for you to imagine.

When we write a story, we assemble our many ideas over and over in our heads. For a long time. Trying out different combinations and variations. Until it feels right. And then we can write it down or tell it to someone else. When we write a story, we're creating a specific sequence of instructions to guide our readers in using their imagination.

We orchestrate the flow of images and feelings that the readers feel.

Sometimes this flow might feel like a powerful flood.

Sometimes a modest gush.

Sometimes just a trickle.

Or even slow drips.

As writers, we must be good at controlling the rhythm of this. Turn it up, turn it down, turn it inside out.

Collective Healing: A Call for a Different National Service

Charlotte Goh, Founding Member
Singapore, 2021



SINGAPORE - My friend and fellow [Arts for Good](#) practitioner [Stef Turner](#), said to us during a Zoom call last week, that so many of us are running, so fast, and many of us just want to take a breath. To really STOP... and breathe.

Such has been this year. It is only April, and it seems that the usual slower months of January and February never happened, and didn't ease us into the new year.

On the same day, someone asked me for my humble opinion (he was asking many people in the community): *What can we do to help enable mental wellness in Singapore?* I am not an expert but I know that there is much awareness on the importance of prevention as well as intervention. We are mostly well aware of the potential external factors that can affect our intra-personal relationship and expectations of self, and we are also aware of the importance and

availability of resources for intervention.

When an individual is down, for whatever reason or health outcome, the ripple effect on the immediate system is huge; everyone in that system is affected.

Likewise, it is the power of the systems around that individual that can heal us. There are strong thought articles about collective healing. This sharing here stems from a simple place from within that sees us as a part of a larger whole; of a family, of a neighbourhood, of a school, of a company, of a community of people who care for each other, right up to us being part of the nation and the larger world. [Beth Tener](#) shared about the 'we' versus 'me' in [her article](#) on collective healing.

When we start seeing that we are a collective whole, then we will start to see our neighbour who is sliding or our friends who remain silent about the turmoil within, and we don't only see, we start to care. I realise that collective healing requires us to be brave.

Even as I write this, I haven't been the bravest. I grapple with respecting the privacy and the space they have carved around themselves, to protect themselves, and whether I should come in, again, to say that I know you are hurting, how can I help. I don't have the answers because every intervention, every act of care and love is held in a different context. I have to keep trusting that my act of care and

love is from an authentic and genuine space. And when the person I care about is ready, I am ready to sense that.



My personal photo of my father who has dementia with his grandson

If I need to be brave, what will help me be a better responder?

Remember national service? It's our collective response to our national security. Many years ago at 16 years old, I wrote to the forum in the newspaper suggesting that women can also contribute to national service. At that time, I suggested women learning first aid, CPR and basic weaponry to support the men. (oh, how young and naïve!)

But right now, for our nation's collective response to mental wellbeing, national service can take on a different practice; to learn to be first responders.

(National Service here is not government. It is the 'me' in the 'we' and the 'us' as a whole, it's our nation's

collective response and service for each other)

Whether we are apathetic or indifference, or hyperactive to support, knowing what it takes to be a first responder to mental wellness issues will enable each of us to somehow provide greater support for others around us, but also hopefully enable each of us to notice the signs of our own state of mental wellbeing.

True. Many people suffering, suffer in silence. When I was going through the years of my eating disorder, I didn't want to talk about it, because I couldn't get out of it. Talking about it would only expose my 'weakness' more.

Yet, I was dying to have a voice. To put words to what I was going through. My experience was swept under the carpet as if it didn't exist. People knew, but kept quiet. Masks and facades. And yes, I had a large part to play in this cocoon I built for myself. But, if only more people asked me if I was ok.....maybe it wouldn't have taken 20 years.

Being a first responder in mental wellbeing, hopefully will allow us to give voice to suffering, to open up conversations that may shift perspectives, which may help in shifting limiting beliefs about self or the situation around us.

Voice is powerful. Voice stifled is also powerful.

We have the power as a community to heal. We can address this together as a whole. It calls upon us to be brave, to care for 'us', because, in the 'us' there is 'me' too.

-The Call-

Learning to be a first responder in curriculum in the education system or as part of corporate responsibility.

You're not Alone...Building Mental Resilience

Ling Anne Hsieh & Alrick Dorett
Contributing Member | Co-Founder
Singapore, 2021



Photo Credit: Iskandar Mahadi, Project Green Ribbon

There has been a lot focus on Mental Wellness since the start of COVID-19 up to now.

An estimated 10% of the world population or 790 million people will suffer from Mental Health related illnesses according to the [World Bank](#). World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that the majority of people, almost 30% to 80% do not seek help and treatment, it is estimated that between 10% to 12% are receiving treatment. We know that there are an abundant of resources on the web to help us start looking into Mental Wellness. Are we using the mostly free resources to help ourselves or others around us? The average delay between onset of mental illness symptoms and treatment is 11 years.

“Mental Health is not a destination, but a process.

It's about how you drive, not where you're going” [Noam Shpancer](#)

The important question to ask oneself, *is how do you know, you are depressed or recognise the signs of depression in others?*

Feeling down from time to time is a normal part of life, but when emotions such as hopelessness and despair take hold and just would not go away, you may have depression.

More than just sadness in response to life's struggles and setbacks, depression changes how you think, feel, and function in daily activities. It can interfere with your ability to work, study, eat, sleep, and enjoy life. Just trying to get through the day can be overwhelming. Men in particular can feel angry and restless.

10 common depression symptoms

1. **Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness.**

A bleak outlook—nothing will ever get better and there's nothing you can do to improve your situation.

2. **Loss of interest in daily activities.**

You don't care anymore about former hobbies, pastimes, social activities, or sex. You've lost your ability to feel joy and pleasure.

3. **Appetite or weight changes.**

Significant weight loss or weight gain—a change of more than 5% of body weight in a month.

4. **Sleep changes.** Either insomnia, especially waking in the early hours of the morning, or oversleeping.

5. **Anger or irritability.** Feeling agitated, restless, or even violent. Your tolerance level is low, your temper short, and everything and everyone gets on your nerves.

6. **Loss of energy.** Feeling fatigued, sluggish, and physically drained. Your whole body may feel heavy, and even small tasks are exhausting or take longer to complete.

7. **Self-loathing.** Strong feelings of worthlessness or guilt. You harshly criticize yourself for perceived faults and mistakes.

8. **Reckless behaviour.** You engage in escapist behaviour such as substance abuse, compulsive gambling, reckless driving, or dangerous sports.

9. **Concentration problems.** Trouble focusing, making decisions, or remembering things.

10. **Unexplained aches and pains.** An increase in physical complaints such as headaches, back pain, aching muscles, and stomach pain.

Ling Anne Hsieh, Co-Founder of Project Green Ribbon (PGR) has a simple and powerful mission statement, “A ground-up initiative by the community for the community”. PGR is a ground-up initiative founded by the community for the community. PGR is

here to lend support to those struggling with their Mental Health and to allow the unheard to be heard. PGR is moving towards a resilient and inclusive society.

PGR hopes to build a compassionate society, and empower people regardless of their background. Instead of dealing with trying to fix the aftereffects. PGR tries to build mental resilience similar to a vaccine which helps to equip you with the skills and knowledge to better equip you when the time comes.

“The power of healing yourself through the act of helping others”
Ling Anne Hsieh’s personal mantra

Ling Anne Hsieh shares: “Now that the world has taken a hit on our mental wellbeing due to COVID I view it positively because this has allowed us to hear, learn and be more aware of what mental health is. Just a few years back, talking about Mental health would immediately strike a person with a statement such as “IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOU? Are you crazy, or Stop thinking too much? ”

Ling says: “Learning from this experience, it is obvious that we should make a choice to start learning and taking the steps necessary to care for our mental health by building your mental resilience instead of waiting for something big to happen which might then be too late.”

Mental Resilience is not something you are born with. It is not a personality

or genetic trait. Mental Resilience enables you to be equipped with the ability to face the adversities that happen in your life, adversities come in different shapes and sizes, family, work, marriage, parenthood, death of a loved one, financial worries, among others.

Starting with 5 small steps which allows you to be more aware of yourself and your mental state.

1. **Recognise the signs of stress**, the feeling of being overwhelmed, difficulty in concentrating, not producing and being productive be it at work or home.

Learn to recognize and understand where these feelings are coming from instead of just brushing it off and telling yourself "it will go away".

Then take action to counter the stressors. For example, going for a walk, having a nice long bath, journaling. Spending time with yourself (me time).

2. **Develop a health and positive routines**, the rat race in society can knock us off all the time forgetting and ignoring ourselves. Try to keep your routine as stable as possible.

Routines that include your (me time) 3 meals a day, getting to bed and waking up the same time.

Putting down all devices away at a specific time.

We tend to forget, but the basic and simplest things we overlook can go a

long way when we take effort to put ourselves first.

3. **Positive Affirmations**, easier said than done I must admit. Look at it this way, our mind is like a jar. The mind has 2 slots, 1 called Positive and the other called Negative.

Being humans we tend to focus more on the Negativity aspect subconsciously. And Positivity is often overlooked or ignored. We cannot expect anyone to fill our Positive Jar, but we can choose and control which jar we want to fill.

Taking conscious effort a couple of minutes in the morning and before you go to bed to remind yourself of 5 positive affirmations can change many things in how you feel, and handle situations daily. And in no time, being positive would be natural to you.

4. **Mindfulness**, with all that I have shared above. Being present in everything we do can reduce anxieties, anxiousness and remove all the unnecessary mental barriers. When we are able to focus on the present, we become more productive and our concentration increases.

It is also important to choose your close ones and friends wisely.

People who are either journeying with you and giving you positive and energised vibes. Having a community of like-minded individuals should not be underestimated.

5. **SEEKING HELP** is not a sign of weakness. Seeking help from anyone you are comfortable with or a professional can be helpful. Everyone needs help at some point in their lives. There is nothing to be ashamed of. In fact, having regular therapy can help you process, manage and build resilience for your emotional, physical and mental health.

Taking small steps and making changes in your life is within your control. Constantly working on yourself can build better resilience in life. Everyone manages things differently, do what is best and suitable for you. There is no right or wrong about it. And if you ever feel that you need someone to talk too, please do not hesitate to reach out. Talking about your mental health is the first step towards a better mental space.

A Breast Cancer Survivor

Dr Pamela Hendry

Founding Member

Perth, Australia

by Dr Vanessa Atienza Hipolito, 2022



COTTESLOE, WESTERN AUSTRALIA (WA)

- I met Dr Pamela Hendry about 6 years ago when I gave an educational talk on the Update of Breast Cancer Diagnostic Testing in Moderate-to-High-Risk Women for the Australian Medical Association (AMA) Nedlands WA. After my presentation, Pamela (Pam) introduced herself as a Founding Director of The Ladybird Foundation. Since then, we connected and in Pamela's words we became "Breast Friends Forever".

I wanted to help her with her advocacy and introduced Pam to Ian Wee. Ian Wee is an Occupational Therapist who focuses on musculoskeletal injuries.

Ian is the Founding Director and Principal Practitioner of the Perth Integrated Health Clinic. The synergy with Ian, Pam and I led to several fundraising cycling and running events and educational health talks. Personally, I raised funds for The Ladybird Foundation through my completion of a full marathon and ironman 70.3 (half ironman) events.



Photo (From Left to Right): Dr Pam Hendry and Ian Wee supporting Ladybird Foundation through Tour de Gracetown Cycling fundraising events.

Dr. Vanessa-Atienza Hipolito (Vanessa): "Tell me about yourself and your childhood?"

Dr. Pamela Hendry (Pamela): "I was born in Gnowangerup (a very small town in Rural Western Australia) 65 years ago and was very fortunate to grow up with my brother in a loving supportive family in the country. I attended primary school in the country and came to Perth to boarding school for my secondary schooling. I studied Medicine at University of Western Australia (UWA) and graduated in 1980.

I am a doctor (GP), a director of a small charity (The Ladybird Foundation), and a breast cancer survivor (8 years and counting). I am also blessed to have

made some lovely enduring friendships over the years.

I am a mother and stepmother of 3 adult children, wife of a doctor, sister, sister-in-law aunt, great-aunt and member of a large extended family. No grandchildren so far!

Vanessa : "What were you doing prior to your diagnosis?"

Pamela: "Prior to my breast cancer diagnosis, I was working part-time as a General Practitioner in a busy metropolitan practice as well as being a full-time Mum and wife. I also helped my elderly mother who was living with dementia at home until she moved into residential care shortly before my diagnosis."

Vanessa : "What do you do for Exercise? Fitness? Daily routine?"

Pamela: "I have always enjoyed a moderately active lifestyle, keeping reasonably fit with regular walking several days a week while I was working in part-time GP. I carried out the usual activities around the home including garden and pool maintenance. More recently, I have returned to running and discovered Yin yoga."

Vanessa : "Your personal achievements?"

Pamela: "I consider my main achievement to be motherhood (including step-parenting) and contributing to maintaining a medical

marriage that has lasted for over 30 years. I worked as a GP for 30 years and was privileged to look after many loyal long-term patients during that time. I also taught medical students for many years, both in my General Practice and on campus at UWA.

Shortly after my breast cancer diagnosis, I became involved in the establishment of a small volunteer charity called The Ladybird Foundation which supports breast and gynaecologic cancer research in Western Australia and has provided essential funding to 4 important research trials so far. I consider this is one way I can thank my own doctors for their excellent personal treatment and for the follow-up I continue to receive."

Vanessa: "Do you have a regular breast examination and imaging?"

Pamela: "I have regular annual breast examinations by my oncologist and an annual check-up followed by imaging arranged by my GP.

1. Mammogram? Yes
2. Ultrasound? Yes
3. How often? Annual
4. Since when? I commenced regular mammograms and ultrasound from age 40.
5. When did you get diagnosed with breast cancer? 5th February 2013.
6. How old are you now? 65 years old

In February 2021 I am in excellent health and cancer-free, pending the outcome of my annual mammogram

and breast ultrasound on 17th February!

I would qualify this by adding that I do experience a number of survivorship "souvenirs", which are variously related to the initial breast surgery (scarring and asymmetry following unilateral mastectomy and reconstruction), the subsequent lymph node clearance surgery (mild intermittent lymphoedema), adjuvant chemotherapy (finger and toe nail changes) and continuing prophylactic treatment with an aromatase inhibitor (experiencing most of the reported significant side effects – joint and soft tissue aches and pains, genitourinary system symptoms, flushes, mood disturbance, raised LDL cholesterol, reduced bone density).

I am reluctant to stop taking the Aromatase inhibitor (AI) as I think of it as a sort of insurance policy against recurrence of the Estrogen Receptor disease which, despite better 5-year survival statistics, can apparently come back to "bite" you for up to 20-30 years after the original diagnosis!"

Pamela: "I always feel a sense of trepidation and anxiety in the lead up to when I have routine appointments with my oncologist, GP or for routine annual breast imaging. I think it is a form of PTSD experienced by many cancer survivors who have felt their lives to be prematurely threatened by a potentially life-threatening condition. I am also arguably fitter at this point than I might have been had I not been

through the breast cancer experience as I subsequently had more time and greater motivation to exercise more than I had been doing prior to diagnosis"

Vanessa: "What age when you were diagnosed?"

Pamela: "57 at time of diagnosis."

Vanessa: "Do you remember what happened on the day of your diagnosis?"

Pamela: "I still remember the events of 5th February 2013 quite clearly. I had been to see my GP for a routine breast check when she could only feel my pre-existing benign cyst and ever-present general lumpiness for which I had always undergone ultrasound in addition to screening mammography.

My mammogram was unremarkable, although in retrospect it did show that I had very dense breasts which were not subject to grading and reporting at that time. In retrospect, increased breast density was probably my main risk factor.

I was aware that the sonographer carrying out my ultrasound was not entirely happy about one area in my right breast as she went over this area repeatedly before excusing herself to have a word with the Radiologist whom I knew professionally. He came into the room and had the unenviable task of telling a colleague (me!) that I had an

abnormal area and that it was almost certainly malignant."

Vanessa: "Do you remember what were you thinking during and after your breast biopsy?"

Pamela: "The Radiologist said that I must feel shocked to be hearing this. I was a little surprised to be told that I must feel shocked but, on reflection, this was really the best word to describe the initial feeling. I proceeded immediately to having a core biopsy (not painful) before leaving Women's Breast Imaging and driving home."

Vanessa: "What about the days while waiting for your test results?"

Pamela: "I think my medical training kicked in straight away and it was a case of "Keep Calm & Carry On" from this point.

I remember telling myself I needed to extra mindful and concentrate on driving carefully in coming days so I didn't have an accident on the way home! Once I arrived home I made a cup of tea and sat down to think about who to tell and what to do. Initially I rang my best GP girlfriend who had always been ready to drop whatever she was doing and come to my aid. She is an excellent GP with plenty of experience of her own patients who had been through breast cancer so she told me which breast surgeon she thought would be best as well as

someone else to provide a second opinion.

Doctors often make the worst patients because we don't quite know how to trust our colleagues! I definitely did not want the burden of being responsible for making this decision myself, despite my own professional experience, so was grateful to have my own GP and my GP friend to ask about this.

With my agreement, she rang and arranged appointments for me with both surgeons. Now that I already had the beginnings of a treatment plan in place, I rang my husband who was at work and told him what had happened. He was wanting to reassure me that the biopsy could still come back benign but I know I was very certain the imaging would be confirmed.

I also rang my GP colleague at work to tell him what had happened and to ask him to let me know if I did not seem to be managing well at work in the next couple of weeks ahead of my surgery. I had a full schedule of patient appointments for the next two weeks and I had decided to work through this so nobody else would be inconvenienced unnecessarily at that point. This was my workaholic nature and over-developed sense of responsibility coming to the fore, neither of which probably should have been there on this occasion. I delayed my initial surgery by a week to satisfy them!

I felt quite numb by this stage late in

the afternoon and decided to go to my monthly Book Club meeting that evening since my husband could not get home from his own demanding specialist practice until much later and I didn't want to sit at home on my own. Our university student son had left to go to Italy for a year of exchange study a week before, one of my step daughters was interstate and one was living independently in Perth.

"I did not tell any other family members or close friends at that time as I wanted the diagnosis and surgery plans to be confirmed so I could reassure everyone I had this all under control. I had to compose a script to tell two of the children about the diagnosis, treatment plan and prognosis via Skype calls which was quite difficult for them and very hard for me. Somehow I felt like I had let myself and many other people down by becoming sick, even though I felt healthy. I was embarrassed that I had not been able to prevent this situation despite my best efforts at living a healthy life."

Vanessa: "What happened after when your GP told you your diagnosis?"

Pamela: "My Radiologist colleague rang me directly and confirmed the result of the core biopsy as we both knew this is what I would want. My GP had also been informed that I knew the result and she rang me to discuss what had happened in the meantime, including my appointment plans. She was very supportive of me as her patient and GP colleague and totally understanding

about this process. I made an appointment to see my GP to obtain the necessary referrals to the breast surgeons."

Vanessa: "What happened during your surgery and further treatment?"

Pamela: "This was an unexpected "roller-coaster ride"!

Initially I underwent a total right mastectomy with immediate silicone implant reconstruction plus sentinel lymph node biopsy. Excision was complete. It was great that I only needed one combined surgery for the initial treatment and reconstruction and I am still happy that this was available, although it probably made the immediate post-operative period more painful.

I experienced quite a lot of pain following cessation of the self-administered analgesic infusion and, on reflection, I probably should have continued the infusion for a while longer. However, I was intent on getting out of hospital as soon as possible which meant being off the infusion for 24 hours, as well as having the acceptable amount of drainage from the wound to allow me to be discharged.

The frozen section of the sentinel lymph node at the time of surgery was clear but the full histopathology report a few days later showed a small area of spread within this lymph node so I underwent a total axillary lymph node clearance two weeks after the

mastectomy. My surgeon rang to tell me this showed no other lymph nodes were involved which was a huge relief. I experienced several bouts of painful seroma over the initial weeks which necessitated drainage of fluid at the surgeon's rooms. I also had cording and lymphoedema which were treated by an accredited lymphoedema physiotherapist who also ran the cancer Pilates rehabilitation sessions I commenced about 6 weeks after the surgery. I did my arm and shoulder exercises meticulously as I was highly motivated to regain full range of movement in my right arm. One of my friends had shown me her excellent result so I knew this was possible.

I chose a very senior experienced breast oncologist to plan my further treatment and I am very pleased I did. My husband is a very experienced specialist in the area of haematological oncology and was able to help with making these decisions. I underwent the standard workup ahead of what we had initially thought would be a course of adjuvant chemotherapy but I had a bumpy ride before I finally got the green light for the chemotherapy.

My bone scan showed a couple of areas that looked like secondaries in my ribs and this was a huge shock for me. I was not at all prepared that a breast cancer that one surgeon had said would possibly only require treatment with an aromatase inhibitor and not chemotherapy would suddenly turn out to have possibly metastasised to my bones. This would have meant an

entirely different prognosis and approach to treatment.

I felt really angry to think that this disease would most likely kill me when I had been expecting a good chance of a cure with treatment. Fortunately a follow-up MRI and a PET-CT did not show up the same areas so I was allowed to go ahead with adjuvant chemotherapy. I think I was probably one of the most grateful and highly motivated people in the chemo lounge during my 4 cycles of chemotherapy!"

Vanessa: "How long was your treatment?"

Pamela: "My adjuvant chemotherapy consisted of 4 cycles three weeks apart but I had a longer break between the initial cycle and the second cycle to enable my husband and me to go ahead with a planned trip to Italy to see our son.

The oncologist was very understanding and supportive as she knew how much this meant to me. It really gave me much more strength to undergo the remaining chemotherapy as soon as we returned. It was important for me to be able to show our son that I was OK and would continue to be OK.

Vanessa: "What changes did you do with your daily routine during your treatment?"

Pamela: "My husband started bringing me a cup of tea in bed first thing in the morning and has continued to do this on most days. Small caring gestures

like this made a huge difference to me as I was used to being in the carer role.

I slept in a spare room when I was recovering after the surgeries so I didn't disturb my husband during the night when I needed to get up for any reason (analgesia, bathroom) or when I was trying to get comfortable. I had an afternoon rest on my own bed every day for several weeks, listening to music and occasionally having a nap. I didn't go to work.

I went out for a coffee to a café with a friend occasionally to have a change of scenery.

I walked every day for exercise plus did my prescribed exercises. I commenced supervised Pilates-based cancer rehabilitation exercise six weeks after my surgery. I did some meditation."

Vanessa: "What were your fears? Concerns?"

Pamela: "I feared my life would be cut short by breast cancer. I would miss many family milestones and have to leave my husband and children, and possibly my elderly mother, to manage without my support.

Initially I was concerned that I would not be able to hide my diagnosis from anyone who saw me if I had to stay in hospital more than a couple of days. I was concerned that I would not be able to tolerate pain post-operatively and could suffer nausea and more serious side-effects during chemotherapy.

I was concerned that I would lose my hair during chemotherapy so there would be no hiding the fact that I was wearing a wig or a headscarf. I was concerned I would not be able to hide my diagnosis from my elderly mother and mother-in-law who I wanted to shield from this worry. I was concerned that my husband should be able to feel free of undue worry about me and be able to continue his work schedule normally so his patients would not be impacted at all.

I was not overly concerned about scarring from my surgery as I have never felt my small breasts were a particularly spectacular feature of my appearance. They had served their biological purpose of breast-feeding so were now proving to be more of a bother than a benefit."

Vanessa: "Did you have any concerns during COVID-19?"

Pamela: "No particular concerns as I was fortunate to be able to keep my annual appointments with my oncologist and my GP, as well as having an annual zoledronate infusion (prevention of bone secondaries and also treatment for osteoporosis) as things have turned out."



Photo (From Left to Right) : Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito, Dr Pam Hendry, Jill Hunter (Podiatrist), Sarah Gwaze (massage therapist)Pi and Ian Wee (Managing Director at Perth Integrated Health) at Perth Integrated Health Balcatta.

Vanessa: "When did you start going back to normal? activities? Exercise?"

Pamela: "I resumed walking daily as soon as I came home from hospital. I also did my prescribed arm and shoulder exercises and commenced cancer rehabilitation exercise classes (Pilates-based) six weeks after surgery.

I continued to manage all the household activities with some minor modifications like using the clothes dryer and airing rack more instead of hanging clothes on the clothesline outside.

Family and friends provided some meals for the first week after I came home from hospital but I was able to manage shopping and cooking for two thereafter.

The one big thing I felt unable to do was return to working in a General Practice setting. I had thought I might need a

few months away to manage chemotherapy but, when I tried to think about going back to work, I was filled with unexpected anxiety.

I realised this came from the fear that I would not be able to devote the necessary physical and emotional time and energy to looking after my own health if I returned to work where I felt compelled to give 110% of my energy to looking after my patients indefinitely. I knew I would probably be unable to change my style of practice after 30 years which had culminated in a patient base of many people requiring quite a lot of time.

Subsequently, I have continued to practice medicine in different settings with opportunities to use my skills and experience in areas I would previously had not thought possible. This has been the 'silver lining' of my professional journey."

Vanessa: "What are your goals for 2021-22?"

Pamela: "Show more loving kindness to myself and others, especially my nearest and dearest. Steer The Ladybird Foundation through another challenging year. Grow my professional knowledge and implement this more effectively in my workplace. Finish the decluttering challenge that was scheduled for 2013 and derailed by my diagnosis at that time but has remained in the "to do" list since!"

Vanessa: "What about for your SELF?"

Pamela: "Show more loving kindness to myself and others, especially my nearest and dearest. Stay connected to people who are an important part of my life.

I am improving my fitness with walking/running, exercise bike, swimming. I am hoping to maintain and improve my personal wellbeing with meditation, Yin yoga, healthy eating, good quality sleep and regular health checks (including annual breast imaging)."

Vanessa: "What is your message to women?"

Pamela: "Prioritise genuine Self-care in your daily life as this is essential if you are going to be able to nurture and care for your loved ones, as well as achieve your own personal goals in all aspects of your life. This is NOT a selfish thing to do and need not take much of your time. Just taking a minute to pause and breathe during your busy and often unpredictable daily life counts! Schedule regular routine health checks!"

Vanessa: "What about your message to family members?"

Pamela: "Practise loving kindness and good manners in all your relationships. Tell your loved ones you love them more often, even when you find it difficult to feel loving towards people at times: these are different things.

Ask for help more often, even if you are the best person to do any and every task! You will be surprised how capable others can be when given the chance!"

Vanessa: "What are your lessons learned?"

Pamela: "I am not indispensable and I am a natural workaholic. And I am not always right! Be authentic to your own DNA and live your life accordingly whenever possible.

Accept and love yourself for who you truly are and know you are "enough", even if others do not treat you well. Cherish and nurture relationships with people who value you for being yourself. Hope springs eternal, as the saying goes, so never give up on it!"

Vanessa: "What is your message to The Brilliant Foundation readers?"

Pamela: "Your Life is a journey, not a destination. Value each and every day, no matter what it brings. Spread loving kindness (a smile counts) wherever you go. Never give up hope for the future!"



THE PREMIER SOUTH WEST CHARITY RIDE will be on 23rd October 2021. Please help us support Pam's advocacy.

Lest We Forget – ANZAC DAY 2021

Founding Member
Perth, Australia
by Renee Ralph, 2021



Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (Anzac) Day, 25 April, is a significant Remembrance Day for Australia. It marks the anniversary of the first major military action fought by Australian and New Zealand forces during the First World War.

Anzac Cove is a small cove on the Gallipoli peninsula in Turkey. It was a World War I landing site of the Anzacs on 25 April 1915. Following the landing at Anzac Cove, the beach became the main base for the Australian and New Zealand troops for the eight months of the Gallipoli campaign. Major films such as The Water Diviner (2014), starring Russell Crowe and Gallipoli (1981) acted by Mel Gibson have been inspired by the Anzacs.

The first Anzac day was celebrated in 1916. The Dawn Service observed on Anzac Day has its origins in a military routine followed by the Australian Army. The half-light of dawn was one of

the times favoured for launching an attack.

Indigenous Australians

Indigenous Australians have served in the Australian forces since 1901. Anzac commemoration service for Indigenous Australians is hosted by members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Veterans and Services Association (ATSIVSA). ATSIVSA was established in 1999 to work closely with other Ex-service Organisations such as the Returned and Services League (RSL) and the Vietnam Veterans Association (VVA), and the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) to seek out Indigenous veterans to make sure they are receiving any entitlements owed to them as a consequence of their military service.

During World War I, Indigenous Australians were given permission to enlist only if their colour of their skin was considered 'white enough'.

As the war went on, casualty rates increased rapidly and recruitment numbers dropped, the officers allowed Indigenous Australians to fight in the war.

"Many enlisted with the hope that fighting for the country would in turn change the way they and other Indigenous Australians were treated – to no longer be discriminated against and to be treated equally."

Source : World War 1 and Australia

- An estimated 50 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people served in the Boer War (1899-1902)

- Over 1,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people served in World War I (1914-1918) and around 70 fought at Gallipoli
- At least 3,000 Aboriginal and 850 Torres Strait Islander people served in World War II (1939-1945)
- In both World Wars, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had the highest participation rates in the military as a proportion of their population in Australia
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have participated in all military conflicts since the World Wars - Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan and in peacekeeping operations including in Somalia and East Timor

• Promises Given to Indigenous Australians, not Kept

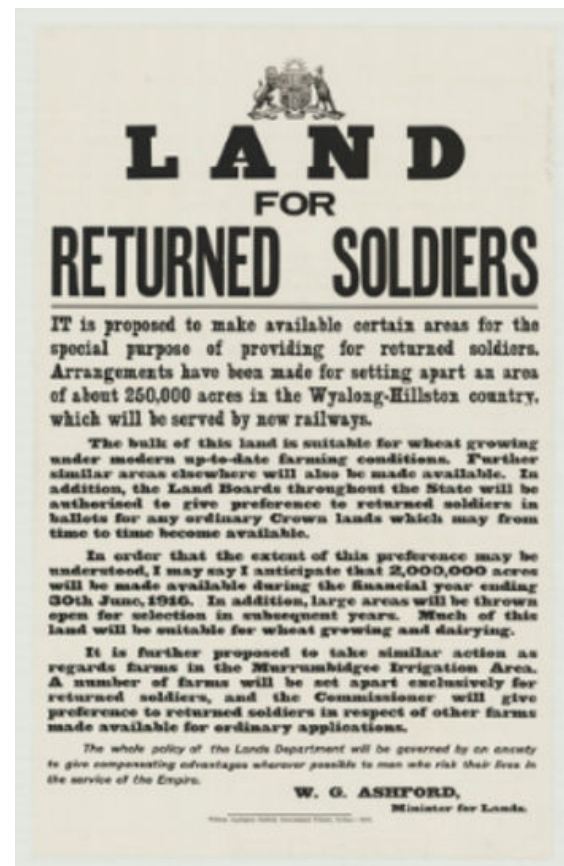
One example of this happened after the Boer War, when Aboriginal men who had participated are believed to have been denied entry back home due to the immigration restrictions of the White Australia Policy.

After the World Wars, Aboriginal veterans received limited public recognition or support. Access to schemes that provided returning soldiers with land and job opportunities were denied to the Aboriginals.

For example, the Soldier Settlement Scheme aimed to give land and work to returning soldiers – where splitting up large rural estates into smaller farming blocks and leasing them to returned

service-people. However, Aboriginal soldiers were denied access to this scheme.

In some cases Aboriginal land was divided under this land scheme and then was granted to non-Aboriginal soldiers.



During the war, Indigenous Australians who were in the trenches with their Australian soldiers were treated as equals. After the war, Indigenous Australians were denied in public social spaces to have a drink with their fellow soldiers at the local.



NSW serviceman portraits, 1918-1919
- Leslie John Locke. Locke was awarded the Military Medal.

The hardship felt by the Indigenous Australian soldiers were threefold. Firstly, after the war, they were not recognised, respected and supported by the Australian Government. Secondly, they did not belong to the community or become economically viable in business society. Thirdly, the soldiers did not have welfare and income to provide for their family. Segregated from society, the Australian terms *Lucky Country*, *Mateship* and *Diggers* did not apply to the Indigenous Australian soldiers and their loved ones.

The legislation and economic framework disadvantaged the Indigenous Australians and the Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islanders; and they were unable to lead their lives to the fullest potential. Furthermore, Acts passed, like the 1905 Aborigines Act in Western Australia disrupted their lives and culture, rather than enhancing them.

1905 Aborigines Act in Western Australia

The 1905 Aborigines Act was passed "to make provision for the better protection and care of the Aboriginal inhabitants of Western Australia".

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.



ANNO QUINTO

EDWARDI SEPTIMI REGIS,

XIV.

No. 14 of 1905.

AN ACT to make provision for the better protection and care of the Aboriginal inhabitants of Western Australia.

[Reseved, 23rd December, 1905.]

BE it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of Western Australia, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows :—

1. This Act may be cited as the *Aborigines Act, 1905*, and shall come into operation on a day to be fixed by proclamation. Short title.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,— Interpretation.

"Aboriginal institution" means and includes any mission, reformatory, orphanage, school, home, station, reserve, or other institution for the benefit, protection, or care of the aboriginal or half-caste inhabitants of the State, and in receipt of any annual or other subsidy or grant from the Government.

"Chief Protector" means the Chief Protector of Aborigines appointed under this Act.

"Department" means the Aborigines Department. "District"

Here's some of the rules and regulations given to the Chief Protector of the Aborigines to implement.

At a personal level, the Aboriginal Peoples were only allowed to have medication supplies, food rations and material things approved by the Chief Protector. Their food rations were based on an unhealthy diet of tea, flour and milk compared to their traditional way of hunting and sourcing nutritious food from the bush.

(1.) To apportion, distribute, and apply, as may seem most fit;

(2.) To distribute blankets, clothes, and other relief to the Aborigines, at the discretion of the department.

(3.) To provide for the custody, maintenance, and education of the children of Aborigines;

(4.) To provide, as far as practicable, for the supply of medical attendance, medicines, rations, and shelter to sick, aged, and infirm Aborigines;

(5.) To manage and regulate the use of all reserves set apart for the benefit of Aborigines.

In terms of ownership and property, the Aboriginal Peoples had no power or say to owning their home as the Protector has the right to manage the property of Aborigines.

The Chief Protector may undertake the general care, protection, and management of the property of any Aboriginal or half-caste, and may

(1.) Take possession of, retain, sell, or dispose of any such property, whether real or personal;

(2.) In his own name sue for, recover, or receive any money or other property due or belonging to or held in trust for

the benefit of an Aboriginal or half-caste, or damages for any conversion of or injury to any such property;

(3.) Exercise in the name of an Aboriginal or half-caste any power which the Aboriginal or half-caste might exercise for his own benefit;

(4.) In the name and on behalf of an Aboriginal or half-caste, appoint any person to act as attorney or agent for any purpose connected with the property of the Aboriginal or half-caste.

The Act created the position of Chief Protector of Aborigines who became the legal guardian of every Aboriginal child to the age of 16 years, and permitted authorities to 'send and detain' Aboriginal children in institutions and in 'service' (work).

The Aborigines Act of 1905 defined an Aborigine as follows:

Persons deemed to aborigine

(a.) an Aboriginal inhabitant of Australia;
or

(b.) a half-caste who lives with an Aboriginal as wife or husband; or

(c.) a half-caste whose as wife or husband, habitually lives or associates with Aborigines; or

(d.) a half-caste child whose age apparently does not exceed sixteen years, shall be deemed an Aboriginal within the meaning of this Act, and of every Act passed before or after this Act, unless the contrary is expressed. In this section the term half-caste includes any person born of an

Aboriginal parent on either side, and the child of any such person.

The Aborigines Act of 1905 was aimed at controlling the Aborigines and making them their slaves in the guise of protecting them. In essence, the Aborigines were not allowed to speak their native language(s), and were classified as flora and fauna (not as human beings). In cementing their future relationships with their life-partners, they were not allowed to marry without the permission of the Chief Protector. In order to be Australian citizens, the Aborigines cannot speak their native language(s) and go back to the land to see their family and relatives.

Stolen Generation

From 1905 – 1967, half-caste children of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent who were forcibly removed from their families by the Australian federal and state government agencies and church missions, under acts of their respective parliaments. This period was known as the Stolen Generation or Stolen Children.

Working for Free

By 1943, the value of Aboriginal slave labour in Western Australia was estimated to be £60,000 a year, about A\$ 4 million in today's dollars. The Aborigines did not receive a penny for their work.

Basically the land was stolen off them and if they wanted to stay on their land, and have that connection to country

and that connection to spirit, they actually had to work for free for the person who stole it.

— Warwick Thornton, Aboriginal Director

Aboriginal culture - 60,000 years old

Thus, Australian Aboriginal culture of 60,000 years where reverence and respect for the land, community, family, dream time and oral traditions were systemically broken down by the 1905 Aborigines Act of Western Australia that lasted for 58 years. The Aborigines Act 1905 was repealed by the Native Welfare Act 1963 on 1 July 1964. However, the trauma from the stolen generations made its negative impact and toil on the Aboriginal Peoples, the First Nations of Australia.

Voting Rights

The Commonwealth Electoral Act 1962 received assent on 21 May 1962. It granted all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people the option to enrol and vote in federal elections.



Bringing Them Home Report

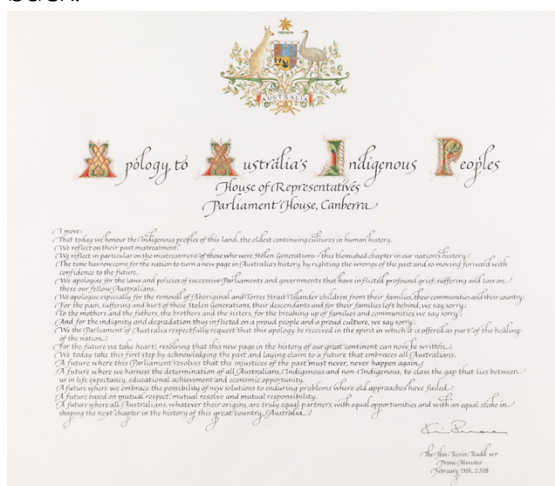
In 1995, a National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families commenced, spearheaded by the President of the Human Rights and Equality Commission, Sir Roland Wilson.

By the end of 1996, nearly 800 submissions had been heard and in May 1997 the *Bringing Them Home* report was tabled in Parliament concluding that:

For individuals, their removal as children and the abuse they experienced at the hands of the authorities or their delegates have permanently scarred their lives. The harm continues in later generations, affecting their children and grandchildren.

National Sorry Day

In 2008, Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister of Australia declared 13 February a National Sorry Day. A psychological and emotional relief for the stolen generation who realised that it was the legislation framework and existing laws that prevented their mothers for searching their offspring. Furthermore, these mothers and their loved ones had no financial means to claim them back.



Memorabilia Books of Indigenous Australians

In 2018-2019, memorabilia books published by The Western Australian Museum (also known as WA Museum *Boola Bardip*) tell the untold history of Indigenous Australians who served Australia. These memorabilia books are complimentary and accessible to download from the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries in Western Australia.

The foreword in No Less Worthy from Ben Wyatt, former Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Treasurer of Western Australia writes:

"...an insight into the lives of the Aboriginal men who volunteered, No Less Worthy stands as a significant educational and historical resource adding to our understanding of an important chapter in our States history.

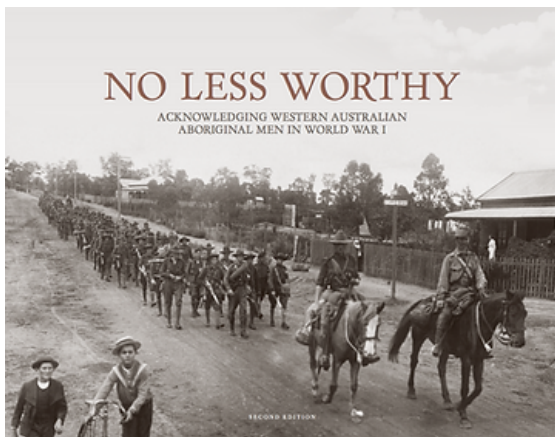
As a proud Aboriginal Western Australian who graduated from the Royal Military College in Duntroon as a commissioned officer, it is an honour to pay tribute to each of the Aboriginal men in this book who contributed to World War I and to those who have served since.

Lest We Forget."

No Less Worthy compliments the first book They Served With Honour published in 2014 which acknowledges the Western Australian Aboriginal Servicemen at Gallipoli.



Source : *They Served With Honour* published in 2014 (Researched and written by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs Community Development Directorate, Aboriginal History Research Unit with contributions from staff and the families of the soldiers)



Source : *No Less Worthy* - 2019 Second Edition published by [The Western Australian Museum](#)

Anzac Day 2021

We are celebrating Anzac Day in 2021. Due to COVID-19, major state marches are planned for Anzac, with restrictions on numbers such as the national event in Canberra, Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania. Western Australia (WA) will also have restrictions on numbers and pre-registration. Overseas services will not be held.



On 24 April 2021 Perth city and the Peel region entered a sudden 3 day COVID-19 lockdown and Anzac Day services in the affected areas were cancelled. Australians can still 'Light up the Dawn' in their driveways this Sunday for Anzac Day 2021.



Western Australia will be celebrating Anzac day tomorrow after RSL WA overturned a ban on the flying of the Aboriginal flag at Anzac and Remembrance Day services after a public backlash. We thank the Aboriginal and Torre Straits Islander and the Anzac soldiers who fought so bravely for our freedom and democracy that we enjoy today. *Lest We Forget.*

To Whom It May Concern | Our first year in operation— Thank you

Josh Galvin

Pioneer Member

Perth, Australia, 2021



Left to Right: Alba Gomez, Dr Renée Ralph, Josh Galvin

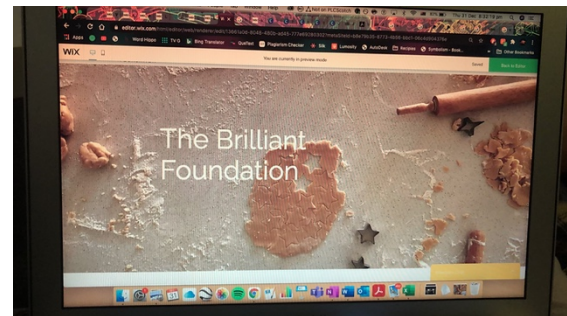
To Whom It May Concern:

As 2021 draws to a close, it gives us an opportunity to reflect on our first year of operation. We set out to bridge an existing gap between academic writing and the world of professionals and individuals with multi-faceted life experiences; I think we've done that.

I was fortunate enough to be invited by Dr Renée and Alrick, our Co-Founders to create and develop the website alongside them. Being 16 years old at the time, I was totally shocked that anyone would put that much trust into me. A year down the track, I will forever be grateful for that opportunity; to be a part of something that has become so Brilliant.

(Note to self, Brilliant is the most Brilliant adjective)

The final push to get our website launched for Jan 8 resulted in an international business call at 11pm on New Year's Eve 2020. Not many 16 year old's can say they've been on an international business call- and you're mad if you've been on one at 11pm on New Year's Eve; unless you are Renée and Alrick (*and me I guess*), two professionals, passionate about bridging the gap and inspiring others. The initial tribe they established of our Brilliant founding members reflects their values, and impedes a lasting legacy on my cohort of peers.



Website Drafts

We've written, we've read, we've shared, we've contributed; but most importantly, we've connected to bridge the gap. At our last sundowner, Students from Curtin, UWA, WAAPA and Murdoch made connections with industry professionals. I too, during my final year of school, made invaluable industry connections through The Brilliant Foundation. Renee and Alrick had the hope to inspire and guide the youth to make better career choices, through the human life stories on our platform; something which along with

the help of the Brilliant founding members, they have achieved.



Left: Dr Renée Ralph with Curtin University Students.



Right: Alexander Circosta, Sharing his Inspiring Story. @ November 2021 Sundowner

Through LinkedIn and Instagram, we've been able to grow our following and build our community. You've seen our funky social media designs and our questionable template choices, but you didn't let that cloud the true heart and Brilliance of The Brilliant Foundation. You stuck with us and had faith in the fact that we would establish a brand and a community built upon the same initial idea.



“

Alexander Circosta has a Bachelor of Laws and a Bachelor of English and Creative Arts. He is currently working as an Actor, Comedian and TV Presenter in Perth, Western Australia"

Read about why he never practiced law and instead sings, dances and presents on TV .

— ALEXANDER CIRCOSTA
Member | The Brilliant Foundation



**Read
Contribute
Connect**

THE BRILLIANT FOUNDATION





If you notice, the filament of our lightbulb is a pen nib- that was [Elizabeth Richards](#) Brilliant stylistic idea which reflected her vision for The Brilliant Foundation. Everyone in our community has their own way of expressing their ideas and visions for the better of their work and our platform.

[Madeleine Antoine](#) for example, using her passion for violin and music to notion the importance of environmental protection; or [Don Bosco](#), creating a company where he gets to work with his two young sons, creating stories and carving a successful life, balancing his love of writing and homelife as a father.

Over the course of the year, we've gained over 700 Brilliant followers on [LinkedIn](#) and slowly but surely, we're building a following on [Instagram](#) (*please follow us there*). We've had more than 7000 total article views and our members spend an average of 17 minutes on our site.

The community has obviously seen the good in The Brilliant Foundation. We've forged some brilliant community partnerships- United Nations Association of WA, WA Asian Business Awards 2022, ASEAN Business Alliance- It's absolutely incredible and more than we ever expected to achieve in our first year of operation.

From our first sundowner in Perth where I was the token male, to our most recent, where no one was a token, it's amazing to see what The Brilliant Foundation has become, and the tribe of peers that have joined us along the way.



November 2021 Sundowner

There's been strong opinions, malfunctioning technology, long days, long nights, sweat and tears, we even had a rabbit join the team, but to leave 2021 on such a high, it was all worth it.



Bungee Rabbit

In our giving, we are hoping to further establish our global online community which nurtures self-awareness, leadership, creativity, lifelong learning, kindness and respect. We walk into 2022 with big plans and new goals but with the same passion and drive we had from the beginning- *memores acti prudentes futuri*.

Best regards,

Josh

Rekindle or Reinvent?

Perth, Australia

by Josh Galvin, 2022



📷 Food and Beverage ~ Josh Galvin

China's decision to impose tariffs on Australian wine export not only has devastating effects on industry but also highlights the barrier an East-West relationship causes, making political and economic relations difficult at times. Mid 2020 saw China accuse Australia of pricing wine below fair market value, imposing temporary anti-dumping tariffs on Australian wine, pending investigation. The tariffs were further extended in early 2021 set to last for 5 years. The Australian economy is dependent on the Chinese market and is built on primary industry. Australia may need to deal with this dependency due to the unfolding global political tensions with the emerging Asian superpower.

Trade, culture, and globalisation are the heart of the food and beverage sector, and my involvement in the Western Australian sector is what sparked my interest in China's coercive actions targeting the industry. I was keen to explore this further as it's a multifaceted issue and extends far

beyond what I experience and what I already know.

The Margaret River region has become a part of the West Australian Identity and produces 25% of Australia's finest wines (Wine Australia, 2021). Having studied international relations, sustainable development, diplomacy, and conflict, I wondered, *How can Australia improve the fragile Sino-Australia relationship, in a way that supports industry and allows for sustainable development?*



📷 Aravina Estate Vineyard ~ Josh Galvin

To fully understand the somewhat controversial issue of Sino-Australia relations, and the complexities in relation to wine export, I took a trip to WA's premier wine region, Margaret River. I also had the pleasure to interview The Brilliant Foundation's Co-Founder, Dr Renée Ralph, in relation to

her work as an international communications strategist, and her Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA). Her expertise in cross cultural communications, particularly in Western Australian-Chinese business relationships solidified a direction for this exploration.



📸 Co-Founder Dr Renée Ralph and Operations Coordinator Josh Galvin - The Brilliant Foundation

My four days in Margaret River saw me visit wineries across the region; speaking to sommeliers, wine makers and executives at various wineries. I was able to learn about the region's history, as well as gain an insight on the effects of the anti-dumping tariffs. The most valuable engagements were at Vasse Felix, Goon Tycoons, and at Aravina Estate.

In 2015, the China Australia Free Trade Agreement (CHAFTA) was established to "enhance our competitive position in the Chinese market, boost economic growth and create jobs." (DFAT, 2021). The agreement created significant opportunities for Australian industry in China, however, the approach partly ignored important Chinese principals

and was established on flawed political ground.

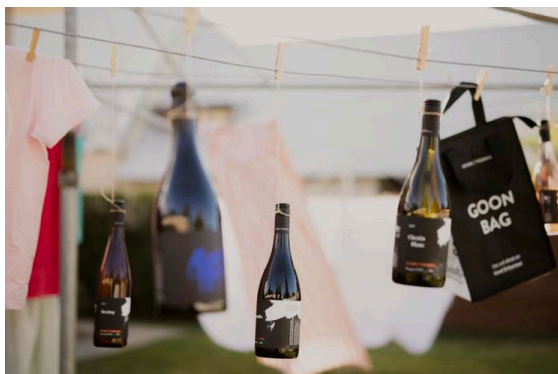
Imposition of the 200% markup tariffs in 2020, saw the \$1.1 billion sector (since CHAFTA) drop to \$20 million, (Prestipino, 2021) having devastating impacts on the Australian wine industry. There was no evidence to suggest Australia was dumping its wine exports.

Wineries in Margaret River have had to adapt in new ways to cope with this significant loss to their business. 'Filius', a range of cheaper premium wines at Vasse Felix is designed for ready drinking and is branded to appeal to a younger demographic with the aim of increasing market share in Western Australia to cope with the strain. The range offers contemporary yet sophisticated takes on classic varieties, including the award winning 'Filius Chardonnay'.



📸 Vasse Felix Filius Collection ~ Vasse Felix

Although a reduced margin, Vase Felix's decision to divert grapes away from other collections, destined for export to China, back into the domestic market, ensures money is still being made.



📸 Goon Tycoons Collection ~ Goon Tycoons

Operating in a similar way, Goon Tycoons, a division of the Fogarty Wine group, “is the opportunity to tinker with the Margaret River model and enjoy the opportunity to showcase the smaller vineyards we stumble upon.” (Goon Tycoons, 2022). Buying grapes off other wineries, and sourcing throughout the group has been a mechanism integral in supporting the whole wine economy, and the strategy has allowed them to adapt their purchases to the demand.

Whilst the tariffs have had devastating effects on the industry, the positives from it see more Australian produce on our shelves, however it doesn't support wineries in the way that a \$1.1b industry did (Ralph, 2021). After spending time in Margaret River, I learnt that if wineries do not adapt, they will struggle in the new market, and if the Australian government does not work to support the wine industry and China relations, the five year tariffs could completely wipe out smaller Australian wineries, and large Australian wine makers such as the Fogarty wine group and Treasury Wine Estates will also struggle to survive (Fang, Global Times, 2021).



📸 Aravina Estate Cellar ~ Josh Galvin

In retaliation to an Anti-China rhetoric in the previous Australian government, banning of Huawei in the Australian 5G network, and accusations of interference in Australian domestic politics; China has used economic coercion to punish Australia for actions deemed harmful to Chinese national interest. Above all, with Australia heavily siding with the United States (US) about China relations, and the inquiry into the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic, led to the imposition of heavy tariffs on 13 Australian exports, including wine (Glaser, 2021). China has not placed tariffs on Australian exports deemed essential to Chinese economic growth, however, is actively looking for other markets.

In response to restrictions lasting seven years, Norway conceded to Chinese coercion, releasing a joint statement, stating that “[The]

Norwegian Government reiterates its commitment to the one-China policy... respects China's sovereignty and territorial integrity... [and] China's core interests and major concerns, will not support actions that undermine them, and will do its best to avoid any future damage to the bilateral relations." (Glaser, 2021). Australia needs to be able to stand its ground, however, must work to improve the Sino relationship and support Australian industry.



📸 China and Australia

Although there is a general acceptance and understanding of Chinese culture in Australia, many important Chinese cultural principals are not drawn on in political and economic relations, a factor contingent on the success of a Sino relationship. Affirmed by Dr. Ralph throughout our interview,

"*Guanxi* is a cultural etiquette common to China which is part of conducting daily business life."

(Ralph, 2020)

At its heart, *guanxi* is about establishing a multifaceted relationship to better understand the other party. *Guanxi* has been a part of China's approach to building political relationships and understanding the west.

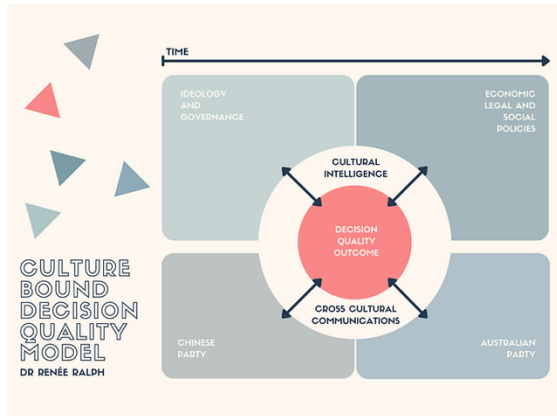
In practice, *guanxi* looks like Chinese nationals living in the affluent suburbs of Western Australia, sending their children to leading independent schools. This auxiliary relationship sets a standard for future relationships to grow upon, but also satisfies *guanxi* and China national interest. Ignoring an important aspect of Chinese culture and relations, how can the Australian government expect their Chinese counterparts to only operate on our western terms?



📸 Guanxi in Practice ~ Dr Renée Ralph

Considering *guanxi*, Fortescue Metals Group, a Western Australian MNC in the resources sector was able to satisfy China national interest but also maximise shareholder value by establishing auxiliary relationships and strong formal business ties. Having Australian and Chinese involvement at every level of the company facilitates a

stable relationship, with their biggest trading partner.



Culture Bound Decision Quality Model - Dr Renée Ralph

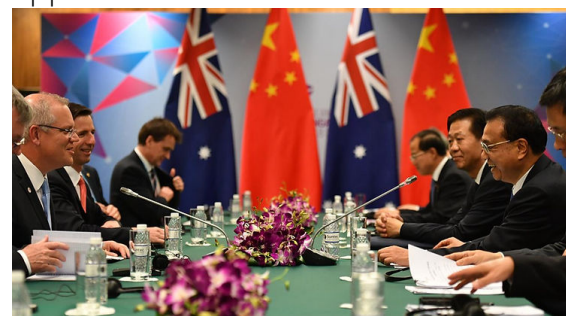
At a governmental level, Australia needs to approach diplomacy with China in a different way, if we want successful and sustainable growth together. The Culture Bound Decision Quality Model (Ralph, 2020), outlines how an understanding of ideology and governance, economic legal and social policies in both China and Australia is a framework to pursue an objective; however, bilateral cultural intelligence is what leads to a decision quality outcome; a win-win situation for both parties.

Applying this to Government, having a three-dimensional approach to diplomacy and relations which respects and acknowledges differences, is what will allow the political and economic relationship to grow and strengthen while being built on “professionalism, trust and respect” (Ralph, 2020) rather than self-interest.

Regardless of the leadership and political affiliation in Australia, it is in

national interest that Australia has a strong relationship with China. Former Prime Minister Paul Keating deepened Australia’s economic and cultural ties with the Asian market (DFAT, 2021). Since being succeeded in 1996, as agreed with by Dr Ralph, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (AUS) stated that there was severe a deterioration in the Sino relationship. The tensions were reduced that year, however, it indicated that the underling sensitivities within Australia to Sino relations would remain a problem.

Under the Howard government 1996-2006 (AUS) actions led China to believe it was changing its policy to be pro-US and anti-China (DFAT, 2021). Once again, under the previous Morrison government, the same anti-China pro-US rhetoric resurfaced, and China has retaliated in the form of tariffs to our industries. Australia needs strategic planning and leadership to balance our global policy objectives. Since the 2022 Australian Federal Election, the new government has made an attempt to appease the tensions.



Australia China Meeting ~ The Australian With China looking to other markets for wine, iron ore, beef, and other Australian major exports, what’s keeping this relationship afloat is

China's desire for legitimacy. An open endorsement from Australia will provide China with further grounds for globalisation. China wants to be recognised in the global community as a proper partner (Ralph 2021). Recognising that an endorsement is only likely to come from Australia, for China, the Australian rhetoric is not worth a complete cease of the relationship, and therefore, has used economic coercion as a tactic to achieve that goal.

There is push for a global response to China's economic coercion, however, for Australia it makes sense to better the relationship ourselves (Glaser, 2021). It will likely be seen as further harm to China national interest, and the support from Australia in a global push will only further worsen the relationship, and potentially harm industry further (Ralph 2021). Not only did CHAFTA provide the wine industry with significant economic growth, but it also allowed wineries and vineyard in Margaret River to be inventive and diversify their products. As I learnt at Aravina Estate and Vasse Felix, there is a strong preference to red varieties of wine in China, due to the cultural symbolism of the colour red: prosperity, celebration, and good luck.



Red Symbolism- CNY~ Josh Galvin

Wine has been a way for the affluent Chinese to fit in with and understand the West; further highlighting the importance of *guanxi* in China. The complete juxtaposition to preferences in Australia provided the balance between the ever popular Sauvignon Blanc and allowed vineyards to diversify product for both the Australian and international market. With wine only becoming part of Chinese life recently, most Chinese citizens will not have the same understanding Australians do when it comes to varieties and regions of wine. The symbolism and significance is what has made the commodity so successful. Granted that, the direct impact of the tariffs on Australian wine are negligible in China.



📷 [Leeuwin Estate Vineyard](#) ~ Leeuwin Estate

The next five years provides the opportunity to reinvent and diversify the Australian economy. Choosing the easy way out, Australia has relied on primary industry and trade with China for the last 50 years. Knowing that China has the power to and will revoke a contract or partnership at any time, Australia must have a strategic plan to protect industries if the Sino relationship were not to improve. Thus, investing in secondary and tertiary sectors is what will propel Australia to be economically independent but still contribute to the global market in the future.

The Australian Government needs to recognise the importance of mending the relationship and rekindling. With China's growing global status, it's within Australian and Chinese national interest that the two states work together to achieve positive globalisation. The Australia China relationship can be the bridge between the east and west, and a model for bilateral successful development.

International Women's Day: #Breakthebias today & everyday!

Melbourne, Australia

by Christina Chia, Contributing Core Member, 2022



International Women's Day (IWD), celebrated on March 8 every year, is a global celebration of women's social, economic, cultural and political achievements. For me, every day should be IWD. This year's theme is [#Breakthebias](#). It is a call for all of us to reflect and act, as we forge and elevate women's rights and roles, contributing significantly to a world where bias, stereotypes and discrimination are unwelcome. The relevance of [#Breakthebias](#) cannot be ignored as we rebuild post-pandemic workplaces in our communities.

As an Asian Australian I have been the target of many forms of stereotypes and biases. When I was hired as a Senior Executive, the CEO congratulated me and said: "You got the job but I need to let the Board and others know that you are Asian".

I was not given the Managerial role I applied for but was given the "second in command" role with feedback that being a migrant (Asian) would not be consistent with the organisation branding.



I also had to contend with a recruiter who suggested I shouldn't take a 'big role' (demanding) as I was a mother of two young children. I was given projects deemed as "female centric" by my bosses, such as PR, business development and fundraising – the "soft and light weight" ones, while "the

boys will manage the 'heavy' ones, such as mergers/acquisitions, IT and finance." Boys?! The list goes on and on!



Over my twenty-five year career in Australia and South East Asia, I admit that some days were really tough, but I never gave up. I kept moving forward, progressing and found ways to survive. Of course, I needed the jobs so that I could fund the best education for my daughters. I also worked very hard and smart to prove that I could stand shoulder to shoulder with any employee – male or female.



I put in extra hours sacrificing sleep and social lifestyle and made work a priority – just like any employee who is serious about advancing their career. I remember missing my daughters' concerts and key events in their lives. I remember my daughters were the first to be at 'Before School Care' and were the last to be picked up at the end of the day. There were days I felt insecure in my job due to the bias associated with staying home to look after my sick daughter.



I did whatever I could with my abilities and capacity to have a progressive career AND be present for my daughters. This is because I believe, back then and now, that I can have a successful career AND be the mother and wife that I want to be.

I have always believed that women can achieve success in anything they put their minds, hearts and souls into. I migrated to Melbourne as a single parent, with very little money, no job prospects, two girls under five years of age and with dreams for my girls to have opportunities for success. I never settled for second best. I never settled for an “either /or” option, rather, a ‘Yes to all’ attitude. I wanted to break the mould of what society had expected of me and set an example for my girls. I wanted to play my part in breaking the biases (conscious and unconscious) that stop women from living their very best lives. International Women’s Day: [#Breakthebias](#) today and everyday!

I believe that the best way for any change to occur, is to look closely and critically at workplace and community cultures, and if we aren’t “walking the talk”, then we need to take action on a DAILY basis. From our spoken words to our chosen actions, every little gestures and behaviour makes a difference in breaking the bias.

Fast forward to 2022. I am very proud to say that I am now leading the way. As a Cultural Shifting Pioneer, I can attest to the value of breaking biases, leading to successful and thriving organisations. Diversity is key. Diversity adds value to companies and increases innovative and creative ideas. Diverse teams can also connect better with clients and customers.

When workplace culture is safe and inclusive and when our differences are valued and celebrated, companies flourish. Culture does not make people.

Rather, people make culture and we need to ‘walk this talk’ together and on a daily basis.



Celebrating IWD is not just about women. All people, being fully respected for who they identify as, must participate in change if we are to achieve an authentic balance in our workplaces. Men, who have been the main protagonists for women not flourishing historically, must work together with all colleagues, to achieve workplace parity on all levels.



I believe women have the innate ability to welcome and celebrate diversity in all its manifestations. Women are not

threatened by another's sexual identity. Women are not disturbed by the revelation of someone identifying as other than male or female. Women understand that she, he and they all deserve the opportunity to flourish in the workplace and in the world.



We have made great progress over the years and there is so much to celebrate – but there is also much progress to be made. A great example of a change in attitude within businesses has been the acceptance of flexible working days/hours.

The pandemic forced businesses to be creative. A workplace culture that once discriminated against women of colour, women with disabilities and LGBTQI women (read “women”) suddenly found that allowing flexible working conditions for all workers didn't have a detrimental effect on business outcomes.

IWD is a great reminder to be grateful for the achievements of those who came before us and to appreciate those who stand beside us now – forging the way for those who will come after.

Our experiences shape who we are. We have a responsibility to learn from the intersections of belief, race, ethnicity, gender and sexual identity, disability and identity.

I encourage you to commit to [#Breakthebias](#), smash stereotypes, break inequality and reject discrimination – today and every day, so that our communities flourish. There is a power we bring when we remember, celebrate and challenge together – today and every day!

The Dying Sun Duet

Madeleine Antoine & Setsu Masuda
Masuda

Perth, Australia

By Renee Ralph, 2022

So brilliant to experience the launch of The Dying Sun album - a beautiful duet with extraordinary violinist Madeleine Antoine and Japanese pianist Setsu Masuda - this original composition was written by award winning composer and Fullbright scholar, Rebecca Erin Smith.



*Photo credit : Dr Renee Ralph
Left to Right : Setsu Masuda, Rebecca Erin Smith and Madeleine Antoine*

Can we imagine a life without music?

In 2016, Madeleine had the vision of teaming up with Setsu Masuda, the Japanese pianist and Rebecca Erin Smith to compose a duet for a violinist and a pianist.



Both Madeleine and Setsu brought the notes to life and the sounds ached, soothed and lifted us...their music urging and moving us to preserve our world that we live in.

"We are not separate from it (our world), we are part of nature," says Madeleine.

Western Australian born Violinist Madeleine Antoine completed a Bachelor of Music at West Australian Academy of Performing Arts in 2020. She since studied at the Prague Conservatory of Music and at The University of Western Australia. Madeleine performs with the Perth Symphony Orchestra, as a soloist, with INNEKA and contemporary bands based in Boorloo (Perth). She has toured throughout Canada, China and Europe, and featured as a soloist on tour with the WA Ballet.

Setsu Masuda started piano at the age of 5 in Japan and did training privately under late Professor Arai of Toho Gakuen School of Music in Tokyo. Since being awarded the Licentiate of Music Diploma in Australia under the guidance of Dr Adam Pinto, she has enjoyed performing in a variety of chamber music concerts and toured in Japan, Singapore, Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and WA.



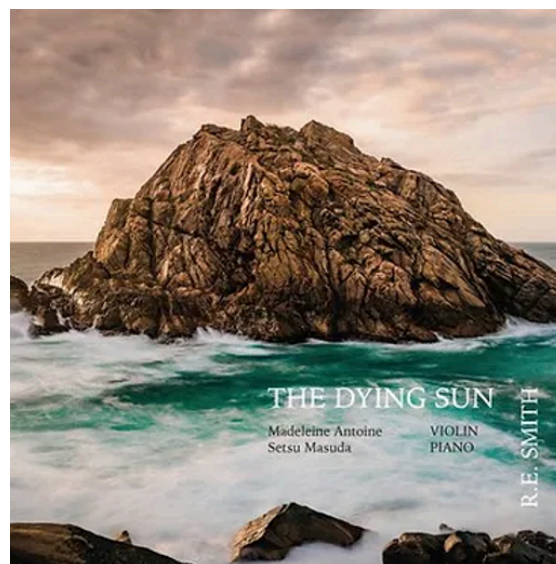
From Left to Right : Rebecca Erin Smith and Madeleine Antoine

Rebecca Erin Smith is an award winning Australian composer who specialises in collaborative media and concert works. A Fullbright Scholar and recent graduate of the Manhattan School of Music New York, Smith earned her Masters of Music under the tutelage of Dr Marjorie Merryman.

Her work has been internationally premiered in Japan, Singapore, Canada and USA. Smith lectures in composition and orchestration at Edith Cowan University, and is regularly engaged as an adjudicator and guest lecturer both nationally and internationally.

Please support our amazing Perth musicians and to get a copy of **The Dying Sun** for yourself or as a gift for someone who loves music, nature and environment.

Go to www.madeleineantoine.com



The Dying Sun depicts the natural environment as precious and rare. It is an homage to the land, made all the more important because of our knowledge of the frailty of wilderness and the rapidity with which the environment is diminishing.

The 1st movement Blood, meaning 'lifeblood', is in reference to the sun. It is mostly slow and gestural, and explores images of a wide expanse of

land over the course of the day. The sun rises and the sun dies. The movement explores the detail which can be created out of a single note through the expression and texture.

The 2nd movement Milk depicts the vast Milky Way constellation.

The 3rd, Nectar, refers to the canola fields, the rustling harmonic sounds evoking the movement of wildflowers and insects.

The final movement Salt explores the coastal area at Sugarloaf Rock - a large natural granite island rising dramatically out of the ocean near Cape Naturaliste in the south west.

Sharing a video from The Dying Sun. This movement is titled 'Nectar'. Click on link below:



<http://www.move.com.au/disc/the-dying-sun>

Hello, I am Longkang Lady, Authentic SG Super Hero

Singapore
By Don Bosco, 2023



SINGAPORE - Have a read of Don Bosco's latest story of a Pontianak (ghost) - enjoy this delightful spiel.

But first — A QUICK GLOSSARY

karang guni (Malay) = scrap dealer

longkang (Malay) = drain

Pontianak (Malay) = scary female ghost in white dress

Sungei Road = local street market, with both legit and dodgy vendors

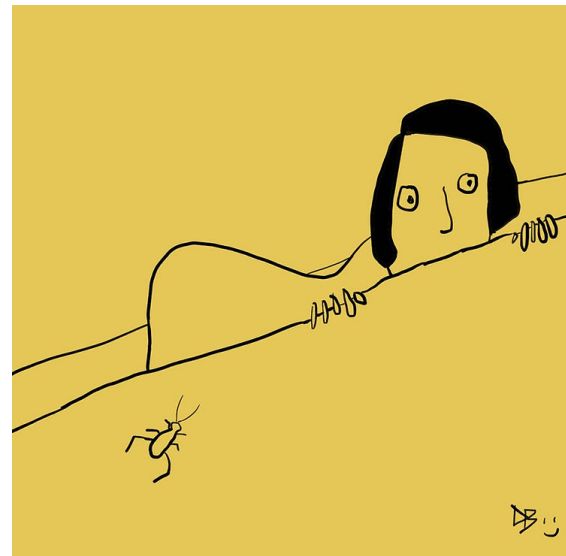
Okay, glossary over, let's begin.

HELLO, I AM LONGKANG LADY,
AUTHENTIC SG SUPER HERO

Yes, they call me Longkang Lady. Maybe you've heard of me. In the old days, I was well known around the Telok Blangah area. I was the neighbourhood hero.

It started when I was a young girl. My father was the karang guni man, together with his brother. They collected newspaper, cardboard, old clothes, metal pieces, all kinds of stuff, even toys, which they would clean, fix, and sell at Sungei Road.

Back then, our neighbourhood heroes were The A-Boys. Their names all started with "A" — Ah Chye, Ahmad and Anand. But they were not actually boys, they were already in their 30s and 40s.



They met when they were playing football, and they were invited to take over from the previous hero when that guy retired. My mother's brother used to play football with them too, that's how I got to know them.

The A-Boys always looked very

impressive. They wore matching blue sarongs with green t-shirts, each one had a big yellow "A" stitched on the back. Ahmad's mother did the sewing.

Ah Chye had a great singing voice, Ahmad was fantastic at killing mosquitoes, and Anand had outstanding chest hair, even as a teenager. That's what all his neighbours said.

Every evening, after work, and dinner, they would go around helping out in the neighbourhood. They took care of a lot of bullies, and also small-time crooks.

But their biggest challenge was handling the Pontianak woman.



She was a real Pontianak, as everyone knew, and she was the reason why other people stayed away from Telok Blangah at night. She was extremely rude and quarrelsome. Sometimes, if you looked in her direction, she would lose her temper and go crazy and torment you with her crazy Pontianak stuff. And sometimes, if you didn't look

in her direction, that would be enough to make her mad.

Seriously, we were all terrified of her.

One night, my mother sent me out to buy bread for breakfast the next morning. I was walking back when I saw the A-Boys having a shouting match with the Pontianak next to the big field.

They were making a lot of noise. The A-Boys yelled until their faces turned purple. But they were no match for the Pontianak. She screeched and screamed so loudly, all the flowers on the nearby frangipani tree fell off.

The neighbours came out to watch. They were careful to stay a safe distance away. Many were excitedly betting on the outcome.

I felt like I had to help somehow.

There was a drain running along the side of the field, my brother and I used to play in it all the time. I went into the drain, and crawled all the way behind the Pontianak. Nobody noticed me, they were all enjoying the shouting match. And then, when I was right behind the Pontianak, I suddenly popped up and shouted, "Boo!"

The Pontianak had such a shock, she jumped up into the air. And then she ran off, waving her hands frantically.

Everyone laughed. And clapped. The A-Boys were relieved. They thought they were going to lose to the Pontianak. Good thing I helped them.

We never had any problem with the Pontianak after that. Each time she dared to show her face, we would just yell "Boo!" and laugh at her. Shortly after, she left the Telok Blangah area.

That was how I got my nickname. Everyone called me Longkang Girl for a few years, and then when I got older, they changed it to Longkang Lady.

After the A-Boys retired, I took over as the neighbourhood hero. Ahmad's mother made me an orange t-shirt with "LL" on the front, in gold glitter. I would crawl through the drains, to get around secretly, and protect the place.



There were so many newspaper reports about me. How I defeated that super villain, Big Biceps Boy, who was an awful bully.

How I caught the four Takeaway Sisters, notorious for taking away lots of stuff that did not belong to them.

How I managed to capture the Milo

Monster, which was actually a rat that broke into a coffee shop and ate so many tins of Milo powder that he transformed into a scary beast.

How I dealt with other villains, like The Night Ninja, Sensational Ah Seow, and so many more.

Those were good days.

The Power to Rise Above

Perth, Australia

by Dr Vanessa Atienza Hipolito, Founding Member, 2022



BRISBANE, Queensland 10 September 2022 – It is an extra special day that I am soft launching my third anthology book at the [Logan Writers Festival](#) in Brisbane today led by editor and Ozark Press publisher Sandy Davies.

I am deeply honoured and humbled to contribute to this collaborative book together with 29 other authors who shared their vulnerable stories of trauma, abuse, bullying, discrimination, harassment and humiliation. This is a collection of powerful stories which I pray will help and serve others to find *The Power to Rise Above*.

It was day 5 of my 14-day quarantine due to Western Australia's public health close contact mandate last

January 2022. I received an email from Sandy of Queensland. She is my co-author in the #1 Amazon best-selling book 'Courage and Confidence'. We have yet to meet in person but were keeping in touch and preparing for our book launch in March 2022. In her email she was creating an anthology book project, inviting me to collaborate with her.



According to her email:

"The concept for the book was born pre-COVID when I was in a toxic workplace where a female manager bullied a young woman in her twenties. In supporting my workmate I discovered here I was in my fifties and had never really shared my story of being bullied and bruised for nearly the entirety of grade 7.

Suddenly my bullied workmate didn't feel alone or isolated. And she loved that someone like me (vibrant, positive, strong) had had that experience but still became me. At that moment The Power to Rise Above project was born.

The purpose is for young people in similar situations to what each of us has faced hearing from women who in

adulthood found a way to rise above their bullies, trauma, discrimination or previous pain to thrive. The intention is for young people to reconnect with their inner strength, have hope, accept themselves, feel empowered and know that they are not alone. And also for adults struggling to work through and release that past trauma to know that they are enough and they will get through.

Each contributor is a woman who is inspirational simply by being.

Contributors are women from across the globe who are living their best lives either as entrepreneurs, artists or public servants. And all are women who experienced bullying, loss, discrimination, anxiety or trauma. Others are from various cities in Australia, Jamaica, The Netherlands, and across America including Hawaii, New Zealand, Guam and Indonesia.

The purpose is to make a difference and instil hope."

After reading her email, I immediately replied and called her on the same day.

After a long conversation, both of us were very excited for each other regarding this book project. "I do not know what is happening right now, Sandy. If you asked me before Christmas or after quarantine isolation, I would have said 'NO'. However, since I am on day 5 of isolation having nothing else to do, you have given me a reason

and purpose during the remaining days of my isolation."

Sandy's invitation came at a more opportune time giving me goosebumps all over, a feeling of tingling on my spine and butterflies in my tummy. It was a happy feeling of being aligned and connected to this book project and which I will always remember for the rest of my life.

I am deeply honoured to be included in her book project. This book is a gift to my inner healing. I was able to deeply understand, discover and acknowledge the "triggers" that gave me unnecessary stress and anxiety which I didn't know existed at that time.

Writing my chapter allowed me to surrender and release all the accumulated negative emotions I unconsciously blocked for many years and decades during my medical training and working as a specialist radiologist. Writing has given me the gift of HEALING.

I realised that while composing my story chapter, the process has brought to light my deep emotional wounds concealed over time. And this truly helped me heal in many areas of my life – emotionally, mentally and spiritually. It also helped me enhance my self-awareness and self-discovery.

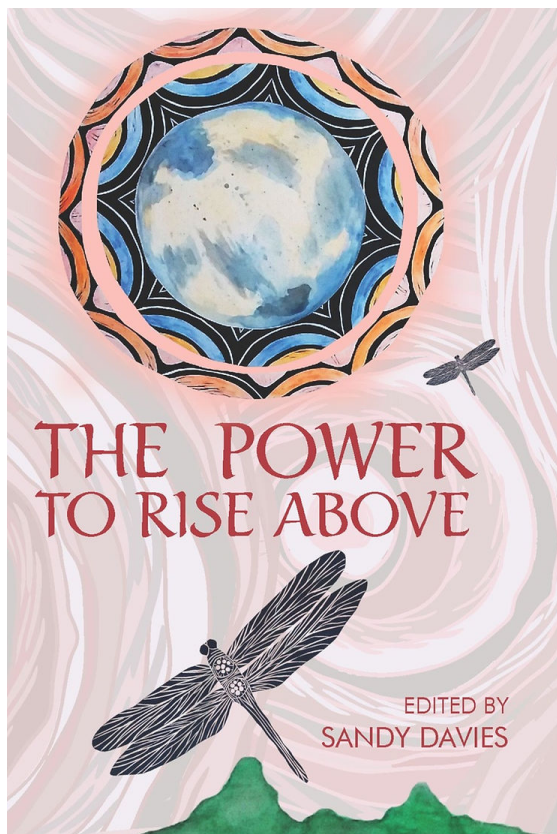
I wasn't happy with the outcome of the first draft because I wrote it with so much rage, anger, hatred and frustration, and it didn't feel right. After deep reflection, lots of prayers and

meditation, I finished the final draft of my chapter with a loving and kind perspective. In the process it was therapeutic.....I was able to forgive myself and my persecutors.

I pray that my chapter will help a lot of medical students, interns, resident medical officers, junior doctors and any doctor in any phase of their career who suffered and is still suffering from mental stress, emotional trauma and moral injury.

You are not alone.

You too have the choice to either be a victim or survivor; a bystander or an upstander.



The Power to Rise Above

The motivational book *The Power to Rise Above* brings 30 authors together

from across the globe to share their stories of hope as a reminder that we are not alone.

There is always room for you to rise, no matter what you are facing. Oprah Winfrey's favourite guest of all time Dr Tererai Trent has written the foreword to this uplifting book.

Tererai's beautiful words include *The Power to Rise Above sings back to us what our soul already knows: we have the power to rise ... the authors of The Power to Rise Above take all our hurts and help us to heal, to rise as one. These incredible women rekindled their resilience as a reminder to each of us that no one can extinguish our fire, the inner light which burns deep within us. If you are yearning to discover your greatness in this life, this book is for you. If you are going through some rough patches in your life, then this powerful anthology is proof that each of us as women has the power to rise above.*

If you are struggling to find your voice, I hope these stories of healing and strength will resonate and empower you to live the best version of yourself.



The eBook version is available at
Smashwords
[https://www.smashwords.com/books/
view/1162059](https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/1162059)

Giving Back

Perth, Australia

By Dr Renée Ralph, 2022

PERTH, Western Australia - The young ones gathered for the Brilliant Sundowner 2022 at City Beach last evening to hear industry and academic leaders share their lives. The weather was perfect in the still cool evening, with the sun setting in the background.



Amy Wei Tian, Associate Professor, Curtin University and Founding Member, The Brilliant Foundation stated that she didn't plan her career in Human Resources (HR) – it just fell into her lap. "Originally, I wanted to be a consultant, in my past life, it wasn't a HR role, I was a PA, personal assistant to an Executive and within two months, they moved me into HR. Sometimes in life, a job or career choose you, and not the other way round. I worked in a large international retail organisation, Jean West in Hong Kong and was moved up within the hierarchy rather quickly. I became the HR Director for three years."

I asked: "How did you end up in England?"

"When I worked in Hong Kong, China, I decided to pursue my studies in the United Kingdom". All in all, Amy studied and worked in Britain for ten years. She completed her Masters and Phd in England worked in another international retail chain, Zara, before coming to Australia.

She said: "There are two things that bring you to a new country...either a job or relationship." Amy met her partner in England, and life led her to Perth to live and work.

When asked what was her hobby?...Amy said: "My hobby is work!"... and everyone laughed.

She said: "Enjoying family and having a child has given me a new perspective in life for me."





Marina Mikula, Culture and Business Partner, currently works with a FMCG global company based in Sydney. She wanted to delve into marketing initially but was persuaded otherwise to specialise in HR as it was a steadier and more stable role.

Marina encouraged students to obtain an internship experience or a part-time job to understand the corporate world as it sets them apart.

Marina graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce at The University of Western Australia (UWA). She worked in Perth before settling into Sydney for three years. Marina loves snowboarding, skiing, snorkelling and surfing. With her partner, they both have travelled to Hawaii, France, Croatia and Germany. Marina said: "I have shifted from a generalist role to a more specialist role and am enjoying HR very much."



Ben McGinty, Talent Acquisition Lead, Woodside Energy expressed his enthusiasm for travel and to explore the world. He graduated from Curtin University with a Double Degree in HR specialising in Asian language, Japanese. He shared: "I had no idea and wasn't sure what I wanted to do when I graduated. Does anyone know? Initially, I had an internship in the retail sector, David Jones."

Then he decided to see the world.

His intention was to stay in the United Kingdom for six months, he fell in love with the place and he lived in London for the next eight years and enjoyed every moment of it. He stayed with Hays in London, focussing on recruitment within a consulting environment. Afterwards, he had another recruitment role within the construction industry and General Electric which gave him further insight and experience in the HR role.

Ben said: "I am lucky enough to have a job in Woodside, now Woodside Energy and I have been here for over 4 years now. In truth, a career is hardly linear."



Dr Mike Baldwin, Lecturer and Unit Coordinator leads the core unit Communications, Culture and Indigenous Perspectives in Business (CCIB), Curtin University with his team.

He has travelled extensively and worked in the States, New Zealand and China. In his previous life, Mike worked in abattoirs and was a tradesman. Mike said: "I am always pursuing the good life." In his mid-life, he decided to get an education and graduated with the Doctorate of Philosophy, UWA focussing on Happiness.

His thesis was about the Happiness and the Good Life, exploring the Concept of Happiness. A person of remarkable and positive action, his values of treating individuals decently, respect and kindness are something that he lives by daily. He shares: "Professional ethics is important to me and the way we live every day with good intentions will bring forth a

positive experience that will bring happiness. It isn't an elusive concept."



During Question and Answer (Q&A), Matthew Cattrell asked Mike: "Have you finally found happiness?" Everyone roared with laughter.

Mike said they are other values to happiness and posed the question: "Are you wanting to be a HAPPY slave or rather being a miserable FREE person?"



Other questions asked by Mel, Faith and Alex:

What is the best bit of HR, being a generalist or specialisation?

What is the hardest part of being in HR?

Is there any specific role or life that you will lead?

The responses by the panel:

“The toughest challenge in HR is people management. Human beings are so different and have different personalities. As a HR professional, we need to have the ability to understand and communicate very well. That is really important.”

“You take cultural and values any day of the week over technical competence.”

“The values you hold. Develop character in being the right sort of person and the sort of moral person. Aristotle believed in developing character in intellectual steps and learn from those mistakes that develop the muscle of character.”

“Making mistakes is okay because that is good and you will learn from it. Be curious. There is a massive world out there that is really rich and really

textured. Ask questions and be involved in it.”

“Have a growth mindset. That is so important”

It was a lovely sundowner where the youth chatted to the professionals, asking questions pertaining to their lives and the way forward.

The Brilliant Foundation is truly grateful for Amy, Marina, Ben, Mike and Louella from the Telethon Institute of Kids and Alexander Circosta for volunteering their time and to share their life experiences with the teens and undergraduates. The experience was totally positive and the ambience was alive and engaging. Thank you all for coming.

For the university students that attended this sundowner – Thank You so much for coming! All of you inspire me every day to do better!

Remember that these amazing individuals are no different to you and I.

They are Resilient. Diligent. Hardworking. Focussed. Passionate.

They find meaning in what they do every day.

Ordinary individuals, doing extraordinary things – in their roles, they seek to work on initiatives and projects that have value to make life lighter, more enjoyable and liveable.

True grit to do better, overcoming adversity and challenges through hard work, positive action and self-awareness.

Not the fake news that we see every day in social media, sensational news, reality TV or influencers touting wares.

They have continued their personal development and life-long learning through education.

They have done the hard yards to lead a fulfilling life. You can do the same.

So please start getting organised.

Make a Plan.

Read your academic journal articles.
(do not roll your eyeballs at this stage)

Do your research.

Update your Endnote.

Attend your lectures face-to-face and attend ALL your tutorials.

Find your friends and your tribe.

Maintain Your Friendships.



Culture and Symbolism in the Visual Arts

Elizabeth Richards

Founding Member
Perth, Australia, 2022



MOUNT CLAREMONT, Perth - *The 2022 Visual Arts Exhibition was officially opened on Monday 17 October by Elizabeth Richards. Liz attended John XXIII College in the mid 1980's and went on to study Fine Arts and Graphic Design.*

She works as a full time Visual Artist creating realistic oil paintings that are detailed and full of colour.

In her opening address, Liz emphasised the importance of the Visual Arts in providing a great sense of joy and self-worth and in developing essential life skills such as creative problem solving and visual communication.

Elizabeth's address:

"Thank you, Rob, and thank you to Louise Hoy and the John XXIII Visual Arts Department for inviting me to open the John XXIII College Visual Arts Exhibition this year."

"My name is Elizabeth Richards - previously Elizabeth Colgan. I attended John XXIII College in the mid 1980's when the school and WA Education were going through major changes.

I was in year 12 in 1986 when the school moved to the new Mount Claremont campus where we are now standing, and I was pretty happy to have access to the brand new Art rooms that the students use today. This year was also the first year in WA that Visual Arts was offered as a full ATAR subject (it was TEE back then), giving it equal importance to all the other traditional subjects."

Elizabeth Richard's oil paintings



"As a kid who loved drawing, painting, pottery and anything art related I couldn't believe my luck. It was edifying

to see that art was now being taken seriously as a subject...which allowed art and creatively orientated people like myself to use our skill set to achieve good grades and potentially see a future career in The Arts.



Elizabeth Richards' oil paintings

I did well at John XXIII thanks to my art mark and went on to UWA where I studied Fine Arts for 4 years. I then travelled and lived overseas for several years, where I was lucky enough to visit all the art works and galleries that I had studied throughout school and University.

Upon returning to Perth, I also finished a degree majoring in Graphic Design at Curtin University. Graphic Design gave me more scope for creative work, as well as important computer skills that have helped with my Art practice. In between having three children (who have all attended JTC) I have worked as a graphic designer, which has now become a side business.

I now work full time as a visual artist, with lots of commissions that keep me pretty busy. I work in a photo realistic style with oil paint. Due to my design background, my work has a very graphic quality with a lot of attention paid to bold composition and colour. I also do a lot of detailed still life work, as I enjoy the intensity, discipline and patience required to achieve a realistic result.

This is pretty much the career I dreamed of at school, and while it has taken awhile to achieve - it is possible! And very rewarding.

Looking around at the exhibition tonight I am blown away by the quality of ideas and the artistic skills that are on display. The work is so interesting and diverse, it makes me want to go back to art school.

The Art Department is producing work way beyond our small beginnings of 36 years ago, and its brilliant to see so many more students choosing to study the Visual Arts.

I have attended the end of year exhibitions for 19 years now and I congratulate Louise and the Visual Arts Team for the work they have done to make Visual Arts into such a successful subject at John XXIII College.

To the talented students here tonight, I want you to understand what an important gift you have been given. You have an aesthetic understanding of the world, an appreciation of and ability to create beautiful things, as well as a predisposition to exploring ideas, culture and human experience.

The Visual Artists, the Designers (graphic, interior, fashion and industrial), Architects and Artisans are the creators of the world we inhabit...the clothes we wear; the building and garden spaces we live in; the objects we surround ourselves with and use; the ideas that dominate the culture of the time.

It's no accident that throughout history the great religions and governments of the world have always patronized the greatest artists of their century; to visualise their spoken words and ideas, create soaring monuments and symbolise the ideas and aspirations that dominate the era. Artists are also the first to question and react against old ideology, creating and visualising the fresh ideas of a new generation and modern times.

An endless re-evaluation and regeneration of human culture. Even if your career doesn't go down the arts

avenue, having an artistic sensibility is an advantage in many different careers, helping with creative problem solving, better communication and possibly more elegant solutions.

And finally, I can say that keeping an artistic practice or sensibility in any form can bring a huge sense of joy, self-worth and comfort to your non-working life. Art is an end in itself, no one has to see it for it be worthwhile. It is challenging and frustrating but also healing and exhilarating, a break from the more mundane aspects of living.

The Visual Arts are a practice that is singular to human nature and something to be valued, encouraged and celebrated.

With that I am very pleased to declare the 2022 John XXIII College Visual Arts Exhibition open."

United Nations Day: The Core of Humanity is Supporting Human Decency and Peace

Perth, Australia

By Dr Renée Ralph, 2022

PERTH, Western Australia - Over 150 individuals attended the 77th United Nations Gala 2022 led by former President, Dr Sandy Chong; Chair, Dr Nau Zhang, Executive Committee, professional and student volunteers last Friday evening.



Photo credit : Dr Renée Ralph

Left to Right : Randhir Amoganathan, Sally Dawkins, Dr Sandy Chong, Craig Challen SC OAM

Video credit : Dr Renée Ralph - Aunty Kerri Anne from Nyunar Tours for the welcome to Country

The evening started with Aunty Kerri-Ann Winmar presenting the Welcome to Country. She sang and yarned of her ancestors, who were the first astronomers, the first farmers and the first scientists. The First Nations culture rich in tradition that lasts for over 70,000 years.



Dr Sandy Chong completed her three-year term as President of United Nations Association of Australia (UNAAWA), Western Australia Division. Under her helm as leader, Sandy initiated the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Forum with Ernst and Young as Sponsor(s). West Coast Eagles is the first Australian elite sporting club that included the UN SDGs as their benchmark in sporting standards. The video clip below signifies West Coast champion inclusion in sport that was launched today to coincide with United Nations Day, 24 October.



<https://youtu.be/C1bUj49ct9U>

The local council in Nedlands as well embraced the UN SDGs to develop and establish a sustainable living footprint for their residents. On Wednesday 28 September, the City of Nedlands signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the UN, becoming a signatory to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Credit : Nedlands Post

Newly elected President of UNAAWA, Mr Randhir Amoganathan stated that he will continue to support the 'flame' that Sandy has passed on to him. Randhir completed his Law degree in 1992 in United Kingdom, with an MBA in 1993 at Keele University and an MSC (Econs) from the London School of Economics in 1994. He specialised in software contracts management in UK and was an In-House Legal Counsel in Singapore. Migrating to Australia in 2008, he was admitted to the Supreme

Court of Western Australia, the High Court of Australia and the High Court of New Zealand. He established Obvia Legal in 2018.



Photo credit : Dr Renée Ralph
Left to Right : Randhir Amoganathan, Sally Dawkins, Dr Sandy Chong, Craig Challen SC OAM

Guest speaker Sally Dawkins speech resonated with the guests that evening as she shares Australia commitment to the United Nations (UN).

She commenced as Director, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in January 2022. In this role, Sally leads the Department's engagement with its diverse stakeholders in Western Australia, including government, business, academia and the community.

Sally has served overseas with the Department in Geneva (representing Australia at the United Nations Human Rights Council and General Assembly), Paris, West Africa and most recently in Ankara, as Deputy Head of Mission at the Australian Embassy in Turkey. Sally has also worked as an Adviser to the Minister for International Development and the Pacific.

In 2017-19, Sally managed government relations and social investment for Newcrest Mining in Papua New Guinea, based in Port Moresby. Sally graduated with Honours in Bachelors of Laws and Arts from the University of Western Australia, and is an admitted solicitor. She speaks fluent French.

She stated: "Since 1946, Australia is a Founding Member of the UN, Australia has been committed in sending peacekeeping troops in Indonesia.

Currently, Australia has 800 Australians who are employed in the UN and Australia are committed to the vision of UN. Statistically, Australia ranks 12th in the world as we have the largest peacekeeping budget in the global community. The effort to support the UN is to stabilise and support nations who desire sovereign choices so that they have an equal voice in the international landscape."

Standards and benchmarks such as World Health Organisation (WHO), International Labour Organisation (ILO) and ASEAN, APEC help to improve fair

trade, economy and embrace multiculturalism.

Sally said: "Australia has over 75 years of commitment to the UN and the aim is to have a seat in the security council by 2029-2030. It is a wake-up call to the human race, that Russia's invasion to Ukraine cannot be normalised."

"Our Global Human Index has declined for two years in a row. An estimate of 800 million go to bed hungry every night", says Ms Sally Dawkins.

Sally emphasised the need to work together. She said: "We must talk, work, listen to each other."

"Reconciliation is fundamental to maintaining peace and security internationally, respecting human rights and promoting equality, dignity and self-determination. Australia is committed to providing opportunities to assist indigenous peoples – both in Australia and overseas – to overcome social and economic disadvantage.

Australia plays an active role in the United Nations systems. We have played an important role in the establishment of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Australians have served as both governmental and non-governmental members. We support the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and continue to give practical effect to the UNDRIP.

In September 2014, Australia proudly supported the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, and welcomed the World Conference Outcome Document.

In August 2015, the Department released its Indigenous Peoples Strategy which provides a framework to work collaboratively with Australia Indigenous peoples, communities and businesses, to advance and promote the wellbeing of Indigenous peoples around the world."

Sally is also heartened and proud that the First Nations perspective is in the heart of Australian National Policy. She shares the international diplomatic policy that exist between our Australian First Nations Peoples that have flown to Botswana to help with bush fire management. It is a huge step in the right direction for our First Nations Peoples where diplomatic ties are achieved in a global stage.



Photo byline : International Savanna Fire Management Initiative (ISFMI) is taking the fire management techniques of Indigenous northern Australians to the world through reinvigorating traditional fire management in Botswana, and promoting the

approach in other countries in Southern Africa and around the world.

Sally shares that Indonesia will be the incoming ASEAN Chair and is part of the Connect Trade today. She believes that the global community has the staying power to create a world that is peaceful and respectful of sovereignty.



*Photo credit : Dr Renée Ralph
Craig Challen SC OAM flocked by his fans at UN 77th Gala, Pan Pacific.*

Craig Challen, 2019 Australian of the Year is an Australian veterinarian, businessman, adventurer, pilot and cave diver. In July 2018 he participated in the Tham Luang cave rescue in northern Thailand, in which 13 people were rescued after 17 days trapped over two kilometres inside a cave by flood waters. On 24 July 2018, Challen was awarded the Star of Courage (SC) and Medal of the Order of Australia

(OAM) by the Governor-General of Australia for his role in the rescue. On 7 September 2018 the King of Thailand appointed Challen as a Knight Grand Cross (First Class) of the Most Admirable Order. For their part in the rescue, he and his long-standing dive partner, Richard Harris, were jointly named 2019 Australians of the Year.



AFP divers enter the cave on 7 July to support the Royal Thai Navy in preparation for the rescue operation. Credit: AFP

Craig Challen shared that the rescue were supported by 30 nations. He stated that the boys were the heroes and the rescue team were confronted with their mortality, and the full expectation of casualties.

"It was a choice that the rescue team had to make as it will take 5 months for cave to dry up."

"The miracle is all the 13 boys survived."

Applause broke out as guests were hanging on to what Craig has to share.

Craig said: "The admirable attitude by the Thai boys. No tears or trembling lips. They were so brave."



AFP divers walk down to the water at the mouth of the cave where the 12 boys and their soccer coach are stranded. Credit: AFP



Credit : Facebook

"It is a pretty good example where there is the manifestation of human nature, the - in group - support from your tribe in Savanna - and the competing interests that's impacting yours."

"Society is more complex, our biology to embrace humanity as one is the only way forward for society to function even though concept is romantic."

Craig said: “The differences of humans are constructed. The fabrication of differences such as Good Friday in Ireland is one example. There’s also the support of a football team - exclusion - the identification of in group - everything outside that group.” He has been asked many times - *Did those boys behave differently if they were Australians?*

Craig shared: “The Thai boys came from a different background and they came from a hill tribe from Thailand or Myanmar. People may manifest differences. I have met with a lot of different people through my travels abroad. People are exactly the same. They get on with their lives, to feed the family and get an education. These children were prepared to do everything to survive. We can learn from them.”

Winners of United Nations Day Awards in the following categories were:
John Acieck, Human Rights
Tanya Langford, Gender Equality
WA Forrest Alliance, Environment and Sustainable Development Goals

The Students Doing Good Challenge operationalises the United Nations SDGs across WA Universities and UN PRME (Principles of Responsible Management Education).

The Challenge invites local and international students from Curtin University, Edith Cowan University, Murdoch University and University of Western Australia to collaborate and work in multidisciplinary, cross-

University teams to develop a 5-minute pitch for a strategic innovation linked to an SDG.

This year’s winning team involved two Edith Cowan University students from the Sri Lanka campus: Hashini Perera and Tiasha Muller who submitted a pitch to tackle SDG 2. More specifically, their Agri Connect pitch presented an integrated sustainable farming information network for farmers in Sri Lanka.

The Brilliant Foundation is a recognised community partner of UNAAWA. Co-Founders and Founding Members attended the UN Gala Day to support our global community as one.



Left to Right: Alexander Circosta, Josh Galvin, Dr Sandy Chong, Dr Renée Ralph, Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito



The Brilliant Foundation members left to right: Alexander Circosta, Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito, Craig Challen SC OAM, Dr Renee Ralph, Josh Galvin



First Indigenous woman Dorinda Cox representing Federal Government



The Brilliant Foundation Members with Ms Sally Dawkins, Director, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)



With Craig Challen SC OAM, Australia's 007 and I.



Western Australia Guzheng Ensemble playing Jasmine Flower with their Qin



Alexander Circosta and Jamiela Sungkar volunteering and co-hosting the UN Day 77th Gala 2022



Dr S Zaung Nau - Chair, UN Day 77 Gala 2022 worked tirelessly with the EXCO, professional and student volunteers.

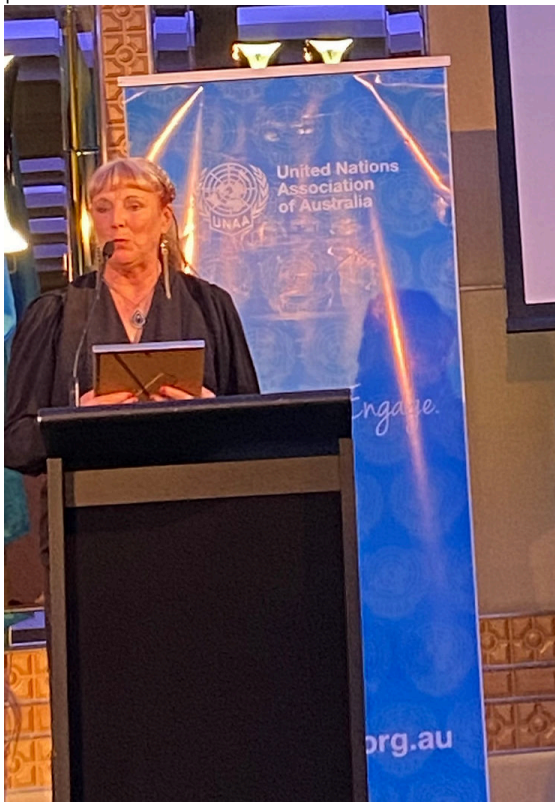
Education, Self-Worth and Hope

Tanya Langford

Winner, United Nations Day 2022 in the category of Gender Equality, UNAAWA Perth, Australia

by Dr Renée Ralph, 2022

PERTH, Western Australia (WA) - Investing in education for oneself offers multiple perspectives to make better decisions in one's life. In 2009, at the age of 40, Tanya Langford enrolled at Edith Cowan University. She was a mature age and single mother, and felt the need to understand how she could help women in compromised backgrounds and vulnerable financial positions.



Credit : Dr Renée Ralph

Initially, Tanya enrolled in Social Work but later she changed it to the Bachelor of Social Sciences. In 2012, she

graduated with the Bachelor of Social Sciences, with a major in Welfare and Community Services.

Her main goal was to work in the arena of gender based violence and to offer support to vulnerable women who have experienced all types of abuse, including childhood trauma and sexual assault.

Tanya is a survivor of the cyclical violence that started in her childhood. Her encounters at home led her to two abusive marriages and she was thrust and exposed to Australian's legal system.

Tanya learnt how to apply for violent restraining orders, reached out and pleaded for help from the police and dealt with the child custody battles in the Family Court. During these dark times, Tanya and her family depended on child support and welfare reliance.



Credit : Dr Renée Ralph

Tanya's tenacity in life and believe in her own self-worth, her believe in helping other women felt that her study, her accomplished degree will prepare her to make a difference in supporting vulnerable women facing domestic violence and sexual assault.

She realized that her education would support women who came from backgrounds that disadvantaged women – the issue of gender inequality and compromised position and women's rights.

Tanya said: "I spent 7 years as a 'Family Support Officer' at Peel Youth Services where I specialized in the area of 'Youth Violence in the Home'.

I did a Research Paper *"Youth in the Peel Region who are Violent in the Home, and/or Severely Disengaged."*

At this time, Tanya received the 'City of Mandurah – Perth Convention Bureau Aspire Scholarship' which allowed her to attend and present at a two day Domestic Violence Conferences in Australia.

She shared: "Whilst the role at Peel Youth Services provided incredible experience, I was very aware of the need to provide greater support to assist women's growth and empowerment."

In 2018, Tanya met the New Zealand Team 'Safe Man Safe Family' and Irene Lydon who was their Perth visit Co-Ordinator.

Tanya said: "Irene is a Maori woman and a Social Worker with the Department of Child Protection (DCP). We realized very soon we shared the passion "to create a Holistic organization where women could access a combination of counselling, therapies, case management, advocacy, welfare and more – to help them heal their trauma and take back their personal power".

Tanya and Irene made the decision to create "Safe Woman Safe Family W.A." as a Not for Profit Charity Organization.

Both women approached the Shire of Murray in Pinjarra and were provided a house to run and organize the 'Safe Woman Safe Family.' She said: "We were fortunate enough to commence the works required to transform it."

Tanya transitioned out of her role at Peel Youth Services, recognizing the need for a 'Full-Time' Co-Ordinator for the renovation, the work being done, plus managing and assembling the team of Volunteers and the many varied aspects involved in creating a 'Women's Centre'.

It was a brave initiative as "this meant losing my full-time wage and becoming a Full-Time Volunteer until the organization could gain sponsorship or significant funding to pay a wage," says Tanya.

Tanya believe in hope and her passion for helping women who were in despair.

On 23 April 2019, they organised an 'Opening Event' of the 'Safe Woman Safe Family Murray Centre'.

During this time, Tanya had collated a team of 20 women willing to help at the Centre, she directed this Centre for the next 3 years, operating it as a Drop-In Centre open Monday to Friday 9.00am to 4.00pm providing a "holistic hub model" of wrap around supports (advocacy and welfare assistance), Counselling, Therapies (i.e.: Yoga, Meditation, Art, Kinesiology, Massage) and the unique "15 Week Trauma Recovery and Empowerment-Program'.

Everything on offer was a daily gold-coin donation to ensure 'cost' was not a barrier for any woman to access the amazing services and therapies. The Centre also offered TAFE and University students opportunities for placement and to experience what other women go through daily.

The 'Safe Woman Safe Family 15 Week / 10 Module Trauma Recovery and Empowerment Program'

For women who had been impacted by family and domestic violence (FDV) and all forms of abuse related trauma. Tanya shared: "Irene and I designed the concept. I developed it to entirety and over the next 3 years, ran 6 rounds which changed the lives of approximately 100 women who took

part- I received funding from Alcoa of Australia to run."



The program had a Psycho-Educational approach and incorporated: understanding trauma, exploring 'ACES', 'Attachment', 'Family Patterns'- to allow women to gain a greater understanding of aspects of their childhood in relation to their lives.

It also taught: understanding aspects of the 'Domestic Violence Wheel', Power and Control, Patriarchy and Social constraints of Gender Inequality; Setting Boundaries; understanding Red Flags; Healthy versus Unhealthy Relationship; Assertive Communication; Dispute Resolution; Holistic Well-being and Self Care; with a constant focus on raising Self-Esteem and building community connections.

In 2020 ,an independent Evaluation Report called: "Breaking The Cycle of Violence" was conducted which provides exemplary evidence that every woman who completed the program – gained positive benefits in every area of their lives.

Many had continued on their path of learning and enrolled in study, volunteering or working. All of them showed significant improvement in their mental health, capacity to communicate effectively, enhanced parenting capacity and most importantly free from the 'cycle of violence'.

Tanya says: "I created another program called "Keeping Us Safe" – an 'Early Intervention – Gender based violence and sexual assault prevention program' we ran in the local Pinjarra High School – which was funded by WA Police-approximately 300 teen girls took part and the outcomes were amazing. I also ran similar for Women which I combined with a Karate instructor teaching 'Empowerment Self- Defence."



By the end of 2021, the Safe Woman Safe Family (SWSF) Centre assisted over 250 women and made enormous impacts in creating awareness in the community and broader afield through its Social Media campaign. The issues of Gender Based Violence and promoting the need to create safer community for girls and women.



However, as the SWSF Centre still had received no financial support - and Tanya was working predominantly as a Volunteer Centre manager, the sad decision was made to close the Centre and wind-down the charity.

In 2021, Tanya created 2 new initiatives – the launching of 'Consultancy Business' – "[I Am Woman Empowerment Programs](#)" which offers 'Empowerment Life Coaching' plus a range of supports and programs for women.

In addition, many of the women who were in the SWSF Team along with Tanya have created a community initiative "HEARTSPACE Women's Support Group" – that provides a safe space for women to meet every week at the 'Pinjarra Community Garden'. Women have access to these support groups, therapies, group activities and self-care for just a 'gold coin donation'.

Almost 150 women have connected already this year and the group is fulfilling its mission and vision of overcoming issues of 'Social Isolation' as well as connecting women with trauma to affordable support, Self-Care Activities and Healing Therapies.

Tanya remains committed to continuing her personal mission of:

- supporting and empowering women to overcome the hardships that are created in their lives due to gender based violence and gender inequality
- enhancing women's rights and encourage their opportunities for growth and leadership
- Promoting acceptance of all forms of diversity whilst breaking down barriers for equity to resources
- Opportunities and a good healthy life.

Tanya continues to lead a life of supporting, nurturing, striving and helping women.

www.iamwomanempowerment.com



Awards achieved

2022 - Tanya Langford is the winner for the United Nations Day Award, in the category of Gender Equality, United Nations Association of Australia based in WA (UNAAWA).

2020 – Tanya was awarded 'The Shire of Murray Australia Day Community Citizen of the Year Award'.

Hand Up, Not Hand Out: "Sweat" Equity to Home Ownership

Perth, Australia

By Dr Renée Ralph, 2022



PERTH, Western Australia (WA) - This morning international and local students from Curtin University studying the core unit, Culture, Communications and Indigenous Perspectives in Business (CCIB) had a yarn at the Foundation of Indigenous Sustainable Health (FISH), with volunteers Charlotte from Scotland, Sinead, a First Nations team member, including Hazel, an 86 year old volunteer and Anna Hay, Executive Support to Mark Anderson.

FISH is a registered charity aim to help First Nations to lead a sustainable and fruitful life. Anna shares that giving and helping means ensuring that First Nations individuals are adequately supported and are provided homes to live in.

Through the help of organisations, government and donations, 11

hectares of land have been bought in Bindjareb Region of South West WA. Anna says: "It gives them dignity and pride. We are helping by lifting their beings, not just handouts. We subscribe to the core values of what we do and pay close attention to collaboration consensus. In this sense, the support is systemic, not just offering finance."

FISH has developed achievable initiatives to encourage First Nation Peoples to be part of this project. The concept of "sweat equity" where the potential new home owners, have a part in their home construction and design. They labour with the trade specialists and that instils a sense of belonging and identity.



It is an amazing process where FISH is helping the First Nation Peoples to own their home and it is co-designed by Indigenous Peoples and signed by

Indigenous Elders. It is believed that this process will help "shift mountains" for the individual internally and externally.



With this community being built, Mark Anderson has commenced bringing interested groups to provide with an educational tour including the six seasons, flora and fauna. There's also our dark Australian story to share about the massacre that occurred nearby.



FISH - Housing Project Initiative

There is an urgent need for safe, secure, appropriate and affordable housing for First Nations people as a fundamental building block for families moving out of poverty.

The rate of home ownership of First Nations Australians is almost half that of non-Indigenous Australians, reflecting a legacy of intergenerational disadvantage. FISH works with First Nations people to break intergenerational cycles of poverty that cause homelessness and housing insecurity. (See FISH's publication on Indigenous housing, in Sustainability Journal, [here](#), and our TEDx UWA talk, [here](#)).



First Nations people co-design and co-build their homes.

- Open and transparent selection process.
- Sustainable and renewable design principles.
- Training and employment of First Nations people and their businesses.

- Mentoring in financial literacy and management.
- Removing barriers to access home loans (through working with IBA, major banks and Government).
- Securing blocks of land at no cost or below commercial value.

FISH first piloted this concept in the remote East Kimberley with Bawoorrooga community; through the successful co-design and co-build of their beautiful, culturally and climatically-designed earth house, here.

FISH is now working with young Bindjareb woman, Jedda Salmon, and her family to build her home in the Bindjareb Region of South West WA. Jedda's ancestors walked this land for thousands of years.

"I can't believe I will finally see my home that I designed rise up out of the ground. My Dad and I can't wait to help as we do our 200 hours of sweat equity to be actually part of building my home." Jedda Salmon

Jedda has co-designed her home with FISH's architect and partners, and will be completing 200 hours of work in the construction as 'sweat equity'. This is the first generation of Jedda's family that will not live in social housing. FISH also provides financial literacy support prior to, and following, the purchase of the house and land, which covers:

- Weekly, monthly and yearly budgeting.

- Building up a deposit.
- Mortgages and costs of home ownership.
- Repayment schedules and interests.
- Understanding compound interest.
- This is the second of 50 homes planned for the next five to eight years as part of FISH's Aboriginal Home Ownership Initiative.

FISH is honoured to be delivering these projects in partnership with the following Aboriginal-owned companies in the construction industry:

- Tjuart Architects;
- Kardan Construction;
- Wilco Electrical;
- SML Painting Solutions.

Feedback from students - Daniel, Alex, Jeremy, Shuo, Alanah, Eden, Charlie, Josh

"It is really good to see that FISH collaborate with Indigenous Peoples to work towards home ownership. Usually, it is only the white blokes that are involved and the Aboriginal individuals have no say in the process. This is good to see."

"I didn't realise that such an organisation as FISH exist. It is so good to be able to relate what we learnt from the CCIB unit and see this Aboriginal economy in practice."

"It is such a good initiative. I have put my name down to volunteer for FISH where I can."

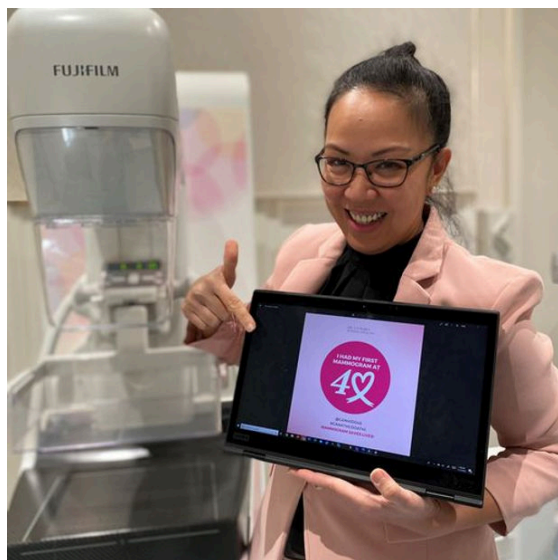
The students bought some merchandise such as key chains, socks and books created and produced by Aboriginals. It was a lovely morning having a cuppa, discovering culture, understanding humanity and yarning.



What is the Good News About Breast Cancer Disease?

Perth, Australia

by Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito, Founding Member, 2022



COTTESLOE, WA - In Australia, more people are surviving breast cancer than ever before. According to Cancer Council, Australia has one of the best breast cancer survival rates in the world. The five-year breast cancer survival rate for women with breast cancer is 91%. Thanks to advancements made through clinical trials, research, advanced treatments, preventions, and screening techniques are available now.

My mission is to educate women so that breast cancer can be diagnosed at an early stage, stage zero or one before it gets to stage three or four. As you know, the number of people diagnosed with breast cancer is increasing. Like me, I am directly and indirectly affected by breast cancer. I have relatives and

friends who were diagnosed with breast cancer. I'm sure, there are a lot of people in our community who have been diagnosed with breast cancer or who knows someone who died of breast cancer.



FACT: Breast Cancer is the most diagnosed form of cancer in Australian woman

According to Breast Cancer Network Australia:

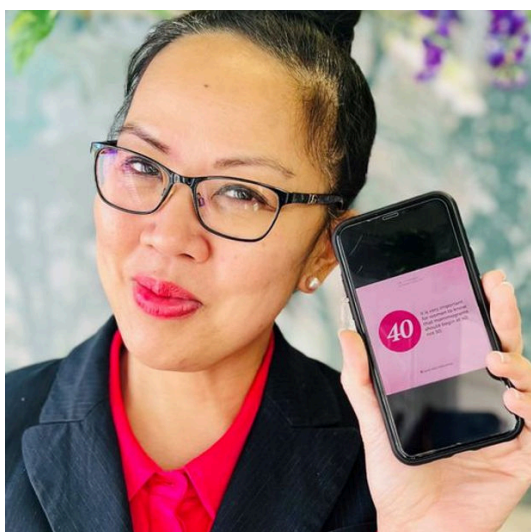
- 1 in 7 women and 1 in 555 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime.
- Approximately 57 Australians are diagnosed every day.
- In 2022, it is predicted that 20,428 women and 212 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer which is approximately 20,640 Australians will be diagnosed with breast cancer.
- In 2022, it is estimated that 3,178 women and 36 men will die from breast cancer which is approximately

3,200 Australians will pass away from breast cancer.

- On average, 9 Australians die every day from breast cancer.

In Western Australia, early detection and improved treatments have led nine in every ten women diagnosed with breast cancer to have survived the disease. The number of people being diagnosed with breast cancer in Australia is increasing. On the contrary, the number of breast cancer deaths is decreasing. This is very important and great news and very significant for us because we are seeing a reduced number of deaths.

Knowing that breast cancer exists is not enough. There is a lot of breast cancer awareness, like Dr Google, the internet, breast cancer survivor advocacy groups, social media and in our community, and there is *October Breast Cancer Awareness Month*. But knowing is not enough, we need to be proactive with our health... to be in charge of our breast health so we can live a better and healthy future.



Why early breast cancer detection is important?

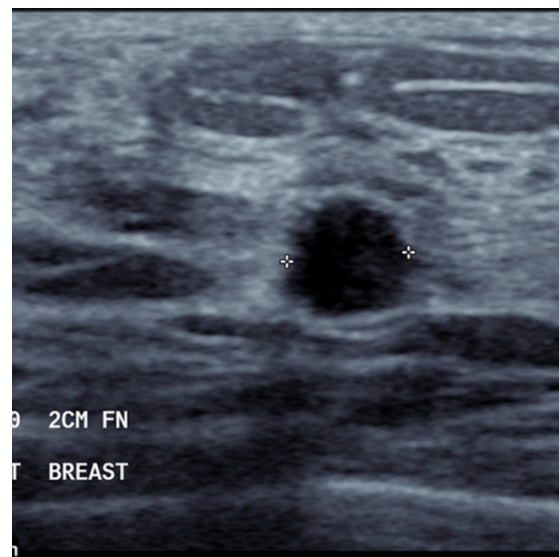
The best time to treat breast cancer is when it is still very small. Early detection of breast cancer will improve your chance of surviving the disease and there will be less extensive treatment and cost.

What are the early signs and symptoms of breast cancer?

Most people have no signs or symptoms of breast cancer.

Early detection is done by imaging: a Mammogram, breast ultrasound, or both.

A woman diagnosed with breast cancer has a better chance of surviving the disease if detected early.



This is an example of a tiny breast lump found incidentally during her supplementary ultrasound scans. She has no signs and symptoms. This lump was not palpable by her doctor and by me. This lump was not seen in her

routine screening mammogram. It only measured approximately 6 mm in size. This lump can grow to a significant size undetected if she was not having her regular mammogram and breast ultrasound scans.

The goal of screening is to detect and diagnose breast cancer as early as 5 mm or less in size and before it can grow to a size where one can start to feel, before the lump may occupy almost the entire breast or before it can spread to the lymph glands or lymph nodes in the armpit. And the last thing we don't want to happen is for the disease to spread into the other parts of the body like the lungs, liver, bones, or brain.



This is an example of an advanced stage left breast in a 50-year-old woman who was referred by her doctor. This is her first mammogram. Her left breast is completely occupied by this tumour (A). There was already skin thickening, nipple, and skin retraction. Her cancer on the

ultrasound measured almost 8 centimetres in size, almost occupying her entire left breast (B).

Women mustn't wait for a change, a lump, or symptoms in their breasts. Get checked even if you don't feel anything. Preventive medicine is the key to your breast health. Breast cancer awareness should not be only in October Breast Cancer Awareness Month, it should be all year round. AWARENESS is not enough; it is time to act and prioritise your mammogram appointment in your calendar.

Traditionally, a mammogram screening is every 2 years in a woman without symptoms. However, annual screening mammograms are recommended if one has a significant family history of breast cancer and other risk factors for breast cancer or needs to be screened under 40 if one has breast symptoms. I encourage women not to wait until they are 50 years old to get a mammogram.

I had my first mammogram at 40. Women need to know that mammograms should begin at 40, not 50!

You are overdue if you are in your 40s and have never had a mammogram or breast ultrasound. You are long overdue if you are 50 and above and never had a mammogram. Screening must start at 40.

In Australia, women from 40 years and over can have a free mammogram

every 2 years, and women aged 50 to 74 are actively invited to screen.

BreastScreen Australia Program

Do you have lumpy breasts, me too! It is still important to do your regular Self-Breast Check

In doing your monthly self-breast check, for example, on the 1st day of the month, please do not look for any lumps and bumps. Looking for any lump in your breasts and armpits, especially if you do this every day, will drive you mad and insane. Please do not do that.

My expert advice is to know your normal lumps and bumps. A woman's breasts are expected to be lumpy and bumpy normally anyway, especially if you belong to a younger age group and if you have a low or normal body mass index (BMI).

Remember, your breasts are comprised of fats and glandular breast tissue. Fat is soft while glandular breast tissue is firm or lumpier compared to fats. Every day and depending on your menstrual cycle, your breasts change, maybe lumpy bumpy which fluctuates depending on your hormones. This can often cause undue anxiety and stress to some women.

If you are unsure or may have breast lumps or symptoms, do not delay booking your appointment with your doctor.

The good thing about sunscreen is that **EVERYONE** needs it

Amy Raveendrakumar

Perth, Australia

by Alexander Circosta, 2023



Photo : Amy with her son

In the throes of Leederville's cultural hub I found her. By the window of the chocolaterie a friendly, youthful face, a woman with an effortless cool who could just as easily be found in a villa in the Hamptons.

I wasn't sure what to expect when a colleague asked me to meet her friend, but I was intrigued, for on this particular Wednesday I met Amy Raveendrakumar (nee Found) and she has made a sunscreen with a difference.

'I have always been a jump in the deep end and then swim for your life kind of person'

Amy is the architect behind emerging skincare brand 'Found My Skin' an ethically sourced and environmentally conscious locally manufactured product. I sat inquisitively, was this simply another side hustle in the never-ending trend of internet entrepreneurs dipping their toe into the deluge of the absolutely lucrative billion dollar skincare industry or was this perhaps something else.



Amy and her Father John Found.

So why Sunscreen?

'Long summers, tan lines, burnt skin, aging faces, losing a friend to melanoma at 39, my inspiring parents, our dying oceans ecosystem, reducing single use plastic and the next generation' sounds like a reason to me.

As someone who has taken care of their own skin I have rarely taken notice of the greater socio-environmental implications of my purchases at Mecca, Sephora or Priceline.

Of course I don't want products tested on animals, but to hear about *Amy's environmental and personal*

consciousness which underpins her business decisions an authenticity was readily apparent and she evidently and thankfully lacked a *get rich* quick mentality.

How did Amy come up with the name? 'Well, Found My Skin is a nod to... mentorship in my dad but also a metaphor for loving the skin you are in.'

With social media democratising the accessibility individuals have to market their product there is now so much more opportunity, however this is coupled with an ever increasing over saturation making it hard to connect your product to its core audience.

Authenticity and purpose driven values are key to standing apart, the eponymous point of difference, and to my pleasant surprise Amy has both in spades.

Found is my maiden name, given to me by my dad. I was born in Perth "Amy Found", daughter of formulation chemist John Found. Leanne Preston married John Found and found great success in the development of cult natural products 'Quit Nits' and 'Wild Child' leading also to the construction of the only TGA approved clean room (an engineered space which maintains a low concentration of airborne particles of course!) in Western Australia.

'And I probably underestimated it before diving in head first. But the good

thing about sunscreen is that EVERYONE needs it.'

Found My Skin has however blended that distress buy with a product that is a little more considered and a little more luxurious. By using ingredients like Kakadu Plum, Vitamin E, Coconut Oil, Iron oxides and Zinc oxides they have crafted a product that serves a beauty need in a very purposeful way.

Well I'm inspired, Have you found your skin?



Amy's 4 Tips For budding entrepreneurs

1 - JUST DO IT! Look, I'm not going to lie. There have been sleepless nights and an enormous financial investment. So, my advice is, risk as much as you can so that you are uncomfortable enough to make sure it works (without becoming homeless over it) ... AKA jump in so deep that you have no option but to swim vigorously but not so deep that you might actually drown.

2 - "IF YOU TREAT IT like a side hustle, that's where it will stay" she told me in

order to make it work, I'd have to throw absolutely everything I've got at it. Quit your job (or take a bit of leave at least) back yourself and go for it.

3 - ASK FOR HELP when you need it but don't rely on anyone too much at the end of the day it's your risk and your gain. Help comes along in the most surprising ways and generosity comes in many forms.

4 - THERE WILL BE DAYS you feel like you can't do it and then the very next day an angel appears and all the stars align.

<https://foundmyskin.com>

United Nations Human Rights Winner

John Aciek

Winner, United Nations Human Rights
Perth, Australia

by Dr Renée Ralph, 2022



Photo : John Aciek (left) with Dr. Craig Challen OAM - our very own Australian 007 who saved the Thai boys in the cave.

Photo credit : Dr Renée Ralph

PERTH, Western Australia - Recent UN Human Rights Winner, John Akuot Aciek is currently serving as the President of the South Sudanese Community Association in Western Australia. He was elected in September 2017 and has served his community with integrity, championing unity and harmony in the community. John has a Bachelor of Commerce (Economics) from Curtin University and an MBA with specialisation in Project Management from Edith Cowan University.

Despite working full time and a family to care for, John always finds time to attend to the problems his community members are facing.

John volunteers for the community and provides support in many ways such as attending to family issues related to Child Protection by advocating for the needs of individuals and families.

John's heart for the community has seen him take on many voluntary roles in various capacities including:

- Served as the Community Advisory Council for St. John of God Midland Public and Private Hospital from 2015 to 2017
- Served as a Member of Advisory Council for Sudanese Affairs for the Anglican Church, Diocese of Perth from 2012 to 2017
- A School Board Member for St. Helena Catholic Primary School from 2013 to 2016.
- A Community Advisory Representative for the City of Swan in the Ellenbrook community area from 2014 to 2016
- A coach in the local football clubs for under 7 and 9 from 2016 to 2018 John has also presented and written community position papers on a range of issues impacting migrant communities in Australia. He has written to government and service providers on matters such as the restructuring of the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), African perceptions of mental health, migrant experiences in Australia and other post settlement

programs impacting new migrants in WA and Australia wide.

Working closely with WA Police

He works closely with the WA Police as part of the African Community Leaders Advisory Group to the Commissioner. In this capacity, as President of the SSCAWA, John represents the interests of South Sudanese people at the WA Police engagement level, ensuring challenges experienced by community members are addressed in the most culturally responsive and sensitive manner.

Supporting the Youth

John has a big heart for the youth and he supports disengaged young people in prison (e.g., such as attending courts and prison visits), and providing mentorship and linking to community and psychosocial support services.

This is guided by a firm belief that young people are the foundation and future of any community, and he consistently advocates for the needs of children at risk through the Child Protection system. In his endeavours, John successfully advocated for nineteen (19) children that were taken into the custody of Child Protection.

Culturally responsive initiatives

Through his efforts, he managed support the Department in seeking culturally responsive approaches, and had all children put in the care of the next of kin, ensuring a child-safe and culturally sensitive response to the needs of children and their families.

Youth employment opportunities

John uses his networks to connect young people employment or trade qualification opportunities. In 2019, under his leadership, the South Sudanese community were able to host an employment expo and invited employers from Goldfields – Esperance and the Wheatbelt. It was a magnificent event attended by over eighty young people. Through this event, nineteen young people secured employment.



Photo credit : Dr Renée Ralph

He strongly believes that encouraging youth to find their purpose in life and to work hard to reach their full potential is a key part of community leadership and he takes the role with great commitment.

From 2019 to 2021, John established two a volunteer teams (Health

Committee and (Social Services Committee) made up of community members to provide a culturally responsive response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Health Committee provided vital information in a range of formats to reach all community members, helping to counter miss information. The Social Services Committee assisted by providing the much needed support for isolated and vulnerable individuals and families during lockdown.

His voluntary efforts to assist the WA Health efforts as part of the community response where recently acknowledged by the Governor of Western Australia, His Excellency Honourable Chris Dawson. This list are as follows:

- **Community parenting programs** – securing funding and community volunteers to run a range of parenting programs in five different languages (Dinka, Bari, Nuer, Pajulu and Arabic) to address identified community needs. These parenting programs are developed from the Circle of Security model and adapted to be culturally relevant to parents raising multilingual children in Perth.
- John has provided leadership of programs that respond to the needs of community including driver education assistance (linking with driving instructors that are multilingual to assist community members who do not speak English), setting up volunteer run services that assist people prepare

and sit for the Australian citizenship test, ensuring that people who would otherwise be disadvantaged due to language barriers are able to obtain citizenship.

The **South Sudanese community** is among one of the most diverse community groups in WA. John has built a good working relationship with South Sudanese sub-ethnic groups. As a champion for unity and harmony, this is a key aspect of leadership in a South Sudanese context. He is a great leader and has worked extremely hard to establish good working relationship with other African communities, especially through the Organisation of African Communities (OAC) WA where John volunteers as Committee head.

Unity of African community in WA

John always advocates for the unity and interests of the African community in Western Australia. His desire is a strong and vibrant African community that will represent and attend to the interests of its people.



Photo credit : Dr Renée Ralph

Inclusiveness and diversity

John's passion for a more inclusive WA community is reflected in broader interests such as his employment with Ngala as a Community Development Officer. He has used his knowledge and experience to serve the community development sector in a more culturally sensitive manner, ensuring the needs and interests of culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) communities are well represented.

John has been a champion for human rights and justice since the day he arrived in Australia. He has and continues to volunteer for a range of causes for the benefit of the community. His efforts help contribute to a range of SDG's including Goals 1 No Poverty, Goal 3 Good health and wellbeing, Goal 4 Quality education, Goal 8 Decent work and economic growth and Goal 10 reduced inequalities.

John has been advocating for the Australian 101 booklet or tool kits to be produced to aid new migrants in better understanding Australian way of life and culture.

In recognition of his volunteering efforts, John was the Award winner of the Community Pillar of the Year 2022 at the WA Community Awards hosted by the Organisation of African Communities (OAC).

Congratulations John - a well-deserved recognition for all the hard work, effort and heart in what you do.

Living My Very Best Life in Challenging Times!

Christina Chia

Contributing Member

Melbourne, Australia, 2023



Christina speaking at the Australian Council of Multicultural Entrepreneurs (ACME) 10th Anniversary celebration, 22 Nov 2022

Dear Reader,

It was a memorable night of re-connection, community embrace, and celebration when I delivered a keynote speech at the Australian Council of Multicultural Entrepreneurs (ACME) 10th Anniversary celebration "Living My Very Best Life as We Lead in Constant Changing and Uncertain Times" last year. It was based on my own personal experience, as a business leader during the pandemic.

When I was asked to speak, I did some research - read the objectives, the vision and I truly loved what it stood for. An organisation with the primary mission to encourage small business entrepreneurs from multicultural backgrounds to form an effective advocacy network. Encompassing what it means to be a community and creating new links in Australia's globalised business landscape.

ACME is a forward thinking organisation, a values-based company established on inclusive and collaborative leadership. It is exciting to see a group of multicultural entrepreneurs coming together, building a connection with mainstream Australian businesses to create opportunities for each other.

This is progressive thinking, and something which truly resonates with my story and how I took conscious steps to embrace multiculturalism as a key component of what I do.



Australian Council of Multicultural Entrepreneurs (ACME) 10th Anniversary celebration.

Post-COVID, we observe the implicit flow on effects - tight labour supply, staff shortages, rising inflation, rising costs of living as well as global political instability.

This makes us wonder and think how are we going to lead, survive and thrive?

Let's hold on to this.

Work, Education and Giving Back to Community

Currently, I am the Chief Operating Officer of a national education business and it is rare in the earlier years in Australia to see a Malaysian Chinese female in Senior Management and a role in Executive Leadership.

I believe in life-long learning and have completed a business degree and pursued a Masters of Business Administration. I am loving and living my very best life, creating opportunities, supporting the value of diversity, championing equality and fairness.

It is truly a joy supporting community, assisting others to embrace a life of inclusivity and empowerment. I am on several Not-for-Profit Boards and was recently awarded the Victorian Multicultural Commission Honour Roll, recognising the decades of work in this sphere.

Vicissitudes in Life

What you don't know about me is that - I married my first husband which

ended in divorce, after the birth of my two wonderful daughters. As a single parent, I made the decision to move to Melbourne with very little money and low job prospects with my two young girls under the ages of five years old.

When I was hired as a senior executive, the Chief Executive Officer congratulated me and said: "You got the job but I need to let the board and others know that you are Asian."

I was not given the managerial role I applied for but was given the "second in command" role with feedback that being an Asian migrant would not be consistent with the organisation's branding.

I also had to contend with a recruiter who suggested I should not take a 'big role' as I was a mother of two young children.

I was given projects deemed as "female centric" by my bosses, such as public relations, business development and fundraising - the "soft and lightweight" ones, whilst "the boys manage the 'heavy' ones, such as mergers and acquisitions, IT and finance."

The list goes on and on!

I tell you my story, because all my experiences over the past 20 years have shaped me to be the leader I am today.

Be Authentic

Leadership emanates from the depths of who we are. You need to bring the best of who you are and play to your strengths. I have now been in senior leadership roles for over 20 years, and in that time, I have learnt that **authenticity** goes a really long way.

Think first about a leader that you have always admired from a distance, but never known personally. Has their life had any real impact on the way you live every day?

Then, think about a person who has really influenced you — your ways of being, your values, your life goals — and I bet, it is someone that you know well, someone that has let you know them as a real human being – that person is most impactful to you.

So the story is, if you have any plans to truly influence people, especially in leading an organisation in a multicultural workplace, you need to let people know YOU. Be Authentic - be true to yourself, and allow others to know who you really are.

It has worked for me as I managed to retain over 80% of my staff during the most challenging time of my career. Remember, that one third of the economy is trust! You need to build that by being an authentic leader!



North Shore Coaching College

Lead with your heart and know your 'True North'

This is one of my favourite leadership values, especially when we are leading in an ongoing crisis and in an environment of constant change.

Have you heard of Bill George's concept of True North?

- Authentic leaders are driven by a moral and ethical purpose.
- They never lose sight of their core values and principles.
- They lead with their hearts, cultivate long-term relationships, and demonstrate excellence through self-discipline.

True North is your orientation point, your fixed point when there are uncertainties in your workplace; it helps you stay on track as a leader. True North is your internal compass,

unique to you, representing who you are at your deepest level.

I remembered in March 2020 when our Premier announced a state wide lockdown. Boy, it was one of the toughest situations I have ever encountered in my career! We had a lot of uncertainty, We had to shut our operations almost overnight. Hundreds of staff had to be stood down or repositioned. There were emotions of heightened fear and anger, **and to be honest - I DID NOT HAVE the answers!**

So what did I do? I did what I do best – I walked my talk and led with my heart. *"I rolled up my sleeves and wore my heart on them"* as they say.

Listen - really listen, with all your heart despite the fact, you don't have the answers at the moment. Remember, sometimes it's not the words that you use, it is how you make them feel!

Give them time – especially when you don't have it. They will notice – especially in crisis mode.

Keep your commitments – I could not provide further reassurance, but I did what I could do to continue communications regularly. That was what I promised. And I DID just that!

Show appreciation, respect, encouragement and empowerment - This is particularly relevant in multicultural leadership teams. You need to make the effort to ensure your

organisation recognises and respects cultural differences. Have continuous professional and personal reflection on the sensitivities and communicate to ensure your staff feel valued and included!

Circle of Abundance

Living my very best life as I lead, is about service through 'giving' —which I call leading with the 'Circle of Abundance.'

When you **serve and give**, you are making a positive impact to those around you. That person, who receives your goodness and kindness, will naturally feel good. When they feel good, those around them will feel it – the ripple effect of what you did, will flow to your community.



I have always believed in the 'Circle of Abundance' and I am very happy to see

that much of the community already are living and walking the talk. Taking action, connecting, sharing your joy and goodness with your people. Through community and connection, the Australian Council of Multicultural Entrepreneurs are already embracing the 'Circle of Abundance.'

1. Influence only happens when you are known. Be authentic – Know your True North.
2. Build Trust! Lead with your heart – especially in multicultural teams.
3. You need to recognise and respect cultural differences and sensitivities to ensure your staff feel valued and included!
3. Lead with the 'Circle of Abundance'

And back to my story...

I remarried, to my dearest soul mate, Roger, I succeeded in educating both my girls and I've learnt that all my experiences have shaped me. I am not limited by my trauma and failure in the past. I've learnt that "it's not what you succeed in doing but what you do to succeed."



Christina Chia with husband, Roger

Distinguished reader, before I go, I would like to share with you one of my favourite mantras:

“What is possible for the world is possible for me” and remember that this applies to you too!

I wish you all the best in leading and living your very best life!

Much Gratitude,
Christina.

Am I living a scripted life?

Alexander Circosta

Pioneer Member

Perth, Australia, 2023

PERTH, Western Australia - In conversation with some colleagues, discussing the usual trivial things like how there are so many Marvel movies or the absurdity of a hot cross bun in January, I found myself taking pause and realizing that perhaps I no longer had a single original thought.

How Existential!



Alexander backstage before his comedy performance.

Like scripted lines from some 90's sitcom I was espousing a never ending cyclic diatribe about the same things I always talked about every year. Never mind it was time to order my coffee.

"Nice weather today"

"Nice to see you"

"Cappuccino please"



Alexander for Frank & Amp; Fritz Eyewear Collection

Oh no it happened again! Quick to dismiss this as simply small talk, justifying that maybe it was actually nice weather, actually nice to see someone and I actually like cappuccinos did little to soothe my existential dread.

"What!?! Christmas decorations...earlier and earlier" – What an original thought!

Perhaps in my efforts to not conform to societies expectations of getting a conventional job and then living a life where I say things like "Thank God it's Friday!" or "Friyay" I had failed to acknowledge that just because I was refusing to play the game did not mean my token wouldn't move around the board.

For you see dear reader, in Monopoly even if I never purchase a single

property, I am still moving the Top Hat (My go-to-token, it feels classy) through all the motions including the free parking, community chests and chances.



Alexander delivering his TEDx Talk at UWA.

Beyonce sings a song called Irreplaceable (stay with me dear reader, I was listening to it while writing, there is a point)

At a live concert in 2011, she instructed the crowd to sing with her, the song is all about being taken for granted. The audience was quick to embody the role of the slighted lover like Beyonce, yet how many were quick to acknowledge that maybe they took people for granted, maybe we are not Beyonce in the song, maybe we are both or maybe it doesn't matter.

So, I decided it was time to ditch the script.

When people asked me if the flowers I was carrying through the shopping centre were for them, I looked them straight in the eyes and said: "Yes." When people asked me how are you? I say the truth: "Insecure and riddled

with anxiety" and then when people say "hot cross buns in January"

I quickly respond: "Can you believe we are still seeing the repercussions of the 1975 constitutional crisis when the two houses of parliament were dissolved over the liberal party blocking supply to Gough Whitlam?"

Now you may think that my actions are simply contrarian and I agree, but the next time you go through a check out at Woolworths and the cashier says: "Would you like a bag?" and you say: "I'm well thanks."

"Take heed, my dear reader, because perhaps you may be living a scripted life".

"Be here, be now and Beyonce".



At Telethon 7 weekend, we raised \$71.4 million in 2022 - I am honoured to be part of a worthy cause for children.

Peripheral Vision, what do we not see?

Singapore

by Alrick Dorett, 2023

TOKYO, Japan - Japan is one of my favourite countries and I just love everything about it, except the fact that I wish I had a better command of the language.



Tokyo's Green Cab Fender or Wing mirrors

I was in Tokyo, Japan recently for work and I had some time to myself.

It is a very unique country and for a long time I always wondered about the Fender mirrors or wing mirrors (I actually had to find out what they

called). Why fender or wing mirrors? Fender mirrors are used to increase driver visibility and reduce blind spots. They also help with navigating narrow streets and busy roads: which is why they are so popular with drivers in Japan.

"If you look too narrowly at things, you'll miss the big picture." - Cassandra Clare That got me thinking, about our vision with our eyes.

In my previous article, [Port and Starboard](#), I talked about having a personal vision.

But for this article, I would like to talk about "beyond our vision".

Peripheral vision is your side vision, the ability to see things outside of your direct line of sight. You use peripheral vision when you see something out of the corner of your eye.

"The peripheral vision is all around us, but it takes a conscious effort to recognize and make use of it." - Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

This part of the visual field is seen through the edges of the eyes and is often described as being less detailed and less focused than the central area of vision. The ability to perceive motion and detect objects in the periphery is important for many activities such as driving, sports, and navigating in crowded environments. In the context of self-improvement, peripheral vision can be a useful metaphor for expanding one's perspective and

seeing beyond one's immediate vision or focus. Often, we become so fixated on our goals or problems that we lose sight of the bigger picture and miss out on opportunities or solutions that are just outside of our direct line of sight.

"The more you widen your view, the more you'll learn to see what's truly important." - Mark Manson

By developing our ability to use and trust our peripheral vision, we can train ourselves to be more aware of our surroundings, to pick up on subtle cues and changes, and to be more adaptable and creative in our thinking.

This can be especially valuable in situations where we feel stuck or limited, as it can help us to break out of our mental ruts and approach problems from a new angle. For example, if someone is trying to improve their career prospects, they may be focused on acquiring new skills or certifications. However, by using their peripheral vision, they may also be able to identify less obvious opportunities, such as building relationships with influential people in their industry or exploring a new niche that is emerging in their field.

"When we learn to see beyond our immediate vision, we gain new perspective and understanding." - Karen Salmansohn

Similarly, in personal relationships, peripheral vision can help us to pick up on subtle changes in a person's mood

or behaviour, which can help us to be more empathetic and supportive. It can also help us to be more aware of our own biases and blind spots, which can improve our communication and conflict resolution skills.

An adaptable mindset is one that is able to adjust to new circumstances, learn from experience, and approach challenges with a flexible and open attitude. It is a mindset that is characterised by curiosity, resilience, and a willingness to take risks and try new things. In the context of peripheral vision and self-improvement, having an adaptable mindset means being able to see beyond our immediate goals or challenges, and being open to new opportunities or approaches that may not have been initially apparent.

It means being willing to take risks and try new things, even if they are outside of our comfort zone or require us to learn new skills. Having an adaptable mindset can be especially valuable in today's fast-paced and rapidly changing world, where new technologies, industries, and ways of working are constantly emerging.

Those who are able to adapt and learn quickly are often the most successful, both in their personal and professional lives.

In order to develop an adaptable mindset, it is important to cultivate certain habits and skills, such as:

- Being open to feedback and willing to learn from mistakes

- Being willing to take on new challenges and try new things
- Being comfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity
- Being able to think creatively and outside of the box
- Being able to collaborate and communicate effectively with others
- Being able to manage stress and maintain a positive attitude in the face of challenges

"In the periphery of our vision lies a wealth of information that can guide us towards new insights and opportunities." - Shakti Gawain

By developing these habits and skills, we can become more adaptable, resilient, and effective in our pursuit of personal and professional growth.

Overall, developing our peripheral vision can be a valuable tool for self-improvement, as it allows us to see beyond our immediate goals and challenges and to approach life with a more open and adaptable mindset.

Reflections on a Meaningful Quote Found on My Late Father's Phone

Singapore

by Alrick Dorett, 2023



The quote by Keanu Reeves - sent by Alrick's mum to his dad's phone.

SINGAPORE - Finding Resilience and Comfort in the Midst of Grief - Reflections on a Meaningful Quote Found on My Late Father's Phone. My Dad passed away on 17th June 2020, 11 days shy of my 49th birthday.

My Mum just gave me his iPhone 8 to wipe in February 2023. I took the phone and left it a couple of days, before charging it up and looking through the phone.

I looked at the pictures he had taken on his last days leading to his death, and I found this dated 6th June. I am not sure who sent it to him or how he got it.

"Resilience is very different than being numb. Resilience means you experience, you feel, you fail, you hurt.

You fall. But, you keep going." - Yasmin Mogahed

I knew that he was in pain and cancer had spread throughout his body and he was in a hospice then. I have tears in my eyes now as I write this because every time I see it I realise how much pain he must have suffered.

My Mum had sent it to him.

It's possible that my Dad found comfort in this quote, and that it helped him to keep going during his final days.

It's also touching to know that your mum sent the picture to him.

Even though I may never know exactly how he came across it, it's clear that he held onto it and found it meaningful enough to keep on his phone until the end.

The quote in the picture is a reminder that even in the midst of our struggles, we can find strength and comfort in the knowledge that we are being tested, and that there may be a purpose to our suffering that we cannot yet see.

"The human capacity for burden is like bamboo - far more flexible than you'd ever believe at first glance." - Jodi Picoult

This may be a test of our resilience, our ability to adapt to change, or our capacity for compassion and empathy. In the midst of these trials, it can be easy to feel as though we are alone and that there is no reason or purpose to our suffering.

However, the quote also suggests that there may be a deeper purpose to our struggles that we cannot yet see. This might mean that our difficulties are preparing us for something greater, or that they are helping us to grow and develop in ways that we would not have otherwise.

"Resilience is very different than being numb. Resilience means you experience, you feel, you fail, you hurt. You fall. But, you keep going." Yasmin Mogahed

It's important to remember that even though we may not understand why we are going through a particular challenge, there may be a reason for it that will become clear over time.

The idea that we are being tested can also be a source of strength and comfort during difficult times. If we can view our struggles as an opportunity to learn and grow, we may be more likely to find meaning and purpose in them. This can help us to stay motivated and resilient, even in the face of adversity.

"Believe in yourself and all that you are. Know that there is something inside you that is greater than any obstacle." Christian D. Larson

Ultimately, the quote in the picture is a reminder that even in the midst of our struggles, there is still hope and possibility. We may not be able to see the purpose or meaning of our suffering right away, but if we can stay open to the idea that there is a reason for it, we may be able to find strength

and comfort in the face of our challenges.

"Don't watch the clock; do what it does. Keep going." Sam Levenson

#bereavement #grief #loss #hope
#strength #comfort #resilience
#coping #support #mentalhealth
#positivity #purpose #testing
#adversity #struggle #growth
#mindfulness #selfcare #healing
#love #remembering #memories
#family #emotions #therapy

The Music That Moves Us

Perth, Australia

by Dr Renée Ralph, 2023



MOUNT LAWLEY - Fifi Mondello, Founding Member, The Brilliant Foundation, Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) artists and Indigenous musicians raised over \$1,000 for Foundation of Indigenous Sustainable Health (FISH) in partnership with Dominique and Liam Rae, owners of Local & Aesthetic. In the heart of giving, Dominique and Liam waived the venue fee hire after seeing the talented performers sang their songs and played their original composition. All funds raised will be donated to FISH.

Mark Anderson, CEO, FISH believes that when you connect the Kaart (head), Koort (heart) and the Wirn (spirit) then people are moved. We begin to see the world slightly differently and deepen our sense of what is important in life.

This was evident yesterday at the inaugural event "The Music that Moves Us", showcasing budding musicians, First Nations and WAAPA artists

emceed and hosted by Fifi Mondello, Founding Member, The Brilliant Foundation.



Mark Anderson, CEO, FISH

Where we spent time celebrating music that moves us and talking about the importance of building community as together we walk shoulder to shoulder softly upon this land.

People, old and young and from different backgrounds, came together to share time to celebrate music that moves us and the stories that sit behind the music. There were even international tourists visiting who enjoyed the excellent musical event.

We celebrated community and once again committed ourselves to walk together to bring positive lasting change for our community where all people feel heard, valued and

honoured as we strive to make this world a better place for all.



Dominique Rae, Owner of Local & Aesthetic in Mount Lawley believes in supporting local businesses, community and First Nations.



Right to Left : Gypsy Williams and Zoe Bizzaca, High School students performing in public for the first time with their original composition "Hear Me Out".

High school student Gypsy Williams, an Indigenous musician with her friend, Zoe Bizzaca composed a new song "Hear Me Out" for The Music That Moves Us. It was the first time the duo performed in public and were excited

to sing and play for the us. Gypsy thanked her mother, Polly Wilson for all the support given to her – the love, inspiration and for making a life better for her family and siblings. Gypsy said: "Dreams do come true if you believe and work for it."



Fifi Mondello, Founding Member, The Brilliant Foundation singing with Scott Demalotte playing the electric guitar

Next Fifi introduced Scott who played his original music titled "Submerge". In true artist form, Scott gave the title of his composition on his way driving to the event in his car. It was an ethereal piece, soothing, calm and moved us to another dimension.

Rachael Coltrona a WAAPA singer and keyboard player sang Day Dream, Hallelujah and If I Ain't Got You – she enjoyed performing and felt really nervous too. Rachael was really happy

to be part of this event, coming together to support such a great cause.



Singer and pianist Rachael Coltrana

Alanah Linn a WAAPA graduate played and sang her three original pieces The End, Happy Birthday and Routines. She is currently studying Bachelor of Arts at Curtin University. She shared that WAAPA encouraged the music students to create their own pieces of work and she has found that the entire experience and journey encouraging.



Polly Wilson, Manager and Artist, FISH with Rachael Coltrana, WAAPA musician



Alanah Linn, WAAPA Graduate and Curtin University student



From Left to Right : Alanah Linn, WAAPA musician with Curtin undergraduates, Jasmine Chow and Charlie Chhum.

We revel and thank the wonderful musicians who shared their hearts and spirit with those present. We would also like to thank Alexander Circosta and Rachael Coltrana who took the

extra initiative to film, produce and edit the video clips for The Music That Moves Us. Madeleine Antoine who shared and supported the event on her social media.

Behind the scenes, we thank the students who volunteered their afternoon to help with guest arrivals and walk-in ticket sales. Over 70 individuals within the brilliant community came to support The Music That Moves Us.

The music event ended with a Raffle ticket Draw – a photograph taken by international photographer, David Renni valued at \$1,5000. The lucky winner, Ros G walked away with the prize.

More gorgeous snaps of the day:



Dr Amy Wei Tian, Founding Member, The Brilliant Foundation



Gypsy and Zoe, playing their original composition



Scotte Demalotte, WAAPA musician playing his own composition





Curtin International Student, Shuo Tan from China enjoyed the music very much and was motivated to play music again. He completed the Culture, Communications, Indigenous Perspectives in Business (CCIB) unit in collaboration with Centre of Aboriginal Studies (CAS) in Semester 1, 2022.



David Rennie, International photographer - his art piece for a Raffle Ticket draw valued at \$1,500.



Recent Curtin University Human Resources graduate Rose Pigga shared that the music played was really excellent, she came with her partner.



Video clip produced by Alexander Circosta



Background preparation and rehearsals





Rachael with Polly Wilson producing a video clip



Bridging the Gap

Perth, Australia

by Dr Renée Ralph, 2023

CITY BEACH, Western Australia – Associate Professor Jane Coffey, People Culture Organisation, Curtin University with industry professionals Kirsty Anderson, Heritage Specialist (Operations), Roy Hill, David Gribble, Former CEO, Constable Care and Louella Paramor, People and Performance Manager, Telethon Kids Institute volunteered their time on Thursday 11 May to share their life stories and their career development with university undergraduates and guests. The Brilliant Foundation Sundowner was held at Hamptons City Beach overlooking the Indian Ocean with the setting the sun.



From Left to Right : Louella, Renée, Jane, Kirsty and David - volunteering their time and sharing their life experiences with the students and youth.

Question and Answer

Renée asked the first guest speaker, Associate Professor Jane Coffey: *“What made you decide to be a teacher and lecturer? What there a career plan and life design when you decided to do so?”*



Associate Professor Jane Coffey, People Culture Organisation, Curtin University

Jane shared she completed a Bachelor of Commerce degree and had no idea what she wanted to do. She started her own company Jane Coffey & Associates for 15 years and she said that she remembered that she was asked to be a guest speaker on a topic and was extremely nervous. However, when she did it, she realised that she loved it.

Jane found a niche initially in sessional work as a tutor for several years before embarking a Doctor of Philosophy (PHD) in Human Resource Management, Industrial Relations and Performance Management at Curtin University. She shared that sessional work provided her the flexibility to bring up her child and be at home for her whilst pursuing her academic career. She loved her role teaching and being with students. Her role evolved from Deputy Head, Curtin

University of Technology to Academic Director, Senior Lecturer and was promoted to Associate Professor in 2021. She has been with Curtin University for 17 years.

Jane is instrumental in designing and developing the core unit Strategic Career Design with her team 3 years ago. It has an annual enrolment of 2,000-3,000 students. She said some of the activities that the students have completed in tutorials such as the Compass Activity, Inheritance Factors and Odyssey Plans were developed by the Life Design Team at Stanford University.

She hopes that this unit will give the current generation the life skills to navigate through today's fourth industrial revolution and complex gig economy. More importantly, to have the adaptive mindset and resilience to manage life's challenges in a purposeful way.

Renée asked the second speaker, Kirsty: *"What degree did you do? Have you always been in the cultural heritage role? Why do you find it fulfilling? Was there a career plan and life design when you decided to do so?"*

Kirsty responded that she had no clue what she wanted to do in her career. She shared that she completed Bachelor of Arts (B.A), Archaeology and Classical History at The University of Western Australia.



Kirsty Anderson, Heritage Specialist (Operations), Roy Hill

She achieved a First Class Honours Degree in Archaeology; her thesis research focused on the proposed stylistic chronologies for the rock art of the Kimberley region in northwest, Western Australia.

Currently, she is working as a Heritage Cultural Specialist at Roy Hill, entering into the commercial space. Kirsty is also completing her Masters of Business Administration with the Graduate School of Business, Curtin University.

Previously she worked at Yamatji Maripa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC) over 5 years overseeing a team of six heritage professionals providing heritage management solutions to twelve native title claim groups and Aboriginal Corporations in the Yamatji and Pilbara regions of Western

Australia. She started as a Heritage Officer at YMAC and was promoted to Heritage Manager and Director of Projects during her time there.

She graduated as a mature age student at the age of 29 and she was competing with the rest of the recent and fresh graduates. She was apprehensive in job applications and interviews, and she realised that she had a unique value proposition (UVP) within herself that no one had.

The self-belief and positive mindset gave her the confidence to pursue what she loved in her life. Her passion to help and support Indigenous communities that are vulnerable and marginalised.

Renée asked the third speaker, David Gribble: *“What made you decide to work for a not-for-profit as a former CEO for the past 12 years? Why in this space? What's your greatest passion? Was there a career plan and life design when you decided to do so?”*

David shared: “Believe it or not, I graduated to become a librarian. I realised very quickly that I didn't want to be in a librarian in a library. So the answer is no, I didn't have a plan for my career.”

However, he became a Chief Librarian in CBM International to manage the delivery of an Australia-wide audio book and braille library production and distribution service.



David Gribble, Former CEO, Constable Care Foundation

At VisAbility, he was there for over 16 years, employed as Chief Librarian for 10 years providing professional library and change management services for a government-funded specialist library service for people with vision impairments, including introducing WA's first automated braille production facilities.

He was promoted to Manager to lead the inhouse ICT Management, government-funded SkillCentre vocational training operations, high-turnover assistive technology commercial sales, and a disability job readiness and placement service.

David has been a CEO and senior executive in the not-for-profit sector in WA for over 35 years. With a background across health, disability, ageing, community services and arts.

He started as the Board Chair for Advocare Incorporated; General Manager for Alzheimer's Australia WA Ltd; Board Chair of Indigo; WA Proctor of Australian Mensa; Deputy Chair, MBA and Executive Education Advisory Panel; Board Member of WestCycle; Chief Executive Officer of Constable Care Foundation; and Non-Executive Committee Member, Curtin Business School Alumni Association.

As a CEO who recently retired, David is currently undertaking a Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) at Curtin University that explores opportunities for immersive vineyard experiences within the WA wine tourism industry. He is also a sessional academic delivering Business Ethics and Managing Change tutorial sessions for 3rd year undergraduate students for Semester One 2023.

David said: "When one door closes, another definitely opens for you in life. When that opportunity arises, you have to rise to the challenge and take it. I really enjoy teaching the students at Curtin and I look forward to each tutorial session."

Renée asked the fourth speaker, Louella Paramor: *"Have you always been in the HR role? Why do you find it fulfilling? Was there a career plan and life design when you decided to do so?"*

Louella shared: "As you can see with the previous speakers, we really didn't plan our career. No one really did. I completed my Bachelor of Commerce,

majoring in Marketing initially and went on to complete my Human Resources Management and Services at The University of Notre Dame Australia."



Louella Paramor, People and Performance Manager, Telethon Kids Institute

Louella worked a Senior HR Officer at University of Notre Dame for over 3 years and went to Town of Claremont as a HR Advisor for 5 years. Currently, she works at Telethon Kids Institute as People and Performance Manager overseeing a team of 6.

Advice for Students Applying for Jobs and Interview

Louella said it is important to be prepared when you front up for an interview. So many times when she has asked the applicant: "What do you know of Telethon Kids Institute and what do we do?" They are dumbfounded or flabbergasted and

it's evident they do not know the answer."

Louella posed the question: "Why apply for an organisation and not research what they do? It is important that you do so – as it shows that you understand the role that you have applied for and whether you are the right fit for the team."

She advised that it is also important to try different generalist roles in your early career before specialising.

Ethics and Integrity

Kirsty said that when she looks for the right candidate who has ethics and integrity, that is paramount to her. "You can have the qualifications, however, the way you conduct yourself and the way your shine through your values – is what I am looking for my team."

When the sharing session ended, the students chatted one-to-one with the guest speakers and took the time to connect and socialised.

Feedback from students:

"As a mature age student myself, it gave me confidence that I will be alright when I graduate."

"It assured me that life is going to be okay. I do not know what to expect when I graduate in HR and hearing the speakers today, I realise that even if we do not know what life will bring – as long as we give it a go, I will be fine."

"I can't believe that David has retired, was a CEO for several years...and is now pursuing his Doctorate."

"I am going to start applying for internships, and if I get paid internships, even better."

"Now that I have graduated and got a job, I pay for all my bills, rent and car. It is a great feeling to be able to do so without my parents' financial help."

"I feel as if I need to do something more in the volunteering space. To give back somehow."

"The last sundowner I came was really good with too. Tonight's event is just as good. It is so worthwhile that I encouraged my friends at uni to come along. We learnt a lot."

For the university students that attended this sundowner – Thank You so much for coming! All of you inspire me every day to do better!

Remember that these amazing individuals are no different to you and I.

They are Resilient. Diligent. Hardworking. Focussed. Passionate.

They find meaning in what they do every day.

Ordinary individuals, doing extraordinary things – in their roles, they seek to work on initiatives and

projects that have value to make life lighter, more enjoyable and liveable.

True grit to do better, overcoming adversity and challenges through hard work, positive action and self-awareness.

Not the fake news that we see every day in social media, sensational news, reality TV or influencers touting wares.

They have continued their personal development and life-long learning through education.

They have done the hard yards to lead a fulfilling life. You can do the same.

So please start getting organised.

Make a Plan.

Read your academic journal articles. *(do not roll your eyeballs at this stage)*
Do your research.

Update your Endnote.

Attend your lectures face-to-face and attend ALL your tutorials.

Find your friends and your tribe.
Maintain Your Friendships.

*Acknowledgement of Thanks:
Associate Professor Jane Coffey, Kristy Anderson, David Gribble, Louella Paramor for volunteering their time, kindness, support and faith in this initiative. It has been a wonderful and*

meaningful experience for the students.

The Brilliant Foundation Sundowner is a complimentary event, organised and hosted by *Dr Renée Ralph, Co-Founder, The Brilliant Foundation. This initiative has been running for the past 3 years now.*

This event is supported and made possible by Founding Members, Fifi Mondello, Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito, Associate Professor Amy Wei Tian and Alexander Circosta, Communications Lead, Rachael Coltrona, WAAPA musician and brilliant member who brought her sound equipment and microphones; and Josh Galvin for helping with packing up the equipment.



Matt, Jasmine, myself and Sam



Oliver, Sam, Nigel, Raven



A/P Jane Coffey, Curtin University



Sharing life experiences with our academic and industry professionals



Kirsty Anderson and I.





The Brilliant Foundation Team : Rachael Coltrona, Fifi Mondello, Founding Member with Alexander Circosta, Communications Lead.



Oliver, Sam, Raven, Nigel with AVP Jane Coffey - Strategic Career Design students all ready for the Career Passport Module Assignment :)



Great ambassadors of Curtin University - international graduate Marion Harel from Mauritius with Andy Wu, international student in HR from Singapore.



Charlie, Felicity, Jasmine, Taya and Victoria



Strategic Career Design students with Jane Coffey.



Marion and Louella.



Felicity, Charlie, Sayuru, Zhou, Nigel, Sam, Oliver, Raven



Strategic Rewards and Performance Management Students in Sem 2, 2022 and Building A Sustainable Workforce in Sem 1, 2023. Lovely to see you all Charlie, Sayuru and Zhou.



Associate Professor Jane Coffey with HR students it.



So good to see you Marion - thank you for coming after work



Dr Aparna and I.



Thank you Dr Aparna for your autographed book Forget Me Not - looking forward to reading



My gorgeous HR students Khusbu, Kaavya and Frances



The Power to Rise Above - co-authored by Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito to empower females who kindly donated the books to this sundowner

Women Leading the Way: Inspiring Stories of Resilience and Success

Perth, Australia

by Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito, 2023



PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA - I am delighted to share with you my latest project, Women Leading the Way. As one of The Brilliant Foundation's founding members, I am grateful for the opportunity to co-author this inspiring anthology. Collaborating with other accomplished women is an honour to bring their stories of resilience and success to life.

My chapter, titled "Pursuit of Passion Through Perseverance and Pride," highlights my journey towards becoming a successful breast radiologist and leader. I share my struggles, triumphs, and the lessons I learned along the way. Through this chapter, I hope to inspire and empower readers to pursue their passions with perseverance and pride.

I am deeply grateful and honoured to be a part of Women Leading the Way and to have the opportunity to share my story with readers. I believe that by sharing our experiences and insights, we can learn from each other and create a more inclusive and supportive world for all.

I cannot express how much joy and fulfilment I have derived from working on this project. I hope that the stories and insights shared in this book will inspire and uplift women everywhere, and encourage them to pursue their dreams with passion and perseverance. In today's world, it is essential to have strong female role models who can inspire and empower other women to take their place in the world. The Women Leading the Way book aims to highlight the importance of women's leadership and the positive impact it can have on society. It offers readers a collection of diverse perspectives and experiences from women who have excelled across a range of fields and industries.

My chapter in the book focuses on self-leadership, which means taking charge of your own life and pursuing your passions with perseverance and pride. As a mother and a radiologist, I understand the challenges of balancing a demanding career with personal and family life. That is why I am passionate about promoting physical and spiritual well-being and speaking enthusiastically on self-care, self-compassion, resilience, and overcoming difficulties.

As a leader who has faced and overcome challenges, I empathize with those who struggle with taking the first steps towards leadership. Nonetheless, I firmly believe that with the appropriate mindset, resources, and encouragement, anyone can overcome obstacles and attain their goals. To aid others in their pursuit of success, I have developed a nine-step framework that guides achieving self-leadership and inspiring individuals to pursue their dreams.

The 9-step framework is designed to empower young and emerging leaders to take control of their lives and make a positive impact on the world. It emphasizes the importance of self-love, personal and professional development, empathy, and having a clear plan of action. By following these steps, anyone can become a successful leader and inspire others to do the same.

As a breast radiologist and co-author of *Women Leading the Way*, I am proud to be part of a book encouraging and empowering women to step into leadership roles. The book provides practical advice and tools for success, highlighting the importance of women's leadership.

I firmly believe that self-leadership is the key to creating a fulfilling life and inspiring others to do the same. That is why I encourage young and emerging leaders to take the time to work on themselves, cultivate self-love, and celebrate their victories along the way.

By following the 9-step framework, you can become a leader not only in your own life but in your community as well. If you have a dream of changing the world, inspiring others, or making a difference, don't let fear and self-doubt hold you back. Instead, embrace the courage to follow your dreams and take action towards becoming the best version of yourself. Remember, your unique talents and gifts are needed in the world, and it is up to you to unleash your full potential and lead the way.

I hope that my chapter, along with the inspiring stories of other women in the book, will serve as a source of motivation and inspiration for young and emerging leaders. With resilience, courage, and confidence, anyone can overcome obstacles and create a path towards a fulfilling life.



You can visit <https://wcvpress.com/women-leading-the-way/> to learn more about *Women Leading the Way* and get inspired by the incredible stories of women who have overcome adversity and achieved great success.

澳洲游学之旅

written by 谭烁 Tan Shuo, Brilliant Member,
The Brilliant Foundation

From CHINA to Perth, Adelaide, Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne 大家好，我是谭烁，目前是澳大利亚科廷大学和东北财经大学的一名大四学生。我出生于四川成都，我的家乡位于中国西部内陆紧邻青藏高原，天气好时能在市区看到远处高耸的雪山。家乡丰富的景色资源使我从小养成了不拘泥于现实和热爱探索的性格，并立志读万卷书，行万里路。



抱考拉 (Carrying A Koala)

从高中起我就离开我长大的城市，在他乡三年苦读终于考上了位于美丽滨海城

市大连的东北财经大学，也同时获得了最后学年前往科廷深造的机会。

在来澳洲之前，我一直担心各种问题，比如我的英语交流能力、疫情还有种族歧视。但是我对未来的期待抵消了我对未知的恐惧，三年里我不断与我的外国朋友练习口语，甚至模拟了我可能遭遇歧视的场景，为接下来的旅程做好了准备。随着海关工作人员的一句‘Have a nice day’开启了我的澳洲生活。

最开始的两周我还在努力适应这里的生活节奏。我搬进了学生宿舍并结识了来自世界各地的室友，与中国大学生的宿舍不同这里有充足的私人空间和共享厨房，闹钟也很准时，嗯，我是说屋外的乌鸦总是在凌晨把我叫醒生态环境可以说是极好。其他所有还能适应，唯有吃饭是现在还让我闹心的事，中餐太贵还不正宗，西餐也无从下口，只有尝试自己做饭，其他方面没怎么进步厨艺倒是涨了一大截。

科廷大学的各种事物让我耳目一新，现代化的教学楼和学习环境让我有了一股拼命学习的狠劲。数量繁多的体育场也让我感叹澳洲学校浓厚的体育氛围。教学模式也与中国迥然不同，在中国我们有固定的班级和老师，但是在这里你得尝试周璇于不同的教师和认识不同的人。这也使我在校园里没交到什么朋友，但是我仍有可以依赖的中国同学和老师。在此我非常感谢 Dr.Renee 她在

课堂中帮助了我很多，并且邀请我参加各种活动，让我更深入了解到了这片神奇土地上的人文风情。

第一学期过得有惊无险，我通过了所有考试包括最难的 Company Law。同时我也自学考过了雅思取得了不错的成绩，还收到了 Australian National University (ANU) 的录取通知书。完成重要的事情后澳洲的旅程才正式开始。

第一站，我和其他中国同学租了一辆大巴前往珀斯北部的沙漠，沿途的风景使我终生难忘。我们沿着海岸边行驶，左手是一望无际的碧蓝大洋，而右手边是一马平川的金色麦田。微风吹过田野形成麦浪与波涛汹涌的大海遥相辉映，是不是还有袋鼠和鸸鹋在路边奔跑。我们第一晚在布满星空下的海滩过夜，我感到前所未有的平静，如同我在老家的雪山上一样。随后的几天我们在 Lancelin 体验了沙滩越野，深入沙漠腹地探寻自然之窗，在 Pinnacles 探索天然石林。这次旅行如梦如幻，每当我回看当时的照片，我任然有一种身临其境的感觉。

除了珀斯周边，在同学的邀请下我也随之开启了 2023 年的第一次旅行。这次我来到了南澳大利亚的首府阿德莱德，与珀斯相比，阿德莱德小而精致，充满了人文气息。当然最令我印象深刻的还是 Cleland Wildlife Park 的动物们。与其他传统动物园不同，这里的大部分动物没有笼子和护栏，你可以直接与他们

互动感受人与自然的零距离接触，我也完成了我人生清单中的重要一项，那就是抱考拉。

最近一次旅程是我四月份进行的东部大学巡游之旅，我和我的同学将在不同的学校深造，所以在参观我们未来学校的同时我们也有机会简略参观悉尼、堪培拉和墨尔本。悉尼的规模是其他城市不可比拟的，我感觉我回到了中国的一个城市，肉眼可见这里的华人数量规模之巨，中餐馆鳞次栉比。我们以极快的速度参观了悉尼歌剧院，海洋馆以及充满古老历史气息的悉尼大学。虽然我只在那里待了 3 天，但是我能感受到悉尼活跃的氛围，四处充满机遇。堪培拉给我的印象不像一个首都，跟像是悉尼郊外的小镇。

我极其喜爱从悉尼到堪培拉的火车线路，穿过草原和山丘瞬间让我想起来高中的上学路，那时我也是做高铁上学，沿途也会看到山丘与田野让人身心愉悦。肯能因为是过节的缘故，我们在堪培拉看到的兔子比人还多，不过确实是搞学术研究的好地方。

最后一站是墨尔本，刚下飞机厚重的人文气息以及冰冷的雨水就扑面而来，我不得不在雨中漫步于墨尔本市中心的高楼大厦之间，这座城市给我的初印象是阴冷，忧郁以及透着一丝高贵。充满历史感的建筑无不向我们诉说着这座城市丰富的故事，同时黝黑的写字楼也透露出这里对于南半球经济的重要性。忧郁

不适应这里的天气，我很快得了感冒不得不提早结束旅行。不过以后有的是机会再次参观，能在墨尔本或悉尼工作也是我的愿望。

除了旅程我还想简短分享我的实习经历，通过科廷大学的介绍我顺利通过面试来到珀斯一家名为 ABN group 的公司做会计助理。刚开始我非常紧张，因为我一直认为我的知识基础不扎实，况且我是一名外国人，我不清楚我是否能在工作上交流。但是我还是勇敢的卖出了第一步。我不后悔这一决定，经理和同事也都非常照顾我，犯错时也耐心指导，这种对实习生的态度难能可贵。在此期间我也学到了比书本还要多的知识，也惊叹于自己能够在异国他乡融入工作环境。

最后我想谈谈我未来的打算，经过这一年的生活和学习，我坚定了在澳洲闯出一番事业的目标。我将前往 ANU 学习计算机，拓展新的领域，并能找到一份正式的工作。当然旅行也必不可少，我期待探索完澳大利亚的每一处角落，结交新的朋友，这一年唯一不足的便是认识的朋友太少，在性格方面我还是要克服自己的恐惧，参加更多活动，发展更多的爱好去锻炼自己。

在此我要感谢所有在学习中和工作中给予我帮助的人。我会继续改进自己，不虚此行。

最后附上一些照片：



我坐在自然之窗



我在 Moore River



悉尼歌剧院和跨海大桥

Belissima Voce

Rachael Coltrona

Contributing Member

Perth, Australia

by Dr Renée Ralph, 2023

PERTH, Western Australia - WOOHOO! [#WAAPA](#) artist and [#Floreat](#) musician [Rachael Coltrona](#) recently launched her music video clip "Complicated" earlier this week. In her voice, Rachael shares her journey how she wrote the lyrics, sang and created the music video "Complicated."

Please support this fabulous young individual carving her career in the music industry. Watch her video below:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=np3rcFdBD2w>

I loved your cover of 'You Don't Own Me' that you sang with a band in English and Italian? How long did it take you to record that song? What was the driver or reason for you to do that?

It took quite a few sessions to get my cover of You Don't Own Me. The first session was mostly about getting the Band in (a local Perth Band called the Memphis Rockers) and lay down the track of Piano, Bass, Guitar, Drums and Saxophone, which we recorded in one session.

We then did a full take of all the instruments and vocals except synths and saxophone, which were added in later, to get the tempo and placement of it.



[You Don't Own Me Video Clip](#)

We then added in the saxophone on top, and the synths in a following session. Once we had the instrumentals, I went back four more times to perfect the vocals as well as

mix the track, picking the best tracks from each instrumental and vocal take.

You Don't Own Me is a classic prelude song of female empowerment. I'd seen the Memphis Rockers do a cover of it, and I loved how they performed it. Having been covered by a lot of artists before, I wanted to put my own creative spin on the track and intertwine two languages, as well as pay homage to my Italian heritage. Leslie Gore had done two versions in both languages, so I decided to combine them in my own way.

Was it the catalyst for you to create Complicated? What is Complicated about?

The catalyst came from a personal experience with someone who was flirting with the idea of keeping me around while not really committing to anything. Kind of going nowhere fast, but I was not wanting to accept it. Relationships are complicated after all!

Complicated is about a song about being in a situationship (a romantic or sexual relationship that is not considered to be formal or established) and about releasing and maintaining control of your situation, before completely falling for someone who you know is not right for you.



How was the process? Is it a single? An Album? An original?

Complicated is my first debut single of my original music, the first of many in the pipeline!

The process of writing it took a long time. I started writing some chords and lyrics based on what I had been journaling into notes on my phone.

Once I had solid chords and lyrics, I brought it to my vocal teacher and we workshopped it over quite a few lessons, until we were happy with it. From there we created a demo of piano and vocals, again that took quite a few 3 hour sessions to get all the vocal takes and harmonies right.

Once we had edited and put it together, I took the demo to Jeremy Smith at Lab Six. I compiled some reference tracks of what I wanted the track to sound like,

and started to add in instruments. We went through a lot of different sounds on a Roland Juno, added in bass, guitar and claps and that took 5-6 sessions.

From there we decided to take things out to make it less 'complicated' and went into mixing and mastering the track. This full process took over 18 months from the song being written to releasing the final version.

How long did you take to do the video clip? Did you choose the other artist in the film? How did it come about?

The music video took just over 3 months, including planning, shooting, and editing to get to the final result. I contacted Jess Wharehinga to work with her and her team and started brainstorming what creative vision I had.

For the song we came up with a story line for the video, a lot which was arose from available locations, and then organised shoot locations, props, costume and talent.

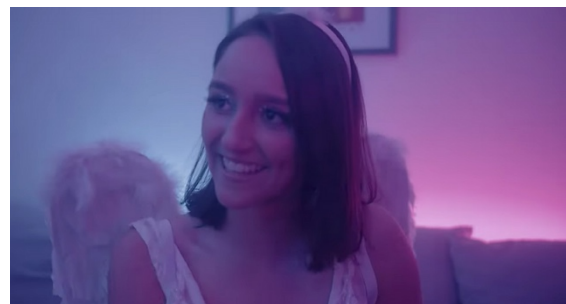
I'm very lucky to have a lot of friends who work in the arts industry so I was able to cast them as the starring and extra roles. We did the shooting over 2 days with 4 different locations.

What do you hope to achieve?
To continue writing music that people enjoy and hopefully go on to tour and do live headline shows of my own with a band and creative team.



Why Singing? How does it make you feel?

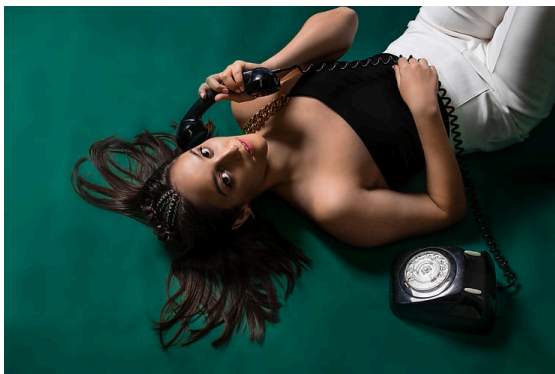
I just love the way I'm able to express myself as a person and creatively, I feel a such a strong emotional connection when I am singing with myself and the people listening. It's an art form. I've put in a lot of time and effort into because it's something I love, I don't know what I would do if I couldn't sing!



Is it tough to break into the arts industry or entertainment market?

I do think it's an enormous challenge, and you really need to believe in yourself, your creative work and your performance skills but like anything, if you work hard enough, have a supportive network and put investment into your career (whatever that looks like).

I believe you can make it. It is a massive industry, filled with so many opportunities if you are willing and open to give things a go and work smart about marketing and utilise your skill set for others or create your own work. I also believe you get to decide what success looks like for you.



What are your plans for the future?
I've got more single release in the pipeline, and I'm currently writing an *EP which I'm excitedly working on, to have a whole new body of work that is cohesive. I would love to tour which is thrilling. I want to continue to perform both live and go on recording new tracks.

**An EP stands for Extended Play and is a musical recording that contains more tracks than a single but fewer than an album.*

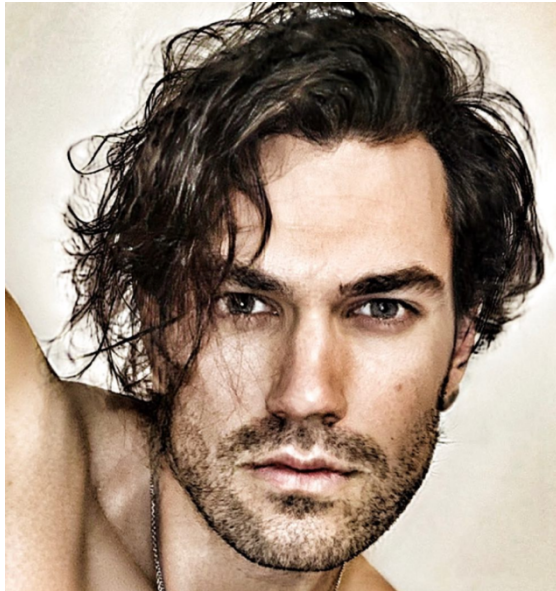
Facts:

1. *Did you know that Hugh Jackman is a WAAPA graduate just like Rachael Coltrona?* Hugh Jackman was offered a role on the popular soap opera Neighbours but turned it down to attend the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) of Edith Cowan University in Perth, Western Australia, from which he graduated in 1994.
2. The Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) has been home to the likes of iconic Aussie performers including Hugh Jackman, Tim Minchin, Lisa McCune, Meg Mac, and Eddie Perfect.
3. The new Aussie Icon is Rachael Coltrona from Perth, Western Australia.

The Only Time We Do Not Swim Is When There's Lightning!

Alexander Circosta

Pioneer Member, Perth, Australia, 2023



The goal was set in February 2019, I had mentioned to a friend of mine that I could not swim, like not even floating, and having swam his entire life he graciously offered to teach me. I decided I would learn to swim so that in February 2020 exactly one year later I would swim the Busselton Jetty. In exchange for his tutelage and having worked briefly as a personal trainer myself I offered to train him in the gym in return.

We trained early every morning before work sometimes four times a week and I quickly learnt how an early start is made all the more begrudgingly when you know someone is waiting for you. We started with the basics from floating and kicking to arm technique and breathing, I assure you learning to

swim as an adult is no easy feat and requires a discipline and dedicated practice.

Of all the time it took, one training session really stands out for me, allow me to set the scene. It was a stormy morning with extremely heavy rains and strong winds, I had already acclimatised to jumping into an outdoor unheated pool but today's challenge was different somehow.

I was apprehensive I had never swam in a storm (not rain, a proper storm!) so as we approached the water I looked to my friend and said: "Do we have to train today Coach?" A fair question I thought given the worsening conditions.

He said something offhandedly, something which resonated and was oddly profound "The only time we do not swim is when there's lightning". Despite looking to the skies as if beckoning them to light up, there was no lightning to be seen on this day.

I felt very reluctant but he proceeded to say: "You do not have to train today if you don't want to" and I thought the session was over and we could have our coffee, a ritual that often ended our joint gym and swim sessions.

However, he then went on to say something more telling he said: "I would be disappointed if you didn't train today."

Now these words, these words had weight, they carried the feeling that in that moment he wanted my goal more than I did. I had said I wanted to learn to swim and here was my test, how much did I really want to learn, how much did I really want to swim the Busselton Jetty.

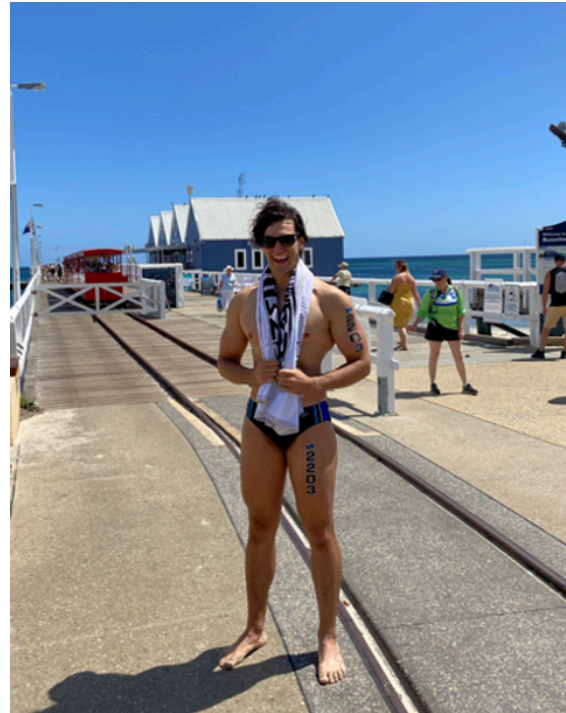
I tell people all the time in my corporate workshops that they must step out of their comfort zone to grow and here was me out of my comfort zone ready to give up at the first sign of bad weather.

The thought of disappointing someone who believes in you is visceral and without another thought I jumped into the water and we trained through the bad weather. I learnt quickly that when you are already in the water the storm has no bearing on you at all.

Our perceived threats are just that, a manifestation of fear attempting to hold us back, a narrative we spin to protect ourselves from pushing beyond a limit no matter how small. I realised that only lightning is truly dangerous, only true danger should stop you, not perceived danger as it's simply not real and it can't truly hurt you.

One year later, I had accomplished my goal and got out of the water after swimming the Busselton Jetty. However on reflection the memory and the lesson that resonates with me till this day is encapsulated completely in that one phrase from that stormy day.

'The only time we do not swim is when there's lightning.'



February 2020 having just swam the Busselton Jetty!

My 5 Quick Tips

1. Always remember 'Nothing Changes if Nothing Changes'
2. Set a goal, make it specific and make it measurable.
3. Be consistent, you only must do one step at a time however incremental that step may be.
4. Have a friend keep you accountable and you them in return.
5. Go outside your comfort zone, not your capabilities.

Why Personal Branding?

Perth, Australia

By Alba Gomez, 2021



People often think they don't have a personal brand or it doesn't matter if they don't have one.

But the truth is that we all have a personal brand. Whether you are in business for yourself, work in the corporate world or for any business. I like to define personal brand as what people think of when they hear your name.

It means identifying and communicating what makes you unique, relevant, and compelling so that you can reach your goals. Personal branding means using who you are to get what you want from life.

Personal Branding enhances your self-awareness. When you go through the Personal Branding process, you develop incredible self-understanding about what makes you unique, valuable, and powerful. It helps you optimize and flaunt your strengths. It requires you to be crystal clear on what you want to achieve and helps you set goals to get there.

Once you know what is unique and compelling about you, you can use that information to create visibility/presence to those people who will help you achieve your goals.

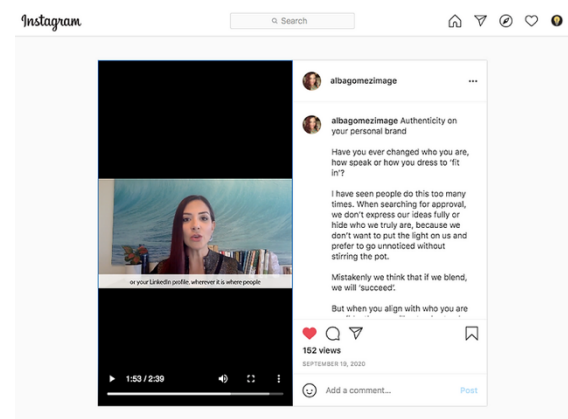


Photo : **Alba Gomez on video** : **Authenticity on your Personal Brand**

Personal Branding will help you differentiate yourself from everyone else who has your job title or who say they are in the same business as you. Because there is only one of you, but you need to become great at communicating that. It creates wealth. Strong brands charge a premium for their products and services, and differentiated job seekers who know their value can command higher salaries.

Personal branding is very powerful because it sends a clear, consistent message about who you are and what you have to offer. A strong authentic personal brand helps you become known for what you're good at, sets you apart from everyone else, and can position you as a niche expert.

How to get started in the personal branding process? I recommend you reflect in the following 5 areas:



Photo : *Alba Gomez presenting on Studio 10*

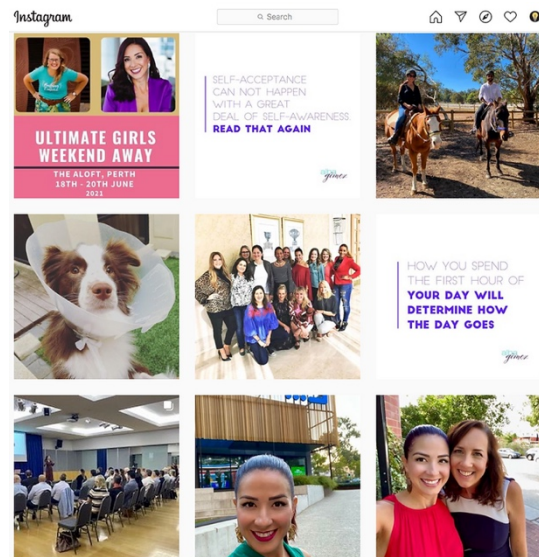
1. Your brand essence. Who are you? What makes you, you? The first step to creating your personal brand is reconnecting with who you are and actually getting to know and understand yourself completely.

We all think we know who we are, but from my experience when I ask people to define themselves without the labels or roles they hold, most people fail to do so.

Your self-image will determine the level of success you achieve in life, so no better way to start this process than by getting to know you at a deeper level.

2. Your presence. Your presence is the energy you create when you walk into a room. It will determine if people like you or not and it will affect the results you get in life and business. Your presence and your body language do most of the 'talking' when you first meet someone.

Over 55% of the impressions we make are created through our body language. When your body language is not aligned with your words, you run the risk of not getting your message across.



3. Powerful impressions. Looking good is important. Not only because people will make assumptions about your capabilities and attention to detail based on what they see, but because there is a huge link between how you present yourself and how you see yourself.

You want to be able to show on the 'outside' how capable and intelligent you are. Make sure you are sharing a true story about who you are. Also, it is important that you leave people feeling elevated by their interactions with you.



Photo : Alba Gomez with Channel Nine

4. Consistency. Consistency is the key to earning people's respect and trust. It will allow people to recognize you. We buy from brands we like and trust. Trust is developed by aligning your message and impressions.

First, make sure you are clear on who you are and what you are about, then make sure you are consistently sharing it on social media, on your voicemail message, via email and so forth. People must get the essence of who you are no matter how they are interacting with you.

5. Your online personal brand.

You want to become a highly recognizable brand and communicate clearly who are you.

You want to convey your personality through your brand and stick with it all the way to create trust.

★ When you GOOGLE your name are you easily found?

★ Do you appear in image search and like what you see?

★ Do you have a piece of content that represents you?

★ Do you like your current profile image on your social media outlets?

★ Are your strengths and uniqueness clearly communicated?

★ Which online platforms are you visible on?

★ Which ones are you planning to be more visible on? How specifically?

You are unique. Make sure you spend time discovering what is unique about you and crafting a brand message that makes you feel proud to share it with the world. This will create a massive impact on the results you get in your life and business.

ASEAN Business Alliance is launched!

Perth, Australia

by Dr Renée Ralph, 2021



AUSTRALIA - ASEAN Business Alliance (ABA) was officially launched on Friday, 6th August with a turnout of 200 distinguished guests celebrating the initiative, led by Dr Sandy Chong, Inaugural Chair. The Honourable Deputy Premier Roger Cook welcomed this momentous occasion.

ABA represents the business community of Southeast Asian Nations in Western Australia (WA). The Alliance is a coalition of Western Australian business councils that represents Southeast Asian nations: Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Burma and Brunei. ABA works in collaboration towards elevating WA's engagement and the promotion of trade and investment with businesses in the ASEAN regions.



Photo : Auntie Kerry-Ann Winmar, our First Nations Elder with Jamiela Sungkar, Master of Ceremonies

Befittingly, before dinner proceedings began, Auntie Kerry-Ann Winmar, a First Nations Elder gave a Welcome to Country (Whadjuk). Her voice filled with pride acknowledging her ancestors that walked the land, 40,000 years ago. A warm welcome and Kaya, wishing ASEAN Business Alliance (ABA) a prosperous journey.

Sandy highlighted that ABA is a significant step forward in boosting Australia's trade as these ASEAN nations' combined total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was US\$3.2 trillion (IMF 2019).

ASEAN is one of the world's fastest growing economies – offering a broad range of opportunities for Western

Australian businesses looking for a new and growing export market. Many ASEAN countries are industrialising and urbanising, and have growing demand for minerals and energy. With a rapidly growing middle class and young populations that are digitally savvy, there is also demand for higher standards of consumer goods, education and training services, and new technologies. Sandy acknowledges the opportunity for in-depth collaboration with ASEAN and WA to strengthen the existing business ties during these challenging times.

Sandy shares a story of ASEAN brotherhood and sisterhood – done in the ASEAN way. Hidilyn Diaz, a daughter of a tricycle driver in a poor village near Zamboanga, wins the first-ever Olympic Gold for Philippines in the Tokyo Olympics 2020. Since February 2020, Diaz was stuck in Kuala Lumpur due to COVID-19, she improvised her training by using bamboo sticks and large water bottles as impromptu weightlifting equipment. Diaz was trained by a Chinese coach Gao Kaiwen, she spent nearly two years in isolation without any family but her training team. Hildilyn Diaz achieved her Olympic dream at the age of 30 years old. Diaz has represented her country on the world stage in weightlifting - 2016 Rio Olympics, 2018 ASEAN Games, 2019 SEA Games, 2019 World Championships.

This is the true spirit of ASEAN. Whether it is sports or business, we

work hard, we persevere and take nothing for granted. This is true to the testament of human resilience and perseverance.



Photo : The Honourable Deputy Premier Roger Cook

Following the evening proceedings, the Honourable Deputy Premier Roger Cook in his opening address congratulates the ABA initiative and looks forward to seizing this opportunity with WA's ASEAN trading partners.



Photo : Louisa Cotter, Secretary of ASEAN Business Alliance; Ms Cotter, Dr Sandy Chong, Inaugural Chair, ASEAN Business Alliance, Dr Renée Ralph, Co-Founder, The Brilliant Foundation and Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito, Director and Principal, Women's Breast Imaging.

Deputy Premier Roger Cook states that ASEAN is Australia's second largest trading partner as a bloc and is essential to Australia's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2019-20, Australia's trade with ASEAN countries was \$113.7 billion, which is greater than our two-way trade with Japan and the United States. Australia's two-way investment with ASEAN in 2019 was over \$259 billion.



Photo: *Burmese community*

Australia's strong trade links are supported by regional and bilateral

free trade agreements that act as pathways for Australian business to tap into ASEAN and the ASEAN Economic Community.

Western Australia's trade relationship with ASEAN is valued at \$25.3 billion. It is WA's third largest trading partner in 2019.

Western Australia has the following agreements to facilitate trade and commercial interests:

ASEAN-Australia New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA)

Malaysia-Australia Free Trade Agreement (MAFTA)

Singapore-Australia Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA)

Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)

Thailand-Australia Free Trade Agreement (TAFTA)

Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (IA-CEPA).

In response to COVID-19, Australia is supporting ASEAN to play a central role in health security and economic recovery in Southeast Asia. Australia has a suite of ASEAN-Australia development initiatives to challenge the impacts of the pandemic under our Partnerships for Recovery. It focuses on strengthening health security, maintaining social stability, and stimulating economic recovery.

In 2020, the Australian Federal Government announced an additional

\$500 million package of economic, development and security measures to support Southeast Asia's recovery. Australia's regional ASEAN and Mekong development programs, complement the work of Australia's bilateral development programs, in building a stable, open, inclusive and resilient Southeast Asia.

In 2020, Australia also committed \$623.2 million to support vaccine access and health security in the Pacific and Southeast Asia. About \$400 million of this commitment will support Southeast Asia to access vaccines and monitor quality, including the \$100 million Quad Vaccines initiative for Southeast Asia.

These significant investments complement Australia's extensive engagement with ASEAN to respond to the pandemic. In 2020, this included convening a Special ASEAN-Australia Foreign Ministers' Meeting on 30 June 2020, enhanced dialogue between ASEAN and Australian health experts; and over \$83 million in cooperation initiatives.



Photo : Dr Renée Ralph, Mary Turonek, Dr Sandy Chong, Dr Linda Kennaugh, Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito

In essence, these alliances help foster growth that enhances mutually beneficial community relations that WA thrives on.

A celebratory vibe continued to fill the air where Western Australia came alive for ASEAN Day and ASEAN Business Alliance's official launch at Double Top, Hilton Perth Waterfront – a melting pot of cultures – feasting, cultural dance performances, laughing and chatting. A momentous occasion where multiculturalism, diversity and inclusion is shared, enjoyed and treasured.



Photo : Burmese ladies in their traditional costumes



Photo : Indonesia ladies performing their traditional cultural dance



Photo : Thai dancers in their traditional costumes



Photo : WA's Filipino community celebrating ASEAN Business Alliance through traditional dance and costume.

AFL West Coast Eagles Club soars to new heights with United Nations SDGs

Perth, Australia

by Dr Renée Ralph, 2021



AUSTRALIA- United Nations Association of Australia (WA) (UNAAWA) held its second Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Business Forum of 2021. The forum was a resounding success with over 100 participants in attendance at West Coast Eagles Club, Mineral Resources Park, Laithlain.

This was the first ever SDGs forum in Australia featuring the sports industry, and it has taken three years for West Coast Eagles and United Nations (UN) in Western Australia (WA) to officially launch this partnership. The forum explored the issues of SDGs in relation to the sports arena and how local government, community leaders in WA can help transform businesses to deliver positive social and environmental outcomes.



Photo : Nic Naitanui, West Coast Eagles Australian Football League (AFL) 2020 Club Champion; Founder of Naitanui Academy and Author of *Little Nic's Big Day*

Dr Sandy Chong, President of UNAAWA and Harvard alumna, facilitated the event with the Honourable Dr Tony Buti MLA Minister for Finance; Lands; Sport and Recreation; Citizenship and Multicultural Interests presiding; Russell Gibbs, Chairman, West Coast Eagles and Nic Naitanui, West Coast Eagles Australian Football League (AFL) 2020 Club Champion, who zoomed in online (*abiding to quarantine rules and regulations* after a recent inter-state game).

Other special guests speakers included:

Michelle Cowan, Australian Rules Football Coach who was the inaugural head coach of the Fremantle Football Club in the AFL Women's competition. Michelle is currently new head of Operations and Player Wellbeing, with West Coast Eagles AFLW.

Dr Alec O'Connell, Headmaster of Scotch College

Professor Sophia Nimphius, School of Medical and Health Sciences from [Edith Cowan University](#)

UNAAWA and SDGs

[Dr. Sandy Chong](#), President, [United Nations Association of Australia \(WA\)](#) is passionate about leadership that is benevolent, giving and inspiring. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future.

At its heart are the [17 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.

1. No poverty
2. Zero hunger
3. Good health and well-being
4. Quality education
5. Gender equality
6. Clean water and sanitation
7. Affordable and clean energy
8. Decent work and economic growth
9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure
10. Reduced inequalities
11. Sustainable cities and communities
12. Responsible consumption and production
13. Climate action
14. Life below water
15. Life on land
16. Peace, justice and strong institutions
17. Partnerships for the goals



Dr. Sandy Chong, President, United Nations Association of Australia (WA) facilitated a panel discussion on "A New Globalism and its Role to Achieving Sustainable Development Goals"

DR SANDY CHONG
The Brilliant Foundation
Founding Member



Photo : [Russell Gibbs](#), Chairman of [West Coast Eagles Board of Directors](#)

[Russell Gibbs](#), Chairman of [West Coast Eagles Board of Directors](#) stated that West Coast Eagles as a professional elite sports club is extremely pleased to have made the decision to embrace the United Nations SDGs. He stated that as a premium club it has a role to play in the community and “our

17 Sustainable Development Goals are as follows:

responsibility to take the lead in embracing SDGs which aligns with West Coast Eagles values. The AFL reaches to our Australian community at grassroots levels, from workers, sporting clubs and charities and continues to do so in the future.”



Photo : Honourable Dr Tony Buti MLA Minister for Finance; Lands; Sport and Recreation; Citizenship and Multicultural Interests

Dr Tony Buti mentioned that his focus has always been supporting grassroots sporting activities, utilising and finding ways to empower younger people. He said that he is a Dockers supporter, a member of Armadale; and is extremely supportive of West Coast Eagles, an elite sports club who is the first sporting organisation in Australia to embrace UN SDGs.

Dr Tony Buti also highlighted the

development of women’s game in AFL making progress and ensuring kids’ sport program affordable so that all kids can play sport. There should be no barriers to playing sport for our youth. The community should be able to help our First Nations Peoples, marginalised communities and children with disabilities. He hopes the Special Olympics will take place in Perth, Western Australia and expressed ardently that the 17 SDGs are close to his heart.

Dr Sandy Chong posed the question to the guest speakers which of the 17 SDGs resonated with them?



Photo: Michelle Cowan is currently new head of Operations and Player Wellbeing, with West Coast Eagles AFLW.

Michelle Cowan stated that SDG 3 – Good health and well-being struck a chord with her. Having good physical and mental health will allow an individual to fulfil their potential in life and fulfil the goals that they want to achieve.

Professor Sophia Nimphius felt that SDG 5 – Gender Equality was essential for girls’ and women’s sport in the industry so that females can feel empowered in what they do.

Dr Alec O'Connell stated that SDG 1 – Ending Poverty was essential. Alec cited the Segregation Policy example in America, where African Americans in the 1920s to 1940s were not allowed to swim in the public swimming pools and only the White Americans could swim. In that environment, Alec highlighted that the youths who were deliberately segregated did not have an existing network to build upon compared to the kids that could swim in the public pools. It was not only their physical well-being that was compromised, it was their future where the Black Americans did not have the connections and framework that could support them throughout their growing up years. Networks are vital for our Australian youth to survive and thrive.

Nic Naitanui agreed with Michelle that SDG 3 is important to him and emphasised that having a healthy and eating lifestyle is essential to his well-being. Nic also hoped to end poverty with SDG 1. He felt that in his experience, football has helped him to provide for himself and he hope to break the poverty cycle in his community. Recently, Naitanui watched in the sidelines whilst his Naitanui Academy team played at Optus Stadium.

Dr Sandy Chong asked how sports have helped the community? Have any changes occurred in sports?

Nic Naitanui said he has been to Kenya and Israel and has seen children being

active in sports and being healthy develops empowerment, empathy and a sense of belonging. He has experienced this positiveness in the South Pacific where he comes from. Now with West Coast Eagles leading the way with UN SDGs, the change has already occurred, even for him, wearing a uniform with the UN logo imprinted on it.



Photo : Professor Sophia Nimphius, School of Medical and Health Sciences from Edith Cowan University

Professor Sophia Nimphius said that she is inspired by the new sports in the Olympics such as surfing, skateboarding, karate, BMX freestyle that are reinventing the games and reinvigorating youth. That is the heart of the being involved in sports where the youth can participate fully.

Sophia mentioned as an American, Title XI Act in USA, equal education was

agreed in 1972 and that meant that in the sports programs had to be equitable too for women.

The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces, among other statutes, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX protects people from discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance. Title IX states:

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

This interlink was essential for women that offered a voice and influence that they didn't have previously.

Dr Alec O'Connell said that the health and benefits in sports reduces obesity and the children growing up doing sports, will have fun with friends and a lifestyle that they can carry through in life. It also develops physical and mental health.

Michelle Cowan shared the gender equality aspect is shifting in particular with AFL women's team that was launched in 2020. There are currently 18 AFL ladies team and at grassroots level AFLW is being livestream in our TV living rooms is a dream come true for her. Broadcasting is huge for AFLW, there are female coaches now,

pathways for women to coach at the highest level and there are opportunities for everybody. As a kid she always wanted to play AFL but there were no avenues for women, now, the possibilities are endless.



Photo : Dr Alec O'Connell, Headmaster of Scotch College



Photo credit : Womens AFL

Dr Sandy Chong shared that she leaned towards sport at a young age when her dad, a military man made his kids run 2.4km every Sunday and the weekend was spent playing basketball and badminton. They were exhausted after each physical activity, however, she realised that it taught her resilience, team work and collaboration skills when she grew up.

What can sports help to achieve?

For the future, being part of the sporting industry and embracing UN SDGs, Nic Naitanui said he is mindful and consumes healthy drinks in public when he is in front of younger children. He will not have soft drinks, instead he will have water.

He likes the UNAOWA tagline *Inform. Inspire. Engage* and states that it is good to have other partners to help in this cause.



Photo credit : [The West Australian](#)

Personally, being an AFL footy player has opened another set of skills that he has developed. Nic has built deeper connections with the community, he has learnt how to talk comfortably in front of a camera and the opportunities that he has been given, he is grateful for them in Australia. He also said that he has become financially independent and can care for his parents and family.

[Alec O'Connell](#) states that [Perth Glory](#), [Scorchers](#) use the facilities at Scotch College and stated that it cannot just be [BHP](#) and the bigger organisations to keep sponsoring as funding is limited in

WA. He said: "We need to be creative with our partners." Scotch has partnerships with their sister school and sports can be the hook, where sporting clubs can do so much and build deep respect for the community.

Professor Sophia Nimphius shared that the partnership with ECU, West Coast Eagles and the work that they do are currently linked.

Nic Naitanui said that sports can be a platform that stamps out racism. Racism is unacceptable and change is occurring for a kinder and respectful world. Nic Naitanui said he wrote a book titled [Little Nic's Big Day](#) with illustrations from Fatima Anaya, the book is about Nic's first day of school.



As a Fijian-Australian, Naitanui originally had a tough time at school. He looked different from the other kids in Perth and his family spoke a different language and ate different meals. Through football he was able to break through that fear and now he wants to share some of the lessons he has learned with Aussie kids.

Dr Tony Buti said as a physical education teacher in his past life, activity has always been important to him and the barriers to sport is the cost that needs to be addressed.

Dr Alec O'Connell states that there are 36 Indigenous Scholarship available at Scotch College. Also, no one is born racist, it is the environment – school, home and TV that needs to stamp racism.

Dr Sandy Chong said the Special Olympics is hoping to host the World Games in 2027 in Perth, Western Australia and right from the start they were using the SDGs goals as their benchmark. In doing so, the Special Olympics team is making sure their decision making process is aligned in meeting with these SDGs goals and to get the bid in, to win the bid, and to host the game in Perth.

Dr Sandy Chong also stated that on the industry level, from Federal, State and Local Government, community organisations and ASX companies, it is pleasing to know that in Australia, we are all now using the SDGs as a benchmark to make sure that everything we do, is now making positive impact on these SDGs goals. These are exciting times indeed.

The evening ended with networking and university students chatting with professional and industry leaders.



Photo (From left to right) : Ryan, Alexander Circosta, Daniel, Dr Sandy Chong, Honourable Dr Tony Buti MLA Minister for Finance; Lands; Sport and Recreation; Citizenship and Multicultural Interests, Nikola, Michael D'Souza, President of The Burmese Association of Western Council, Dr Z. Nau, Dr Renée Ralph and, Associate Professor Amy Wei Tian, Curtin University



Photo : United Nations Volunteers with Dr Sandy Chong, President, United Nations Association of Australia (WA)



Photo (Right to Left) : Elizabeth Lang, CEO, Diversity Focus with guests.



Photo : Dr Renée Ralph (left) with Associate Professor, Amy Wei Tan, School of Management and Marketing, Faculty of Business and Law, Curtin University and Founding Member, The Brilliant Foundation.

United Nations 76th Gala Celebration with Dr Sandy Chong

Perth, Australia

By Dr Renée Ralph, 2021



Photo : Dr Sandy Chong, President, United Nations of Association of Western Australia (UNAAWA)

PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA (WA) – The 76th United Nations Association of Western Australia (UNAAWA) Gala Event was celebrated at the Boola Bardip, WA Museum of Culture, Hackett Hall led by Dr Sandy Chong, President. Over 250 distinguished guests and UN Association members attended the evening. Ten Consul-Generals representing China, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Italy, India, Malaysia, Japan, United States of America, Vietnam were there to give their warm support including Dr Judith Edwards, Former Minister of Environment and

Heritage (2001-2006), Christine Tonkins, Member of Churchlands and former UN Staff and Sarah Hooper from Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).



Photo : Consul-Generals from various countries supporting the UN 76th Gala Event with Dr Sandy Chong, President of UNAAWA.

The Welcome by Country was given by Auntie Kerry-Ann Winmar, Elder of the Noongar First Nation Peoples. The keynote address was presented by Sandy Anghie, Deputy Lord Mayor, City of Perth and she recognised that multiculturalism, integrity, peace and harmony were integral values for a better world. She understands the intricacies and pleasures in life, as she is happily married to her wonderful husband of Indian descent as they both nurture their children in Western Australia.

Dr Sandy Chong said that United Nations (UN) is now in its 76th year, emphasising the need to progress human rights, gender equality, environment and social impact. It is not good enough that poverty still exists in our abundant world where children are

starving and the young not receiving an education in different parts of the world. How can we, all make it better? How can we ensure that young girls are safe and that females receive the same access to education, career development and equality in today's world? We have to be equitable in our business decisions, to be fairer and we have to build sustainable communities.

The United Nations serve as a platform to foster health bi-lateral trade and international relations. The UN Charter codifies the major principles of international relations, from sovereign equality of States to the prohibition of the use of force in international relations.

The UN Charter represents a beacon of hope creating a place for continuing conversations and a call to action for us to advance human rights.

A digital address was given by Guy Ryder, Director-General of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) from Geneva – highlighting the continuing quest for a kinder and generous world to eradicate hunger, inequality and safety for the young.

He thanked the UN Association WA Division (UNAAWA) for their continuing support and active participation.

United Nations Association of Australia (UNAAWA)

The UN in WA are dedicated to informing, inspiring and engaging the West Australian community and

leaders regarding the work, goals and values of the United Nations to create a safer, fairer and more sustainable world. Established in 1946, the Western Australian Division of the UNAA is run solely by a small group of passionate and committed volunteers.

In WA, there is the Human Rights, Environment, Gender, Equality, Education and SDG Business Forum Committee with a strong emphasis on achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Photo: Welcome by Country was given by Auntie Kerry-Ann Winmar, Elder of the Noongar First Nation Peoples.

The VIP Speech was given by Paris Laurie, West Coast Eagles AFLW Best Club Person 2021

UN Day Award Ceremony

The UN Day Awards were presented in the categories of Human Rights, Gender Equality, Environment, World's Teachers day and SDG Challenge. Mr Mark Anderson, CEO and Director Foundation for Indigenous Sustainable Health (FISH) was one of the judges for the Human Rights Awards 2021.



Photo (From Left to Right): Aunty Kerry-Ann Winmar and Mr Mark Anderson, CEO and Director of Foundation of Indigenous and Sustainable Health.

Congratulations to United Nations Day 2021 Award Winners
 Human Rights Awards - Law Access
 Gender Equality Award - Kendal Galbraith
 Environment Action Award - Rotary Club Elizabeth Quay

Congratulations to World Teachers' Day 2021 Award Winners
 Collective Impact Award - Coolbinia Primary School
 Primary Teacher Award - Nikki Fairhurst Oakwood Primary School
 Secondary Teacher Award - Jacqui Edwards, Woodvale Secondary College
 Special Mention Award - Association of Independent Schools of WA (AISWA) - "Purposeful Pedagogies: Global Competencies in Action."
 Kathleen Booth, Kent Street Senior High School



Photo : Senior Constable Sam Lim, WA Police Force to present of the UN awards to the winner. Senior Constable Sam Lim of the department's Community Engagement Division was named Officer of the Year at the Nine News Police Excellence Awards in December 2020.

As a Chinese man born and raised in Malaysia, Senior Constable Sam Lim was given the opportunity to learn nine languages, including Malay, Mandarin, Indonesian and Burmese. Sam is a Chinese-Australian who speaks 10 languages and has received the Western Australian Police Force's highest honour for his work with multicultural communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The nights' entertainment included John Curtin College of Arts, Chamber Choir singing Skyfall. Followed by the String Ensemble playing Brandburg Concerto No.3 Movement 1 by J.S. Bach.

The wonderful young girls playing Jasmine Flower and Edelweiss from the Western Australia Guzheng Ensemble. Finishing off with a soprano performance by the Couch Divas singing The Prayer.



Photo (Left to Right) : Dr Vanessa-Atienza Hipolito, Director and Principal, Women's Breast Imaging Clinic, Cottesloe with Sandy Anghie, Deputy Lord Mayor, City of Perth and Dr Renée Ralph, Co-Founder, The Brilliant Foundation



Ms Jamiela Sungkar, the Master of Ceremonies for the UN 76th Gala Celebration at Boola Bardip. Jamiela is a practising psychologist in Subiaco.



Photo : Full-house attendance at the WA Museum Boola Bardip.



Photo (from left to right) : Dr Renée Ralph, Co-Founder, The Brilliant Foundation, Professor Harlene Hayne, Vice-Chancellor of Curtin University with Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito, Principal and Director, Women's Breast Imaging (WBI), Cottesloe.



Photo : John Curtin College of Arts, Chamber Choir singing Skyfall.



Photo : Western Australia Guzheng "Zither" Ensemble



Photo: Couch Divas singing The Prayer

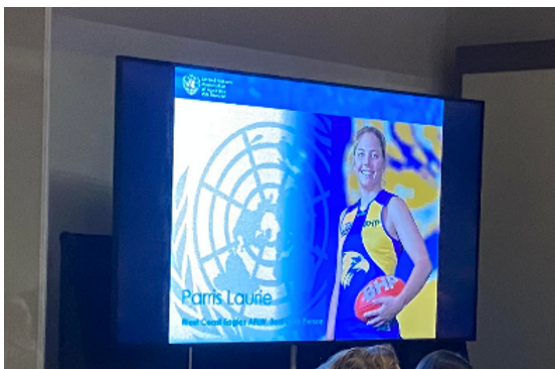


Photo : Paris Laurie, West Coast Eagles AFLW Best Club Person 2021



Photo : Christine Tonkins, Member of Churchlands and former UN staff presenting the award to the winner.



Photo: Dr Judith Edwards, Former Minister of Environment and Heritage (2001-2006) presenting the award.



Photo : Indian Dance - our own Bollywood dancers in WA



Photo : Ms Najwa Hass, Edith Cowan University - Winner of the 2021 SDG Challenge Award for Community



Photo : Dr Nau, United Nations Organising Committee Member is wearing her traditional Burmese costume made by her grandmother. The silver beading and accessories in her beautiful hand-made outfit weigh 7 kilograms.



Photo : An eclectic mix of cultures celebrating the United Nations international community spirit.



Photo : Couch Divas with Dr Siddier Chambers in her Jamaican traditional costume.



Photo : Ms Louisa Cotter, Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito, Dr Renée Ralph



Photo : Dr Sandy Chong with President Chung Wah Association, Mr Chen Ting and United Nations guest.



Photo : These amazing Asian ladies from distinctive cultures -The lady in the far right is wearing a beautiful Mongolian dress.



Photo : The WONDERFUL First Year Commerce Students, School of Management and Marketing, Faculty of Business and Law, Curtin University volunteering at the UN event



Photo : Dr Sandy Chong giving the closing address and thanks to the UN Event Sponsors and Partners.



Photo (From Left to Right) : Dr Subhardisini Parida, Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito, Dr Renée Ralph, Dr Amy Wei Tian, Guest of United Nations, Dr Vidy Podtar



Photo (From Left to Right) : Dr Renée Ralph Dr Sandy Chong and Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito



Photo (From Left to Right) : Dr Amy Wei Tian, Dr Vanessa Atienza-Hipolito, Dr Sandy Chong and Dr Renée Ralph, Co-Founder, The Brilliant Foundation

Professor Sally Kift - Equity Holy Grail for Learning

by Dr Renée Ralph, 2023



Professor Sally Kift, James Cook
University

Photo credit : Dr Renée Ralph

Murdoch, Western Australia – Over 270 participants attended the 32nd Western Australia Teaching and Learning Forum (WATLF) 2023 for two days (Feb 2-3) hosted by [Murdoch University](#) in partnership with [Curtin University](#), [University of Western Australia](#), [Notre Dame University](#) and [Edith Cowan University](#). It was a sold out event supported by senior academic and early career academics, professional staff and students from local, international and interstate.

This year's theme *University Life : Being, Becoming, Belonging* indicated the post-COVID impact on Higher

Education and how technology transformed the way teachers interact and engage with students face-to-face and online.

Welcome to Country was given by Elizabeth Hayden (Aunty Liz) who encouraged the positive way ahead. She acknowledged the changing of the tide of Higher Education embracing the First Nations culture in curriculum, offering better decision-making processes and alternatives for the youth and potential leaders. She praised Hon Kim Beazley AC, one of her favourite people who is warm, knowledgeable and amazing. She said having met him, Hon Kim Beazley AC understood the First Nations issues well and she admired him for what he has done for the Aboriginal culture.

Aunty Liz shared her position as a First Nations individual subjected to disparaging remarks and racism in her life – the audience gasped with her truth-telling and she moved us teachers to do the very best for students, so that students are left wanting more content from us.

Welcome Address by Professor [Andrew Deeks](#), Vice-Chancellor and President, Murdoch University stated that technology plays an enormous role in teaching, facilitating and engaging students. It has become part of our lives and to progress we have to learn how to use that tool effectively. He said that we will continue to share our ideas, strengthen and challenge

our teaching practices to educate our students and generate new knowledge.



Professor Sally Kift, James Cook University delivered a warm, hilarious and knowledgeable Keynote Address. She has 30 years' experience within the Australian Higher Education policy, practice and executive leadership. She emphasised equity of learning for students during post-COVID and this year's theme of *Being, Becoming, Belonging* was apt and timely in contemporary Higher Education.

She, herself was learning new terms such as Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) versus the state of Joy of Missing Out (JOMO), as all of us are in the state of learning, unlearning and relearning. The new terminology expresses perhaps the lived experiences of a student at university navigating through complex cultural and digital

dimensions. In the mix, the labour transformation within the tertiary education sector has been shrinking, with unemployed academic, professional staff and graduates.

Growth in unemployed with a university degree

	Total unemployed	Unemployed with degree	% with degree
May, 2019	694,300	129,600	18.66%
Feb, 2020	761,100	170,900	22.45%
Nov, 2020	877,500	204,400	23.29%

ABS Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly, Author provided

So while the total number of people in work was slightly lower in November 2020 than in May 2019, graduates fared better than individuals without a degree-holder.

It is a genie in a bottle situation where teachers have to focus and still inspire life-long learning students and uphold student equity in these challenging times. The search of the Equity Holy Grail must prevail.

Professor Kift cited Jason Clare MP who was the first in his family to graduate and he emphasised that education changes lives – simply by looking at where he's at now. Post-COVID, there is an increase of part-time students 35% (making up of mature age students) and an uptake in disability students.

How do we create an environment for all students to *be, become and belong* in diversity to be included so that they are known, mattered and cared for?

Recent statistics show that 56% of the student cohort, are still the first ones to

graduate in their families from Higher Education.

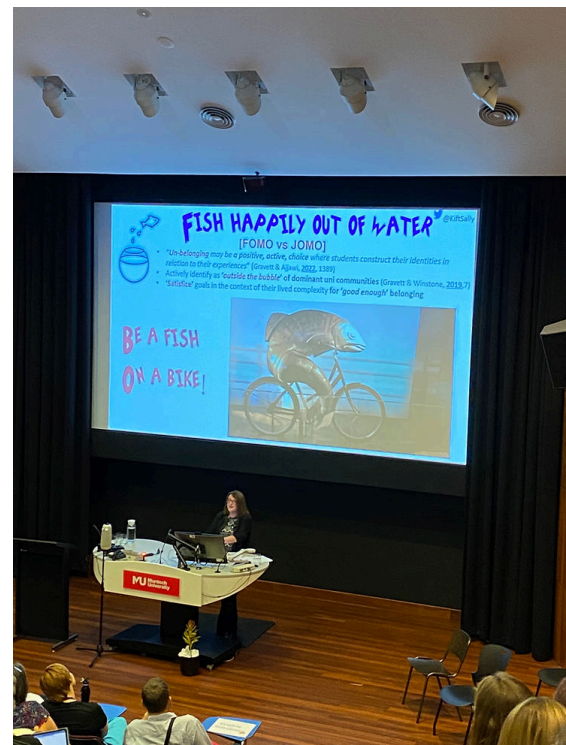
Just learning and coming to university is one dimension, the other aspect is student well-being in the areas of digital skills, digital well-being and data security. Professor Kift cited Alexander Mihaj, in the hybrid learning environment how do we as academics offer personalised mediation and explained teacher presence?

As part-time students are balancing either part-time or full-time work, exploring studying options with either face-to-face attendance and/or online – their lives are busy, fast-paced, chaotic and these students' are time poor. It is a juggling act for academics to offer quality learning to these students in their complex life challenges.

In Curriculum Land, the first assessment for first year undergraduates is linked to their experiences where they are needing to seek out academic support.

Professor Kift states there are multiple ongoing transactions that are meted out in a ghostly way.

The anxiety the undergraduates are facing, will need to be normalise as they create a new identity and a sense of professional identity to exist and this is the transition point within higher education.



The students will experience imposter syndrome – *am I good enough to be in university?* Doubts will resurface and as academics, we can lend a helping hand to these students from dropping out of the course or unit.

We understand the issues of education capital and social capital so when the students question *Who am I?*

Are we the Fish out of water that equate to the cultural alienation at university?

Are we the Fish in water?

Or

Are we the Fish happily out of water riding a bicycle?

We have to understand the education landscape has changed and we have to relearn new ways to humanise our online class versus one student's experience feedback "I have a closer relationship with my Internet provider."

Professor Kift shared that pedagogical warmth is required as supported by Peter Felton and we have a role in building a community for students in the classroom face-to-face and/or online. It is vital that we start building these relationships as to avoid panic-gogy and entangled pedagogy. She leads us to The Blend - operating in the Third space where learning and teaching is transformed. Students as Partners (SAP) offer feedback after each class to review what they learn to the lecturer or tutor.

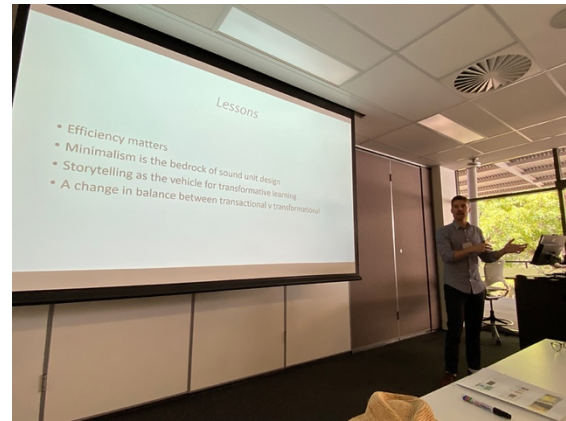
And Voila! Here we are today - academics and students are either dancing the perfect dance or swirling in the perfect storm.

Full house at Kim Beazley Lecture Theatre, Murdoch University

Snapshots over two days



Associate Professor Jane Coffey, Curtin University presenting on meaningful careers whilst navigating technology and AI - The essence of sustaining a career and life-long learning.



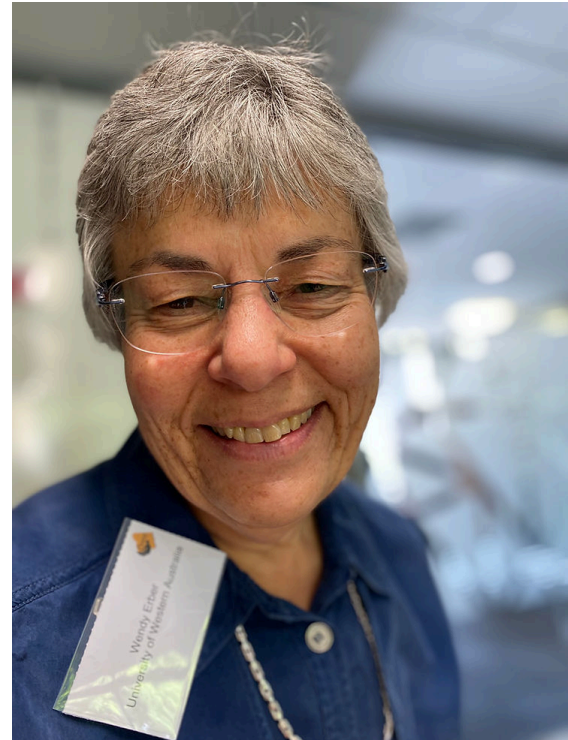
Dr Samuel Teague, Data Analytics, Murdoch University - his heart-rendering presentation "Into The Wild" captivated us



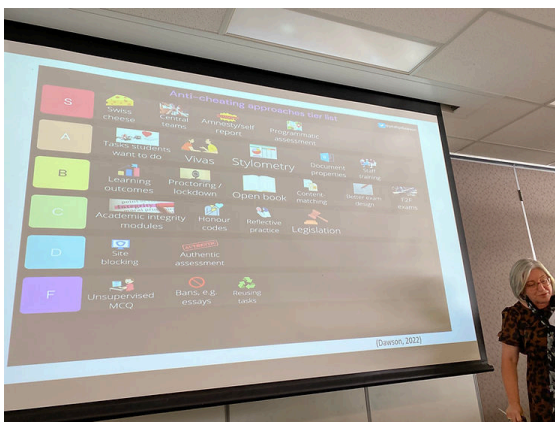
Professor Issa and Dr Hall, Curtin University



Aunt Liz giving the Welcome to Country



Professor Wendy Erber, Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, University of Western Australia.



Dr Carmela de Maio, a lawyer and a sessional academic from Edith Cowan University giving a talk on Academic Integrity - a holistic approach involving educational institutions, government, academics for students.



Professor Wendy Erber, Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, University of Western Australia. Professor Erber explained the evolution of blood transfusion and storage with Socrates underpinnings in relation to the COVID 'war'. Irene Lee, educational technologist shared her identity as having an established role in the Third Space due to COVID and her role with academics.



Presentation on Rubric Matrix helping students to develop their learning skills in critical analysis



Day 1 - Dr Renée Ralph, Curtin University at Nuts and Bolts Pitch and Workshop



Associate Professor Dimple, Curtin University on the Feedback Loop designed to give students clarity in the unit.



Dr Miriam Sullivan, ECU (right) and I - thank you for being kind and supportive.



Associate Professor Dimple, Curtin University engaging the audience.



Dr Bep Uink Kulbardi Aboriginal Centre, Murdoch University - Embedding a Relationships-First Strategy into Higher Education Systems

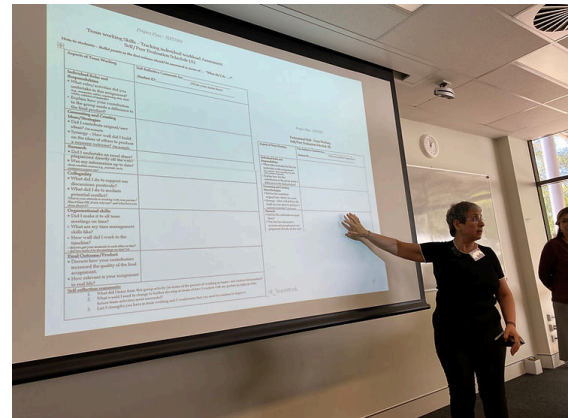


Dr Vanessa Galvin, early career academic at Curtin University presenting on the importance of

History in relation to architecture and the physical space(s) that we live in.



Dr Bep Uink Kulbaradi Aboriginal Centre, Murdoch University



Professor Issa and Dr Hall, Curtin University - helping our students and giving them staggered feedback throughout the unit is integral - a stellar and brilliant presentation!



Professor Johannes Hermann on Viva Voce, group assignments, forming groups and peer feedback



Dr Renée Ralph, Curtin University with Dr Vanessa Galvin, Curtin University and Dr Carmela de Maio, ECU



The three musketeers from Curtin University, Dr Jacqui, Dr Mike and Dr Judy preparing their Nuts and Bolts pitch on learning optimisation



Lunch time under the beautiful trees



Dr Renée Ralph, Dr Mike Baldwin and Dr Sandra Martain, Faculty of Business and Law, School of Management and Marketing (SoMM), People, Culture Organisation (PCO), Curtin University.

Note of Gratitude

Thank you to Murdoch University, sponsors and organisers for making WATLF 2023 happen. It was my first WATLF and I thoroughly enjoyed the collegiality, warmth and friendships made. We all learnt so much from this forum and the ideas shared will come in useful this year's teaching. What a brilliant community of being, becoming and learning!

Australia's National Monument to Migration

Sydney, Australia

by Christina Chia, 2023

SYDNEY HARBOUR - On a beautiful autumn's day at Australian National Maritime Museum's stunning waterfront location in Sydney Harbour, I was excited and humbled to be added to the Australia's National Monument to Migration, which celebrates and honours the contribution of migrants to Australian life, culture and diversity.



It was an honour as a guest speaker at the unveiling ceremony on Saturday 20 May at the Australian National Maritime Museum Wharf 7.

As part of the ceremony, 574 names were unveiled, representing 53 countries. Donations were made that contributed to the Migration Heritage Fund which supports the Museum's work to celebrate Australian migration.

The Monument is a major Museum initiative which promotes Australia's multicultural identity Australia-wide. The monument features more than 32,000 names engraved on a series of bronze panels which thread along our waterfront site at Sydney's Darling Harbour. It is backed up by a database of migrant stories and we have exciting plans for this digital program in the future.

Migration is not just about crossing a border. It's about the courage to embrace new beginnings and contribute to a brighter future. Australia truly welcomes those who dare to dream.

The impact of migration on Australia is a testament to the power of unity. People from different corners of the world come together to create a mosaic of opportunity, harmony, and shared prosperity.

My first memory of Australia was when I was an international student in 1991. It was a hot summer's day in February & my Marketing Communications lecturer came into our class in a wrinkled shirt. I was speechless. And after the initial culture shock of the lecturer presenting in a wrinkled un-ironed shirt, he casually said "Hello"

and asked us to call him by his first name, Michael.

You see, in my home country Malaysia, this type of casual behaviour is contrary to what I was used to. In Malaysia, culturally, lecturers are presented in ties and crisply ironed shirts. We are expected to formally address them as "Mr or Mrs".

It was years later that I found out that linen shirts, like the one worn by my Australian lecturer Michael are worn during summer & good quality linen is expensive.

I completed my undergraduate degree at RMIT University in 1995.

I got married and worked in Melbourne for University of Melbourne.

I gave birth to my two beautiful daughters, Zoe and Ashley.

After some years I moved to Malaysia for family reasons.

This sounds like a fairy tale - educated, married & a young family.

However, this was not the case. I migrated back to Melbourne in 2005 - I was a single mother, with 2 young daughters in tow, 2 suitcases, little finances & limited network. It was one of the toughest times of my life.

As a determined single mother and sort of 'new' migrant again, what I brought with me was loads of courage & hope to succeed and grow. I saw this as a period of opportunity for all of us.

I saw a promising future in the land of abundance - Australia!



I was not one of the very early migrants of Australia. In the early 90s, there were already Malaysians in Melbourne.

My parents, like many at that time, worked hard, sacrificed and sent their children overseas for tertiary education. I recalled that I saw Australia as a land of opportunity if I persevered and worked hard.

As a migrant, and as a single mother with two young daughters, socially & culturally, the environment was more accepting. We were able to have a quality lifestyle filled with opportunity despite being on a modest income.

Being Asian and as most Asians were known for our strong work ethic, I worked very hard and was given the opportunity to progress & have a good rewarding career whilst raising young children.

Let's fast forward over the next 18 years, my career grew and I gained numerous management and executive positions. Currently, I am the Chief Operating Officer of a national

education business called North Shore Coaching College, a national education business. I even found love & married to my second husband, Roger, who is here with me today.

And yes, one of most beautiful parts about living in Australia is multiculturalism. Melbourne, like most cities in Australia is now a culturally diverse melting pot of many races. Diversity and inclusivity is normal - there's fairness and opportunity to contribute for a better living!

You see, when I first arrived in 2005 as a single mother with two young daughters, we decided to go on a picnic. I used all I had to buy a roast chicken & salads from Woolworths and headed to the park. We did not own a luxurious picnic mat as I used one of our blankets as a mat and my daughter's tea party set as cutlery.

The families there invited my daughters to play with their children. They even gave them some lollies. That summer's day in the park with my children playing and laughing - with the generosity of the families around us, remains one of the most cherished memories in my life. We were treated by those families as equals and with care & kindness.

This experience and many other examples of the generosity shown by those around me inspired me to give back to my community. I truly believe in the 'Circle of Abundance' - when you do good for others, those around will feel

good. They will then continue to give the goodness and soon the entire community is being lifted with this joy. This ripple effect is continuous because I believe there is an innate intention in us all to wish joy and abundance for each other.

I am very proud to continue the circle of abundance - serving and leading in my various community portfolios.

Some of the examples of my voluntary communities I serve and contribute to are:

Mental Health Foundation Australia as Multicultural Attaché for close to 9 years. One of my favourite experiences was to serve & cook for thousands of meals in Victoria for the disadvantaged during the 2020 & 2021 lockdowns.

Promoting Chinese culture & language in my role as the Vice President in the Chinese Association of Victoria and President of the Australian Asian Family Association

Contributing to the RMIT University mentoring program AND

Reaching out to multicultural communities, locally and globally through my MYC Heart Connectors podcast



So for me to be standing here, with the opportunity to be a community advocate, AND in a career where I am blessed to be involved in educating our youth and, a migrant for over 30 years, is a defining milestone in a long and important journey.

I was honoured and humbled to be recognised for my community service over the years by various organisations. In 2022, I was inducted to the inaugural Honour Roll by the Victorian Multicultural Commission for my community service.

Distinguished guests & friends, my story was not pre-destined but grew out of courage, chance & hope. In more recent years, I have made a conscious effort to give back, serve & lead for a better Australia.

I followed my passion and intuition and I will continue to do so. I have assimilated, collaborated & immersed myself with other community groups - & I will continue to work hard to bring communities together in this land we call home.

As I close, I believe the migrant mentality should be one that celebrates the uniqueness of the land we call home, whilst honouring the uniqueness of where we have come from.

We must embrace the diverse presentation of humanity as we help to create a harmonious, fair & inclusive country. This is our home. So, to live our very best life, we need to continue to work hard, not take things for granted and be the change we want to see.

Our Brilliant Community





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