

We need to work together to end homelessness

By Meg Webb

Homelessness can touch the lives of almost anyone. The unexpected combination of only a few life events – the loss of a job, a serious health crisis, family breakdown or family violence - can lead to someone facing homelessness.

This year, the global COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on employment and our economy is driving many new groups of people into homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

We also know that there are structural drivers of homelessness too, which put people at much higher risk. Things like the severe lack of affordable housing in Tasmania, low incomes and insecure work, and insufficient support for those leaving state care or custody.

As we recognise Homelessness Week this year, from 5 -12 August, the global COVID-19 pandemic has added even more urgency to its theme, Everybody Needs a Home.

Home is more than just a roof over your head.

A home gives you a sense of security and belonging. It is a foundation to engage with employment or education, a place to socialise and connect with others, a place for families to be together. Importantly, during the COVID-19 pandemic, a home is a place where you can safely manage your health, self-isolate if necessary and ensure the community is not put at risk. Now, more than ever, homelessness isn't an issue just for the person or family affected, it's an issue we must solve together to achieve good outcomes in health, employment, safety and a strong

community.

In Tasmania, we have seen a significant impact from the COVID-19 emergency on newly arrived refugees and Temporary Visa Holders (TVH). Many have lost jobs, are struggling to pay rent and have limited access to government support. Some have no income at all.

One service provider in Tasmania reports a 150% increase in demand for emergency relief by temporary visa holders over the last four months compared to 2019 levels.

Refugees, international students and skilled migrant workers leave family, friends and social connections, investing time and money to come to Tasmania. COVID-19 travel restrictions mean many can't simply 'go home'. Homelessness is a very real possibility.

These are people who have come to our State, contributed to our community and our economy and, in many cases, have been left with very little support during the COVID-19 emergency.

Everyone deserves to have their basic needs met. Tasmania has a duty of care to all its residents, regardless of when they arrived and where they were born.

As we continue to plan for our health, social and economic recovery in Tasmania, we need to ensure that all our members of our community are supported, including those who have migrated here, are here for study or work,



and those who have arrived seeking asylum.

Looking at the longer term, it's in all our interests to end homelessness in Tasmania. Not just chip away at the edges, but actually make a clear plan to end it.

The 2016 census showed 1,622 Tasmanians were experiencing homelessness. The majority of these were under the age of 44 years, with four in ten under the age of 25 years.

Our Specialist Homelessness Services assist thousands of Tasmanians each year, but they struggle with not enough capacity to meet the need in our community. Twenty-eight people a day are turned away from short term and emergency accommodation in Tasmania,

and that number is increasing.

With a lack of affordable housing in the community, many people get stuck in a cycle of repeated homelessness. There are over 3,500 people on the waiting list for public housing in Tasmania, with priority applicants facing a 59 week wait to be housed.

This is an issue that can only be solved by putting politics aside and planning a collective, long-term solution. All sides of politics, at both a state and federal level need to make this a priority, so that with bold, long-term planning and investment we can build a strong, healthy community that leaves no one behind.



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Recover. Rebuild.

Authorised by Meg Webb, Parliament House, Hobart.



EMERGENCY RELIEF – NORTH WEST TASMANIA

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information	food	meals	
			
bills	furniture	transport	
			
chemist voucher	budget support	clothing	
			

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Australian Red Cross www.redcross.org.au For temporary visa holders	Rural Relief Fund www.ruralbusinessstasmania.org.au For farming families

The views and opinions expressed in the articles are those of authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of “Diverse Tassie”.

Abu's diary

The diary of a free spirited Maltese Shih Tzu. Adopted daughter to a Chinese accounting student and a tall hairy social worker - Looks a little like a spring onion

Ninth diary entry:

Last entry, it was all about the lowest home mortgage interest rates. The talk of the town. My dorky best pal, Bozzo from across the valley couldn't stop howling about it – in the hope that I'd gain great benefit through my parents investing more money towards my favorite liver treats, rather their self-indulged date nights.

The focus of this entry? Well, my golly, how the weather Gods decided to freak the humans out with the icy cold weather in early August! My parents couldn't stop winging on about it. We need a better heater, more ugg boots – a fluffier beanie. With alpaca fur. The icy weather has also prompted to wrap their bony, hairless and yet – ever so elegant fingers around my super warm belly. I guess, I gotta accept that I serve multiple purposes in this family unit.

A time to walk,

A time to unleash my wild, stinky side and a time to comfort my adorable, ever so vulnerable parents.

The highlight of July for me was when my parents packed up some tasty food, forgot about their paperwork dominated and stiff routines and we went for the ultimate Tassie road-trip to Lake Roseberry in the West. What a slice of paradise that Lake is. Those glorious reflections of the skies above and the soothing peaceful sounds drifting across the waters which the water-birds emit.

Birds!? What a wonderfully beautifully creature – and yet – such a frustrating species. I know that I am a ferocious, scary beast of the jungles, but please – just let me play with you in the mud just once? Or teach me to fly with you, so that we fall in love with the world below via bird's eye-view together?

I managed to steal my parent's camera and snapped a few photos of our road-trip. What was the highlight you ask?

Mmmm...It's hard to look past how fabulous it felt to have the honor of pooping in the wild mountain ranges of Queenstown.

In amongst everything that's occurring at the moment, - as I squatted down over a couple of rocks – I pondered upon this quote,

“Some poor, phoneless fool is probably sitting next to a waterfall somewhere totally unaware of how angry and scared he's supposed to be ” - Duncan Trussell



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Friendship
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Independence day, Aug
14th

Down-Under its all abt
Friendship
Happy INDIAN
Independence day, Aug
15th.



Migrant Resource Center: Donations needed to meet demand for culturally appropriate food boxes

22/07/2020

Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania (MRC Tas) is calling for donations to increase its capacity to provide free fresh and dried food boxes to temporary visa holders and other migrants who are experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19.

With initial support from the Jetty Foundation and the Rotary Club of North Hobart, MRC Tas has been providing weekly staple food boxes to those in need. Delivery of boxes around Hobart and surrounding suburbs is being supported by the Glenorchy District Football Club and its community partners.

The Tasmanian Government has granted funding through the Emergency Relief funding scheme, which extends the delivery of Food Boxes until the middle of September 2020.

Catherine Doran, Director of Strategy and Development at MRC Tas, said that since the project started in early May, MRC Tas has experienced a high volume of requests for assistance.

“This project has received some great support from the community already, and it has been wonderful to see so many organisations collaborating on this. However, more donations are needed to meet demand and extend the program beyond September,” Ms Doran said.

“COVID-19 has impacted everyone, but

for people on temporary visas it can be particularly challenging. Migrants play an important contribution to Tasmanian society, both economically and culturally.”

The food boxes are packed by volunteers and contain healthy, nutritious, and where possible, culturally appropriate food, intended for cooking in a home kitchen.

“A donation of \$50 will provide a food box, the average contents of which will last for approximately 10 days,” Ms Doran said.

International student and food box recipient Jean Barria said the food boxes have been a great help to her, as she is currently without an income due to COVID-19.

“Thank you so much MRC Tasmania for the food boxes delivered to us. We are so grateful, and this help means so much to us! Thank you for warming our hearts, and our tummies too, of course. We appreciate so much this help to the community during these toughest times,” Ms Barria said.

Donations will assist in the purchase of ingredients and packing of boxes. Donations can be made by visiting www.mrctas.org.au/donate.



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Your contribution matters.

As a bystander, you can send a clear message that racist behaviour is not okay. Depending on the situation, there are lots of ways to help.

Be there

Speak to, sit or stand next to the person being harassed to show you support them. You do not have to respond directly to the perpetrator, if that feels safer.

Call it out

If you feel it won't endanger you, tell the person who is being racist that they're out of line. Sometimes they'll back off. Or perhaps they'll reflect on what you've said later.

Use your power

If you take action, others may too. You'll never know how much your intervention could mean to someone who's being harassed.

Report it

You can report racism or discrimination, wherever it happens, to Equal Opportunity Tasmania via their website. If you're travelling on public transport, call on the driver to assist.

If the situation feels threatening, call for police assistance on 131444. In life threatening or emergency situations call 000.

If you wish to remain anonymous you can alternatively call Crime Stoppers Tasmania on 1800 333 000 in non-emergency situations.



City of HOBART

Salamanca Market—Angelic approach to market safety

At a glance:

- Tasmania’s Own Market – a temporary replacement for the much-loved Salamanca Market – will start this Saturday.
- Safety Angels will be onsite to help market-goers stay safe by offering friendly advice and reminders about physical distancing and hygiene.
- The market will feature 80 Salamanca Market stallholders and can accommodate a total of 500 people at a time.

AN ANGELIC presence will watch over market-goers to help ensure they stay safe at this Saturday’s inaugural Tasmania’s Own Market.

The interim market is a temporary replacement for the much-loved and

widely renowned Salamanca Market, which remains suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The smaller, modified market comprises Salamanca Market stallholders in a defined market zone that can accommodate up to 500 people at a time. “This market might be smaller, but there will be no reduction in the quality of Tasmanian-designed and made products on offer,” Lord Mayor Anna Reynolds said. “While our borders remain closed, this really is a market by Tasmanians, for Tasmanians.”

With the health of stallholders, market crew and shoppers in mind, a team of Safety Angels will remind market-goers of safety requirements, such as physical distancing.

“It’s easy to forget about that 1.5m distance when you spot the perfect gift or personal treat while browsing the market,” Cr Reynolds said. “That’s where our Safety Angels will float in to offer a friendly reminder.”

Safety Angels are just one element of the market’s comprehensive health protocol, which also includes designated entry and exit points, hand sanitiser stations, monitoring of patron numbers and preferred contactless payment.

“Under the current restrictions, a maximum of 500 people can be inside the market at any given time and that includes stallholders,” Cr Reynolds said.

“As this will be quite different to past market experiences, we do kindly ask that anyone attending the market follows the guidelines provided.

“If there happens to be a queue to get into the market, that presents the ideal opportunity to go for a walk around Salamanca and support one of the many other local businesses that have also been doing it tough by, for example, grabbing a cup of coffee at a café.”

Thanks go to Telstra for providing the market team with mobile phones for use in monitoring patron numbers via a real-time gate counter app that can be updated live from every entry and exit point.

Tasmania’s Own Market will operate at Salamanca Place between Montpelier Retreat and the Silos this Saturday from 8.30am to 1.30pm. Eighty Salamanca Market stallholders will participate, with a further

80 stallholders to operate the following weekend. To see which stallholders will be onsite and more information about what to expect with the interim market arrangements, visit salamancamarket.com.au.

Slow down and stay safe on our roads

Mark Shelton, Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management

The Tasmanian Government is urging Tasmanians to slow down on our roads following a recent spate of crashes resulting in death and serious injuries.

Sadly this year 22 people have died and a further 163 have been seriously injured on Tasmanian roads, compared to 19 fatalities and 148 serious injuries at the same time last year.

This is a concerning trend and it’s important that we all heed the message that slowing down on our roads, will save lives.

Behind these statistics is a Tasmanian

who tragically leaves behind loved ones, friends and colleagues.

Tasmania Police continues to patrol roads across the state, but we also need all road users to do their bit to ensure the safety of themselves and others.

The message is simple:
Slow down, drive to the conditions and be mindful of icy or wet conditions;
Pay attention all the time;
Don’t drive while tired;
Wear your seatbelt or helmet; and
Don’t drink or drug drive – it’s not just your life at risk.
We must look after each other because the reality is our lives depend on it.

Updated HomeBuilder guidelines to help Tasmanians faster.

Michael Ferguson, Minister for Finance

The Tasmanian Government has updated guidelines for the State and Federal HomeBuilder grants that will better streamline the process and ensure grants can be paid sooner.

The Tasmanian Liberal Government’s \$20,000 grant and the Morrison Government’s \$25,000 grant mean Tasmanians can potentially access up to \$45,000 for their new home build, making Tasmania the best place in

Australia to build a house right now.

The new guidelines will align better with the existing First Home Owner Grant process, reducing complexity and making it simpler for financial institutions.

The program will stimulate residential building activity and maintain employment in the construction industry, supporting jobs and our economy in our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The updated guidelines and application can be found at www.sro.tas.gov.au/about-us/covid-19

Madeleine

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Circular Economy and Environment

Md Juman Hussan.

Circular Economy refers to a system of resources utilization where reduction, reuse and recycling of elements prevails: minimize production to a bare minimum, and when it's necessary to use the product, go for the reuse of the elements that can not return to the environment.

That is, the circular economy promotes the use of as many biodegradable materials as possible in the manufacture of products -biological nutrients- so they can get back to nature without causing environmental damage at the end of their useful life. When it is not possible to use eco-friendly materials -technical nutrients: electronics, hardware, batteries... - the aim is to facilitate a simple uncoupling to give them a new life by reintroducing them into the production cycle and compose a new piece. When this is not possible, it will be recycled in a respectful way with the environment.

According to the World Economic Forum "A circular economy is an industrial system that is restorative or regenerative by intention and design. It replaces the end-of-life concept with restoration, shifts towards the use of renewable energy, eliminates the use of toxic chemicals, which impair reuse and return to the biosphere, and aims for the elimination of waste through the superior design of materials, products, systems, and business models."

There are ten principles that define how circular economy should work:

Waste becomes a resource: is the main feature. All the biodegradable material returns to the nature and the not biodegradable is reused.

Second use: reintroduce in the economic circuit those products that no longer correspond to the initial consumers needs.

Reuse: reuse certain products or parts of those products that still work to elaborate new artifacts.



Reparation: find damage products a second life.

Recycle: make use of materials founded in waste.

Valorization: harness energy from waste that can't be recycled.

Functionality economy: circular economy aims to eliminate the sale of products in many cases to establish a system of rental property. When the product completes its main function returns to the company, where it is dismantled for reusing the valid parts.

Energy from renewable sources: elimination of fossil fuels to produce the product, reuse and recycle.

Eco-design: considers and integrates in its conception the environmental impacts throughout the life cycle of a product.

Industrial and territorial ecology: establishment of an industrial organizational method in a territory characterized by an optimized management of stocks and flows of materials, energy and services

Sources: Expok, Fundación para la economía circular, Lecciones de la naturaleza and El Mundo.

—Md Juman Hussan is the news editor of Showdesh Barta and Australia correspondence of sylhetview24.com. He actively contributes to his articles and poems. He also regularly write on Australian Biggest Community Newspaper Australian Muslim Times. He is Australia correspondent of Eurobangla Television. He also regularly contributed his articles and poems in Sydney based printed newspaper Shadin Khanto and Muktomoncho.



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Tasmania—Given a different perspective

to My Life.

Ailing from a small village (in South East Asia) rich in sports culture, I always felt that some fantastic sports persons from our village had missed an opportunity to compete with the best in the business only because of early injuries and lack of proper leadership in rehabilitation area. Injuries were neglected and proper rehabilitation methods were never put into use ultimately ending an individual's sports career at even early stages. I strongly believed this situation can be improved, and improving this situation could produce some life changing results for individuals and the community as well. Very soon realized nurturing

fresh, young, raw talent by creating a less-injury-prone (if not an injury-free) environment is absolutely at the crux of producing world class athletes. As much as this basic foundation criterion is easily prone to be neglected, it is very clear to me that it inhibits the growth of an athlete at a very early stage.

This prevailing dire situation in many communities along with my passion towards sports instigated me to take up physiotherapy during my bachelors. My strong pursuit to learn more in the field drove me overseas to pursue a Masters degree. I gained ample clinical knowledge in rehabilitation through my academics and thorough hands on experience for several years.

I had a completely different experience when I came to Tasmania. I had ample opportunity to work with clients from different backgrounds and with different disorders. All this usual and unusual experience enabled me to understand and delve more effectively under stressful situations. Experiences enabled me to be able to understand the human side of the injuries which was completely new to me till then. I saw how passionate people are living their lives and how involved they were in their community. The importance people gave to their community and to the environment gave a whole new perspective on looking at life. Be it be working and interacting with several people like community leaders, care

coordinators, team coaches or be it be seeing how people care for each other, all this provided a different understand of health.

As W.H.O states health is "A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". I realised the importance of stable healthy community in shaping up an individual health. The human aspect of dealing with people was noticed to be prime factor in treating a person but not the injury/disease. This "human aspect" encouraged me to manage, interact and build relationships in community and fostered a new dimension for me. The likes/dislikes, satisfaction/dissatisfaction of the patient/

athlete have now become the center of my treatment process. The rich community sports culture in Tasmania was very welcoming. People of all ages and from all walks of life engaged themselves in some sorts of sport. It was so enduring to see so many cricket clubs, football clubs, netball clubs, golfing clubs. There was always a place/space to be a part of it. People were seen not just playing for winning but there a sense of enjoying the game and cherishing the mental and physical benefits that came along with it.

I don't say my dreams/aspirations have changed but Tasmania with its rich cultural diversity, captivating natural scenic beauty and welcoming communities have given a different and right dimension to my dreams/aspirations.

I lived in Victoria before coming down to Tasmania but got stuck with the astounding natural beauty of this island and one can feel that sense of belonging in Tassie. Once Tasmania owns you and get to know how welcoming the people are, you are stuck and don't want to move anywhere else.

That's my experience in Tasmania and I believe most of you might be having a great experience after living here. Diverse Tassie would love to hear those stories.

We got some wonderful stories lined up in the upcoming editions, hope you will find them interesting.

-Mohan



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Further boost for Tasmania’s arts and cultural sector

Setting Tasmanian children up for a brighter future

Elise Archer, Minister for the Arts

The Tasmanian Government is a strong supporter of the arts and we have been committed to supporting our cultural and creative industries through the challenges of COVID-19.

I am delighted to announce that we will be providing a much needed funding boost to 60 Tasmanian artists through our latest Individuals and Groups support program round.

A total of more than \$349,000 has been awarded to these artists to help deliver 23 projects across of a variety of artistic platforms including music, theatre, visual art, writing and dancing.

Among the successful applicants is a Tasmanian Indigenous musician, an award winning emerging writer and a Burnie-based playwright.

Dewayne Everettsmith will use a \$25,000 grant to record an album of 12 songs in palawa kani language.

Sam George-Allen, winner of the 2019 Premier’s Literary Prizes’ Tasmanian Young Writers Fellowship, has received \$16,000 to create a five-episode podcast which will focus on the craft of nonfiction writing.

And playwright Ross Hay will use his \$11,000 grant to develop his work, The Road that Cuts the Rivers, into a local theatre production.

Applications for this funding round were independently assessed by expert peers drawn from the Cultural and Creative Industries Register.

For more information on the register and for a full list of recipients, visit: www.arts.tas.gov.au

Elise Archer, Liberal Member for Clark

The Tasmanian Government understands that investing in the first 1000 days of a child’s life can set them up for the brightest future possible, especially for those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable.

The Bouncing Back - Talk and Read Project gives families of children from birth to Kindergarten fun ideas about talking and reading that can support children’s learning both at home and at school.

Over the next few weeks Talk and Read bags will be passed on from schools to 7,800 families.

Families will receive a calico bag with a range of early years materials, including:

a picture book;
tips for talking and reading with your child;
picture poster for talking, finding and storytelling;
tip sheet with practical ideas on how to use a ball for play and learning;
wellbeing in the early years information for parents.

Families from Launching into Learning and Learning in Families Together will receive the bags, including a range of early years materials.

Child and Family Centres, Early Childhood Intervention Services and Libraries will also receive a range of these materials to share with their families.

The Bouncing Back - Talk and Read Project aims to engage and support families of children from birth to Kindergarten with key learning at home messages about talking and reading.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH:

South Indian Famous Tomato

Dal:

This simple yet most famous household recipe of south India, Tomato Dal is easy to cook and takes just 15-20 mins to prepare.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of Toor Dal(Red Lentils)
- 1 onion
- 2 tomato
- 2 Red chillies
- 4 cloves of garlic
- A pinch of turmeric
- 1 tablespoon oil

- 1/2 tablespoon mustard seeds
- 1/2 tablespoon coriander seeds
- 1/2 tablespoon cumin seeds
- 10-12 curry leaves
- 1 tablespoon salt

Procedure:

Put Dal, chopped onions, tomatoes in a pressure cooker and add 2 cups of water...and let it cook till the dal is nicely mashed up. put it aside

Now take a vessel heat it with oil and then add cumin, coriander, mustard seeds, red chillies , turmeric and curry leaves and let it cook for sets and then add turmeric and salt and let it cook for few more seconds. Now add the mashed up dal to this tempering and mix it and cook it for

2-3 mins...now add a cup of water and cook for another 10 mins on low flame.

Preference:

Eat Dal with Rice or Roti’s

The Talk and Read Bags will build on the partnerships that have been formed between families and schools, and today I was delighted to visit Moonah Primary School to see first-hand the positive impact this initiative is having on students.

More information on the Talk and Read Project is available from: www.education.tas.gov.au/parents-carers/early-years/bouncing-back-talk-and-read-project/



Nutrition Facts

Dal

Serving Size: 1 cup (214g)

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 222	Calories from Fat 38
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 4.2g	6%
Saturated Fat 0.6g	3%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 0.7g	
Monounsaturated Fat 2.6g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 431mg	18%
Potassium 713mg	20%
Total Carbohydrates 34g	11%
Dietary Fiber 13g	52%
Sugars 4.5g	
Protein 14g	
Vitamin A	8.7%
Vitamin C	20%
Calcium	3.4%
Iron	32%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2000 calorie diet.



The Multicultural Council of Tasmania represents multicultural community organisations in Tasmania.

We argue for government policies that build social inclusion and good outcomes for Tasmanians with a culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse background.

Individuals and community organisations can join via www.mcot.org.au



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Moonah Arts Centre to reopen with new exhibitions this month

Moonah Arts Centre (MAC) closed its doors to the public in March because of COVID-19. The centre is now scheduled to reopen on Friday 21 August with 3 new, exciting exhibitions by local artists.

“It’s been a really challenging time for artists” says MAC’s visual arts program officer Rebecca Holmes.

“Artists who were traveling from

interstate to be involved with MAC’s program have been unable to travel, and many artists haven’t been able to access their studios or collaborate with other creatives and have had to put projects on the back burner.”

“At MAC, we’ve been trying to support our artists by creating opportunities for them to show exhibitions, or parts of their exhibitions, online. This is something

that we will continue to do as we look to reopening our exhibition spaces as it has created some exciting opportunities.”

Toby Juliff is one of the artists in the exhibitions opening on 21 August at MAC. He has collaborated with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre and the Tasmania Fire Service to create an artwork examining an impending climate catastrophe. In addition to his exhibition, Toby has created a series of podcasts where he interviews artist, faith leaders, and experts in hazard reduction burning.

The podcasts will be available online during the exhibition.

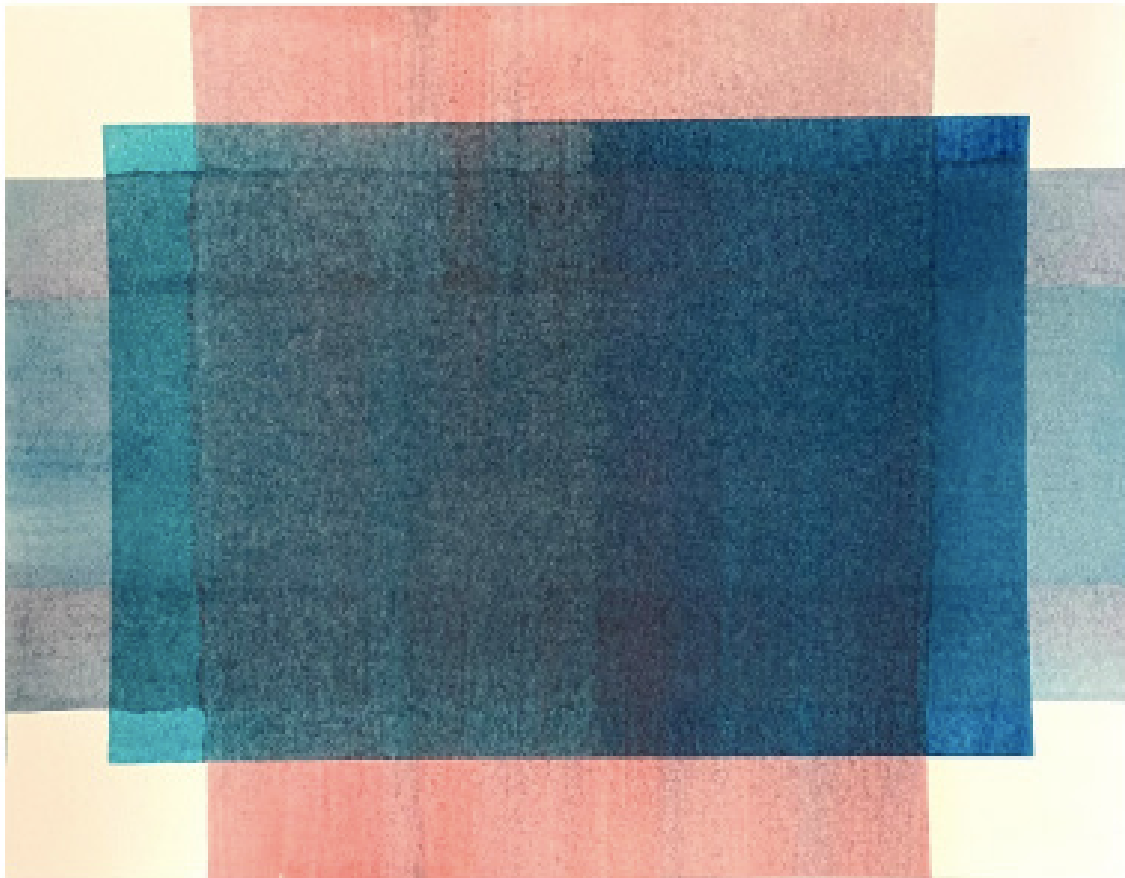
Catherine D’Orazio is also showing her work in this round of exhibitions. She makes her abstract watercolour paintings by layering colours over and over, in a ritualistic, contemplative process. In addition to her exhibition, Catherine has created a video showing her process. The video is a quiet invitation to meditate on the nuances of emotion and painting.

The third exhibition is by artist Nadia Refaei. Nadia uses family photographs and other records to explore the idea of ‘homeland’ in the context of the Syrian conflict. Nadia will also have a dual language video resource to accompany her exhibition, which will be available online.

“We’re so excited to invite people back to MAC to see these great exhibitions in person” says Rebecca Holmes.

All three exhibitions will be open to the public from Friday 21 August at Moonah Arts Centre. The exhibition spaces will be open Monday to Friday 10am – 5pm and Saturday 11am – 3pm.

- ESSENTIAL INFORMATION:
- Exhibitions run Fri 21 Aug – Sat 12 Sep
 - Moonah Arts Centre, 23-27 Albert Road, Moonah
 - Exhibition open from 10am-5pm Tuesday to Friday and 11am-3pm Saturdays
 - Entry to the exhibition is free



Catherine D’Orazio, “Unknown”, 2020, watercolour on paper. Photo: C. D’Orazio



Gallery-goers at an exhibition opening at MAC. Photo: Kaea & Olivia Photography



Nadia Refaei, 2020

The views and opinions expressed in the articles are those of authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of “Diverse Tassie”.

A Liver of Life

By Tara Bufton

“You’re a survivor.”

The words hung in the air all around me as I sat in couple’s counselling. Feeling minimized by the words. Watching myself feel minimized and questioning myself; ‘Is feeling minimized by that a symptom of my bipolar? Could I receive that comment differently?’

You see, I know the counsellor meant it in the nicest possible way. He meant to congratulate me on coping. But it doesn’t sit well with me.

The assumption that my life is a battle, a struggle – that doesn’t work for me.

I was born this way, bipolar is a part of me. The things I struggle with may be different to someone without a diagnosis. The things they struggle with are different to the ones someone-else struggles with too.

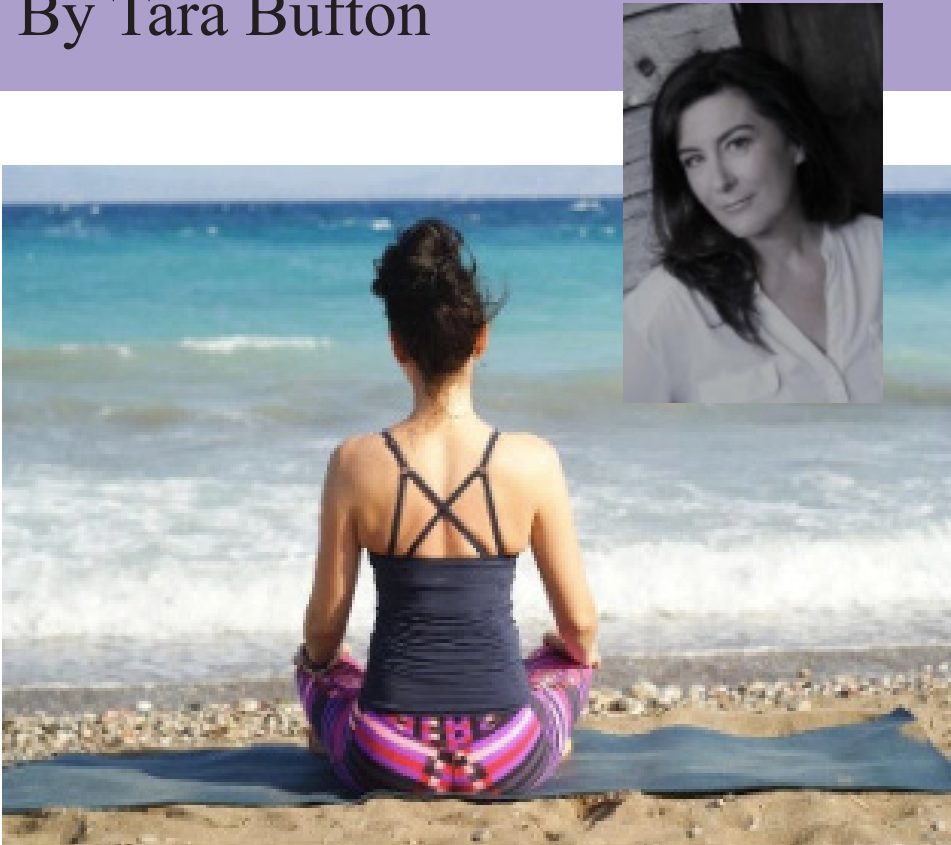
Struggles are relative. Do I struggle as much as a child-slave working in a clothes factory in India? Do I struggle as much a white man born into upper middle-class comfort, who struggles daily to live up to expectations put on him?

My point is, I am no more a survivor than anyone else in the world. I find pity disabling. Being labelled a fighter, a survivor, a battler pushes me down.

I have a good life. I have challenges, just like we all do. My mental health makes me a better person in as many ways as it makes me a worse person.

I embrace who I am. I like who I am. I am not a survivor, any more than you are.

I am a liver of life.



CONNECT at the Multicultural Hub

Zoom: how to connect online

English: basic English conversation

Tai Chi: Easy exercise

When: Tuesday 11 August 10-12:30pm

Where: the Multicultural Hub, 65 Hopkins Street, Moonah

This is an activity for elderly Tasmanians who are interested in connecting online. The information session on how to use Zoom in Easy English is facilitated by AIYA and MCOT in collaboration with the Golden Chinese Friendship Club.

For more information contact Nico via 0436 360 818 or nico.vanleeuwen@mcot.org.au



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P15

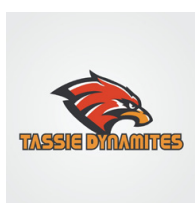
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