



Calendar of events

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Saturday 17th November – Living Beyond Suicide's (LBS) annual 'Walk through the Darkness and into the Light' Walk and Remembrance Service at Henley Beach

BTS supports this most important event that has become a focal point in the annual calendar for those bereaved by suicide. The 17th November is also 'International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day'. Details page 3.

Wednesday 21 November - No Support Meeting

Wednesday 12 December - BTS Christmas Support Meeting

7-9pm, Uniting Communities, Lvl 3, 10 Pitt St, Adelaide. Parking, Care Park, 15 Pitt St (directly opposite). Bring a plate of supper and join us for a support meeting ending with a remembrance to those that we have lost to suicide. More details page 2.

Wednesday 18 January - No Support Meeting

Sunday 3 February - BTS Coffee Morning

10am -12.30pm Botanic Garden Cafe Fibonacci – located on the Schomburgch Terraced Pavilion. This is an opportunity to catch up with others who have lost someone to suicide, in a less formal setting than our regular monthly meetings. Join us for coffee and cake while chatting and listening to others and then take a stroll through the beautiful surroundings of the Botanic Gardens. BTS volunteers will be on hand.

Wednesday 20 February- BTS Support Meeting

7-9pm, Uniting Communities, Lvl 3, 10 Pitt St, Adelaide. Parking, Care Park, 15 Pitt St (directly opposite). Please call or text the BTS support line on 0468 440 287 for time of meeting or if you require further information.

A Welcome from the Chair

Each time I sit down to write for the newsletter I reflect on the people that I have met over the last few months, even years and think of the loss, trauma, grief and pain that suicide leaves behind.

The emotional and physical toll can be totally draining on an individual and without an adequate support network can leave one feeling isolated and alone. Hopefully BTS provides support to those who seek assistance outside family, friends, their social network and professionals. At each monthly meeting we meet newly bereaved who are facing the most difficult time of their life and are wondering if life will ever get better. Our hearts go out to them for we have been there and know that the way ahead is painful and hurtful. Somehow, we learn to live with the pain and hurt and are able to function in society again, a very changed society, for we are very different people.

In addition, we now see Christmas decorations in stores and know that we must 'get through' what is upcoming and meant to be a joyful and happy time of the year. Even for many of us, where some years may have passed since our loss, Christmas is a time where we can feel very alone and alienated amongst the celebrations around us. Some of us may even spend it alone, unable to join in the celebrations. Each of us needs to do what is best for us, to take care of ourselves. On page 4 you will find an article on coping with Christmas.

There has been much discussion in recent times on the need for extra resources for mental health. For many years Professor Patrick McGorry has been an advocate for improved services. We have included an article written by the professor that details an idea for improved mental health services.

The 17th November 2018 is a significant day for those of us bereaved by suicide. It has been designated as the International Survivor of Suicide Day. On this day Living Beyond Suicide holds the annual 'Walk Through Darkness and into the Light' sunrise walk followed by a remembrance service conducted by Wesley LifeForce.

In the lead up to Christmas BTS is holding its December meeting on the second Wednesday, the 12th December.

BTS held its Annual General Meeting in September with the election of new office bearers. These people give generously of their time to ensure that BTS is able to carry out its work with those who have lost someone to suicide. To them go my thanks for their commitment. A special mention must also go to the small band of support volunteers who ensure the monthly meetings are run in a caring, safe and supportive environment.

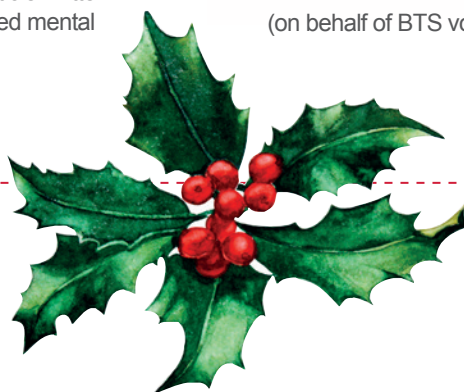
Thanks go to the many other organisations that are out there supporting the suicide bereaved community and/or working in the field of suicide prevention.

Finally, to those of you bereaved by suicide go my heartfelt thoughts. Whilst the days can seem so dark I hope that like me you are able to find some light, to be able to smile and laugh again whilst knowing the loss that you carry will always have a place in your heart.

May you all travel safely and take care of yourself and those around you.

Tim Porter
Chair

(on behalf of BTS volunteers and committee)



BTS Xmas Support Meeting

The BTS committee and support workers welcome you to our December BTS Support Meeting to be held on Wednesday 12th December from 7-9pm at Uniting Communities, 10 Pitt St, Adelaide. Parking (Care Park) is available directly opposite in Pitt St.

This will be our last support meeting for the year. Rather than hold a regular meeting we invite you to bring along your family, friends and people who have supported you through-out the year and join us in a relaxed, caring environment where you can chat with other bereaved persons.

Prior to the end of the evening we will have a poem and letter reading followed by remembrance to those we have lost.

Please bring a plate of supper to share. Coffee, tea, water and soft drink will be available. For many of us this evening is a very important part of Christmas as it allows us to remember those we have lost in a compassionate and supportive setting

We hope you can join us.

LBS - WALK THROUGH THE DARKNESS



The Living Beyond Suicide team extends a warm invitation to you, your family and friends to participate in our annual **WALK THROUGH THE DARKNESS**

An early morning walk along the beach, on Saturday 17th November 2018 for 'International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day'.

The walk is an opportunity to raise awareness as well as remember and reflect upon lives lost to suicide. The walk will commence at 5.30am at a choice of two locations – Tennyson or West Beach. Groups will walk simultaneously towards Henley Jetty, through the darkness and into the light of dawn.

You may choose to walk the entire way (approximately one hour) or meet us at 7.00am for a Remembering Service at Henley Square, adjacent to Henley Beach. As in previous years, complimentary breakfast will be provided. Join us as we walk together in our journey of healing. Walk in memory of a loved one, to support others bereaved by suicide and for suicide prevention.

ANGLICARESA

Walk Through The Darkness and into the light ...

Saturday 17th November 2018

ANGLICARESA
Disability & Mental Health Services



Join us on 'International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day' in memory of a loved one, to support others bereaved by suicide, and for suicide prevention

West Beach 5:30 am

Adelaide Shores Sailing Club, Barcoo Road

Tennyson 5:30 am

Oarsman Reserve, opposite 183 Military Road

Walk the entire way or join us from 7:00am at Henley Square for a Remembrance Ceremony

Complimentary breakfast, tea and coffee are provided

For more information call **1300 76 11 93**
RSVP via lbs@anglicaresa.com.au
www.facebook.com/LivingBeyondSuicide

phn
ADELAIDE

An Australian Government Initiative

EVERYTHING YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

When you have lost someone that you love, there are some really important things that you should know about loss at Christmas time.

When you install a new program on a computer, while this new program is making alterations to your system then everything else slows down. In fact, some routine programs may even stop working altogether. The process of bereavement is just like running a new program. Once it's started it needs to run its course... and it doesn't stop for Christmas. In fact, celebration times like Christmas, birthdays and anniversaries will create the equivalent of unexpected pop-ups.

Pretty much most of what we feel during the course of bereavement is completely natural, and yet sometimes we are so bowled over by the intensity and complexity of our emotions that we can feel as though there is something wrong with us. Our emotions can change like the sea. Gentle waves of sadness and reminders can suddenly turn into the storm of the century with the equivalent of an emotional tsunami. We can feel overwhelmed and carried by the tide of emotion, buffeted about by the memories that surround us.

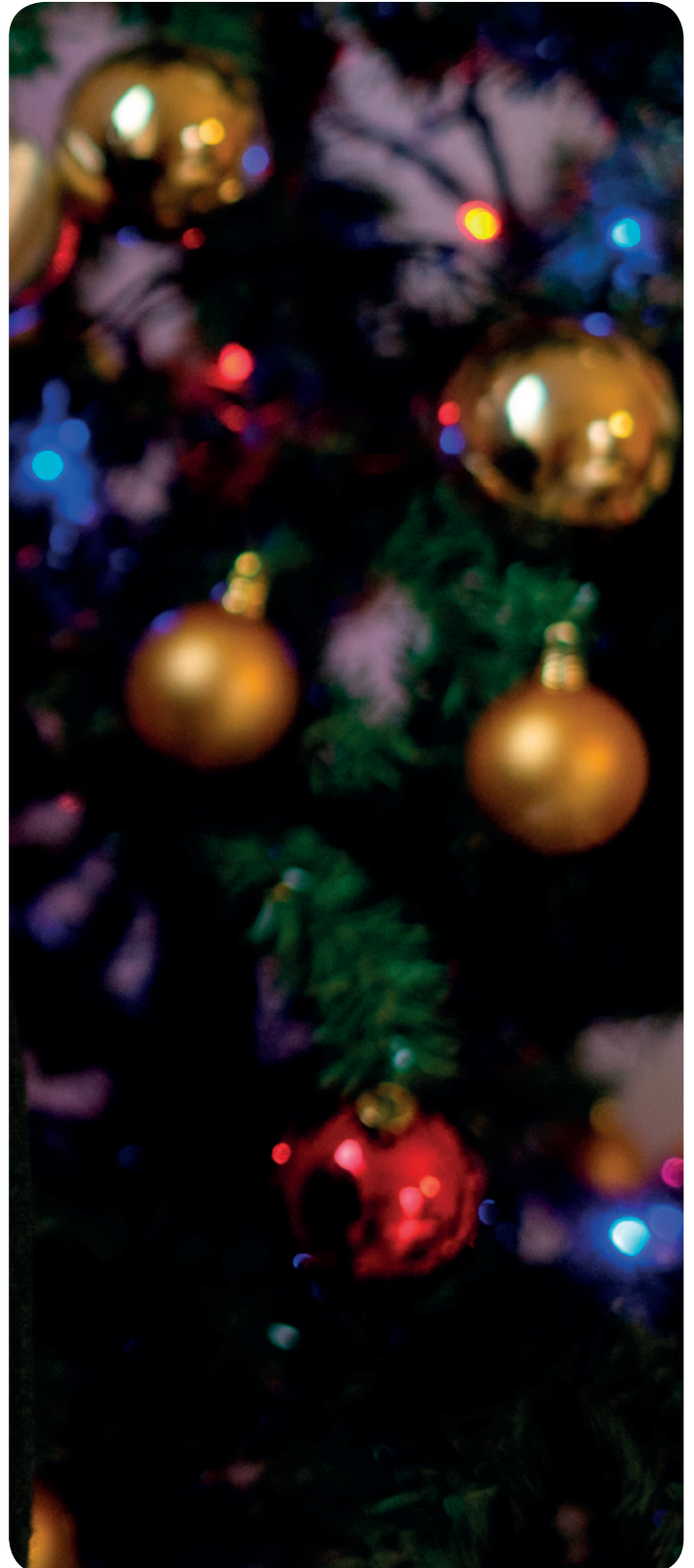
Being with loved ones can actually have a double edge to it. Being around people who are joyous and happy can be a stark reminder of our own loss and doing something lovely with friends and family can actually generate very powerful feelings of emptiness and sadness even though the intention may have been exactly the opposite.

For most people family relationships are the most challenging in our lives, so it's not surprising that if we are in a place of profound loss and vulnerability then spending time with family members at Christmas may trigger some complex emotional responses.

And yet it is often the unexpected little things that take us by surprise, like going shopping and noticing someone's favorite biscuits that they always used to buy at Christmas, or receiving a Christmas card from someone who doesn't know yet. Sometimes being with friends and family can feel like a pressure. Even though we desperately don't want to be alone, we may feel that we have to put a brave face on things when we are with others and this can be a real trial. We may also struggle to be fully present, however hard we try. Remember that whatever stage you are at in your grieving process, you have a major program running in the background, and this is going to slow everything down. You may find that you forget things. You may find you lack concentration. All of these things are completely natural. However organized you used to be at Christmas, you may not be this year, and that's okay.

Sometimes remembering the good times that we've had with someone can be almost too hard to bear in the face of their absence. The loss can simply feel too great.

I think it's important to remember that the intensity of our feelings will always be relative to the quality of the relationship that we had with someone, so when you experience intense pain and sadness at the loss of someone close it is actually a testimony to the quality of that relationship, and a testimony to the love and regard that you had for them.



BEREAVEMENT AT CHRISTMAS

When we lose someone we will experience not only the loss of that person but also a whole bunch of what I would call secondary losses as well. A good way to picture this is to imagine a spider diagram. In the middle there is the person that we've lost, and all around the outside of the diagram are loads of other things that we've also lost alongside this person. Not only the things that we used to do with them, and the things that we associate with them, but also the loss of future possibilities. Christmas is a big reminder of all of these, both past and present.

Christmas can also be a time of immense guilt in bereavement. We feel guilty with our family and friends for not being happy, but then guilty to the person we've lost if we do have a good time. Sometimes we can feel guilty about ever feeling OK ever again, as though we oughtn't to be doing so and as though being OK even for a moment would be disrespectful to the person that we've lost. Or we feel guilty if we start to relax and momentarily forget them. We can be afraid that if we stop thinking about them for even just one second we will somehow forget them forever.

All of these thoughts and feelings are completely natural and yet because many of them are intense and contradictory and go against the way that believe that we should be feeling we can get into a complete pickle... which is the last thing that we need at a time of natural vulnerability.

If you have recently lost someone or this is your first Christmas without them, then I would suggest that you do the following:

- Take time out whenever you need it and ask others to respect this.
- Share as little or as much as you wish with people, grief is a private affair and deeply personal. We have the right to our dignity.
- Make a specific time to remember them and put a time boundary around it.
- Dedicate your thoughts to them during this time and do something to mark their passing. Write them a card or a letter, or go for a walk, whatever feels most appropriate, and honor the time that you had together.
- Give your feelings your full attention. Acknowledge and validate the way that you feel and however distressing remember that the way that you feel is testimony to the love that you had for them. At the end of the time that you have allowed for this in your day, light a candle and then go and have as good a time as you can. Because this is what they would have wanted for you.

Jenny Florence a-z-of-emotionalhealth.com



Former Australian of the Year's radical and affordable solution for our mental health crisis.

Prof. Patrick McGorry thinks the enormous economic and personal strain of mental illness in Australia calls for a radical re-imagining of how we treat it.

Australia is in the grip of a national crisis in mental health care.

Every year in Australia around 3,000 people die from suicide. Most have sought help from our health system, but it has failed them and their bereaved families and friends. Suicide clusters hidden from public view are claiming the lives of large numbers of young people in regional and metropolitan Australia. If these deaths were due to a viral epidemic or road trauma there would be decisive action.

However, suicide is the just tip of a massive iceberg. Four million Australians experience mental illness every year and it impacts nearly all families. With 690,000 experiencing severe mental illness, it is the largest cause of disability, yet less than 10 per cent can access the NDIS. Mental illness causes nearly 15 per cent of the health burden, similar to heart disease and cancer, yet it is allocated just over 5 per cent of the health budget.

The World Economic Forum estimates that the direct and indirect costs of mental illness amount to 4 per cent of GDP, more than that of cancer, diabetes and chronic respiratory disease combined. Investing in mental health care with major return on investment is the best buy in health care by a country mile.

“Severe mental illness is the largest cause of disability, yet less than 10 per cent can access the NDIS”.

The paradox is that we've never had greater awareness of mental illness. Yet this awareness hasn't led to better mental health care. Many argue that the awareness industry has become a barrier, because it has created the impression that governments have responded to the problem. The scale of the challenge has led to a defeatist attitude in some parts of the mental health sector, which holds out false hope that well-meaning 'workarounds', and unproven preventive approaches are the only realistic way forward.

Across Australia in the 1990s, the 19th century asylums were swept away by deinstitutionalisation and governments pocketed vast amounts of revenue from land sales and saved vast amounts on bed reductions. They promised that we could drastically reduce bed numbers and relocate them within general hospitals, provided we built strong community mental health services. This promise has been broken in the most irresponsible manner with fatal consequences for tens of thousands of Australians.

As the Australian population surged to 25 million, state governments disinvested in community mental health care. Successive federal governments have flattered to deceive, but simply haven't understood the scale of the problem. The result? Implosion. A rising tide of desperate people with life-threatening mental illnesses and crises surging into emergency departments, and flooding streets and prisons.





Emergency departments are highly unsuitable environments for distressed people. People with mental illness, already agitated, suicidal or psychotic go to the back of the queue. When they eventually become agitated by long delays, they are typically forcibly restrained and sedated. They seek help but are harmed or sent away without any real care. Hundreds of thousands of Australians – the “missing middle” – are too ill for primary care, but not desperately ill enough to qualify for emergency care. Early intervention and continuity of care, routine in cancer and cardiovascular medicine, are denied to people with mental illness. Expert and sustained specialist care for mental illness is largely a mirage.

“This solution is readily affordable”.

There are solutions. The National Mental Health Commission has proposed a “stepped-care” model with investment upstream to build the missing steps in care and turn off the flow into emergency departments. What would this look like? Every Australian community would have its own stigma-free, mental health collaborative care hub, with an expert multidisciplinary team of GPs, psychiatrists, allied health professionals, addiction specialists, and 24-hour mobile home intensive care unit. Developmentally appropriate versions, vertically integrated with primary care for children, young people, older adults and the elderly would be crucial. Every Federal Electorate would over time be home to at least one of these hubs. Headspace, with its one-stop-shop design, is a small-scale prototype and an example of the first step in such a reform. This solution is readily affordable, with each of these hubs costing around \$15m and even less in rural and regional Australia. The annual cost of the fully scaled-up reform would be less than \$2bn, or one-tenth of the cost of the NDIS which covers only 400,000 Australians. Remember, four million Australians experience mental illness each year.

What is needed to make this happen? The answer is political will. How can this be created? The missing ingredient is large-scale engagement of the public in their own self-interest. The campaign “Every Australian Counts” led to the NDIS being funded. Mental illness affects 10 times more people, yet Australians have been relatively silent in demanding a fair go for the mentally ill. Australians for Mental Health is a new charity aimed at creating a social movement to affect reform and achieve equity in health care for Australians with mental illness. Led by people with lived experience, it could be a game changer as we enter a new election season.

Prof. Pat McGorry AO is Executive Director of Orygen, the National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health.

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/the-feed/former-australian-of-the-year-s-radical-and-affordable-solution-for-our-mental-health-crisis>

Mental illness affects 4,000,000 Australians. Everyday, eight Australians take their own life. Australia’s mental health services are fragmented, underfunded, hard to access, and of poor quality. People who need help can’t get the care they require. Our Mental Health System is broken – Australian’s for Mental Health, is a people’s movement fighting to fix the broken system:

Click the link below for further information .
<http://www.australiansformentalhealth.org.au/>

The Bereaved through Suicide Support Group

Run by people who themselves have been bereaved through suicide, BTS supports those in the community who have been close to someone who has taken their own life – partner, child, relative, friend or close acquaintance.

**Telephone support service: (08) 8332 8240
or 0468 440 287 from 8am - 8pm**

**Email support service: support@bts.org.au
Suicide bereavement resources: www.bts.org.au**

Donations

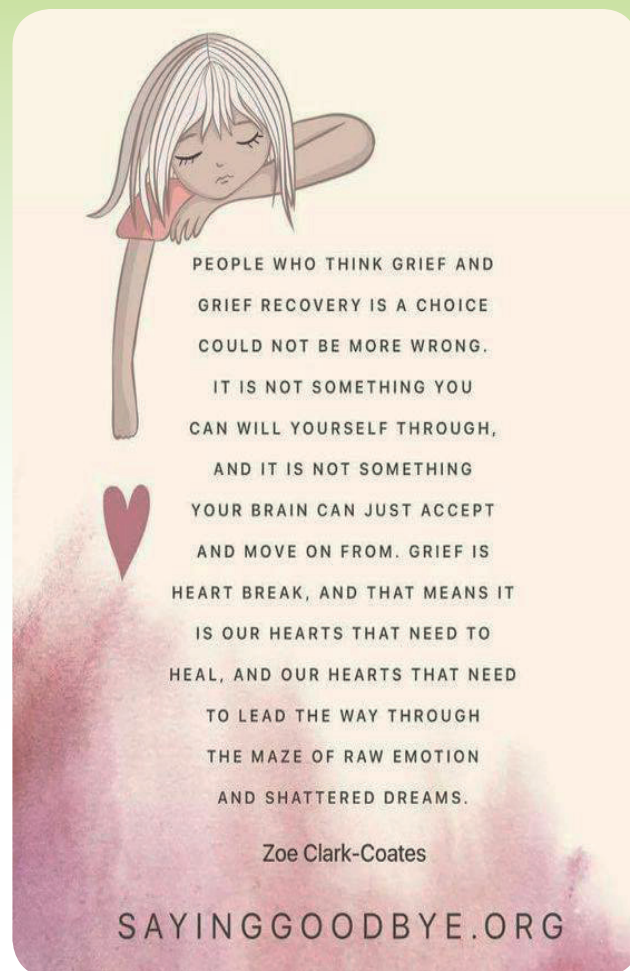
Should you wish to make a tax deductible donation to BTS you can directly EFT to:

BTS Support Group BSB: 633-000 A/C: 148312366

or donations can be sent to: PO Box 15, Hindmarsh SA 5007.
Tax deductible receipts will be issued.

Without donations, BTS would not be able to continue supporting the Bereaved through Suicide community.

100% of all donations received are used to continue supporting people bereaved through suicide. BTS receives no government funding and all work is undertaken by volunteers.



Additional Support Services

[Living Beyond Suicide \(LBS\)](#) between 10am–10pm any day.

[Minimisation Of Suicide Harm \(MOSH\)](#)

[Kids Helpline](#)

[Lifeline](#)

[Beyondblue](#)

[Mensline](#)

[Suicide Call Back Service](#)

Phone 1300 76 11 93

Phone: (08) 8443 8369

Phone: 1800 55 1800

Phone: 13 11 14

Phone: 1300 22 4636

Phone: 1300 789 978

Phone: 1300 659 467

The Suicide Call Back Service is a professional, national, 24/7 counselling service for anyone affected by suicide.



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