



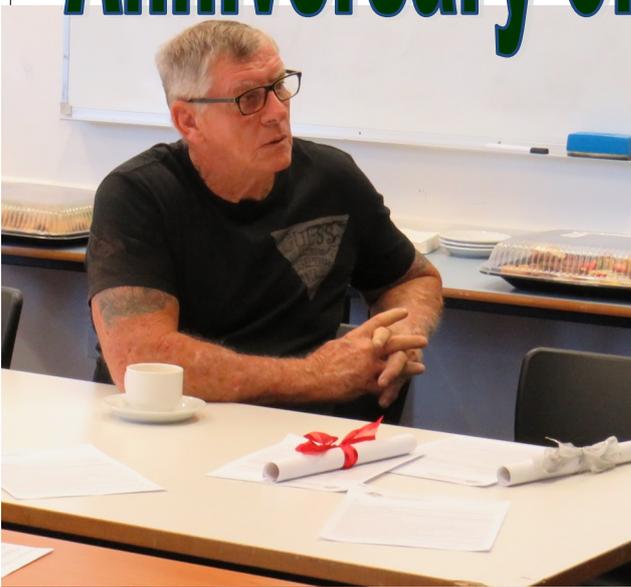
The Lotus Place NQ office is located at
312 Sturt Street in Townsville City.
We provide outreach to Mackay,
the Burdekin and Cairns

www.lotusplace.org.au • North Queensland • December 2017

*Lotus Place focuses on helping each person to fulfil their potential,
and to access justice and healing from the effects of childhood
abuse.*

*Lotus Place provides integrated peer support, advocacy,
counselling and other support services to
Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants.*

Anniversary of the National Apology







Thank you to all Forgotten Australians, friends and family members from Cairns, Townsville and Mackay for coming together and acknowledging the 8th Anniversary of the National Apology

The Fishing Club!



**Next Fishing Club meeting is
7th December!**





Report on Aged Care and GP Training

Over the past 12 months we have been attempting to engage with Residential Aged Care Services to offer training in caring for Forgotten Australians to staff and management as well as to Allied Health Professionals.

We recognise that this is an aging population that has very specific needs given the high likelihood of re-traumatisation and the reluctance (to say the least) of Forgotten Australians to enter Residential Aged Care.

In August of this year we made contact with the Workforce Development arm of North Queensland Primary Health Network who have the portfolio for delivering training to GP's, Allied Health and in particular Aged Care providers and assessors in the North Queensland region.

Val. Cooper, a Forgotten Australian most passionate about this topic reviewed our materials and accompanied us to the sessions to share her story

We now have had further interest received from Ingham, Mount Isa, Home Hill, Townsville again, Charters Towers again, Cairns and Innisfail. Individual attendees have returned to their workplaces and "demanded" this training be delivered to all workers in residential aged care.

Comments Received:

"more training please in the Burdekin"

"please do this in every place please"

"It was interesting and something that's not spoken of in our community"

"Very real and confronting. I am walking away with a changed mindset about everything"

"Please come back"

"It's a well thought out presentation. Easy to understand, thought provoking"

"The presentation should be required training for staff working in aged care facilities"





A resource you might like to use?

Recently a Forgotten Australian who has been assisting us with designing training programs for Aged Care Providers and General Practitioners drafted a letter for Forgotten Australians to use when first meeting a new doctor or counsellor.

We think it is fantastic and have included a copy in this newsletter. If you think you might use it, let us know and we change the wording to suit your individual circumstances.

It is just an example and we would be very happy to work with you in drafting a version that would suit your particular needs



Dr.....,

I'm writing because I am a soon to be patient of yours, and there are a few things that I think would be beneficial for you to know prior to our first appointment.

I am a survivor of physical, mental and emotional abuse, physical and emotional neglect and sexual abuse.

My medical records may not reflect these things specifically as this is the first time I have communicated them to your services.

I've entered a new season of safety in my life with limited or eliminated contact with my abusers and I am seeking to find a physician who will partner with me in my future health care and help me to address the lingering effects of abuse on my health which have been partially or fully unaddressed.

Because of my history, meeting new doctors and undergoing physical exams can be extremely anxiety provoking for me. My counsellor has helped me to assess what I may need in order to feel safe in medical environments and during medical procedures/exams. I thought it would be best to share some of that prior to seeing you.

One thing that is extremely helpful to me is if the first appointment with a new provider can be a consult in which there will be only discussion and no exam. I believe this is what we have scheduled on, and I just wanted to confirm that need.

During the appointment, I will likely be anxious and will have trouble processing the information we discuss. It is a struggle for me to express what I am thinking and feeling and whether or not I am feeling safe. It's likely that I will become dissociative during/following a physical exam and during/ following discussion of health topics related to the abuse.

This dissociative state may or may not be apparent to an observer. For these reasons, if possible, I would like to request to be scheduled for slightly longer appointments than usual, so that I can have time to get grounded, process information, and ask questions.

For a variety of reasons (including a history of head trauma, neglect, iron- deficiency and Complex PTSD) I will be unable to remember in detail what we've discussed following our appointments. I will take notes during the appointment to record our conversations, but, if possible, I would like to request to be supplied with a copy of your records from each appointment.

I look forward to developing a positive relationship with you as my new health care provider.

Thank you

Your new patient

Final sitting marks the end of the Royal Commission

14 November, 2017

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse will sit on 14 December to publicly mark the conclusion of the five-year long inquiry.

Royal Commission CEO, Philip Reed, said the sitting will be a chance for Commissioners to thank the community for their continued support of the Royal Commission and its work.

"When we began in 2013, we had no idea just how widespread or prevalent child sexual abuse in institutions was in Australia, or how many people would come forward to share their story," Mr Reed said.

"Since then we have held 57 public hearings, where we sat for 444 days and heard evidence of more than 1,300 witnesses. Commissioners have also listened to the personal accounts of almost 8,000 survivors of child sexual abuse in institutions through 'private sessions'.

"Combined with our comprehensive policy and research program, the Royal Commission has been able to contribute to the community's understanding and awareness of institutional child sexual abuse."

Mr Reed said that during the life of the Royal Commission, thousands of individuals, including survivors, academics, legal practitioners, government representatives and advocacy and support groups have contributed to its work.

"We couldn't have achieved what we have so far without the input and support of so many," Mr Reed said.

The Hon. Justice Peter McClellan AM, the Chair of the Royal Commission, will present the National Library of Australia with a book of around one thousand messages written by survivors of institutional child sexual abuse.

The book titled, 'Message to Australia' is a collation of personal messages written by those who shared their story to the Royal Commission in a private session. The messages, addressed to the Australian community, tell of survivors' experiences and their hopes for creating a safer environment for children in the future. Once handed to the National Library, the book will be accessible to members of the public.

This sitting will be open to the public, with limited seating available.

For those who are unable to attend, the sitting will be streamed live to the public via webcast on the Royal Commission's website www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au

The Royal Commission's final report will be delivered to the Governor General on Friday 15 December 2017.

Event:	Royal Commission Final Sitting
Date:	Thursday 14 December
Sitting times:	9.30 am AEDT (the sitting is expected to conclude by 10.00 am AEDT)
Location:	Hearing Room 1, Level 17, Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney

DON'T FORGET: WALLET CARDS

The Historical Abuse Network participants in North Queensland designed these wallet cards for use in dealing with services, people or organisations to help them to understand what it is like living with the legacy of trauma.

Please let us know which card you would like and we can get it sent straight out to you

 <p>I am a Forgotten Australian lotusplace.org.au</p> <p>Please listen to me Believe me Recognise me Do not judge me</p> <p><u>Trauma changes people</u></p>  <p>HISTORICAL ABUSE NETWORK</p>	<p>Attention! lotusplace.org.au</p>  <p>Health professionals Community service providers Emergency services Support persons Law enforcement</p> <p><u>Please read this card</u></p>  <p>HISTORICAL ABUSE NETWORK</p>	 <p>lotusplace.org.au</p> <p>Please listen to me Believe me Hear me Do not judge me I may be confused I may feel threatened</p> <p><u>Trauma changes people</u></p>  <p>HISTORICAL ABUSE NETWORK</p>
<p>I am a Forgotten Australian A survivor of Australia's past child welfare system. The reality of my childhood was one of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ depravity→ neglect→ physical, emotional and sexual abuse→ denial of basic human rights. <p>Childhood trauma drastically changes development and it may effect the way I am relating to you right now.</p> <p>Please consider my past when you engage in the present.</p> <p>Initiative of the HAN Reference Group NQ</p>	<p>I am a Survivor ...of Australia's past child welfare system. The reality of my and my peers' experience was often one of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ depravity→ neglect→ physical, emotional and sexual abuse→ denial of basic human rights. <p>Childhood trauma drastically changes a person's development and the way they will relate to other people and situations for the rest of their life.</p> <p>Initiative of the HAN Reference Group NQ</p>	<p>I am a Survivor One of 500,000 others who spent part of their childhood in Institutional/out-of-home care.</p> <p>Often the reality of our childhood was one of brutality, neglect and physical, emotional and sexual abuse.</p> <p>I carry the trauma of my childhood through many parts of my life. It <i>doesn't</i> define me but it can change my ability to respond rationally to stressful situations.</p> <p><u>Trauma changes people</u></p> <p>Initiative of the HAN Reference Group NQ</p>



Managing PTSD During the Holidays

People suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) may have a more difficult time during the holidays for any number of reasons:

Those suffering from PTSD do not understand why or cannot explain why they are irritable or cannot enjoy the holidays.

Family members try to make the holiday special and may end up feeling angry instead when the person with PTSD is not willing or able to participate in holiday events.

Holidays and family functions can make the PTSD sufferer feel like an outsider. They may feel uncomfortable joining in the celebration and, as a result, end up feeling alone and isolated.

Large crowds or events with alcohol can be problems for people with PTSD. He or she may feel unsafe in places with many people or large crowds. Trips to the mall or large family gatherings may bring about such uncomfortable feelings the sufferer may instead avoid all situations that involve crowds.

People with PTSD have a larger chance than the general public of having problems with alcohol. Holiday parties often include alcoholic beverages and this may be a big problem, especially if triggers are around.

No matter what the reason, the holiday season is often difficult for people with PTSD, but there are a number of things they can do to help manage their PTSD during this holiday season:

Understand Your Triggers - Knowing what your triggers are and having techniques to cope with triggers can help you to make it through family gatherings or shopping trips.

Develop Coping Strategies- Anxiety coping techniques, such as deep breathing or removing yourself from the situation for a few minutes can help.

Prepare Yourself - Be prepared for situations that may come up. You may want to write down some of our coping strategies. When a stressful situation arises, you can take out your notes and use the strategies. Sometimes during a stressful situation, you can forget what helps. Having it written down help calm you down.

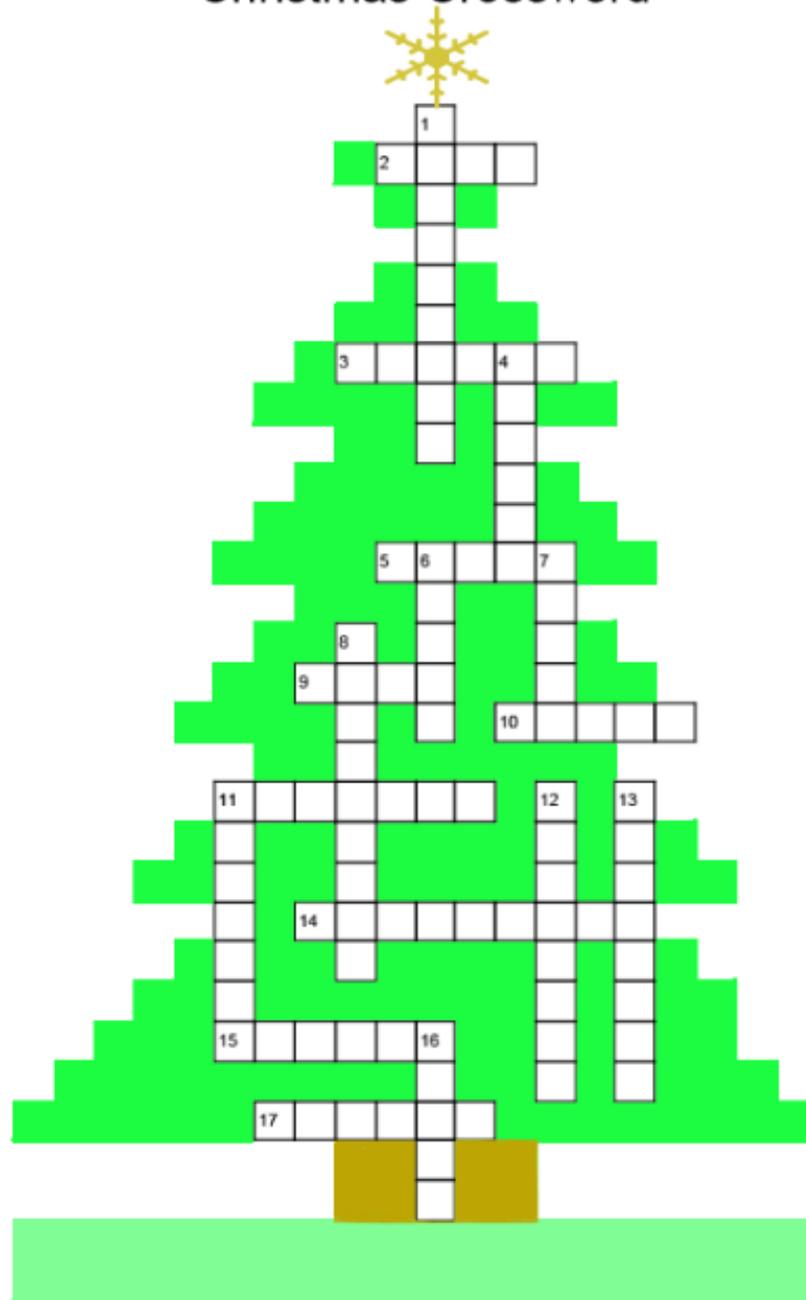
Create a Support Network - . Knowing there is someone that understands what you are feeling and will be watching for signs of anxiety can help and make coping with the situation easier.

Ceremony reminds us of what we are missing, rather than what we have. Survivors of cruelty and catastrophe are particularly affected by the commercialization of compassion.

We can bolster our resistance with reminders of our independence, maturity and network of kindred spirits.



Christmas Crossword



Across

- 2. Play things
- 3. A famous snowman
- 5. Ringing instruments
- 9. Decorated with ornaments and tinsel
- 10. Sweets
- 11. Santa's preferred way to get in the house
- 14. Hung up over the fireplace
- 15. Santa's transportation
- 17. The lead reindeer

Down

- 1. Where Santa and his elves live
- 4. Sparkly decorations that look like icicles
- 6. Santa's helpers
- 7. Jolly Saint Nick
- 8. Used to decorate the tree
- 11. Better leave these out for Santa
- 12. Can these really fly?
- 13. They're under the tree
- 16. Plant leaves and berries used to deck the halls



Christmas Events

CAIRNS

December 18th

Rydges Esplanade Resort

11:30am

MACCKAY

December 20th

Mount Pleasant Tavern

12noon

TOWNSVILLE

December 21st

Kirwan Tavern

11:30am

**PLEASE RSVP BY DECEMBER 4TH
FOR CATERING!**



Christmas Holidays

Kylie-maree and Jess from Lotus Place NQ are both taking holidays over the Christmas period.

Which means our NQ office will be unattended.

The team in Brisbane will be operating and available through the Christmas/New Year period. You can contact them at any time on

07 3347 8500 or 1 800 035 588. WWW.SNOOPY.COM







“Trauma is personal. It does not disappear if it is not validated. When it is ignored or invalidated the silent screams continue internally heard only by the one held captive. When someone enters the pain and hears the screams healing can begin.”

— Danielle Bernock, Emerging with Wings: A True Story of Lies, Pain, and the Love That Heals



The lotus flower has its origins and roots in the muddy waters below the surface, yet above the water it is a beautiful resilient flower. After a consultative process the Lotus Flower was chosen as both a metaphor and image to represent the journey from adversity to hope.



Lotusplacena



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