

BRAIN INJURY MATTERS NEWSLETTER

MEET POPPY EGAN



1. How long ago did you acquire your injury?

I had a right ischemic stroke on 26 January, 2020. I joke that surely my body could have found other ways to protest about Invasion Day.

2. What is your greatest achievement since your injury?

Returning to work as a Project Manager of the BIM Peer Support Program.

3. What do you want to achieve in the near future?

I want to have a solo exhibition of my art.

4. What do you find your biggest challenge?

Since my stroke, my anxiety has been magnified, so my biggest challenge is to keep on top of my anxiety. Pacing myself and getting good rest and mindfulness have been really important in managing my anxiety.

5. What is your favourite food?

I love chocolate. I have a bit of a sweet tooth.

6. What is your favourite movie?

Recently, I really enjoyed *The King of Staten Island*. It's a great, laugh out loud, oddball comedy. I enjoyed it because the leading actor is not your typical hero.

7. What is your favourite hobby?

I love making art. I also like reading and listening to fiction.

8. What do you want to achieve through Brain Injury Matters?

I want to see BIM continue to connect people throughout regional Victoria.

9. What advice would you give to someone with a new brain injury?

You need to give yourself time to recover and adjust to your brain injury. It can be helpful to talk to a neuropsychologist about how you are feeling. Come along to a Peer Support Group or Online Monday Morning Coffee at 11am.

10. What does Brain Injury Matters mean to you?

We are all different and yet we have this amazing connection through our brain injuries.

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REGULAR THINGS HAPPENING AT BIM

ONLINE COFFEE MORNINGS

Mondays at 11am

Open to anyone with a brain injury.

A fun way to start the week includes jokes, quizzes, and conversation starters.

Contact office@braininjurymatters.org to receive the Zoom link.



PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

- **Northcote** - Tuesdays, 10am
- **Frankston** - Tuesdays, 10am
- **Online only** - Wednesdays, 10am
- **Ringwood** - Thursdays, 10:30am
- **Footscray** - Thursdays at 10am
- **Gisborne** - Last Wednesday of the month
- **AWSABI (Albury-Wodonga Stroke & Brain Injury Inc)**
- 4th Thursday of the month, 10:30am
- **Bendigo** - Fortnightly on Thursdays, 11:30am (May 18, June 1 etc)
- **Melbourne CBD Women's Support** - 1st Monday of the month, 11am









Contact office@braininjurymatters.org if you are interested in joining a group.

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE, ABI WISE APP, FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM

<https://www.braininjurymatters.org>

ABIWise App is free to download from GooglePlay and App Store

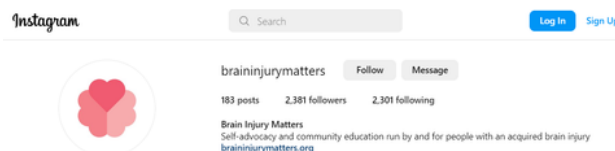
 ABI Wise

 Weekly Tips	 ABI Info
 Stories	 Meditation
 Resources	 Contact Us

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Brain Injury Matters
737 likes · 853 followers



Instagram

braininjurymatters Follow Message

183 posts 2,381 followers 2,301 following

Brain Injury Matters
Self-advocacy and community education run by and for people with an acquired brain injury
[braininjurymatters.org](https://www.braininjurymatters.org)

Proudly brought to you by  Brain Injury Matters

THANK YOU

Special thanks to

United Brains

who have transferred to BIM all resources
after the winding up of their groups.

All United Brains members
are automatically
BIM members.



MONASH
University



Transport
Accident
Commission

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS POST INJURY

WORKSHOPS

COMING SOON

TO A PEER SUPPORT

GROUP NEAR YOU

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT REPORT

Hello Everyone

I really hope that you have been keeping warm!!

The work of the BIM Committee of Management continues – the behind the scenes work of keeping the organisation running and providing some of the things like peer support groups that are so important to people. The number of people linking up with the peer support groups is always growing and the feedback about their impact is very positive.

But we are also looking to expand our horizons and explore new things and link up with similar organisations. I met with Angela from Brain Injury Community. Brain Injury Community is a self-advocacy organisation in Queensland. When Angela was in Melbourne recently, we met to share information and look at ways to work with each.

The analysis of the 4th BIM Annual Needs Survey has been completed and that will be sent out to you shortly.

So that is it till next month. Stay well till then!

Brent Alford

Chairperson
Brain Injury Matters



ILC PROJECT REPORT

Our Peer Support Groups continue to meet on a regular basis - weekly, fortnightly, or monthly catchups. Importantly, we have started a new Peer Support Group for women, which will meet on the first Monday of the month. The first catch-up was held in the first week of June.

You can see from the photos, on the next few pages, the variety of interesting activities and catch-ups from the past month or so. Going to the movies, portrait painting, lunch at the pub, a community consultation on loneliness and a games day.

The reach of the groups continues. The number of new people joining the peer groups in the first half of 2023 is 40. There is now a weekly average of 65 people each week attending the groups (up from 62 last month), since the start of the year.

Cheers

Andrew, Fiona, Fraser, Nick, Peter L, Peter P, Poppy, Ryan, Sally and Yannick

PHOTOS FROM PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

MONDAY ONLINE COFFEE MORNING



EAST METRO PSG - Ringwood Games & Toasted Sandwiches Day



***SOUTH METRO PSG - Frankston
Cafe***



***WEST METRO PSG - Footscray
Counter Lunch***



NORTH METRO PSG - Northcote Portrait Painting & Movies



WOMEN'S PEER SUPPORT GROUP



On the first Monday in June, ten women met for the first time at Ross House. To celebrate we shared a delicious chocolate mousse cake with coffee and had a good chat.

It was exciting to meet women from all over Melbourne. We connected by sharing our first album. We all had a good laugh, as we recalled music that we loved as teenagers.

As a group, we came up with some great ideas for outings and activities to plan over the next few months.

Our next meeting will be on Monday, 3rd July, at 11am-12.30. All women are invited to join us at the Ian Potter Centre at Fed Square.



Women's Peer Support

*Please join us at the next monthly
Women's Peer Support Group,
Monday 3rd July from 11am-12.30pm,
Meet at the
Ian Potter Centre at Federation Square*

*We will be meeting in the foyer, having a look at some
of the current exhibitions then having coffee. Entry
to the Ian Potter Centre is free. Participants cover
the cost of any refreshments and snacks. Support
workers are welcome.*

*For further information please contact Poppy Egan
poppy.egan@braininjurymatters.org
or call 0466101812*

YOU'RE HOT THEN YOU'RE COLD...

As we head towards the depth of winter, some people with brain injury may struggle with the physical and financial challenges of the cold.

The part of our brain called the **hypothalamus** is responsible for regulating our body temperature. If this is damaged then people with brain injury may feel too hot, too cold, or even both at different times.

BIM members have shared some of their personal experiences. One member said that the side of their body affected by stroke gets colder than the other side.

Another member finds it almost impossible to go out in hot weather, because their body gets overheated. A third member particularly feels the cold and takes a blankets and heat pack when going out in cooler weather.

Some tips for staying warm:

- wearing layers of clothes;
- covering extremities with gloves, scarves, hats and warm socks;
- having warm drinks, including taking a thermos with you;
- snuggling under a throw rug when seated; and
- heating rooms appropriately.



As energy prices soar, it may be difficult to justify turning on the heater.

Here's some energy saving ideas:

1. Close and seal windows and doors to keep heat in. For example, fit draught seals.
2. Energy Victoria recommends setting your heating to between 18 and 20 degrees. Every degree higher can add 15% to your heating costs.
3. Only heat/cool rooms you are using

You may be eligible for the Victorian Government \$250 Power Saving Bonus. Go to www.compare.energy.vic.gov.au for more information and to apply.

If you are concerned about your ability to regulate your body temperature, please seek advice from your General Practitioner, or other member of your health care team.

If you are having difficulty paying your energy bills, you could:

- contact your energy provider to check that you are on the best plan and ask about help paying your bill; or
- contact the National Debt Helpline to talk to a financial counsellor. Phone 1800 007 007 or visit www.ndh.org.au

A STORY BY ANAT

Difficulty Speaking Clearly

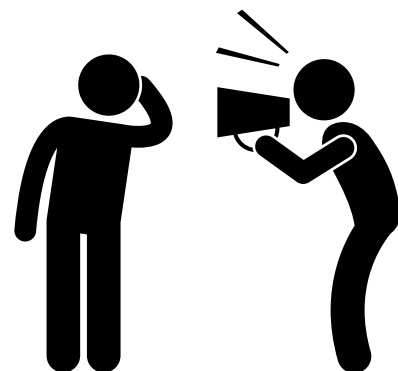
“What did she say?” asked the irritated voice.

Rosie had heard this before many times, but what she was saying was completely clear to her. It shocked her to realize that her low volume and lack of articulation meant that quite a few others could not understand her.

Since she was new to the group, she nervously introduced herself, saying “My name is... Rosie. I’m quite glad... to join this group, because I’ve heard... that you’re all so... accepting of everyone who has had... a brain injury.” While saying this, Rosie was extremely nervous, because she desperately hoped that this would finally be the group that suited her.

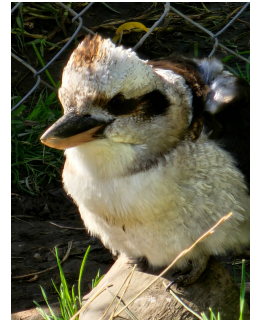
Rosie explained to her new group that she often feels upset by experiencing misunderstanding of what she is saying. Since most of the group members have a brain injury, Rosie hoped that this would be the group that would finally understand her.

She heard from others that many of them had to go through lots of speech therapy, so Rosie decided that she would do the same. She was very pleased that the people in this brain injury group helped her in her motivation and gave her some positive comments. Now she is doing lots of speech therapy in the hope that everyone will finally understand her.



YARRA VALLEY NOCTURNAL ZOO

By Mark Korenhof



In April, I went to Yarra Valley Nocturnal Zoo.

I got to stay 2 nights and it was all covered under the NDIS.

I did a night tour and saw koalas, white kangaroos, sugar gliders, rock wallabies, lots of birds, snakes, lizards, wombats, echidnas, emus and llamas! There are over 450 animals.

The zoo keepers all have disabilities and are trained up by Steve and Lou, the owners.

I really recommend it to others with brain injury.

My favourite part was having close up encounters with all the animals. I even had a koala called Charlotte staring at me through my bedroom window!

You can take a look at their website at <https://www.yarravalleynocturnalzoo.com.au/>



CALLING ALL INDIVIDUALS WITH ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY

- help us develop a tool to assess cyber risk and safety.

Why is this study being done?

Researchers at Monash University have been investigating people with acquired brain injury's (ABI) experiences of cyberscams (being cheated or ripped off online). Anyone can be scammed, but people with ABI might be more vulnerable, due to impairments and life changes commonly experienced post-injury. Our team has been testing a survey called The CyberABILITY Scale. This survey is still being developed. We are inviting people with and without brain injury, who have and have not been scammed, to complete The CyberABILITY scale. We will use responses to further refine the scale, see how effective it is in measuring scam vulnerability and identify risk factors to being scammed.

Who is conducting this research?

The Monash-Epworth Rehabilitation Research Centre and Monash University.

What does the study involve?

This research involves an online survey, which we estimate will take 30 minutes to complete. We would ask that you complete the survey within one week. We will also ask you to complete part of the same survey again about 2 weeks later, which will take 10-15 minutes. The survey will mainly ask about your online activities, thoughts and behaviours.

To thank you for your time, you will receive a \$20 gift voucher (e.g., Coles), sent to you via email after completing the second survey.

Interested in taking part?

Contact us via cyberability@monash.edu for further information.



CYBERABILITY

ADRIAN'S BLOG

In My Opinion...

For the full value of joy, it's best to have someone to share it with.

It's hard being alone. It's always easier to share joys of life with someone. Someone to share the good times, and the bad. Family is also important, parents and siblings. Unfortunately, my Mother died when I was very young, but I am lucky enough to have a brother and 3 sisters. Now, also many nieces and nephews. It's good to have a big family, and a supportive one too. After my accident, I'm grateful for the support of my family. I'm grateful for what I have, not what I've lost. And I'm grateful for my family for supporting me over my many years of continued rehabilitation.

A.B.I. – Always Be Improving!!

Newsletter Contributions Welcome

Contributions by BIM members to our newsletter are always welcome. If you have any tips, stories or experiences that would be of interest to others, please contact office@braininjurymatters.org

Brain Injury Matters is a self-advocacy organisation and we welcome all members having a voice. However, please note that opinion pieces published in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the position of Brain Injury Matters.

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