

BRAIN INJURY MATTERS NEWSLETTER

IT'S BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS WEEK 21-27 AUGUST 2023

MEET JULIA ARTHURSON



1. How long ago did you acquire your injury?

I don't know why I have a brain injury. I don't even know what mine is.

* Julia was involved in an accident in 2009. As a result, she needs 24 hour care.

Julia has poor short term memory, but this doesn't limit her determination to do as much as possible for herself.

2. What is your greatest achievement since your injury?

Being able to learn to stand again.

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

I want to walk, asap. If I could walk I would get a job.

* Julia has recently been using a standing frame at home to increase muscle and control in a standing position.

4. What do you find your biggest challenge?

Not being able to walk is my biggest challenge to my independence.



5. What is your favourite food?

Thai food. Specifically Pad Thai.

6. What is your favourite movie?

I don't think I have one. I enjoy movies, but always had other interests. I can't even think of a favourite movie from my childhood.

7. What is your favourite hobby?

I really like cooking, but I don't do much of it. I have a cooking class once a week which I really enjoy.

* Julia really loves art - painting. Julia cooks at home for her housemates.

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

I want to talk with others. Through casual conversation with people, I can practice my speech and improve. I also enjoy meeting new people

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

Try to keep going like everything is normal: this means keep a focus on what's important to you and set up routines that will give you a forward-looking focus and drive to improve and not fall into negative thoughts as much.

10. What does Brain Injury Matters mean to you?

It's awesome. We all matter and it helps us be hopeful.



BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS WEEK 21-27 AUGUST 2023

Brain Injury Awareness Week, held annually, aims to raise understanding and knowledge of acquired brain injury in the Australia community.







This year's theme is **"Brain Injury is more than you see, think and feel."**

It explores how brain injury is a complex disability that affects how people think and feel, but it is often unseen and can cause stigma, shame and isolation.

This Brain Injury Awareness Week, BIM is highlighting the National Assistance Card and the Hidden Disability Sunflower (see page 4).

BIM will also be using our social media to promote Brain Injury Awareness Week. We encourage our members and supporters to do the same. There are shareable resources at

https://synapse.org.au/brain-injury-awareness-week/



NATIONAL ASSISTANCE CARD

The National Assistance Card is a personalised card to assist people with disability and health conditions in the community. It is currently available to all people in Australia living with brain injury. It can help cardholders to communicate their unique areas of difficulty and the assistance they may need. Each card shows the cardholder's full name, a photo, date of birth, disability and/or health condition and related areas of difficulty.

The card costs \$44 and requires health professional documentation.

For more information and to apply for the card, go to https://www.nationalassistancecard.com.au/





HIDDEN DISABILITIES SUNFLOWER

The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower is a tool to help others in the community better recognise and support people who have disabilities and medical conditions that are not immediately obvious. There are different ways to display the Sunflower symbol. You can buy badges, lanyards and wristbands and learn more at https://hdsunflower.com/au/

You can also get one for from Travellers' Aid at Flinders Street station and Southern Cross station, as well as the City of Melbourne Tourism Hubs.







COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT REPORT

Howdy Friends

BIM continues to push on and explore new areas that we know meet the needs of people with ABI. We are exploring getting peer support into the residential rehab system. More information about that next time!

We have concluded the piloting of the Relationships Workshops developed with Monash University with one peer support group. We received very good anecdotal feedback, but await the formal evaluation. All the workshops are facilitated by BIM members, who have received facilitation training. The workshops cover Friendships, Intimate Relationships and Families. We have 4 workshops to go! Once the program has been evaluated and any changes made, BIM will conduct the workshops on a regular basis.

In the past few weeks, we have also visited Bendigo and Albury/Wodonga to touch base and assist with raising the profile of peer support in those towns.

Until next month, take care.

Brent

Brent Alford Chairperson Brain Injury Matters





ILC PROJECT REPORT

The reach of the groups continues to grow unabated. The number of new people joining the peer groups in 2023 is over 50 people. We now have a reach of 158 people. Our yearly weekly average attendance is 66. Group members are putting their hands up for group facilitation roles.

You will see from the photos the variety of interesting activities and catch-ups from the past month or so. These have included a BBQ on the Frankston Peer, Relationships Workshops and guest speaker, Majak Daw, former AFL footballer.

Cheers

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

PHOTOS FROM PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

SOUTH METRO PSG - Frankston
BBQ at Frankston Pier





WEST METRO PSG - Footscray Relationships Workshop



AWSABI - ALBURY-WODONGA STROKE AND BRAIN INJURY INC. Promoting their Peer Support Group at a local shopping centre with Brent Alford (BIM Chairperson)





EAST METRO PSG - Ringwood Visit from Majak Daw

When planning what we would like to do, one group member, Stephen, asked if we could get Majak Daw, former North Melbourne and Melbourne AFL player, as a guest speaker. We managed to make it happen! Majak told us all about his life: his family leaving Sudan and coming to Australia as refugees; seeing kids at school playing footy and wanting to join in; getting drafted and being concussed in his debut match for the Kangaroos; some of his injuries and surgeries; and how he looks after his mental health. Thanks to Majak, his sister, Mary, and son, Hendrix, for volunteering their time to come and meet us.

Majak and Stephen

















You are invited to



Our FREE Stronger Voices Training about:

Your Rights and How To Speak Up



For people with an Acquired Brain Injury



Date: Wednesday 30th August or

Thursday 12th October



Time: 10am - 2:30pm



Where: Ross House, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne



We will provide lunch and drinks!

How to contact us:



Email: training@voiceatthetable.com.au



Phone: 0493 700 734



SUMMER OF 69 by Scott Jefferies

It seems to me; we have multiple opportunities in our lives: positive and negative.

And Bryan Adams' song, The Summer of 69, is Not Quite Right.

I don't mean, magic, reincarnation, religion, or anything -- just a common human experience of living.

We like to think we had a specific time we call 'the best days of our lives.' When we could also say, I want another and another, as an unbreakable series.

I can remember a September holiday down the beach in the 80's. First year Uni in the 90's. Helping a mate get elected to Council when I was 19. My first year in Thailand before my eyes opened to what was happening. And BIM, after my car accident, when I was making a comeback and recovering.

I had generous time to learn and multiple chances to fail while growing. And helpful kindness and support after my Acquired Brain Injury.

And I didn't have to endure much racism or abuse early on, due to being white, male and Anglo Saxon.

Although I did cop a fair bit of racism in rural Thailand in 2010-Where I was called "The Farang" (the foreigner) and told I would never fit in.

"Go Home, Farang!", is what the childish Grade 6 students used to sing. "You're a Buffalo!". Because I was fat, stupid, and generous with my money. (Yeah right, at 65kg.)

"Whatever does not kill me makes me stronger..." Nietzsche.

But all up, I guess -- the Summer in my life has been positive...



Brain Injury Matters

Women's Peer Support

Monday 7th September 11am-12.30pm, Hayden Ray Smith Room Level 4, Ross House 247-251 Flinders Lane, Melbourne

You are invited to join us for a Weaving Session

No skill necessary. We will show you how to do it.

All materials provided.



Please RSVP to Poppy by August 31 poppy.egan@braininjurymatters.org or call 0466101812



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.

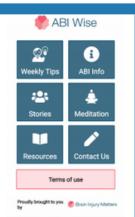


CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE, ABI WISE APP, FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM https://www.braininjurymatters.org

ABIWise App is free to download from GooglePlay and App Store













ADRIAN'S BLOG

In My Opinion...

Below is a poem from a very interesting youtube clip, produced by Brain Injury Matters in 1995. It shows how to keep a clear vision, not getting distracted.

"As you amble on through life, my friend,
Whatever be your goal,
Keep your eye upon the donut,
And not upon the hole."

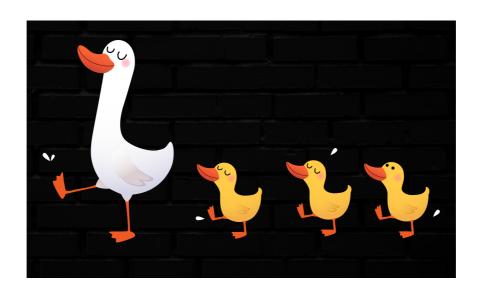
I've put the whole clip below. It's a very interesting 29 minute film, looking at Acquired Brain Injury from different people's experiences.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9au1sq0a2XA&t=55s

Joke of the Month Why did the duck cross the road? To prove he isn't a chicken!!

A.B.I. – Always Be Improving!!

If you would like me to add anything to this page, please email me on adie3@hotmail.com





IN ADRIAN'S KITCHEN CHICKEN STIRFRY

Ingredients

- 1 pack Hokkien noodles;
- Small pack chicken thighs;
- 4 carrots,
- 1 capsicum,
- Half a broccoli;
- 1 tin Edgell's mushrooms in butter sauce;
- Soy sauce;
- 2 cloves garlic;
- 1 onion;
- Optional- snow peas, cashews

Method

- 1. Dice chicken, carrot, capsicum, onion, garlic and broccoli.
- 2. Cook onion in wok, add garlic.
- 3. Separate noodles in boiling water in bowl.
- 4. Add chicken to wok.
- 5. Add carrot, capsicum and cook.
- 6. Add mushrooms and noodles to wok.
- 7. Add soy sauce.
- 8. Add broccoli in the last few minutes.



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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