

Subject:

From:

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<col.b@inet.net.au>

Newsletter - January 2025



Brain Injury Matters

Welcome to our new look newsletter, that is embedded in this email, rather than being a pdf attachment. We'd really value your feedback. Is it accessible? Is the content relevant to you? What else would you like to see? Please send your feedback to office@braininjurymatters.org

Meet Alice



1. How long ago did you acquire your injury?

My life changed on the 6th of May, 2023.

2. What is your greatest achievement

6. What is your favourite movie?
White Chicks.

7. What is your favourite hobby?
Stand up paddleboarding.

8. What do you want to achieve

since your injury?

Firstly, to be able to sit up, as I didn't have the core muscles to hold myself up, then to be able to stand up and lastly to be able to walk again.

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

I would like to be able to go back to work as an Allied Health Assistant.

4. What do you find your biggest challenge?

My brain injury has affected my memory. Also, I struggle with my physical limitations. I cannot wait to toss my crutches away!

5. What is your favourite food?

Spaghetti Bolognese!

through Brain Injury Matters?

To be able to meet new people, have a bit of fun and unwind time from all my therapy appointments.

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

Firstly, take it slow and remember that you are not just your brain injury. You are so much more!

10. What does Brain Injury Matters mean to you?

Once I left hospital, I felt very lonely and was looking for a group where I could meet new people and get to know them. This group has been great for me, as I don't feel like I'm the only person with a brain injury, but it has been good for my carer too, as they are able to connect with other carers.

Committee Of Management Report



Our Committee for this year includes Adrian, Peter (Secretary), Anat, Nia (Vice President), Roger (Treasurer), Kelvin, Col (President) and Nat (absent from photo).

Giddy Everyone,

Well, we at BIM, and I guess all members too, have yet to come to terms with the

fact that we didn't receive any funding in the last round that was announced just before Xmas. It was a bitter pill to swallow, but we will continue the fight to attract more funding and to continue the work to support the peer support groups.

In fact, we are about to put in an expression of interest for the Stronger Communities Program Round 9 for 2025, through the office of the Greens. We were successful a couple of years ago with the same grant and were able to secure some funds. This round we will be asking for funds to update the website and the app and for funding that will allow us to manage and automate, to a certain extent, the monthly newsletter, this thing, that goes out and updates everyone on the happenings at BIM.

On another topic, I have been silently adding links to the [BIM Links page](#) on our website. So far, we have approximately 60 or so links to other organisations and many information sites. The sites that have been linked have been checked so they are safe to view. If you have any suggestions for sites, forward them to me, or you can use the form on the links page.

I hope that everyone is well and if you have any concerns, please let me know.

Cheers,
Col Brokenshire
President

Office Report

I hope everyone is enjoying the summer months and that you had a good break over the Christmas period.

Well, it's not the start to the 2025 that we would have liked, but we're continuing to agitate in any way we can to secure funding for the peer support groups. Many BIM Members and their families have written to, or visited, their local Members of Parliament (MPs) to talk to them about BIM and the peer support groups. Thank you for taking the time and making the effort! If you would still like to approach your local MPs to let them know that BIM needs funding, it is not too late! If you would like some support to do so, please let me know (email: georgia.tracy@braininjurymatters.org) and I will endeavour to help.

We are planning for the first BIM Committee of Management meeting for 2025 which is due to take place in February. Apart from the funding issue (which seems to be ever-present), we are continuing to work on lots of different projects including peer support in ABI rehabilitation settings, an awareness campaign that ties in with Brain Injury Awareness Week in August 2025 and consultation to other organisations who are collaborating with BIM about their inclusion and diversity efforts. There's also a few interesting research projects happening. I'm looking forward to working with the BIM crew this year to ensure our work is impactful, professional and sustainable.

Be safe and stay cool over the rest of the summer months.

Cheers,
Georgia



Peer Support Group News



South Metro PSG

Our Frankston based peer support group has started the year with a trip to The Big Goose, a 'Share a favourite song' session and a BBQ. The group meets on **Tuesdays, from 10am.**

North Metro PSG

The North Metro peer support group is based in Northcote and also meets on **Tuesdays, from**

10am. This year they have planted seedlings at a Therapeutic Horticulture session, been to Degani's cafe, and done some planning for their upcoming sessions.



Brainwave Online PSG

Every Wednesday, from 10am AEST, our online group zooms in from many places in Australia. They love to chat, test each other with trivia questions and support each other through hard times. They recently did the Therapeutic Horticulture Session with Georgia via Zoom.

West Metro PSG

Based in Footscray, the West Metro peer support group meets on **Thursdays at 10am.** They started the year with a discussion on what they were proud of from the past year and things they are looking forward to this year. They also overwhelmed a cafe in Caroline Springs with way more members turning up than expected!





East Metro PSG

The East Metro PSG is based in Ringwood. So far this year, they have enjoyed a BBQ at Ringwood Lake, had a 'Trivia Bonanza' and been to the new cafe at Jells Park. The group meets on **Thursdays, from 10:30am.**

Online Coffee Morning

A highlight of the week for many members is Monday Online Coffee Morning. There are always 2 conversation topics that everyone gets a chance to answer. There is also a chance to share a joke. Any BIM member is welcome to attend. **Mondays at 11am.**

1. What makes your day better?
2. What's the best/worst thing about having a smartphone?



Women's PSG

On the first Monday of the month, from 11:30am, the Women's PSG meets in Melbourne CBD. As you will see later in this newsletter, the group is off to the State Library cafe in February.

AWSABI PSG

The Albury Wodonga Stroke and Brain Injury (AWSABI) peer support

group meets on the 4th Thursday
of the month at 10:30am.



Bendigo PSG

The Bendigo PSG meets at the
Bendigo Neighbourhood Hub
fortnightly on Thursdays from
11:30am. The first meeting of
2025 is Thursday, the 30th
January.

Joining a Peer Support Group

Join Us

You can sign up as a member at our website by clicking the Join Us button above.

Alternatively, if you would more information about any of our peer support groups,
please send an email to the appropriate group.

Online

Online Coffee Morning – Mondays 11am onlinecoffeePSG@braininjurymatters.org

Brainwave PSG – Wednesdays 10am onbrainwavePSG@braininjurymatters.org

In-person

Frankston: Tuesdays 10am southmetroPSG@braininjurymatters.org

Ringwood: Thursdays 10.30am eastmetroPSG@braininjurymatters.org

Northcote: Tuesdays 10am northmetroPSG@braininjurymatters.org

Footscray: Thursdays 10am westmetroPSG@braininjurymatters.org

Bendigo – co-ordinator@bnh.net.au

Good News Stories from Members



Mind over Matter & Pain

Mark Thompson, BIM member from Ballarat, has been back in the water, outpacing the life-guards!

Mark acquired his brain injury 31 years ago from a sailing accident. He used to be a prolific swimmer, but hasn't been able to walk, let alone swim, for 2 years due to a hip problem. Recently he was taken down to the beach in a buggy and swam 800m out to a buoy! He says he was looking out for the next buoy, but the exhausted life-guards who accompanied him (on their paddle-boards), said, "No way! We're not doing that again!" Congratulations, Mark! Keep swimming!

Helpful Tips from Members

Ever had trouble remembering to take your medication?

Here's some tips from some of our members.

Webster Packs

Did you know that you can get your pharmacist to make up blister packs with your all your medications with days and times listed? One member said it changed his life after discovering that he could get his pharmacist to organise his medications for him and he didn't need to organise his own pill box. A 'webster pack' is a colloquial term, named after a product called Webster-pak® which was invented in Australia.



Pill Alarm System

But, what if you forget to take the medication at the right time of day? Another member showed us her Tab Timer that she carries in her handbag. The Tab Timer sets off an alarm to remind her to take her medication and dispenses the correct dose. She said it was costly, but worth it. There are a number of cheaper alternatives on the market and they may be covered under NDIS. Talk to your support coordinator or occupational therapist, if you think this might help you.

My Technology Space



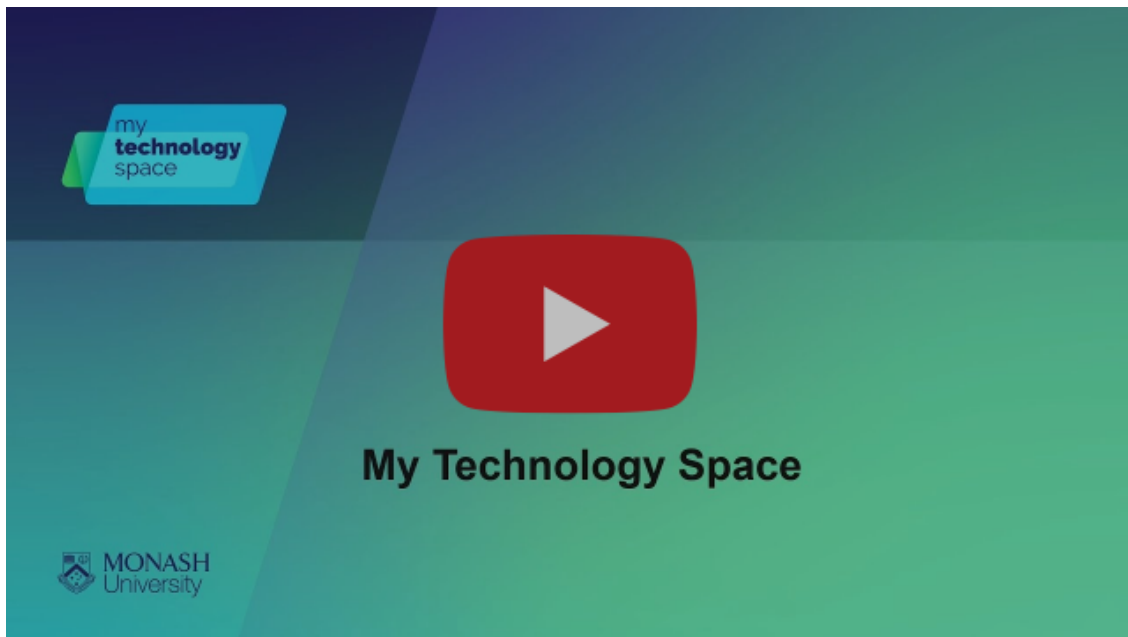
A free online resource is helping people with acquired brain injury (ABI) consider assistive technology to plan, organise and remember everyday tasks. The resource was developed by Monash University researchers in collaboration with people with ABI and other experts.

Assistive technology, or 'AT,' includes products a person might use, like a smartwatch or mobile phone, and services like allied health that help with product selection, setup, training and use.

Believed to be the first of its kind, [My Technology Space](https://www.mytechnologyspace.org/) is an accessible [online resource](#) that helps people think about using AT to [support memory and thinking](#) in activities after acquired brain injury.

Check it out at <https://www.mytechnologyspace.org/>

Brain Injury Matters hopes to show the website to all our peer support groups.



Women's Group in February



Coffee at Mr Tulk

WHEN: Monday 3rd February

TIME: 11am – 12:30pm

WHERE: Mr Tulk Cafe, State Library, 328 Swanston St, Melbourne

RSVP: to poppy.egan@braininjurymatters.org

Adrian's Blog

Happy New Year!!

I'd like to start off by saying a big THANK YOU to Sally for all her efforts compiling all the articles for the newsletter last year. And I look forward to working with her again this year!

I'd also like to thank each member of the BIM community who contributed to the newsletter last year. Without your valued contributions, the newsletter wouldn't have been as successful as it turned out to be. Let's try to make this year even more successful!!

First joke for 2025

....drum roll please.....

What did the carpenter say when he finished building his house?
"NAILED IT"

Hopefully we can live every day in 2025, try our hardest to improve our lives (ABI- just a little bit everyday) and then, in 12 months' time, look back at 2025 and say that we NAILED IT!!

And finally, here's a recipe to help you endure the hot summer ahead...

Salmon & Salad

Ingredients:

- Salmon
- Lettuce
- Avocado
- Cherry tomatoes
- Danish fetta cheese
- Capsicum
- Red onion
- Balsamic vinegar
- Salt & Pepper



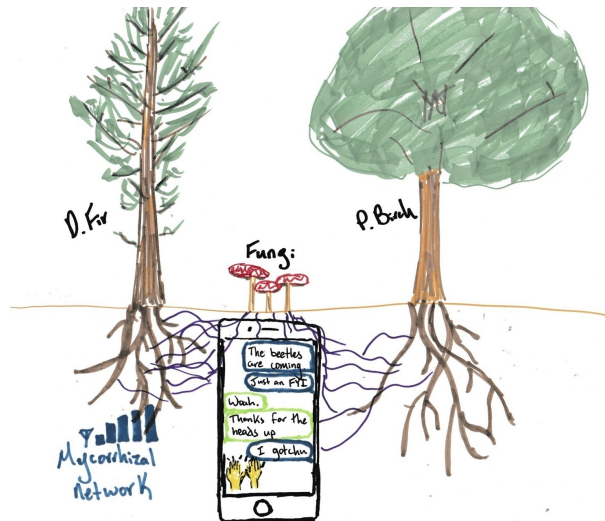
Directions :

- Rub salt & pepper into skin side, cook salmon.
- Drizzle lemon juice on salmon (once cooked).
- Cut avocado, cherry tomatoes, red onion, and capsicum.

Add fetta cheese and balsamic vinegar.
Most importantly, enjoy!!

Did you know that trees talk to each other?

At the recent Therapeutic Horticulture presentations at our peer support groups, Georgia mentioned that trees actually communicate with each other below ground, sometimes over very large distances. For those that are interested, check out this [TED talk by forest scientist, Suzanne Simard](#).

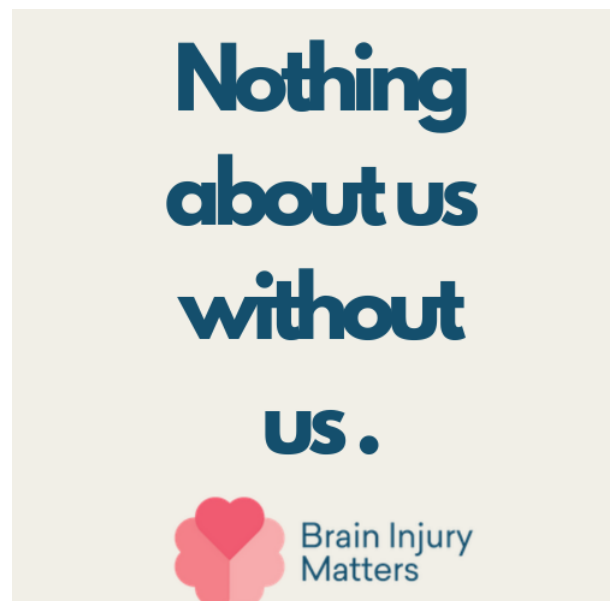


Newsletter Contributions

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 all members voices are welcome. However, please note that opinion pieces published in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the



position of Brain Injury Matters.



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