



SYDNEY

u3a

Learn Laugh Live

Harbourside North

July 2023

Welcome to the U3A Harbourside North Bulletin and the third for 2023.

We look forward to your suggestions for topics and contributions for inclusion in this year's editions. paulacastileu3a@gmail.com

The Editors

Ursula Schappi and Paula Castile

SUPPORTING FRIENDS AND FAMILY DURING DIFFICULT TIMES

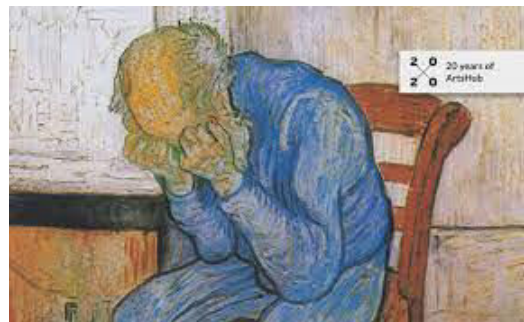
It is sometimes difficult to find the right words when a close friend or a family member appears to struggle with something that bothers them. We may notice it but shy away from commenting – partly because we don't know how to express our concern and/or because we don't want to offend our friend or neighbour by saying the wrong thing. So, we say nothing to alleviate our friend's possible distress. Later we justify our inaction by thinking that others, including our friend's family were in a better position to help.



It is the 'bystander effect' that is, *'the inhibiting influence of the presence of others on a person's willingness to help someone in need'*. This is how the Encyclopaedia Britannica defines the bystander effect and it continues:

'Investigations of the bystander effect was extensively researched in the social sciences after the Kitty Genovese incident in the 1960's when several neighbours were watching but did nothing to assist Kitty being stabbed to death on her way home. This case sparked a wealth of research on helping behaviour which has expanded beyond emergency situations to include everyday forms of *helping*' (Ref 1).

So, what can we do to overcome the tendency of shying away from helping when we believe others may be in a better position to deal with the problem? And, what if you are the person seeking help? How can you inspire or assist people to help you?



One example is coping with stress. Stress can become overwhelming or chronic and it can affect our well-being and mental health. Most of us know about stress management techniques, but the most effective release may be to open-up to a friend. Admitting to someone that we struggle with a situation may be the first step to diffuse the stress.



How do we best respond to distress of our friend in a crisis? Listen well, give hope, don't blame (Ref 2). Simply asking, "How are you going since"... or... 'with' ... ? Never use

'should'. Learning to use open ended questions and active listening techniques will help. Open ended questions are those that cannot be answered with 'yes' or 'no'. They include Who, What, When Where, Why and How (Ref 3).

Some strategies may include lending a hand, bringing food, getting them out by suggesting a walk together, or a movie, or lunch, or suggesting useful resources such as support agencies (see below).



If you are worried about money, you're not alone. Most people stress about money from time to time (Ref 4). But financial stress can become problematic if it disrupts your everyday life. You might find that you can't focus on or enjoy other parts of your life because your money-related stress is causing you to worry so much. Others may simply go into denial, often making their situation worse and can cause people to engage in a variety of unhealthy behaviours, such as overeating, or alcohol and drug use.



If supporting someone living with chronic pain, remember, no one can really understand another person's pain. Consequently, giving advice is not a good idea. If you've had personal experience of chronic pain, you can provide information on

what helped you – e.g. pain management, therapies, exercise, meditation. You can share your own story. Otherwise, patience, practical support and kindness are often best.



Recently I experienced excruciating referred pain in my knee. Often these only last a couple of minutes. This time it lasted about 30 minutes. Several women came to help me. I asked one if I could take her arm, and she helped me out of the shop where I could lean against a wall until my friend joined me. One woman asked me if I was okay. I said 'No, but it will pass'. She thanked me for being honest and said she had leukemia and when asked the same question, she always answered, 'I'm fine'. She said, next time she would too be honest.



I keep six honest serving men, They taught me all I knew, Their names are What and Why and When and How and Where and Who, I send them over land and sea, I send them east and west, But after they have worked for me, I give them all a rest.

Rudyard Kipling (Ref 5).

References:

1. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/bystander-effect>
2. <https://mhfa.com.au>

3. <https://www.mentimeter.com/blog/stand-out-get-ahead/how-to-create-open-ended-questions>
4. <https://www.choice.com.au/shopping/consumer-rights-and-advice/your-rights/articles/help-paying-power-and-water-bills>
5. https://www.kiplingsociety.co.uk/poem/poems_serving.htm

SUPPORT SERVICES

Financial Services

- <https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/servicedirectory/190-financial-support>
- <https://www.1800respect.org.au/services/services-overview/money>
- <https://moneysmart.gov.au/managing-debt/urgent-help-with-money>

Mental Health

- <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-involved>
- <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/talk-to-a-counsellor>
- <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/services/Pages/support-contact-list.aspx>

Grief Counselling

- <https://sydneygriefcounselling.com/>
- <https://www.hss.com.au/>

Pain Management

- <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/pharmaceutical/doctors/Pages/chronic-pain-medical-practitioners.aspx>
- <https://www.hammond.com.au/healthcare-services/pain-management>

Ursula and Paula



President's Message July 2023

On behalf of all our members who enjoy this Bulletin every two months, many thanks to Ursula Schappi and Paula Castile for their hard work in preparing such interesting articles for us to read. If you would like to contribute an article, please contact Paula at paulacastilu3a@gmail.com

Second Semester 2023

The second semester Course Book is now available, in hard copy if you have ordered one, and on our website for you to view or download. I look forward to exciting and enlightening u3a sessions for the rest of the year.

SUCCESS

We are currently in the process of organising someone to take over from Eve at the Mosman Art Gallery – more details later.

We also have a new committee member, Helen Mountford, recruited by Judy Harris to fill our public relations position. She has already attended a PR meeting at Head Office and is brimming with good ideas.

Please give her a warm welcome.

But we need More.....

Sadly, Chris Serrano has resigned from her position in welcoming attendees and filling their need for refreshments at Mosman Seniors' Centre. She is likely to be travelling

a lot this year. Thanks to Anne and Ross Ranger for standing in for the last eight weeks, but they now have other obligations that will prevent their attending so regularly. Despite appeals to local attendees no-one has come forward. It is truly not onerous, the Council supplies the refreshments, so it's just a matter of checking that all is well. Meeting members at the door is also an excellent way to meet new people – and I'm always there to help.

CRISIS

In several messages recently I have stressed our declining membership, to no avail. **YOU CAN HELP.** 81% of our members join because of a recommendation from a friend or relative. Please invite a friend to some of the talks that you attend. Remember – they can attend two free sessions before needing to become a member. And what greater gift of friendship could you give than to introduce them to u3a – remember what an important part it is of YOUR life – making new friends, socialising, enjoying interesting talks and activities. All for less than \$2 a week!

Speakers

We are always on the lookout for new speakers. I especially want to find a speaker who can deliver talks on Music. Please let me know anyone that you think might be interested and I will contact them.

CALL OR EMAIL ME NOW:

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