

Life Force Foundation is a non-profit organisation providing emotional/psycho-social support for people dealing with the experience of cancer, through group therapy and meditation, counselling, special workshops and retreats.

Life Force Foundation

CFN 15707

ABN 61 068 056 682

DGR 428809

EASTERN SUBURBS

NORTHERN SUBURBS

INNER WEST

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NEWSLETTER

Gabi Hollows

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December
2003

Congratulations on Ten Years

I am delighted to be able to write about Life Force 10 years after its foundation by Jilly Pascoe who, following her own experience, recognized the unmet need for an ongoing sympathetic support system for people with cancer. Since its inception Life Force has gone from strength to strength and become an important and integral component of many peoples lives.

The services provided by Life Force complement and do not compete with the treatment and support offered to patients treated in cancer centres and Life Force has developed strong links and associations with many health professionals involved in the delivery of cancer care.

The individual diagnosed with cancer goes through an intensely personal experience and not only has to deal with the possible impact of the diagnosis on their own mortality but also how to cope with their illness and how to move forward following diagnosis and treatment. For some this will mean learning how to live with cancer and for others who are potentially cured how to live with uncertainties and the many other issues of survivorship. Most people go through an emotional roller-coaster and need ongoing psychological support by knowledgeable, sympathetic and caring individuals and this best describes Jilly and the wonderful team at Life-Force. I know it has not been easy for her and the organization and they have had to struggle with the uncertainties of funding as well as the emotional impact on their own lives of having to provide ongoing support to so many people. It's important for them to realize that they are held in high regard and they have made a real difference to many peoples lives. Congratulations and good luck for the next 10 years.

Michael Friedlander, Patron, Life Force Foundation



Some of the Life Force family

Complementary Therapies and Quality of Life

By Mariette Mudita Maclurcan

Mariette, one of the Life Force team, is currently undertaking research into the benefits of a yoga program designed specifically for cancer patients, as part of her PhD

Studies have indicated the positive effects of a range of interventions designed to improve quality-of-life in cancer patients, including psychological, social, educational and physical strategies. A variety of psychological and behavioural interventions have been provided to help decrease cancer-related distress. Such strategies include the provision of individual counselling, group therapy; health education and information sessions, problem solving and stress management techniques such as relaxation, meditation and visualisation. One such intervention has involved the use of relaxation, meditation and visualisation practices. While it is known that relaxation and meditation improves the quality of life (QOL) of cancer patients, a holistic yoga program, which combines these elements with gentle movements called postures, has additional benefits by working with the body and not just the mind. It has been demonstrated that gentle to moderate exercise can have positive effects on a cancer patient's physical, functional, psychological and emotional well being.

More recently, the contribution of yoga to healthier psychological outcomes for people with cancer has been investigated. Specca et al found that a group of cancer patients engaged in a mindfulness stress reduction program had lower levels of mood disturbance, depression, anxiety, anger, confusion and stress symptoms and increased scores on vigour in comparison to the wait-list control group. Carlson et al 2 replicated these results finding the program most effective in reducing anxiety and worry. Shapiro's 3 study of women with early stage breast cancer demonstrated that the yoga group had significantly lower levels of psychological distress and sleep disturbance than those participating in a stress-reduction program. Kritzell 5 in qualitative studies found that yoga participants reported increased self-esteem, self-understanding and levels of awareness of body and mind states.

The times when women find holistic yoga helpful appear to be during chemotherapy or radiotherapy treatment as it helps counteract nausea/anticipated nausea and

stress/anxiety or following treatment. Studies indicate that when a person is getting back to an exercise program following cancer, gentle to moderate exercise is most appropriate, so a gentle holistic hatha yoga program is ideal.

Benefits:

The term yoga means balance or harmony and helps restore physical, mental and emotional well-being. It is an empowering self-care tool, which can be used anywhere: at home, in hospital or in a class setting. The known benefits include:

- gently strengthens and conditions the body
- reduces stress, tension, anxiety
- improves energy levels, counteracts fatigue & overcomes sleeping problems
- counteracts overactive and worrisome thought patterns and enhances memory and attention skills

Meditation, relaxation and yoga programs are becoming recognised, both nationally and internationally, as part of an integrated system of care for people with cancer in which both the physical and psychosocial needs of the patient are addressed.

1. Specca, M., Carlson, L., Goodey and Angen, M. (2000). A randomised, wait-list controlled clinical trial: The effect of a mindfulness meditation-based stress reduction program on mood and symptoms of stress in cancer patients. *Psychosomatic Medicine* 62: 613-622
2. Carlson, L. E., Ursuliak, Z., Goodey, E., Angen, M., & Specca M, (2001). : 112 - 123. (2001). "The effects of a mindfulness meditation-based stress reduction program on mood and symptoms of stress in cancer outpatients: 6-month follow-up." *Supportive Care in Cancer* 9 (2): 112-123.
3. Shapiro., S. (2002). *Mindfulness-based stress reduction and breast cancer*, University of Arizona: 118.
4. Young, P. (1999). "The experience of cancer patients practicing mindfulness meditation". *Dissertation Abstracts International: Section B: The Sciences & Engineering* 60(4-B Oct): 1508.



Sporting Support



Upon speaking earlier this year about the East Canberra Tigers Charity Match we were delighted to announce that Life Force Foundation would be a recipient of the money raised through this great event.

The event was a huge success with young club players, club member and officials, Canberra Raiders players and CDMRL (Canberra & District Minor Rugby League) members and executives all taking part and enjoying the night immensely.

Fun and excitement aside there was also the matter of the charity and fundraising. The funds were raised by player's fees, gold coin donations at the gate and various other donations from local Canberra businesses and companies. The major sponsors and donators were The Sports Club Kaleen, Corporate Express, Dean's Trophy Centre and The CDMRL Executive Office.

Individually from these companies we thanked on behalf of you: Bill Gameck, Bruno Visintin, Richard Paton, Matt Ford and Dave Hamilton.

The funds raised were split down the middle to two worthy recipients one of which is Life Force Foundation. The second recipients are a family within the club who have a family member with an inoperable and terminal cancer.

The total takings on the night were \$1,358.50 of which we are pleased to announce Life Force Foundation are entitled to the sum of \$679.25, exactly half of the events takings.

Thank you for allowing us to use your name and details in our newsletter and just for being such a wonderful organization in the community.

We wish you all the best for the future and hope our donation can do even the smallest bit of help.

James Marando

Acknowledgements...

Our thanks to the following people for their recent donations to Life Force Foundation:



Sue Adler, John Balazs, Coates Bennett Lawrence Accountants Mudgee, Colonial First State, Pamela Chalmers, Agnes Chan, Maree D'arcy, Richard de Carvalho, East Canberra Tigers Minor Rugby League Club, Richard Galey, Alexa Gilbert – Obrart, Peter John Raymond Forbes, Aurora Hammond, Lawrence Hinchliffe, Angel Ioannou, Deborah Key, Janice Lam, The Leukaemia Foundation of NSW, Kerry May, Nicole Murray, Michael Parle, Marian & Peter Phelan, Kerry Robertson, Bun & Dorothy Traynor, Leona Watson, Robin Woods.

Message from Jill

At the end of 2003 I look back on ten years of LFF and it is important for me to share with you the great sense of reward I have felt from working with people living with cancer and their families. It is a privilege to become part of these people's lives and to be able to reassure them, encourage them and give them the support services they need to get through the experience of cancer in the best possible way.

It is wonderful to witness the transformations that take place in their lives on many levels; to watch them gaining serenity, making changes that require enormous courage, and to see their renewed sense of confidence and strength. They have been a special inspiration. It is that human connection that sustains us all - that we matter to each other. It's about feeling whole, that's what healing is!

It has been a great ten years - working with Caro Jonas through the early years, just the two of us, was a wonderful experience, then gathering around us a marvellous team of therapists to further the work of the Foundation.

LFF has been fortunate in securing valuable liaisons with TAFE as well as The Sydney Psychological Medicine Group and The Leukaemia Foundation. More recently Life Force has been asked by the Department of Health to undertake a consultancy to provide a directory of Gynaecological Oncology treatment and services in NSW.

Support for this work over the ten years has come from many quarters. In particular I would like to thank Avis Australia, TAFE Colleges, Coates Bennett Lawrence Accountants Mudgee, John Balazs, Michael Parle & Mark Ryan and our patrons, Prof. Michael Friedlander & Gabi Hollows, as well as the, many wonderful individuals whose continued generosity, be it financial or giving of their time and energy to the Foundation, has kept us going.

A special acknowledgment must go to Pamela Chalmers, Cary & Rosie Giezekamp, and all the Life Force angels, without whose tremendous fundraising efforts there would not be enough funds to pay our team of professional counsellors and therapists!

On behalf of all at Life Force I wish all of you, our members, supporters and friends, a peaceful and loving Christmas, 2003.

Jilly Pascoe



Caro & Jilly

What's On

Life Force Christmas Party

CANCER PATIENTS, CARERS
& THE LIFE FORCE TEAM!



Date: Saturday 20 December 2003

Time: 11:00am

Venue: Trenerry Reserve, Wolseley Road, Coogee

Join us at our end of year get together and
Let the sea air REVITALISE you.
Let the awesome view INSPIRE you and

BYO picnic blanket, refreshments, family & pets and
spend some time with our Life Force Family



RSVP on 9389 3834

Life Force Retreats, 2004

Lift your spirits, renew your strength and vitality. Allow yourself to be nurtured with massage, yoga, meditation - experience the healing power of nature in beautiful surroundings. To book, call 9389 3834.

Dates

February 20 to 22

May 21 to 23

August 20 to 22

November 19 to 21

Life Force Foundation Support Groups

2004 Term Dates

Note: It is important to register for all support groups, before turning up, in order to check on numbers and confirm that details are correct. Phone Caro Jonas on: **(02) 9564 3289**.

To register for the Carer's group please phone Jo Dewar on **(02) 9517 9018**

Eastern Suburbs

meets weekly at:

St. Joseph's Parish Centre
10 Albert St, Edgecliff

Monday evenings: 5:45pm - 7:45pm

Term 1 Feb 2 to March 22 (8 weeks)
Term 2 May 3 to June 28 (8 weeks)
Term 3 July 26 to Sept 13 (8 weeks)
Term 4 Oct 18 to Dec 6 (8 weeks)

Northern Suburbs

meets weekly at:

Mosman Art Gallery & Community Centre
Cnr Short & Myahgah Sts, Mosman

Wednesday evenings: 10.30am - 12.30pm

Term 1 Feb 4 to March 24 (8 weeks)
Term 2 May 5 to June 23 (8 weeks)
Term 3 July 28 to Sept 15 (8 weeks)
Term 4 Oct 20 to Dec 8 (8 weeks)

Inner West

meets weekly at:

Annandale Neighbourhood Centre
79 Johnston St, Annandale

Thursday evenings: 5:45pm - 7:45pm

Term 1 Feb 5 to March 25 (8 weeks)
Term 2 May 6 to June 24 (8 weeks)
Term 3 July 29 to Sept 16 (8 weeks)
Term 4 Oct 21 to Dec 9 (8 weeks)

Family & Carers Group

meets weekly subject to numbers at:

Annandale Neighbourhood Centre
79 Johnston St, Annandale

Tuesday evenings: 5.45pm - 7.45 pm

Term 1 Feb 10 to March 30 (8 weeks)
Term 2 May 4 to June 22 (8 weeks)
Term 3 July 27 to Sep 14 (8 weeks)
Term 4 Oct 19 to Dec 7 (8 weeks)