

# Hobart Women's Health Centre Newsletter



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2009

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## Body Image - Yours or Theirs?

by Jen Van-Achteren

The term body image often conjures up notions of an issue applicable only to teenage girls with disordered eating. This view is, in fact, quite incorrect. While women, in particular young women, are concerned about body image, the issue now appears to be increasingly affecting young men. In reality everyone has a 'body image' connected to self-identity, self-esteem and mental health.

O'Dea, defines body image as including *"an individual's perception and judgement of the size, shape, weight and any other aspect of the body which relates to body appearance"*.<sup>1</sup>

So, body image refers to the perception an individual has regarding their body; a person's attitude towards their body - including how they see themselves, think and feel about the way they look and how they think others perceive them. An individual's beliefs and attitudes, in addition to those of society, family, peers and the media all impact on their body image.

Someone with a positive body image feels comfortable in their skin, happy with how they look on the outside and feels good on the inside. A person with an unhealthy body image is dissatisfied with the appearance of their body, may have a distorted view of their size and shape, an unrealistic expectation of how it should look and believe their appearance is their sum total.

Negative body image wounds self-esteem. Feeling awful about physical appearance can lead to thoughts of being an unworthy person. 'Lack of self esteem may affect people in a number of ways, including the capacity to make positive life choices.'<sup>2</sup> Consequences of unhealthy body image range from dieting, excessive exercise and plastic surgery to disordered eating and conditions such as anorexia and binge eating. Disordered eating conditions have the highest mortality rate of any mental health condition.

A 2008 survey conducted by Mission Australia, of 45,500 young people aged between 11 and 24, found body image was one of the top three concerns of both males and females.<sup>3</sup> In 2005, Girlfriend magazine found one in two teenage girls had dieted and more than 50% were unhappy with their bodies.<sup>4</sup> The Hobart Women's Health Centre 2006 health survey of young women found body size/shape was the second highest area of concern. Anecdotally it appears body image is not only an issue for middle to older teens, but also tweens (pre-adolescent girls 9 to 12 years) in increasing numbers.



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It would be interesting to see the results of a body image survey of women over 25. I suspect the results would be very similar to the ones above. A recently overheard conversation between a small group of 30-something women, discussing the benefits of preventative botox treatment, illustrates the point that body image is not just a teenage concern. People, women in particular, spend billions on creams, cosmetics and plastic surgery. We believe the promise of youth and happiness and the message that leaving the body untouched is "a sign of self-neglect".<sup>1</sup> On TV makeover shows, the phrase 'let herself go' is heard repeatedly.

*Bodies*, the latest book by Susie Orbach - psychotherapist and author of the 1979 bestseller *Fat is a Feminist Issue* - examines the nature of our body image conditions. Presenting new evidence from the field of neuropsychology, that the brain is connected to body image, Orbach refers to a "built-in empathetic and mimicking capacity"<sup>5</sup> human beings have which facilitates learning throughout life entirely on an unconscious basis. She asserts children not only obtain distinct gestures from their carers, but also the manner in which adults close to them discuss and treat their own bodies. Many studies and articles point to the need for adults to be healthy role models.

Orbach expands by connecting this evidence with the role of the media, and in turn big business, plays in this ever-growing displeasure with our bodies. 'Possessing brains with an inherent mechanism driving us to imitate, Orbach argues compellingly that we naturally can't help but react to the overwhelming number of 'improved' images we devour daily'.<sup>6</sup> Even armed with awareness and knowledge of the role these fake images play in convincing us to purchase products or services, we can't help but be affected by them.

Evidence suggests men are becoming more fixated on body image than ever before. However, it's still the case that they are not subjected to the same pressures as women. 'It's more acceptable for men to put on a few kilos or go without shaving, and growing old gracefully is OK. If a woman's dress size increases, she misplaces her razor or has obvious wrinkles, it's the end of world.'<sup>7</sup> Our patriarchal society and its conditioning have a lot to answer for.

Armed with the knowledge of how the images we are bombarded with every day impact on us all, particularly our children, it's time we stopped the growing epidemic of unhealthy body image. There are many things we can do to change the image environment, but it's up to all of us to take a stand. Be kind to yourself and conscious of how you talk about yourself and others in front of children.

Challenge others when they are running themselves down - and spread the word about how big business, the media and their images perpetuate body hatred.

Often we criticise organisations and politicians for doing something we don't like, but we forget to praise them when they do something we like; so, if you see an organisation promoting positive images, let them know. Chastise companies for promoting negative images, write letters to editors and lobby politicians for change.

A Federal Government initiative has seen the formation of a National Advisory Group on Body Image comprised of fashion industry leaders and representatives from health, media and youth groups. 'The group is charged with developing a voluntary code of practice for portraying body image in the media.'<sup>8</sup> There is a real impetus for creating an environment in which we view our bodies as a "place we live rather than an aspiration always needing to be achieved".<sup>5</sup>

#### References

1. O'Dea, J. A., 1995., Body Image and nutritional status among adolescents and adults – a review of the literature, Australian Journal of Nutrition and Dietetics
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3. Mission Australia, 2008., National Survey of Young Australians - Key and Emerging Issues
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5. Orbach, S, 2009., Bodies, Profile Books
6. Haywood, S, 2009., Applause for the Book "*Bodies*", Adios Barbie.com
7. Smith, L., Body Image, Feministzine.com/feminist/fashion/Body-Image.html
8. Media Release, Ellis kicks off online body image consultations on International No Diet Day May 6, 2009 The Hon Kate Ellis MP Minister for Youth

## Green Mail

The Hobart Women's Health Centre is keen to reduce our carbon footprint and embrace environmentally friendly practices. You can help us in our endeavour, dear readers, by receiving the Centre's Newsletter via email rather than snail mail.

If you currently receive our Newsletter in the mail and have an email address we could send it to instead, please let us know. You can do so by either giving us a call on 6231 3212 or sending an email to [info@hwbc.com.au](mailto:info@hwbc.com.au).



## Roses from the Heart Project

Christina Henri's Roses from the Heart Project intends to gather together 25,566 bonnets made with empathy for convict women who endured so much, and yet have received so little recognition.

Adult female bonnet, pattern taken from 1860s colonial bonnet (muslin)

The project is still going strong and the bonnet count is heading towards 15,000. Numbers increased after Christina travelled to Western Australia and Queensland for Bonnet Blessing ceremonies.

More bonnets are still needed so if you would like to participate you can obtain a pattern from <http://www.rosesfromtheheart.com.au>.

## Breast Cancer Support Groups



For any woman diagnosed with breast cancer who would like information and support.

The next meeting date and time is:

**September 15** 11:45 am - 1:15 pm

Group discussion  
"Mini Field of Women"

**October 20** 11:45 am - 1:15 pm

Group discussion

**November 17** 11:45 am - 1:15 pm

Group discussion

**Please phone Rosemary on 6231 3212 for more information.**

## Stories From Above

'Stories from Above' is the interpretation of stories from the women who participated in the 2008 Women's Health Forum, 'Women On Top', in Launceston.

Vicki West, a Tasmanian Aboriginal artist with extensive experience working with different community groups, was employed as artist in residence at the forum. Vicki's art work stands up against the 'myths of Tasmanian Aboriginal extinction' and celebrates the continuance of living culture.

Vicki worked together with Karen Revie and the women at the forum, utilising 'dodder vine' gathered from the North of the state. Dodder Vine is a native plant which has been described as an *unwelcome pest* in its own environment since European Settlement.



Artist Vicki West with Ankarah in front of 'Stories from Above'.

This material has been used to represent the voices of women from around the state. The Centre is honoured the installation now lives in our courtyard and we encourage you to come and see this amazing work.

## AIDS Awareness Week 2009



The Tasmanian Council on AIDS, Hepatitis and Related Diseases (TasCAHRD) coordinates AIDS Awareness Week activities in Tasmania, engaging with people affected by HIV/AIDS, their communities, allied services, organisations and community groups.

The event for 2009 is a live/audio performance and visual event set outdoors at the Female Factory called *Songs in the Blood*, a play by Elizabeth Mansutti. *Songs in the Blood* will be held on Wednesday evening, November 25. The play documents, in a powerful way, the experiences of women in Australia living with, and affected by, HIV/AIDS.

This year's activities will include a workshop for women to create a candle installation. There will also be some origami figure making workshops, which will be included in the candle installation, held at a few venues including the Hobart Women's Health Centre in late October – early November. Please contact Ankarah 6231 3212 for more information.

If any women would like to volunteer for any of the AIDS Awareness Week activities please contact Amanda, Jude or Emily at TasCAHRD on 6234 1242.

# Healthy Eating

by Wendy Meek

The weather is starting to warm up a bit and spring bulbs are brightening our streets, so what should be happening in our veggie gardens?

I have green manure in my garden at this time of year and have filled the space with lots of garlic! Garlic is great, you can stick it in the ground and just forget about it. It flowers, and then you get to dig up the most amazing bulbs. Remember, if you want good quality bulbs, plant good quality in the beginning.

**Harvesting:** winter lettuce, spinach and silverbeet.

**Planting:** potatoes, cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, celery, lettuce, jerusalem and globe artichokes.

## Truffles

We are going to get a bit extravagant this edition, but I am a firm believer that the best way to eat good healthy food is to try new things, learn about food, where it comes from and how it is grown and harvested. This will give you a love and passion for food, an understanding of the relationship between different foods and seasons and inspire you to seek out quality fresh local produce. We have a special and amazing gourmet food grown right here in Tasmania.

In 1999, the first Australian truffles were harvested in Tasmania, the result of eight years of work. Trees were inoculated with the truffle fungus in the hope of creating a local truffle industry. Their success, and the value of the resulting truffles, has encouraged a small industry to develop. Because of their high price and their pungent taste, truffles are used very sparingly.

The flavour of black truffles is far less pungent and more refined than white truffles. It is reminiscent of fresh earth and mushrooms and, when fresh, their scent fills a room almost instantly.

We have a fast growing industry of Black truffles harvested at this time of year in Tasmania. Other states are starting to grow and harvest as well, but Tasmanian truffles have a very good reputation - on par with the best in the world. Only in the last two years has the general public has been able to purchase them. You can purchase a Tasmanian truffle from the Wursthaus in Salamanca. They are not cheap, but you don't need to buy much and it's a great treat for home that will still cost you less than going out for dinner. If you are not sure, you can purchase eggs stored with truffles (a more affordable option) and make the best omelette you could imagine.

Traditionally, truffle hogs were used to find truffles. Today it is common for truffle hounds as well as truffle hogs, to be used in the gathering of truffles because hogs have been known to eat too many truffles in the field. However, traditionalists argue pigs have more sensitive noses and their particular taste for truffles leads to a more devoted animal. These pigs live good lives and are treated as family pets. I don't know of the use of pigs in Tasmania. To my knowledge Tasmanian truffle dogs are Labradors (you would have to be quick to get a truffle out of most of the labs' mouths I've known in my life) and even a Kelpie.

Truffles have specific storage needs, so I suggest you buy it as close to the day you are going to use it as possible. Leave the storing to the experts.

My suggestion is keep your truffle menu very simple.

Truffle risotto is always a good way to go, or the flavour is also very good with eggs and pasta.

A very simple way to eat truffles is with olive oil or butter and pasta. It is very important you use the best ingredients you can...go on... splash out!

see recipe opposite...



## Self Esteem and Assertiveness Course

This is a free four week course is designed to enhance self awareness, self esteem, confidence and assertiveness.

Tuesday evenings from October 6 - 27 at 6 - 8pm at the Hobart Women's Health Centre.

Contact: Ankarah or Ali at the Centre on 6231 3212 or email to [ankarah@hwbc.com.au](mailto:ankarah@hwbc.com.au)

# Recipe - Truffle Pasta

## Ingredients

One Tasmanian Black Truffle (ask for advice on how many it will feed when buying)

Use top grade pasta (Martelli or equivalent from good super markets or Italian shops)

Good eating grade Olive Oil

Parmigiano-Reggiano

Salt and pepper to season to taste

## Method

Use the biggest pot you have and bring well-salted water to the boil (salt decreases the boiling point of the water making it easier to keep the water boiling once you have added the pasta).

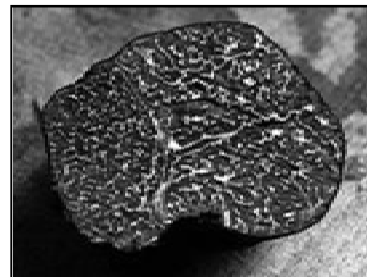
Once water is boiling, add pasta - making sure you do not pack the pot. The pasta needs to be able to roll in the boiling water. Check packet for cooking times, as this varies for different pastas. Do not overcook the pasta!

Drain pasta in colander.

Put back in pot and add olive oil and pepper.

Grate truffle using fine grater or microplane. You may prefer to shave the truffle, either using a truffle shaver or potato peeler, and add to pot. I used my microplane. Leave some truffle to put on pasta once served.

Season and Enjoy!!



## Anti-Poverty Day at HWHC

**Tuesday October 13**

**12:00 – 2:00 pm**

*Anti-Poverty Week*, from October 11 - 17, aims to strengthen public awareness of the causes and consequences of poverty and hardship, to encourage research, discussion and action to address these problems.

Hobart Women's Health Centre will be hosting an Open Day event on the 13<sup>th</sup> October from 12 – 2pm as part of Anti Poverty Week 2009.

The day will feature many activities including:

### Free BBQ Lunch

### Swap opportunities

Opportunity to exchange produce, plants or second hand goods.

### Entertainment

Face painting, lucky dips and seedling planting for the children.

Tours of the Centre.

### Information and tips

Budgeting

Saving money on food, shopping, and home heating.

**For more information ring the Centre on  
6231 3212.**

## Ageing Well with Weights

After a short break in September, the popular Ageing Well with Weights eight-week strength training program will start again in on Friday October 9.

The course, run by physiotherapist Pat Sandercock, consists of some theory and specific exercises utilising weights tailored to each individual's needs.

Sessions are held on Fridays from 1:15 – 2:30 pm and cost is \$5 per class or \$35 for the full course, if paid by/on the first day. The use of weights in class and exercise handouts are provided. Comfortable clothing is recommended.

Please phone reception on 6231 3212 to receive an enrolment form, or collect one from the Centre during opening hours. The course is very popular, so it's good to book early. If you need or want more information about the course contact Ankarah.

Please note practice times are available for women to maintain their strength after completing the program. Contact the Centre for details.



Anne Godfrey, Jenny Line and  
Judy Pitt practising their  
strength training.

# WHAT'S ON @ HWHC

The following **group sessions and activities** are held at the Centre on a regular basis and are free unless otherwise stated. We welcome referrals to any of these programs.

<b>Ageing Well with Weights</b>	8 week strength training program on Fridays 1:15 - 2:30 pm. \$5 per class with physiotherapist Pat Sandercock. To be sent forms for the next course, please call the Centre on 6231 3212. Practice times available, after course completion on Mondays 11:40 am to 1:00 pm and Wednesdays 3:00 to 4:00 pm.
<b>Birth and Beyond</b>	Wednesdays fortnightly, 10 am to 12 pm. Share a healthy lunch afterwards. Starting September 2. Group sessions to share and learn more about birthing and mothering experiences.
<b>Breast Cancer Support</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month 11:45 am - 1:15 pm. For any woman diagnosed with breast cancer who would like information and support.
<b>Fitball Beginners' Class</b>	Tuesday and Thursday 10 - 11:30 am. \$5 per class with physiotherapist Pat Sandercock. Numbers are limited, so phone Pat for information and to book on 6229 7488.
<b>GP services</b>	Mondays 12 - 4 pm, half hour bulk-billed consultations by appointment with Dr Janeil Hall.
<b>Grandparents Raising Grandchildren</b>	Support and relaxation. Contact Ariella for more information on 6234 7948.
<b>Herbalist</b>	Thursday 1 - 4 pm, by appointment only. Cost is \$25.50 for the 1st one hour consultation and \$15.50 follow up appointment. To make an appointment phone Sally on 0407 872 792.
<b>Massage</b>	Remedial and Lomi Lomi massage on Wednesdays 12 - 4 pm \$45 per hour. Phone 0409 219 278 for a booking with Tanya Langdon. Shiatsu by appointment \$60 for 1½ hours or \$45 for 1 hour. Phone 6297 1221 for a booking with Lynne Bradshaw.
<b>Meditation</b>	Guided and safe relaxation meditation, Tuesday 10:30 - 11:30 am (beginners welcome).
<b>Midlife Outreach Service</b>	Individual consultations around menopause issues. 10 am - 2 pm at the Centre on September 21 & December 14. Bookings essential contact Jennie Gorrige on 6222 7242.
<b>Stitches and Stories</b>	Last Thursday of the month from 1:30 – 3:30 pm. The group is open to women of all ages to come together to stitch, embroider, sew, mend, share knowledge and stories.
<b>Tai Chi</b>	Mondays 10:30 - 11:30 am and 1 - 2 pm. This is a low impact form of Tai Chi, which focuses on increasing mobility and flexibility, while developing inner strength and tranquility.
<b>Tas Lymphodemia Support Group</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday every three months, 5:15 - 6:15 pm, at the Centre. Phone 6260 4406 for further information. Next meeting is September 17.
<b>Women's Friendship Group</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month from 1:30 - 3:00 pm. Are you interested in meeting new people, having a laugh with likeminded women and becoming better informed about issues affecting you? The group is small, friendly and welcomes new faces. Phone the Centre for more information.
<b>Women's Walks</b>	Thursday mornings, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm. Calendars are available from reception.
<b>Writers' Support Group</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month, 2 - 4 pm.
<b>Yoga</b>	Wednesday mornings, 9:30 - 10:45 am, for experienced participants and 11:00 am - 12:15 pm for beginners. \$5 per session with Kathy.

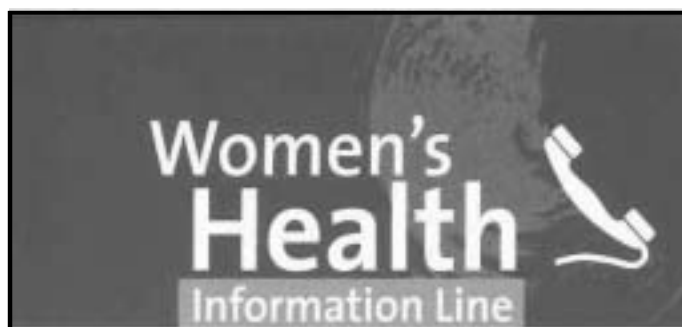
**Come in for a cuppa, browse in our library or use the photocopier.**

# Leave to Improve

by Jen Van-Achteren

The final details of the Federal Government's Paid Parental Leave (PPL) Scheme are yet to be made public. However, major decisions about the scheme have been finalised and were publicised as part of this year's Budget announcements. Legislation for the scheme will be introduced to Parliament in 2010 and the Government intends to conduct an information campaign next year, in the lead up to the commencement of the scheme on January 1, 2011. While it is not possible to analyse the scheme in its entirety, the key points can be examined.

The Australian Government has adopted many of the Productivity Commission's recommendations included in the Final Inquiry Report *Paid Parental Leave: Support for Parents with Newborn Children*. Firstly, the Government took up the recommendation of eighteen weeks' paid leave, which is four more than the World



The Hobart Women's Health Centre has taken over the operation of the Women's Health Information Line from the Department of Health and Human Services. The Information Line supports women to make informed health and wellbeing choices by providing information on general women's health issues, support services and community and government organisations.

The number 1800 675 028 is unchanged. For email enquiries please note the address is [info@hwhc.com.au](mailto:info@hwhc.com.au).

The Information Line will be available from 9 am — 4 pm Monday to Thursday with a dedicated answer machine at other times.

Hobart Women's Health Centre is keen to ensure all information is current and relevant and would welcome further contacts and information from service providers and other organisations. Contact the Centre via at email [info@hwhc.com.au](mailto:info@hwhc.com.au) or phone on 6231 3212.

Health Organisation proposes. The length of time is a great start, but Australia has a long way to go to meet the world's best standards of 68 weeks in Sweden, 50 in Canada and 39 in the UK. The government intends to review the scheme two years after its commencement, but the areas listed for consideration do not include the length of leave. New Zealand has already increased its scheme's length by two weeks and the Families Commission recommended continual increments each year until the scheme has reached 52 weeks by 2015. The Centre would be keen to see our Government increase the length of leave to 12 months, even if this occurred incrementally over a number of years.

In order to be eligible for the government's planned PPL Scheme, workers must have been employed continuously for at least 10 of the 13 months prior to the expected birth or adoption of the child, and undertaken a minimum of 330 hours of paid work during that period. This equates to around 7.5 hours per week over a 10 month period, less than the 10 hours per week for one year proposed by the Productivity Commission. The Federal Government has, however, put in an income test of \$150,000 - based on the primary carer's adjusted income in the previous twelve months; this was not a suggestion made by the Commission. Parents who are the primary carers of a child born or adopted on or after January 1, 2011 are eligible. PPL will also be available in the tragic circumstances of still birth.

The government took up the Commission's advice of paying the minimum wage rate (currently \$543.78 per week) rather than the ACTU proposal, in which employers would contribute a top-up payment to fully replace the income of working women who earn more than the minimum wage. The Productivity Commission recommended employers be compelled to provide the 9% Superannuation Guarantee Contributions to employees. The government has decided not to include this component in their scheme. The decision will, however, be subject to the review.

The PPL Scheme does not include the Productivity Commission's recommendation of two weeks' paid paternity leave. The Government chose to defer this component, to reduce the scheme's cost, but it too will be considered as part of the review. However, the Government has taken up the Commission's suggestion of allowing an unused portion of PPL to be transferred to the other parent.

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Parents receiving PPL will not receive the Baby Bonus (except in multiple-birth cases) or Family Tax Benefit Part B. Families who are eligible can choose whether or not to participate in the scheme, depending on their situation. This choice allows families the opportunity to make the best decision to fit their circumstances.

Paid Parental Leave can be taken in addition to, or at the same time as, existing employer schemes - as long as it is taken after the birth or adoption and completed within 12 months. This is an improvement on the Productivity Commission's recommendation, which stated the leave had to be taken within six months and after any other employer schemes; which may have meant some parents missed out on the government scheme altogether. For parents suffering ill health, who may have exhausted all other leave prior to birth, greater flexibility on the timing of commencement may be warranted.

Once the Government PPL comes into effect, employers providing their own paid parental leave schemes via an industrial agreements are not permitted to withdraw the entitlement until its conclusion. When developing new agreements, employers may negotiate with employees to change existing paid parental leave provisions in light of the Government's PPL scheme. Casual employees, contract workers and the self employed will be entitled to PPL, improving the situation for many who currently have no access to employer-provided entitlements.

The Productivity Commission recommended young people on junior wages, entitled to PPL, receive only 60% of the minimum wage. Fortunately, the Federal Government agrees the living expenses and costs of raising a child are the same for young parents as they are for older parents and have apparently not embraced the advice.

While the Centre is very pleased a paid parental leave scheme will be introduced there is always room for improvement. The evaluation and review will begin in 2013 and be completed in 2014. The Centre hopes the scheme will continue to be evaluated every two years and continuously enhanced, benefiting the health and well-being of future generations. Look out for opportunities to voice your opinion to the Australian Government on the scheme.

Parents can obtain up-to-date information on the Federal Government's Paid Parental Leave Scheme from Family Assistance Office at [www.familyassist.gov.au](http://www.familyassist.gov.au). If you would like a copy of the

booklet *Australia's Paid Parental Leave Scheme – Support working Australian families* go to the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs website at [www.fahcsia.gov.au](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au).

#### References

Productivity Commission, 2009., *Paid Parental Leave: Support for Parents with Newborn Children*, Commonwealth of Australia  
Attorney General's Department Australian Government, 2009., *Australia's Paid Parental Leave Scheme – Support working Australian families*, Commonwealth of Australia  
Van-Achteren J, Summer 2008/09., *Delayed Delivery*, Hobart Women's Health Centre Newsletter, Hobart Women's Health Centre

## New and Nimble Hands

Two new masseuses are now practising at the Centre - Tanya Langdon, who is a Remedial and Lomi Lomi massage therapist and Lynne Bradshaw, a Shiatsu Therapist.

Tanya began studying massage in 1998 and has worked in Hobart, Melbourne and Alice Springs using traditional Balinese, Hawaiian and western massage techniques to successfully treat stress related illness and pain.

Lomi Lomi is a Hawaiian massage, a very fluid and rhythmic treatment working on cleansing the lymphatic systems, relaxing both soft and deep tissues and opening the heart using hands, breathing, rhythm and energy flow.

Tanya is a member of Australian Association of Massage Therapists and a registered provider with most Health Insurers. She is available at the Centre on Wednesdays between 12 and 4 pm phone 0409 219 278 to make a booking.

Lynne describes Shiatsu as incorporating aspects of Japanese massage traditions, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and western anatomy and physiology.

The TCM theory proposes that energy known as "Ki" moves through the body along well-defined paths called meridians. These are expressions of the unity of mind and body – through the meridians, your thoughts and feelings are communicated to your body to become symptoms or sensations. So, the body becomes a "picture" of your emotional and internal wellbeing.

A shiatsu session takes around 1½ hours to balance the energy flows through the meridians - allowing the receiver to feel more whole, harmonious and integrated. Lynne recommends the recipient wears loose clothing.

Lynne is available by appointment please phone her on 6297 1221 to make a booking.

# Talking Herbs

*the alternative medicines*

*with Sally Riley*

I have recently been fortunate enough to travel extensively in Scandinavia and Britain for a number of weeks. Having now got the travel bug out of my system for a while at least I am still mindful of the precautions one must take in regards to health threats while on the move. This time, there was the additional risk of contracting swine flu - particularly as it seemed to be rampant during the time I was away. Some simple precautionary advice is appropriate, even if travelling closer to home. I went prepared with face masks, but found the only individuals wearing them were some airport personnel in Bangkok.

My travel kit always contains the following:

**Echinacea** is best known for boosting the immune system. It is particularly useful against respiratory infections as it stimulates the neutrophils, the white cells that gobble up foreign bodies. It is an excellent preventive herb for influenza viruses, being antiviral and antibacterial, so is a must in the present climate for travel. It is readily available in table form.

**Probiotics** are helpful when there is a chance of food bugs causing nausea and diarrhoea. A good probiotic for gut microbial imbalances is a must. It should be taken for a number of days, if an infection strikes, or can be taken continuously as a preventative. The probiotic should contain ideally Lactobacillus acidophilus, Lactobacillus rhamnosus, and Bifidobacterium lactis.

**Ginkgo biloba** helps cerebral circulation in the brain. It is great for short-term memory and helps keep us focussed. If you are one of those people who go to sleep in front of the TV, you may benefit by taking Ginkgo. It is also an antioxidant and has some anticoagulant activity. This characteristic is useful when flying because it may, in a small way guard against deep vein thrombosis. Those on Warfarin should not take this herb.

**Horse chestnut** is beneficial for the prevention of deep vein thrombosis. Its main claim however, is its usefulness for varicose veins, haemorrhoids, localised oedema, restless legs and any situation where there is a compressed nerve. This is not one I chose to take but it is a possible consideration for travel.

**Turmeric** has strong anti-inflammatory properties. It therefore could help with those aches and pains in hips and joints from sleeping on unfamiliar mattresses which may be hard and by the way sometimes creak abominably. The anti-inflammatory property may also be of use for inflammation in the lungs resulting from viral infection.

**Fish oil** in capsules form (1000mgms, 2 capsules per day) for inflammation and general cardiovascular and brain health.

**Celloids** PPMP- (Potassium phosphate and magnesium phosphate) are simple but extremely helpful minerals for nerves and muscles. These minerals are excellent in preventing cramps and for reducing stress. It is thought they help with jetlag symptoms.

Sally is available on Ph. 0407 872 792 for a consultation in herbal or mineral therapies and nutritional advice, by appointment at the Centre on Thursday afternoons.

Doses for herbs should always be checked with a professional health practitioner, as therapeutic doses vary for each herb and some have cautions for certain health conditions.

## *Birth and Beyond*

*Birth & Beyond nurtures a holistic approach to the needs of women as we journey through the childbearing years; support to explore and choose what is right for you and your family.*

**Fortnightly on Wednesdays between  
9:30 am - 1 pm**

**The dates for this  
season are as follows:**

September 2, 16 and 30


October 14 and 28

November 11 and 25

Phone the Centre on  
6231 3212 for more  
information about topics  
and presenters.



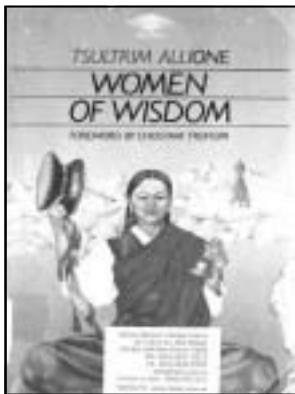
# WOMEN'S WISDOM LIBRARY



## **Women of Wisdom**

**by Tsultrim Allione**

Women of Wisdom is a great little book for so many reasons. It is a pleasure to read, exciting and profound. For women seeking to explore their spirituality, it offers a philosophy of life, insights into psychology, the nature of reality, the universe and our place in it. It is also based on strong feminist beliefs about the status of women in contemporary society.



Tsultrim Allione has led an interesting life as a Tibetan Buddhist nun, a wife and mother. Drawing on her own experiences and those of the six Tibetan female mystics featured in the book, she offers these biographies as a historical record, and as role-models for women seeking to explore a life of spirituality.

Women of Wisdom was inspired by the lack of literature available about women committed to a spiritual life and also by the inherent sexism which - across many cultures, religions and spiritual beliefs - labels women as incapable of reaching the highest states of awareness. Furthermore, the difficulties Tsultrim Allione encountered in her spiritual journey were not only compounded by the lack of guidance available from a woman's perspective, but also the fact the issues were often significantly different from those faced, and written about, by men.

Based on a sound understanding of the personal and structural barriers women face in all walks of life, Women of Wisdom explores these age-old challenges, primarily from a Buddhist perspective. It has relevance for any woman captured by the urge to delve into the unknown of spiritual experience.

It is difficult to convey in words an essence of spiritual experience, but I enjoyed the way in which Tsultrim Allione puts the concept forward. As she says, "One cannot force or grasp a spiritual experience, because it is as delicate as the whisper of the wind".

**Julianne Campbell**

## **My Pelvic ~~Floor~~ Flaw**

Preventing pelvic floor problems throughout life.

Information every woman should know

**by Mary O'Dwyer**

This book is easy to read, with great colourful diagrams and useful websites. It covers issues of pelvic floor function and dysfunction, with practical methods of pelvic floor retraining for all stages of life – from childhood to senior years.

O'Dwyer refers to the pelvic floor as the 'centre of our femaleness' and emphasises the need for correct information to protect it from damage that could occur through exercise, childbirth, menopause and aging.

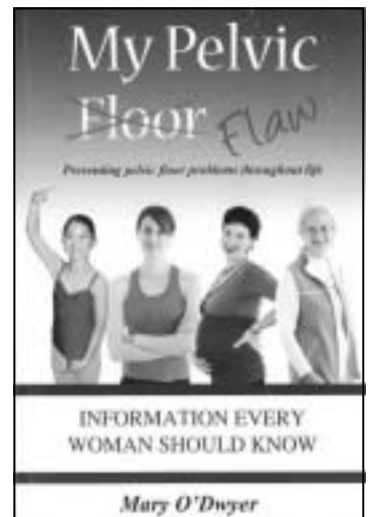
We live longer now and, as we age, evidence reveals there is increased risk of developing genital prolapse leading to symptoms which include loss of bladder and bowel control and sexual dysfunction.

Mary O'Dwyer is a physiotherapist who undertook her post graduate study on the pelvic floor. O'Dwyer learned 'the extent of pelvic floor dysfunction and the impact that bladder and bowel incontinence, sexual dysfunction and pelvic pain have on women's relationships, self image and independence.'

The relief women involved in her study expressed - at having the opportunity to talk about their experiences, problems and concerns - quite amazed O'Dwyer.

The book provides a checklist of the symptoms for Pelvic Floor Dysfunction and explains how to find and retrain the pelvic floor.

O'Dwyer encourages the reader to utilise this information as part of 'female wisdom' and to pass the information between the generations of women. She also advises women who suffer from undiagnosed pelvic pain, bladder urgency or leaking to ask their GP for a referral



to a gynaecologist, continence unit (you can also self refer) or pelvic floor physiotherapist (available privately or at The Royal Hobart Hospital) for specific treatment.

I was impressed to see 10% of the profits from the sale of this book are donated to The Hamlin Foundation for Fistula Surgery in Ethiopia [www.fistulatrust.org](http://www.fistulatrust.org).

**Ankarah Grace.**

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century GP Service

The Centre recently began using a computerised system for our GP service. Use of the new technology will improve both the storage and privacy of patient records, streamline processing and add to patient safety. And by finally joining the 21<sup>st</sup> century the Centre has enhanced our ability to attract and retain GPs.

Patient safety has been improved by increasing the legibility of patient histories and prescriptions, and access to drug interaction and allergy checking. Our GPs are now able to easily and quickly acquire up to date medical and drug references online. Pathology results can be imported and specialist referrals made using the computer system which brings us into line with those services.

In addition, it is another step in the migration to a "paperless" office which will reduce our impact on the environment.

In order to move to this computerised GP system it was necessary for the Centre to purchase new computers and specialist medical software called Best Practice.

This large financial outlay was made possible with a grant from the Tasmanian Community Fund. The Centre would like to thank the Tasmanian Community Fund for funding this important project.



## Web Spinning

Mental Health First Aid Guidelines Project have produced first aid strategies applicable to a range of developing mental disorders and mental health crisis situations. The guidelines consist of first aid actions that have been rated as important or essential by expert panels of professionals, consumers and carers. <http://www.mhfa.com.au/Guidelines.shtml>

As a project of [Loveyourbody.org](http://Loveyourbody.org), the mission of [adiosbarbie.com](http://adiosbarbie.com) is to promote healthy body image and self-image for people of all cultures and sizes

Feed the world at [www.freerice.com](http://www.freerice.com) is a UN World Food Program. For each answer you get right in their non-profit online quiz 10 grains of rice are donated to feed to hungry people.

## Lesbian and Bi Women

### *The Lounge*

Is having a break while the Centre examines whether this service will continue.

### *Borderlines – Queer Radio*

#### **Hobart's sexuality & gender issues radio show**

Every Monday 10 am – 12 pm  
Edge Radio 99.3 FM

### *Sol @ Soak*

#### **Every third Saturday of the month from 6 pm**

Hobart's only regular women's night  
at Soak Bar, 237 Elizabeth Street, North Hobart  
Live music and DJ

Meals available from adjoining Kaos Café

### *Artfully Queer Art Exhibition*

Coming up in September. For more information on this year's theme, and to participate, contact the GLC or go to [www.taspride.com](http://www.taspride.com)

# Pride Festival

## **Women's Big Breakfast at KAOS Cafe**

hosted by

Hobart Women's Health Centre

To celebrate Lesbian and Bi women's well-being during the Pride Festival

**Date:** November 11, 2009

**Time:** 7:30 am

**Cost :** \$15 per head including many breakfast choices to tempt you, accompanied with one of the best coffees in town

**Please call Hobart Women's Health Centre on 6231 3212 to book your place.**



## INTRODUCING. . .

Hi my name is Ali Dugan. I am a social work student on placement at the Hobart Women's Health Centre until Christmas. While at the Centre, I will be involved in a wide range of projects and activities. I will be co-facilitating a self esteem and assertiveness course, other community education sessions and assisting with origami figure-making workshops as part of AIDS Awareness Week. A large chunk of my time here will be taken up researching violence against women, the issue the Centre intends to focus on this year.



In the past, I have had a variety of jobs in tourism and Parks and Wildlife. I feel I have finally found what it is I truly want to do by returning to study. I currently work part time at Life without Barriers, who provide out of home care services. My role there is to support foster carers, which I thoroughly enjoy. I would like to either continue in this field or move into the mental health area.

When I am not studying or working, I am kept busy by my six year old daughter. If I do get any "me time", I enjoy Bikram Yoga, bushwalking, photography or sitting at a café savouring a good cuppa.



## . . .WHAT AN EXPERIENCE

My name is Madge, and I have been coming to the Centre for about nine years for various workshops and activities. I mostly attend The Lounge, where I am able to relax and chat with like-minded women. But, I also value my solitude and often spend several days alone with just my pet mice for company.

People often say I have a good sense of humour, but I wonder if it's just a sense of the ridiculous, as I say and wear what I want and try to keep my conversations interesting and fun - life is too short to be a dull person! Maybe I'm just eccentric?

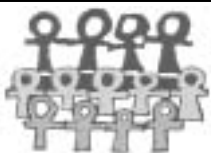
I give to my favourite charities whenever I can, and I am donating my body to the medical school at the University of Tasmania when I die - but hopefully not for quite a while yet.

## CONTRIBUTIONS. . .

Contributions from readers are very welcome. If you have an article, review, comment or notice that would be of interest to our readers, please send it to the Newsletter Editor by post, email or drop it into reception when you visit the Centre.

To be considered for inclusion, all contributions must be received by the following deadline:

**Summer Edition: 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2009** (newsletter distributed at the end of November)



## . . .GETTING IN TOUCH

Open: *Mon, Tues, Wed & Thurs 9:15 am to 4 pm*

Visit: *25 Lefroy Street North Hobart* Post: *PO Box 248 North Hobart Tas 7002*

Tel: *03 6231 3212* Outside the 62 area, freecall *1800 353 212* Fax: *03 6236 9449*

Email: *info@hwhc.com.au* Website: *www.hwhc.com.au*

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