



# TCP Connect Webinar Series Three

## Change Favours the Brave

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## **A Message from Thriving Communities Partnership CEO, Ciara Sterling**

At TCP we are constantly inspired by the brave and bold changemakers in our community. As society's challenges continue to become more interconnected, changing and complex than ever before, these humans and organisations are constantly seeking to innovate, improve and explore new ways of working to approach these problems.

In our third series of the TCP Connect Webinars, we spoke with leaders from across our essential service ecosystem to hear about what they've been working on, and what's next for their organisations moving forward. This series, 'Change Favours the Brave', sought to shine a light on these brave and bold projects and explore the challenges, motivations and lessons learned throughout the process. Sharing these lessons and pieces of advice has helped to build our collective capability, ensuring that everyone across the TCP community can draw value from the exciting work being done by these brilliant changemakers from a cross-section of sectors and industries.

We were yet again forced to navigate a difficult and complex time as the disruptions of COVID-life persisted throughout 2021, and there were many times when these webinars were a much needed source of inspiration and comfort amidst the uncertainty. We explored so much throughout these ten episodes, and saw some key themes that permeated throughout the whole series.

Support for people experiencing vulnerability remained a central focus throughout this series as we highlighted the work of the brave leaders and positive disruptors throughout our community. The use of technology and innovation was also a key theme in this series, as well as the challenges and opportunities when dealing with financial wellbeing, mental health, stigma, bias, and unexpected life events.

One of the greatest parts about our 'Change Favours the Brave' series was hearing our guest's final key piece of advice for those who are wanting to be brave and work on an initiative for social good. Some were simple and practical, others were rousing calls for collective action, but all of them added immense value to our conversations and are an excellent snapshot of what it meant to navigate 2021 and what we can take forward into 2022 and beyond.

To all our guests, participants and those within the TCP team, a huge thank-you for your contributions to yet another fantastic TCP Connect Webinar Series. Together we showed how and why change favours the brave and I hope this report can act as a blueprint and a reminder for how we can continue to be bold and brave in the future.

## About this report

**This report is a compilation of the key insights that TCP has drawn from each of the ten episodes in the Change Favours the Brave Series of the TCP Connect Webinars.**

### **The TCP Connect Webinars**

The TCP Connect Webinars create the opportunity for all members of the TCP community to come together to learn, share and connect with one another, all for the purpose of ensuring that everyone in Australia has fair access to the modern essential services they need to thrive in Australia.

### **Series Three - Change Favours the Brave**

In our third series, 'Change Favours the Brave', we spoke to organisations and people doing bold and brave things, both big and small, to ensure people are able to live in a fair and equitable Australia where everyone feels 'I matter'. We explored the inspiring work happening in our community, inviting our guests to share the lessons they've learned throughout their journey so that all members of the TCP community can draw value from the experience. We also spoke about what their vision is for the future and how we might build this future collectively, working with other organisations within and across sectors, and people with lived experience.

### **What you'll find in this report**

For each episode you will find:

- The key insights drawn from the discussion each week, including links to relevant resources and places to find out more information
- A link to the video recording of the episode
- A final piece of advice from each guest for someone wanting to be brave and work on an initiative for social good

These pieces of advice create an excellent snapshot of what it has meant to navigate the past few years and act as a source of motivation and inspiration for all current and future changemakers within our community. We encourage you to use these insights and pieces of advice to bring about conversations and action within your own organisations, collaborating with those around you to continue to push for holistic, tangible, positive change in our communities.

# Ep 1 - Using technology and partnerships to change the way technology is accessed

*Speakers: Krish Goundar, Product Owner of the Australian Death Notification Service at the Department of Customer Service NSW and Gabby Sundstrom, General Manager of Innovation at Thriving Communities Partnership.*

Date of episode: 14 July 2021

View [episode 1 recording here](#)

In our first episode in the 'Change Favours the Brave' series we spoke with **Krish Goundar**, Product Owner of the Australian Death Notification Service at the **Department of Customer Service NSW** and **Gabby Sundstrom**, General Manager of Innovation at **Thriving Communities Partnership** about how they are using technology and partnerships to change the way support is accessed.

Here are the main takeaway points from the discussion:

- **The Australian Death Notification Service (ADNS) and One Stop One Story (OSOS) Hub initiatives showcase the importance of collaboration in alleviating barriers for people accessing support.** The ADNS allows people to notify multiple organisations online that someone has died so their accounts can be closed or transferred. The OSOS Hub allows people to connect to the extensive support they are eligible for across a range of essential services, instead of needing to individually contact and navigate the often complex system of support. Read more about the [ADNS](#) and the [OSOS Hub](#). These two innovations are bringing together organisations from across sectors to centralise processes for people, removing difficult emotional barriers that arise through having to re-tell their story. Both initiatives exemplify the core values of human-centered design, the importance of collaboration across sectors and how we can use technology to improve and streamline the services we offer.
- **Taking a human centred approach is better for humans and better for organisations.** When people are experiencing trauma and stress, they have a limited bandwidth. This impacts people's ability to access support - they don't know where to start, and they don't know what's available, so it all becomes overwhelming. Both the ADNS and the OSOS Hub conducted research with humans to understand their pain points and challenges. By reducing barriers and streamlining support through people-centred processes, we are making it easier for people to get the support they need. What both initiatives also found was that by addressing the pain points for the humans, they were also addressing the pain points that were continually presenting for organisations.
- **Technology is not always the answer and there is still work to do to ensure that our services are reaching even the most excluded.** Digital access barriers and language barriers are just some of the challenges the ADNS is looking to overcome with each iteration of their service. The value of personal touch points, especially when

dealing with complex emotional matters like death administration, is not to be underestimated and the gaps in access, usability and awareness of these new technologies offer plenty of opportunities for improvement.

- **Strength in numbers through the formation of new partnerships is essential to the success of new cross sector support services.** Partnership for the ADNS is free and allows participating organisations to optimise their business processes and ultimately improve customer experience. The alignment and streamlining of death administration can assist in improving risk management, reducing operating costs and allows the organisation to play a positive role in the customer journey through what is often a very difficult time. The more organisations that join, the stronger the service becomes and the greater positive impact there is for the community.
- **Where there is a shared vision and mutual benefit, we can really start to shift the system towards humans.** System change is hard, so there are some special ingredients required for successful innovation.
  - A shared vision for the problem we are collectively trying to solve
  - Mutual benefit across all stakeholder groups
  - An openness to understand the complexities and challenges faced by each support provider
  - Keeping the human at the centre of all design processes and ensuring an ethical lens is applied to all designs and decision making
- **What's next for the OSOS Hub?** The OSOS Hub pilot went live in September 2021 with the service initially being offered to people in our community impacted by family violence. We have co-designed the hub across sectors and with people with lived experience to ensure privacy, safety and security is primary in all aspects of the experience. Through the OSOS Hub we leverage our genuine shared purpose across the partnership to improve the experience of the human through technology and process. We will then look to scale the program across the partnership and broaden the scope of the service offering.
- **We asked the audience to share one insight or learning that they took away from this webinar. Some of the common answers included:** technology needs to work side by side with other avenues of support, the importance of celebrating diversity, the power of collaboration and the power of co-design in developing trust.

**As part of the Change Favours the Brave webinar series, we asked our guests to provide advice to those that are continuing to do brave and bold things.**

Krish's advice was to *"celebrate the diversity of people and to embrace it... when everyone is celebrated as an individual that brings out the best in the product"*.

Gabby encouraged people to *"find your allies... if you've got an idea, share it, because it's much easier when you've got a whole bunch of people trying to tackle a challenge together."*

## Ep 2 - Innovative work to support people to be safe and healthy at home and in the community.

*Speakers: Melissa Hardham, CEO of WEstjustice and Nor Shanino, Co-Founder of The Ubuntu Project.*

Date of episode: 28 July 2021

View [episode 2 recording here](#)

In episode two we spoke with **Melissa Hardham**, CEO of **WEstjustice** and **Nor Shanino**, Co-Founder of **The Ubuntu Project** about their innovative work to support people to be safe and healthy at home and in the community. An inspiring conversation with two incredibly captivating speakers, Melissa and Nor exemplify what it means to put humans first and how listening with two ears and one mouth can drive the greatest change in our communities.

Here are the main takeaway points from the discussion:

- **If we want to achieve long-term collective impact and address root causes, we need to adopt innovative ways of working together that allow us to best use our limited resources and to develop client led approaches.** WEstjustice focuses on preventative and early intervention aspects of law and justice by integrating with other services. They take a client-led, family-led and community-led focus in designing services and they've learned that being based out of places where people are already accessing other services is critical. This allows them to focus on life outcomes, not just legal outcomes. They follow an innovation approach of testing, trying, evaluating, codifying and scaling their services. [Read about WEstjustice programs here.](#)
- **Being proactive, involving and listening to the community in research, design and decision making, and working in a collaborative capacity are all factors in the work of being "positive disruptors."** Humans don't live in a silo, so why do we keep offering solutions in a silo? The Ubuntu Project finds opportunities for "positive disruption" of the status quo and works to pilot, prove, advocate and scale their initiatives, all alongside the community. [See more about The Ubuntu Project here](#)
- **Developing communications with the communities you are trying to serve, and using channels they prefer, is vital to ensuring important messaging is getting to everyone.** Navigating language barriers can be complex, so utilise visuals with subtitles, create animations that can be dubbed in multiple languages, minimise jargon. Also, work alongside services like social workers already embedded within communities. Technology has expanded our communications channels. Create and share content through an individuals' preferred channels, this may include Instagram, WhatsApp, Tok-tok as well as more traditional channels.
- **It's easy for organisations and people to fall into 'filter bubbles' where we surround ourselves with people similar to us, and we need to consciously intervene in this.** Bring in diversity of thought and diverse humans who aren't like everybody else in your organisations. Give space for that independent thought to happen. Don't focus just on diversity, focus on what Nor calls 'deliberate diversity'. This

involves relishing and celebrating all diversity, including difference of thought, experience, background, culture, race, gender and sexual orientation. All of those life experiences are going to bring new thinking and ways of working into your organisation. You also need to commit to creating safe spaces within your organisation to ensure people can bring their own unique self to work.

- **Melissa and Nor shared their biggest surprise outcome of the past year, providing a sense of hope and inspiration for the support service community.** Nor witnessed an increase in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities engaging with mental health sessions and saw humans opening themselves up and sharing their struggles with their fellow community members. There was also an increase in youth engaging with these services with the support of their parents, treating mental wellness as a high priority. Melissa saw the incredible results that collaborative spaces can have, connecting humans to a variety of services within the same building which helped to significantly reduce stress, improve mental health and increase the efficiency of the organisations themselves.

**As part of the Change Favours the Brave webinar series, we asked our guests to provide advice to others who are doing brave and bold things.**

Nor's advice was to *"challenge yourself... get out of your comfort zone, think out of the bubble, humble yourself,"* and to listen to the diverse voices of the community for advice and ideas on how to improve the lives of our fellow humans.

Melissa's final message was *"to create an environment of creativity for staff to work with communities and slow down the design phase and really engage all the critical thinkers in the room to get the right result... In order to create that change we have to be brave enough to be creative and design in that collaborative way."*

## Ep 3 - How to achieve authentic buy-in and embed lasting change within organisations

*Speakers: Jane Calvert, Head of Social Licence at Transurban and Paul Holmes, Principal Lawyer, Civil Justice Services at Legal Aid Queensland.*

Date of episode: 11 August 2021

View [episode 3 recording here](#)

In episode three of our Change Favours the Brave Series we spoke with **Jane Calvert**, Head of Social Licence at **Transurban** and **Paul Holmes**, Principal Lawyer, Civil Justice Services at **Legal Aid Queensland** about how to achieve authentic buy-in and embed lasting change within organisations, from co-designing family violence policies to disruption for good in the legal sector.

Here are the main takeaway points from the discussion:

- **Policies should not just be documents that tick a box. They should be a galvanising force that creates a different way of working, that genuinely puts humans at the centre.** Transurban recently co-designed and embedded their family violence policy, using a process that enabled them to build awareness, create mutual accountability and collective ownership across the organisation. This process included:
  - Identifying key internal influencers to be involved in supporting the case for change, driving internal alignment, defining an agreed sense of purpose and implementing the policy and actions.
  - An external co-design process that involved understanding the problem space, exploring what better practice looks like and co designing the various guidelines and the action plan that sits beneath it.
  - Co-designing with community sector, industry colleagues and people with lived experience, and compensating people for their time.

TCP was delighted to be able to work with Transurban and their stakeholders to develop their family violence policy. Throughout the development process, we observed a great deal of authenticity, generosity, and commitment from everyone who took part which has led to some fantastic outcomes. Congratulations to all involved in really leaving competition, bias and judgement at the door to ensure the right outcomes for humans.

- **Communications need to be simple - even legal documents. We need to shift the thinking from just compliance to increasing understanding and supporting people to have greater agency to actively participate.** Legal Aid Queensland is working in collaboration with Logan Financial Literacy Action Group to rethink how they communicate about financial issues. While fact sheets aren't new, in a community where there are up to 180 different languages spoken, understanding specific communication needs and collaborating with government, local banks, neighbourhood centres etc to

simplify communications has made for effective financial education. [Learn more about Logan Financial Literacy Action Group here.](#)

- **When people see you do what you said you would do, this builds trust with stakeholders, staff and humans.** Creating a safe space for open communication, listening to voices of lived experience and taking the time to build strong and lasting relationships is essential in an effective collaborative environment. By following through with clear, tangible changes that directly respond to the needs of the community and the insights of external stakeholders, you are showing staff, stakeholder, customers and the broader community that you are listening, acting and worthy of their trust and support.
- **You don't get to the glory of a great outcome without being able to dare greatly, even in failure, because it's only by failure that you'll learn and end up with the right result.** Both speakers reiterated the importance of being brave and making a start. Even if you feel you are so far behind others, be brave in not knowing, reach out across networks, across sectors and learn from those who have tried and trodden the path before you. You don't have to reinvent the wheel. Don't be afraid to make mistakes, instead embrace them as opportunities to learn, grow and change.

**As part of the Change Favours the Brave webinar series, we asked our guests to provide advice to others who are doing brave and bold things.**

Jane's advice was encapsulated by the notion to *"eat that elephant one bite at a time... use the end goal to inspire and maintain momentum, but recognise that the steps towards that goal maybe many and there are days when you feel like you'll be standing still, or maybe even going backwards, but keep going and keep that end goal in mind."*

Paul's inspiring advice was *"to dare greatly, even in failure, because it's only by failure that you'll learn and end up with the right result."*

## Ep 4 - Connect and Chat

Date of episode: 25 August 2021

As this episode occurred in breakout rooms there are no recordings available.

Last week we asked everyone to be a contributor in our TCP Connect and Chat webinar. Connecting with other participants in a series of breakout rooms, we shared what our organisations or industries are seeing, what we're working on and heard about the brave, bold things happening across our network.

Here are some of the common themes discussed in the breakout rooms and the main takeaway points from the discussions:

- **A lot has changed since pre-COVID. We're missing those little watercooler catch-ups and that human connection.** We need to keep creating these opportunities to hear what others across the network are doing, to share our challenges, and to celebrate our successes together. These conversations reinforce our sense of togetherness and the connection that is critical in navigating the new COVID world together.
- **Experiencing vulnerability is part of being human, for everyone including our staff.** Staff are hearing very personal stories from the humans they connect with and no one is immune to the effects of this. Organisations have been reviewing mental health support for staff and improving Employee Assistance Programs (EAP). Initiatives include resilience programs, encouraging staff to take days off when they need to avoid burnout and looking at new roles including Chief Mental Health Officers within their organisations.
- **People continue to experience greater levels of risk and exclusion through COVID, including greater financial stress, family violence, mental health etc.** Humans are reaching out to their service providers from across all sectors for support. We're seeing how interconnected our services really are and the joint responsibility we have to work together to create more aligned responses. Partnerships and strong referral pathways are key to providing the wrap around support that can better assist people to get back on track.
- **Participants shared some shining moments of cross-sector support, reiterating that collaboration and a holistic ecosystem response is the only way forward.** We're yet to understand the long-term effects of COVID on things like early access to super and taxation issues for people experiencing Domestic and Family Violence (DFV). Finding new opportunities for collaboration and embracing our collective responsibility allows us to see the problem from all angles. The TCP DFV Network for Business, which was developed through one of TCP's Don't Just Think Tanks, was highlighted as an example of this safe space to share. If you are interested in taking part in this network, reach out to [contact@thriving.org.au](mailto:contact@thriving.org.au)

It was clear from the discussions that the humans of TCP across the network are wanting to take advantage of the opportunities to connect with, and learn from, each other. We loved the opportunity to hear from everyone about the new and brave things we've all been working on and look forward to seeing new connections form across sectors and industries.

We are committed to continuing to create these opportunities and ongoing resources for our network to **connect with** each other, build our **collective capability** and create **change for humans**. TCP has a collective vision for change and change favours the brave.

# Ep 5 - Deepening our understanding about bias and how this can impact the way we engage, connect and support people in our community

*Speakers: Joe Ball, CEO of Switchboard and Dr. Stefan Gruenert, CEO of Odyssey House.*

Date of episode: 8 September

View [episode 5 recording here](#)

In our fifth episode we spoke to **Joe Ball**, CEO of **Switchboard** and **Dr Stefan Gruenert**, CEO of **Odyssey House** about how organisations can be brave and bold in deepening their understanding about bias and the impacts that has on how we engage with, connect with and support people in our community.

Here are the main takeaway points from the discussion:

- **Working with and not for the community through support services helps to ensure there is “nothing about us without us” and is the core of being brave and bold.**  
Odyssey House is a Victorian statewide drug and alcohol treatment, training and support organisation. They work with around 16,000 people every year, including children, youth, adults, couples and families to build capacity and reduce shame around asking for help. Switchboard provides peer-driven support services for LGBTIQ+ people, their families, allies and communities. They embody the principles of “our health in our hands” with over 180 volunteers with a spectrum of lived experience. Community control and involvement in their services helps Switchboard and Odyssey House understand where they can offer more and take up that space in such challenging times, creating a community belief and a sense of looking after each other. Read more about [the work of Odyssey House](#) and [the work of Switchboard](#).
- **Stigma and bias at an organisational level needs to be challenged. The first experience with a service is very important and can cloud a person’s experience for years to come.** For support services like Switchboard’s ‘Rainbow Door’ it’s important to refer people to inclusive organisations so that they land well, and feel safe, so that the client does not need to become the educator of that service while seeking support. This is also the case for clients referred from Odyssey House, working with people impacted by drug and alcohol issues, who in many instances have experienced complex trauma, and then suffered ongoing shame and stigma. Bad experiences can quickly turn people away and reinforce stigma and discrimination. Ensuring organisations understand bias and consciously create a sense of trust and respect is an important part of reducing the anxiety of people seeking help and brings humanity to the front of our work.
- **Getting all the words right is important, but not as important as genuine efforts to challenge our own individual biases and seeking to understand the space these biases may exist in.** Everyday actions and daily behaviours are a great way to challenge bias at an individual level by doing things to intentionally bring diverse perspectives into our lives. Through books, Facebook groups, podcasts etc, we can

invite opportunity everyday to disrupt our thinking and keep that disruption going. These are key ways to diversify our behaviours and help us understand the issues where our biases may lie. Bringing that sense of curiosity and trying new things, especially as leaders within organisations, is essential to challenging everyday experiences of discrimination.

- **We can't be good at everything, so choosing a small number of things to act on and striking a balance between big, bold risks and more incremental change is the key to sustainability in this space.** In times of uncertainty, having staff that can grab new ideas and shift quickly is very beneficial, but it's also important to listen to and value those who are more cautious. As a leader, your job is to hear both and make a decision. We need to ask ourselves, what are one or two things that are going to make a big difference, do lots of preparation and research and fight for those issues. Joe captured it perfectly when they said "defer to people that are experts", asking others isn't a sign of weakness, it's actually a place of strength. Supporting partners in their advocacy, signing joint statements within and across sectors where appropriate, and focusing on your organisation's priority areas will ensure that the work you're doing is done well and has the greatest effect.

**As part of the Change Favours the Brave webinar series, we asked our guests to provide advice to others who are doing brave and bold things.**

Stefan's key piece of advice was to *"maintain a focus on your relationships with your partners and your work colleagues, build a great team that respects and admires each other's diversity and strengths. That will stand you in good stead for whatever brave, bold adventure you go on."*

Joe's advice asked the leaders of organisations to *"find colleagues that are diverse, surround yourself with people that are going to give you honest and fierce feedback. Work out where is my accountability going to come from to do this diversity and LGBTQIA+ inclusion work you need and find that accountability at [your] level."*

# Ep 6 - The intersect between climate change, people experiencing vulnerability and the role of organisations

*Speakers: Annabelle Butler, EM Regulatory Change at Suncorp and Dr. Guy Jackson, Postdoctoral Fellow at Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies.*

Date of episode: 22 September 2021

View [episode 6 recording here](#)

In our sixth episode we spoke to **Annabelle Butler**, EM Regulatory Change, **Suncorp** and **Dr Guy Jackson**, Postdoctoral Fellow at **Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies** about the intersect between climate change, people experiencing vulnerability and the role of organisations.

Here are the main takeaway points from the discussion:

- **There is a growing understanding of the intersection between climate change, loss and damage and vulnerability, and organisations across all sectors are beginning to make huge changes in this space.** Globally insured losses from natural disasters for the first half of the 2021 calendar year sat at US\$40b, second only to 2011 where the world was rocked by earthquakes in Japan and New Zealand. Suncorp has been seeking to understand the relationship between income, geography and risk and, along with many in the insurance industry, are pulling out of insuring and investing in carbon heavy industries. Guy's research across the Pacific and Northern Australia explores processes that lead to expressions of disaster and whether they are influenced by different political and historical processes and cultural change. You can read more about [Guy's research](#) and [Suncorp's Climate Action Plan](#).
- **Climate change will lead to more extreme events but it's not the root cause of vulnerability in this space. Vulnerability comes first.** Natural disaster events interact with existing structures in society like land use practises, political economy and allocation of resources, resulting in areas of disadvantage being highly exposed. The disproportional effects of climate change are evident in everyday spaces, like tree lined streets protected from urban heat island effects compared to social housing with inadequate air conditioning. And more broadly, it impacts global south countries that don't have the capacity to adapt to climate change, highlighting this intersection between society, vulnerability and climate change.
- **When considering new developments and infrastructures, it's about *where* we build but also *what* we build.** Industries are asking councils and organisations to take into consideration climate change when making decisions around where and what type of development they allow. Annabelle reiterated the relationship between geography, income and risk in urban developments occurring in high risk areas because the land is cheap, creating challenges for people experiencing vulnerability. Guy's studies have also uncovered gaps in social housing in remote communities, stating that "we need to

recognise that we might not be able to design our way out of it... we need to start thinking about where we live and then fundamentally about housing as a right instead of it being just an exchange value.” Read about [Suncorp’s One House initiative](#) on building resilient, sustainable housing.

- **Everyone approaches the conversation from a different value space. It’s about finding that point of connection with the community and with organisations to ensure they have agency in the conversation.** Lots of organisations, social service providers, local councils and various groups are having these conversations about how climate change is affecting them and intersecting with the social world, but from a unique angle. It’s important that we are recognising the differences around our country, the different histories and values, and listening to people, first and foremost, to see what matters to them most. Tying these conversations back to people and place is fundamentally important in all things we do.
- **When moving from anxiety to action it’s important to start small.** Conversations around climate change can cause a lot of anxiety in people which leads to inaction. Through larger existential threats, like climate change and even COVID, we’ve learned that everyone can play their part to reduce the impact these threats have on the community. This means changing how we interact with the world, and leads to activism for some, but for others it creates a loss of identity, loss of cultural value. It’s perfectly fine to feel this sense of grief. It all looks very puzzling and complex but if we start small and do our part, we’ll find our power to effect change. Here are some links that were shared by participants that might help you get started: [ACOSS Community Sector Climate Change Advocacy Week](#), [Healthy Homes for Renters](#), [Residential Efficiency Scorecard](#), [Sustainable House Day](#).

**As part of the Change Favours the Brave webinar series, we asked our guests to provide advice to others who are doing brave and bold things.**

Annabelle’s advice to organisations was that *“locally, we need to stop doing it [inappropriate developments]. If you see these things happening, say something... people often don’t respond and it’s really important.”*

Guy’ message was that *“the end goal is to make communities and individuals and societies take ownership of their problems but also give them capacity to adjust and be part of the process of climate change adaptation... Give people that agency back to realise that they can actually make decisions and influence their political process to have positive outcomes.”*

# Ep 7 - The brave and bold things being done to support the wellbeing and participation of children and young people

*Speakers: Zoe Robinson, the ACYP Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People and Lali Wiratunga, MBA, National Manager of Westpac's Davidson Institute.*

Date of episode: 6 October 2021

View [episode 7 recording here](#)

In our seventh episode we spoke to **Zoe Robinson**, the **NSW Advocate for Children and Young People** and **Lali Wiratunga**, National Manager of **Westpac's Davidson Institute** about the brave and bold things being done to support the wellbeing and participation of children and young people, who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

Here are the main takeaway points from the discussion:

- **Westpac's Davidson Institute and the Office of the NSW Advocate for Children and Young People (ACYP) are producing some incredible work in co-designing with and for children and young people.**
  - [Westpac's Youth Impact Challenge](#) is in its second year, engaging and supporting the empowerment of young people aged 7-21 to put forward their ideas to solve for one of the Sustainable Development Goals. We're seeing some amazingly creative young people from all walks of life and all parts of the nation who want to have a voice in making change happen. Check out Youth Impact Challenge 2020 Senior School winners [Kenshi Candles](#) and [One Pad at a Time](#) for some great examples of innovation.
  - The ACYP digital projects like the [Digital Lunch Break](#) and [Family Project](#) are centralising everything in one space to make things easier for parents, which Zoe says "doesn't take away from that connection and real energy you get from being around people... but they've done it in a good way to make sure that we're preserving that."
- **Children and young people want to be heard, we need to listen.** ACYP has been engaging with children and young people in NSW. They shared concerns about their communities and their desire to help. Many children and young people felt like they weren't consulted during lockdowns and when you get a population who can't vote and where adults are designing and deciding their future, you get a pretty vocal bunch. [Westpac's e-learning modules](#) are listening to this too, providing education on the basic foundational elements of money management, hoping to spark interest for young people and make them realise that they can have a stake in change.
- **Young people use a variety of channels and mediums to communicate, and we should be open to trying new ways to ensure young people feel comfortable to engage where and when it matters to them.** ACYP partnered with the NRL to run [NRL's State of Mind](#) programs in schools which moved online due to Covid. It provided a

soft entry into mental wellness for young people through that sports connection. Young people and children of all ages want their voices to be heard, even children as young as 5 may want to tell their truth through creative means like drawing and storytelling. It's about creating space that is strength based and trauma informed to enable them to share what matters most.

- **If we want to engage children and young people, we need to give them a seat at the table.** Westpac's Youth Impact Challenge co-designs and partners with the Australian School of Entrepreneurship where the average age is about 21, and they have been crucial to the project. Lali calls it the 'Greta Effect' - young people have been inspired by people like Greta Thunberg and now is the time we need to create the space for their voices to be heard. It's critical to bring young people to the table so they can give you their feedback; elevate their voices, opinions and views. Provide them a seat on advisory boards, collaborate with youth councils and do it in a sensitive way, meeting them where it matters to them and making sure that you're closing the loop and it's not tokenistic. See ACYP's resources on [how to meaningfully engage with children and young people](#), and [how to establish a children and young people's advisory group](#).

**As part of the Change Favours the Brave webinar series, we asked our guests to provide advice to others who are doing brave and bold things.**

Zoe's advice was simply *"Do it! And think about the different ways you can do it. The more we hear, the more we engage, the more we start to make communities better, business better, government better, we're only going to improve from there."*

Lali shared his insightful take, asking organisations to *"find your 'why'... then be clear on the 'what.' What you can deliver. Then if you've got your why and your what, you're probably going to find people who are part of your tribe... and from that you will make amazing things happen."*

# Ep 8 - How organisations can work collaboratively to support people impacted by natural disaster

*Speakers: Sara Collins, Manager Community Strategy at Energy Queensland and Keith Diamond, Experience Design Director from Symplicit.*

Date of episode: 20 October 2021

View [episode 8 recording here](#)

In our eighth episode we spoke to **Sara Collins**, Manager Community Strategy at **Energy Queensland** and **Keith Diamond**, Experience Design Director from **Symplicit** about how organisations can work collaboratively to support people impacted by natural disaster.

Here are the main takeaway points from the discussion:

- **Keith and Sara reflected on their learning from TCP's award-winning [Disaster Project research](#), which explored the experience of community members, small business owners and frontline service providers during a natural disaster.**
  - Energy Queensland were well versed in disaster response, however there was still an opportunity to do more than just getting the power back on. Building a deeper understanding of the experience of communities provides insight into how the whole system response can improve.
  - Creating an [interactive journey map](#) provides organisations the opportunity to overlay their practices with the community experience before, during and after a disaster event. This insight helps to improve product, service and organisational strategy, and identifies opportunities for improvement across the system from a human perspective.
- **Using lived experience to tell the story from the inside out rather than the outside in is a game changer in approaching complex problems.** The power of storytelling through lived experience provides inspiration to people to be bold and brave. Using a human centred design approach and capturing the voice of communities, rather than just a simple quantitative number, enables brave conversation and drives change.
- **Pain points exist within each organisation but applying a systems lens enables us to see the interconnections from a systems perspective.** We need to understand how we are connected to other organisations and find the meeting points across sectors and industries so we can come together as a collective, address issues and remove complexity for the human. Bringing diversity of thought into a discussion and ensuring everyone feels safe having conversations are key ingredients to solving from a system perspective.
- **Trust and alignment is the core.** It is important to collectively establish that “north star” and have faith that each organisation is working towards achieving it. Creating a safe space for organisations to challenge and learn from each other helps to build trust and ensure alignment to the shared vision. Exploration is also important, we need to remember not to predetermine what the outcome is going to be or how we are going to get there.

- **It's important that we listen to all voices - The voices of lived experience can include individuals, small business, the community, first responders and frontline workers.** The Disaster Project benefitted from a phased approach, understanding the frontline experience as well as the community experience is a powerful way to understand how the ecosystem works together and to gain insights into complex issues. A key insight from the research was the importance of understanding the experience of staff, and ensuring we are providing them with the right tools and support.
- **We have a responsibility to be inclusive and appreciate diversity when building our responses and communications.** We need to understand the impacts of disability, age, location, digital inclusion etc. to ensure there are no gaps in our response. We should not take a one size fits all approach, especially in a crisis situation. Taking into account the whole scale of a disaster, reaching the entire audience and giving the community agency to be a part of the discussion is critical to inclusive responses.

**As part of the Change Favours the Brave webinar series, we asked our guests to provide advice to others who are doing brave and bold things.**

Sara's advice was that *"it's easier to achieve change with a nudge rather than pushing uphill... if you take the good work you're already doing and energise it with a fresh perspective... it might make all the difference in getting something across the line."*

Keith echoed Sara's sentiments, adding his advice that it's important we are *"building off something rather than starting from ground zero... and asking that question: Do we know the full picture about the community we're trying to serve and the ecosystem we're playing in?"*

# Ep 9 - The myths, assumptions and reality of people in prison and what organisations can do to support reintegration

*Speakers: Anna Henry, Director Offender Services and Reintegration, Corrections Victoria and Dr. Marietta Martinovic, Senior Lecturer in Criminology and Justice Studies and Australian Inside Out Prison Exchange Program Manager at RMIT University.*

Date of episode: 3 November 2021

View [episode 9 recording here](#)

In our ninth episode we spoke to **Anna Henry**, Director, Offender Services and Reintegration at **Corrections Victoria** and **Dr. Marietta Martinovic**, Senior Lecturer of Criminology and Justice Studies and Australian Inside Out Prison Exchange Program Manager at **RMIT University**. We discussed the myths, assumptions and reality of people with experience in the prison system and what organisations can do to be brave and bold in supporting people while in prison and when reintegrating back into society.

Here are the main takeaway points from the discussion:

- **Financial needs are a key concern for people in prison.** Data from Corrections Victoria's reintegration assessment tool in 2020 saw financial difficulty as an overwhelmingly high need in over 80% of respondents. Without financial stability then all other problems come alongside that, including safe housing and risk of homelessness. Financial support offerings for people in prison are an essential part of the rehabilitation process, particularly when understanding that many people, especially women, are experiencing financial abuse themselves while in prison. For more information, check out TCP's work on the [Fostering Financial Stability for People in Prison Project](#).
- **We need to dispel the myth that people in prison are somehow separate to the rest of the community.** The idea of all people in prison being uneducated, unaware and lacking self-reflection is completely untrue and Marietta reiterated that the key is to be open minded. We are all human beings and no one should be defined by their experience in the prison system, especially considering that a large majority are only in prison for a very short time and over 40% are on remand (not sentenced). [RMIT's Inside Out Prison Exchange Program](#) has been helping to bridge this gap, bringing "Inside" and "Outside" students together to learn as equals.
- **It's important to remember when considering those in the prison system that we all want the same thing - a safer society - and employment post-release is key.** Employment pathways help to reduce reoffending and support people as they reintegrate into the community. Corrections Victoria is leveraging the Victorian social procurement framework to strengthen post release employment opportunities. Organisations should consider developing employment opportunities for people exiting prison within their organisations.

- **People in prison are still our customers and they have the right to the same offerings.** People in the prison system, including Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people with a disability, often experience multiple layers of systemic inequalities. There is also a high prevalence of people impacted by family violence and people with mental health needs. Organisations often have many policies that support people experiencing vulnerability, however people in prison are often excluded from these supports. While the *'how'* a service is delivered might be different, people in prison have the same right and need to access services, so these offerings should be made available and easily accessible to them.
- **There is so much complexity in prison and we need to be guided by people with lived experience.** The Think Tanks that have developed from RMIT's Inside Out program have championed lived experience advocates and Marietta and Anna both agreed on the immense value, reward and validation through the process. The ideas coming out of these Think Tanks have already helped Corrections Victoria to shape post release support, employment options and transition practices.

**As part of the Change Favours the Brave webinar series, we asked our guests to provide advice to others who are doing brave and bold things.**

Reflecting on her work over the past several years on RMIT's Inside Out Program, Marietta's advice was *"Don't give up. It took 8 years for all of the stakeholders; the prisons, corrections and the university to say yes you can go ahead... nobody saw the vision that I saw... just persist with it, don't give up if you know it's the right thing to do."*

Anna echoed these calls for change, saying *"Now is a really good time. COVID has changed the world... While we're defining what the new normal is, now is a good time to make those changes. Being brave is usually not easy... it just means you're doing it right if it's a bit harder."*

# Ep 10 - The intersect between financial wellbeing and mental health

*Speakers: Heidi Baker, Consumer Insights and Communications at ASIC and Greg Jennings, Head of Wellness and Prevention from Beyond Blue.*

Date of episode: 17 November 2021

View [episode 10 recording here](#)

In episode ten, our final episode for the Change Favours the Brave series and for the year, we spoke to **Heidi Baker**, Consumer Insights and Communications at **ASIC** and **Greg Jennings**, Head of Wellness and Prevention from **Beyond Blue** about the connection between financial wellbeing and mental health and what organisations can do to reduce stigma and support customers, staff and any human experiencing vulnerability.

Here are the main takeaway points from the discussion:

- **Mental health challenges have increased dramatically in recent times, making the concept of a mental health continuum very familiar.** Greg detailed his definition of mental health, noting the “continuum” that gauges the fluctuating nature of mental health, shifting from healthy, to at risk, to more severe. Beyond Blue has seen an increase of up to 60% in demand for support at the height of the COVID pandemic.
- **People were forced to make very complex financial decisions throughout the pandemic.** [ASIC's Moneysmart website](#) has acted as a single source of truth for people to get the financial information they need, with 10 million people using the website in the 2020/21 financial year. Especially during the pandemic, COVID related content like how to access ealy super, managing on a reduced income and where to go if you need urgent help with money was frequently accessed.
- **Beyond Blue and ASIC have partnered to conduct research to help better understand the link between money and mental health.** It built upon the “anec-data” and previous HILDA data which showed that 36% of Australians experienced financial hardship, 25% experienced symptoms likely to indicate a mental health condition, and 14% experienced both financial hardship and mental health symptoms together over the most recent five years of survey data. Understanding how mental health impacts financial decisions and how financial hardship impacts mental health helps us better design ways to support the community navigate the complex choices they need to make. The research is due to be published in 2022.
- **When addressing mental health and financial wellbeing, the best place to start is the workplace.** Financial wellbeing and mental health issues can be dormant in conversations throughout the workplace and disclosing these at work is a really personal decision. The workplace is an ongoing opportunity for all organisations to consider how we can be supporting the whole wellbeing of those we work with, which influences the support we provide for the people we serve. [headsup.org.au](#) is a great information and disclosure tool that helps people consider the pros and cons of disclosure in the workplace.

- **The vicious cycle and cumulative effect of financial wellbeing and mental health means that early intervention is key.** When it comes to money and mental health, research has shown that a challenge in one area can lead to a downward spiral in the other, creating a vicious cycle. These experiences are often not isolated - they are impacted by sudden life events like job loss, relationship breakdown or death of a loved one, adding up and becoming difficult to disentangle. Therefore it's important we intervene early and encourage people to access support to help limit the compounding effects. See ASIC's [video](#) and [resources](#) for more info.
- **Creating environments that are conducive to conversations about mental health and financial hardship can help reduce stigma.** Stigma is a significant barrier to people accessing support for mental health or financial wellbeing issues. Conversations about money or mental health are still often seen as taboo and financial hardship can be seen as shameful by those experiencing it. This stigma creates a reluctance to seek support and when people internalise feelings of shame it erodes self-esteem and self-efficacy. Creating environments that facilitate conversations is integral to supporting positive mental health and financial wellbeing.
- **It takes a whole-of-community approach to support positive mental health and financial wellbeing.** In many cases it's the people outside the mental health sector that can have the biggest role in making change and improving people's mental health. Leaders in organisations, teachers, policy makers and essential services - people who interact with humans daily - can have a profound impact. We need to design systems, processes and products which contribute to financial capability and confidence, and empower choice and security. Cross-skilling people in financial and other essential services to better understand mental health and vice versa can also ensure we are ensuring our staff can provide the appropriate support to the community.

**As part of the Change Favours the Brave webinar series, we asked our guests to provide advice to others who are doing brave and bold things.**

Greg's advice for mental health work was *"unreservedly go for it, if it's worthwhile, find a way... but make sure you put some really good boundaries in place for yourself as well because we tend to invest so much in these endeavours when they're contributing to something bigger than ourselves."*

And Heidi added her support for collaboration with her advice to *"identify who those people in organisations are that we can partner with. We can all get quite narrow in our focus and get tunnel vision, but at the end of the day, all of us on the line are working towards a common goal of supporting people to live their best lives."*