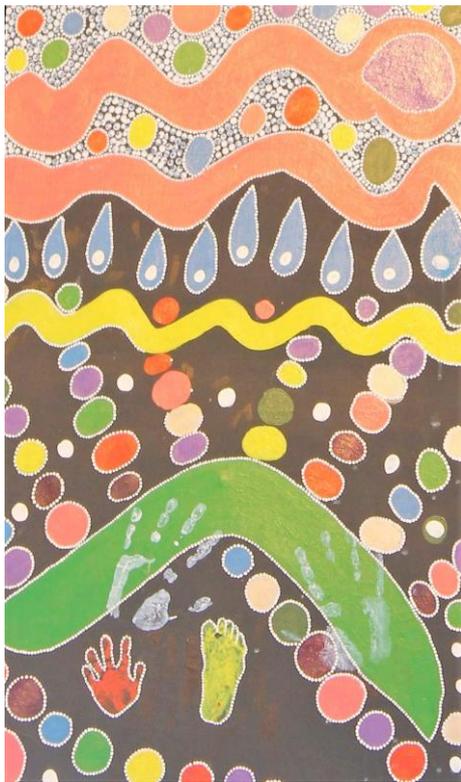


QUARTERLY UPDATE - November 2016

Heal For Life acknowledges Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of the land on which it works.

Heal for Life trains New England Aboriginal professionals



A painting done by Nioka as part of her healing week

Armidale woman Nioka Chatfield is on a mission to bring Heal for Life's services to her local area to help people to heal from childhood trauma and to help solve the problem of bullying in schools and the community.

Nioka organised for Liz Mullinar to run a successful trauma informed practice workshop in August for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community members who work with adults and children. She said the training helped teachers, social workers,

health professionals and community members better understand the people they are working

with. This will enable them to work more effectively in their roles.

"Many young people are bullying or acting up for a reason, because of an underlying trauma they have experienced," Liz said.

"We aim to make working with young people more enjoyable," she said. (Cont p 2.)

Psychologists needed

Heal for Life is looking to employ two more psychologists – one full time and one part time. Please get in touch if you or someone you know is interested.

Message from Liz



It is very exciting that more people are accepting and recognising the importance of training in **Trauma Informed Practice**. I can feel a radical change in the air. If Trauma Informed Practice were embraced by schools what a difference that would make for all children.

With nearly 20 years experience of working with people with multiple diagnoses and every type of trauma, Heal for Life is uniquely able to offer practical, knowledgeable training.

We'll also soon be opening a trauma centre in Newcastle. With qualified psychologists, that also have the benefit of Heal for Life's survivor focussed approach, this will be a practical, affordable, easy to access support service for anyone who has experienced trauma.

Despite the awareness of the impact of trauma there is still very little knowledge about how to actually heal people permanently from their trauma. We believe we lead the world with more than 6,500 people agreeing that our program has changed their life.

We're looking for more psychologists to work with us on our programs. Please get in touch if you or someone you know is interested.

Liz Mullinar
Founder and CEO

My healing journey - Pheonix



A life of emotional agony, constant thoughts of suicide, fear, loneliness and disconnection - that was my existence prior to stumbling upon Heal for Life.

I am a survivor of early childhood

trauma and abuse, beginning when my mother became ill after my birth and had to have total bed rest for six weeks. She wasn't allowed to me and reassure me that the world was a safe place. The nurses at a small country hospital didn't know about bonding. My father was a violent alcoholic who didn't care enough to come to the hospital.

Mum told me frequently that I was a difficult baby, I cried all the time. If she was alive today I'd try to tell her, that's what babies do when they feel unwanted, unloved and terrified.

After this traumatic start to life I endured severe abuse at the hands of adults who were supposed to protect me. My mind was so damaged I was unable to learn, I spent my life lost in depression, fear, anxiety and extreme disassociation.

My first healing week, in December 2007 was the beginning of a new life for me. The start of my long journey of healing, of understanding that I wasn't crazy and the abuse I endured wasn't my fault.

Today I live a life that is full of hope, healing and growth. The extreme emotions of fear and anxiety have been released along with the overwhelming trauma they were attached to.

I can think straight and remember clearly. After a lifetime of mental confusion, being able to put my thoughts in order is a continuing delight for me. I have no words to describe what it feels like to feel safe enough not disassociate. I will continue my journey, to have new experiences and challenge the limitations and lies that my abusers put on me.

Heal for Life continues to grow and reach more survivors because of the support it receives from people who care enough to be involved. I will never meet most of you and I want to take this opportunity to say how grateful I am that you care for battered survivors like me. Without you my story would probably have ended in suicide. Now it is a story of hope, healing, fun, joy and sanity. Together we can change the world, one life at a time.

Healing in New England

From p1

Nioka, who experienced significant childhood trauma, is involved with the local Dawgaway Aboriginal Women's Healing Service. She attended a Heal for Life residential healing week three years ago which she says saved her life

"I was at breaking point," Mrs Chatfield said.

"The Heal for Life program gave me answers about why I was going through certain things and why life was a constant battle," she said.

"It was beautiful the moment when I realised I was normal."

"The program gave me strength so I now know with the support of my husband and kids I am going to be OK."

She said other local services are often restricted to specific groups of people such as those dealing with drug and alcohol issues. Those services often focus on the symptom of the issue, such as treating addiction, rather than the root cause of the problem.

"There was no service to meet the needs of people like me who have experienced trauma but don't drink or do drugs."

"I had to go and find one and I am determined to bring it to Armidale to help other local people.

"Our mob need healing."

The trauma informed practice training is the first step for Nioka and Heal or Life in creating local services. Nioka is training to be a peer support volunteer with Heal for Life and will then go on to do facilitator training.

"We need to train up local people to help deliver programs and ongoing support locally."



Program news

Private retreats help young people in crisis

We have been running an increasing number of private retreats for young people in crisis. These are proving an effective intervention to prevent young people losing their foster parent placement due to behavioural issues.

Additional healing week – Dec 11

As we are fully booked for the rest of 2016 we are holding an additional healing week commencing December 11. Our first 2017 healing week starts January 22.

Young people's program on request

We're experiencing high demand for young people's programs so we're now running them as requested. So do call us if you have a young person interested in attending.

What guests say about Heal for Life programs

Thank you so much for the healing week It has really begun to change my life. My children feel like they have a new mother... My husband is getting used to my new found sense of humour and fun... I had so much healing...more than I expected. I have let go of all my food allergies and have total freedom to enjoy food. I believe I am finally free from any eating disorder.

I have lost my anger. I have lost my fear of men. I had to speak at a forum and am really challenged in this setting with some male personalities but felt so much more comfortable. I am being triggered but I am recognising the triggers and having a lot of self talk. Thank you so much again. I am totally sold on your model. Kim

Training news

Kimberley training success continues

We're still receiving enquiries from the training we ran in the Kimberley earlier this year. Several participants are coming to Heal For Life for further training or healing weeks. The intention is to start healing weeks in their communities.

New manual for people working with traumatised kids

Our two amazing youth facilitators, Nic and Taijah, are utilising their considerable experience working with some of the most traumatised children in Australia to run training for teachers and foster parents. We have a new resource manual for anyone working with traumatised children. Cost \$25.

What others say about our training

"I found the training to be very helpful in trying to understand children and people better - that trauma can affect everyone in a different way and there are many triggers for different people." Melissa Stace, Armidale

Busting myths surrounding childhood trauma and abuse

One of the biggest myths is **chemical imbalances in the brain**. Dr Tim Carey wrote a [great article](#) recently comparing the myths of Father Christmas and chemical imbalance.

To quote him. "Many authors (e.g., Gotzsche, 2015; Healy, 2012; Moncrieff, 2009; and Whitaker, 2010) agree that there is not one shred of evidence for the notion that an imbalance of chemicals in the brain causes mental health problems. Ironically, any imbalance in chemicals associated with mental health problems seems to occur after people have begun ingesting psychotropic medication not before (Gotsche, 2015; Whitaker, 2010)."

One myth is depression is caused by an imbalance of the neurotransmitter serotonin and schizophrenia is caused by an imbalance of dopamine.

The chemical imbalance propaganda may eventually be recognised as one of the greatest marketing manoeuvres ever. Promoting mental health problems as consequences of out of balance brain chemicals has turned pharmaceutical companies into some of the most successful and profitable organisations on the planet.

The fallacy that mental health problems "are just like diabetes" so that medication needs to be taken "for the rest of your life" has beguiled health professionals and patients alike despite the emptiness of the claims. Mental health prescribers use chemical imbalance to ensure medication compliance. Multiple prescriptions are also a regular occurrence once people embark on the chemical cure journey.

At Heal for Life we see this myth giving people the excuse to not address their pain and hurt. **Although medication can be an essential tool to support healing, for it to be used *instead* of healing is a tragedy.**

Tips from our [Facebook Page](#)

Visit our facebook page to receive links to valuable articles for both survivors and health professionals. Here is a sample of some of the topics covered recently.

[Using physical discipline can have physiological impact on a child's developing brain.](#)

[Stop blaming your genes – you are in control of you.](#)

[Intergenerational trauma; 5 ways it can impact families](#)

[5 things loving parents would never say](#)

[How to release the stress stored in our bodies](#) - There is one muscle that often stores trauma. Here is how to joyfully release the stress.

[Childhood trauma leads to lifelong chronic illness – so why isn't the medical profession helping patients](#)



Share your tips, inspiration, love and questions via our Facebook page and other social media channels too.

Christmas party - Dec 17 from 11.30 am



Catch up with old friends, meet all of us and, of course, to wish each other a great Christmas.

From everyone at Heal for Life, Merry Christmas.

Welcome to our new Guardian Angels!

Rhonda Bailey | Gage Presbury | Sandra Weine | Ros Thomas



BE A GUARDIAN ANGEL TOO

Just \$100 a year will make you a Guardian Angel too. Your money goes directly to our services to help people to heal from their abuse and trauma. For more information or other ways to donate visit healforlife.com.au/donate

About us

Heal for Life is a not for profit centre run by survivors for survivors of childhood trauma and abuse. Over 17 years it has helped thousands of people to heal through residential programs, training and support.

Mission

Empowering people to heal from childhood trauma and child abuse.

Services and support

Survivor support line
1300 760 580

Programs

- Adults
- Kid Kamp
- Youth (12-17)
- Young people (18-25)
- Private retreats

Training

- for survivors
- for health professionals

Facility hire

Meeting/training rooms and accommodation for your private or corporate function or retreat.

Contact

1300 760 580

NSW Hunter Valley (Head office)

registrations@healforlife.com.au

Western Australia

wa@healforlife.com.au

United Kingdom

admin@healforlife.org.uk

Philippines

healforlife.ph@gmail.com



**Quality
Improvement
Council**

'Yes ... we are
a QIC accredited
organisation'