



ON BEING CHEERED ALONG

This article is from a web magazine called The Book of Life. It is part of work of the philosopher Alain de Botton. I find it provides a valuable reflection of life's challenges. You can view and subscribe at <http://www.thebookoflife.org/>

This articles looks at the disservice done to others when we try to cheer them up.

There are friends who are deeply well-meaning who nevertheless have a habit of responding in unfortunate ways when we reveal a trouble to them. They try – at once, with considerable vigour – to cheer us up. We may appreciate their underlying good nature while nevertheless profoundly resenting their particular technique – for what we may want from them, above all, is not a swift rejoinder that our problems are in fact, despite appearances, easily solvable – but rather, a shared moment of sadness and mournful sympathy.

Across history, the articulation of melancholy attitudes in works of art has provided us with relief from a sense of loneliness and persecution. Among others, Pascal, Keats, Shelley, Schopenhauer and Leonard Cohen have been able to reassure us of the normalcy of our states of sadness. In particular, they have made a case for a species of low-level, muted sadness that arises when we are open to the fact that life is inherently difficult and that suffering and disappointment are core parts of universal experience. It's not a disorder that needs to be cured. The good life is not one immune to grief, but one in which we allow suffering to contribute to our development.

Yet the dominant tone of many friendships continues to be cheerful or its more brittle cousin, cheery – a good mood that tolerates no other. This falsely presumes that the best way to please others must be to present ourselves in a vibrant mood, when in fact, admission of our despair, and the number of moments when we wonder if it can really be worth it, are key tools in the process of friendship properly re-imagined.

Landlord ordered to pay \$11,000 continued from page 2
The tribunal noted that "although this was of no fault of his own, he [Dr Bhandari] still has the responsibility to undertake the necessary steps to ensure" a habitable premises, ordering him to pay damages of \$11,681, including rent reduction, packing and removal of \$2800 and a refund on Ms Laming's blinds of \$900.

"It is unacceptable for a tenant and a child to live in an environment which smells of tobacco smoke, and particularly where the smoke is so strong it is causing the tenant and her child to feel unwell," the tribunal said

Read more at: <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/sydney-landlord-ordered-to-pay-11000-to-tenant-because-of-chainsmoking-neighbour-20151122-gl5b4p.html#ixzz3tsLGIXhN>

In a discussion of parenting styles, the psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott once identified a particularly problematic kind of carer: the person who wants to 'jolly' babies and small children along, always picking them up with cheer, bouncing them up and down and pulling exaggerated funny faces, perhaps shouting 'peekaboo' repeatedly. The criticism might feel disconcerting: what could be so wrong with wanting to keep a child jolly?

Yet Winnicott was worried by how this manoeuvre could end up denying a child the possibility of acknowledging its own sadness, and

more broadly, its own feelings. The jollier is driven by a compulsion to impose a mood which may have no basis in the child's reality. The jollier doesn't just want the child to be happy; it can't tolerate the idea it might be sad – so unexplored, unresolved and potentially overwhelming are their own feelings of disappointment. Childhood is necessarily full of sadness (as adulthood must be too), insisted Winnicott, which means we must perpetually be granted access to periods of mourning: for a broken toy, the grey sky on a Sunday afternoon

or perhaps the lingering sadness we can see in our parents's eyes.

The friend, no less than the carer, needs to remember how much of life deserves solemn and mournful states – and of how much loyalty we will therefore be ready to offer those who don't feel aggressively compelled to deny our melancholy

Cheers

Gordon Russell

ps: Do you have any friends who need to read our newsletter? Ring and we will post one out or they can download it from our website

emergency numbers

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Plumbing , Gas, Roof Leaks | 8356 2750 |
| Electrical | 1300 130 229 |
| Breakins & Glazing | 0411 848 398 |
| Police to attend - noise/robbery etc. | 131 444 |
| State Emergency Service storm/flood | 132 500 |



PRIVACY ISSUES WITH HOME SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS

Recently we received complaints regarding a unit owner installing cameras.

Owners advised us that some of the cameras pointed to common property and the homes of other owners.

Here is some advice from Youi Insurance that may be helpful. In some cases it may be useful to create a new by-law or article to control the use of cameras.

It is estimated that home surveillance is a \$4.4 billion industry in Australia. The affordability of CCTV equipment has led to a huge increase in the number of people installing video cameras to protect their homes and properties. Having home and contents insurance is one thing, but having a visible deterrent like surveillance equipment could make a difference.

Surveillance Equipment

For under \$2,000, you can purchase a security system comprising four fixed cameras with night vision, motion detectors and a TV monitor and for around \$3,000, you can upgrade to a camera that pans, tilts and has 26 X zoom.

Surveillance can be internal, with a camera in every room or external, with cameras monitoring both the front and rear of your property. It's entirely up to you and you can even install them yourself.

Privacy Issues

The problem arises when you cross the line between monitoring your own property and somebody else's. If your camera is angled in such a way that it includes coverage of your neighbour's yard or driveway, then complaints about invasion of privacy could be forthcoming.

There have been a number of recent instances involving irate residents, demanding action from authorities because of what they consider intrusive CCTV surveillance by their neighbours.

One would have to think they have some justification for being upset, given that we all expect to be monitored in public places and even welcome it from a public safety perspective, but draw the line at being watched on our own private property.

The Law

The complaints made in those situations have largely been ignored because there is currently nothing illegal about home surveillance in Australia.

Some exceptions to this include when:

- The surveillance is of a criminal or voyeuristic nature.
- The area being monitored is one where someone would reasonably expect to have privacy, such as a bedroom or bathroom.

- The surveillance is of such intensity that it is creating a nuisance, preventing someone from the enjoyment of their property.
- The installation of the cameras is the result of a neighbourhood dispute involving threatening behaviour, in which case an apprehended violence order may call for the cameras to be removed.

The main reason there is no law or council by-law governing home surveillance is because it is a relatively new phenomenon and the lawmakers are still catching up. It may require testing in court and precedents to be established before any concrete legislation will emerge.



The Solution

So if you're planning to join the thousands of other property owners who have installed surveillance equipment in their homes, it would be wise to use some basic common sense to avoid alienating your neighbours and possibly being taken to court.

When you install CCTV cameras, make sure:

- They are only monitoring your property.
- If they are overlooking the street, there is a sign informing people they are being monitored.
- They are not monitoring areas where people could reasonably expect privacy.
- If they are monitoring a strata titled home or apartment, ensure that you have permission from the body corporate to do so.

<https://www.youi.com.au/youi-news/privacy-issues-with-home-surveillance-systems>

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BATTERY POWERED HOMES

Rooftop solar is now installed at 23% of homes in South Australia, many of them units – is battery storage next?

We are now seeing unit owners installing Tesla and similar batteries to further reduce their dependence of the national electricity grid.

One owner went ahead but appears to be unable to produce a Certificate of Compliance from an electrician.

High capacity lithium battery installations can bring special risks. These installations if not undertaken by a certified installer could result in a fire.

The following article was published on website <http://reneweconomy.com.au/> by Giles Parkinson on 24 February 2015

The surge in rooftop solar continues unabated in South Australia, with the local grid operator reporting that another 17,000 homes installed rooftop solar in 2014, a rise of 11 per cent over the previous year – and 23 per cent of all residential customers now produce their own solar energy.

The latest update was included in the annual results of Spark Infrastructure, which owns SA Power Networks, as well as two network operators in Victoria.

South Australia is the star performer, thanks to excellent solar resources and historically high retail prices. It is estimated there is now more than 550MW of rooftop solar on 174,000 installations in the state.

Interestingly, SA Power Networks seems to indicate that solar is helpful to the network. “PV is shifting (the) peak, but also helping reduce stress on the network during heat-waves,” it said in its presentation, echoing comments of previous years. Indeed, the peak is now at 7pm to 7.30pm in the evening, when it would have been late afternoon previously.

This means that the volatility on the electricity markets has been greatly reduced, much to the chagrin of the fossil fuel generators who used to profit from those regular surges in demand.

However, SA Power Networks indicated it would be moving to change its network charges to “demand” based, rather than consumption based. This would address the overall fall in demand caused by the big uptake in rooftop solar.

Executives also admitted it could encourage home-owners to install battery storage. The timing of that, said Sean Kelly, was still unclear, but he said that could provide a further benefit for the stabilisation of the network.

The following information includes content from the Clean Energy Council website.

Two different types of installation accreditation are currently in place for the installation of battery storage systems. A person can hold grid-connect installation accreditation with battery endorsement or grid-connect installation accreditation plus stand-alone installation accreditation. Additionally, the person must have sufficient qualifications for the specific battery type that will be used.

Additionally there is an accreditation for the design of battery storage systems.

Accredited designer – a person who is accredited by the Clean Energy Council to design grid-connected battery storage systems or stand-alone battery storage systems (or both), and holds all relevant qualifications.

Accredited installer – a person who is accredited by the Clean Energy Council to install grid-connected battery storage systems or stand-alone battery storage systems (or both), and holds all relevant qualifications.

The context in which battery storage is used is important for safety considerations. Therefore, it is essential that information on safety is specific to you and your battery installation. The questions on this page are intended to supplement rather than replace one-on-one consultation with an accredited designer.

Insurance implications: We are advised that this type of battery installation is covered under strata corporation policies. (please contact your group’s insurance company to confirm). Those in community titles need to check with their body corporate manager or insurance company.

If the installation is not undertaken to Australian Standards and in accord with the manufacturer’s instructions then the insurer is likely to pay out for any damages and seek recovery from the owner responsible for the installation.

We recommend that a sign be installed at the front of your unit indicating that lithium batteries are installed. This will assist emergency service personnel if they need to attend your unit or group.

Resources:

The CSIRO and the Clean Energy Council have put together a guide for consumers. Please visit their website www.solaraccreditation.com.au/consumers/solar-battery-storage-faqs.html and read the fact guide on the next page.

You can search for accredited designers and accredited installers at <http://www.solaraccreditation.com.au/consumers/find-an-installer.html>



LANDLORD ORDERED TO PAY \$11,000 TO TENANT BECAUSE OF CHAIN-SMOKING NEIGHBOUR

Passive smoking and the resulting injuries to third parties is a very serious matter. Particularly in units where residents live so close to one another.

The following article appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald late last year. It may surprise some that a party other than the smoker can be held liable for any damages.

A Sydney landlord has been ordered to pay more than \$11,000 in compensation to a tenant whose flat was made unliveable by a chain-smoking elderly neighbour living in the flat below.

Lynette Laming moved into the Potts Point apartment with her 13-year-old daughter last December and within weeks had raised the issue of “very strong smell of toxic cigarette smoke permeating the apartment”.

Ms Laming approached the managing agent and the building manager to fix the problem.

But when the smoke didn’t stop, Ms Laming took her landlord, Raj Bhandari, to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal, claiming he did not provide a safe place to live.

“There is no dispute that the smoke was emanating from the apartment below where an elderly, sick occupant, who was chain smoking, resided,” a tribunal judgment found.

“The owner of the apartment below was apparently reluctant to evict the tenant or stop her from smoking given her ill health.”

Smoking was allowed in the apartments and the owners corporation declined to intervene, suggesting instead that the owner, Dr Bhandari, take action against the owners of the flat below.

By May, Ms Laming, herself a real-estate agent, had moved out of flat 401, claiming the smoke was making her child unwell, and sought about \$14,000 including rent reduction and packing costs calculated at \$240 an hour.



The tribunal heard that “most afternoons and evenings the leased premises were affected by smoke from downstairs and to quite a considerable extent”, noting that “somehow there is a mechanical problem in the internal ventilation passages of the strata that is allowing the smoke to pass from the downstairs unit into the inside areas of the upstairs unit”.

“Obviously it is going to be a complex problem to rectify and probably expensive. However, this does not lessen the landlord’s responsibility to provide premises which are fit for habitation.”

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GOT QUESTIONS ABOUT BATTERY STORAGE SAFETY? We've got answers.

The CSIRO and Clean Energy Council have prepared a guide for consumers and small businesses on the safe installation and use of household and small commercial battery storage systems.

Battery storage is becoming increasingly affordable for the average consumer, and with solar panels now generating power on roughly 1.5 million Australian rooftops, it could be a great option to manage your own power supply and use.

Battery storage does have its safety issues and risks. When used properly and well looked after battery storage is safe, but it’s important to be aware of the relevant risks so they can be properly managed.

If you have already purchased battery storage or are giving it some serious thought, the Battery Storage Safety Consumer Guide answers a range of common safety questions on everything from how to seek out a qualified person to safely install your system, to storage, monitoring and recycling.

Battery storage safe installation and maintenance checklist

- Know what type of battery storage system (i.e. battery chemistry, power and energy size) you are having installed. Different battery types have different requirements.
- Understand what you will be using your battery for, and the amount of energy available for your use (this is usually less than the manufacturer’s rated total amount of energy labelled on the batteries).
- Monitor your system regularly (at least once a month) and ensure that you:
 - a. have a system in place – for example, an appropriate battery monitoring system, a log book, and a visual and audible alarm
 - b. know what to check for when doing a visual check or taking meter readings.
- Batteries do not perform well with sudden changes in ambient temperature, so they must be appropriately housed with adequate airflow. On extremely hot or cold days, you may need to do additional monitoring; ensure you have a system in place to remind you to do this.
- Ensure your batteries are not accessible to children, are vermin proofed and are separate to the living areas of the house. Do not store items on top of or lean items against your batteries or enclosures, because they could be a potential electrical fire risk. Consider installing signs to remind you of this.
- Ensure your batteries have the correct safety and warning signs for the battery type, and that you know how to follow their instructions (e.g. emergency shutdown procedure and emergency action plan).
- Keep manufacturer and installer and warranty information to refer to as needed, and use only accredited installers and professionals to alter the system.
- Revisit your whole system periodically and replace or upgrade components as required. Your accredited installer should be your first point of contact for maintenance. Keep the installer’s contact details.