



unit/update

viewpoint

FINDING THE LIGHT WHEN YOU'RE LOST IN LONELINESS

The following is a report from the ABC on a Red Cross report on loneliness, published in December 2017, by Emilia Terzon and Lexy Hamilton-Smith of ABC News

For many people Christmas is a time of joy, friendship and family. But a Red Cross national survey has found for nearly one-in-four Australians loneliness is a regular part of their lives.

Making December a month of anything but cheer for many.

According to Red Cross spokeswoman Isabel Stankiewicz loneliness or social isolation can strike anyone, at any time. "Loneliness does not discriminate whether you are sleeping rough or sleeping in the penthouse — loneliness can touch you," she said.

Reasons for loneliness

- Death of loved one — 34 per cent
- Moving from friends/family — 31 per cent
- Isolation at school or work — 22 per cent
- Divorce or separation — 21 per cent
- Losing a job — 17 per cent



Red Cross spokeswoman Isabel Stankiewicz and pensioner Robert Morgan By Lexy Hamilton-Smith

Source: Australian Red Cross Loneliness Survey 2017

"It might be you have left your job, lost a loved one, having a baby, it is these vulnerable times loneliness can attack."

The Australian Red Cross Loneliness Survey, conducted by Mevcorp, looked at 1,015 people aged 18 and over in cities and regional areas across the nation.

It found 7 per cent feel lonely all the time, while 16 per cent were lonely "quite often".

Regional Manager Janeen Miesch said a third of people reported feeling alone "sometimes".

"It is a growing number and loneliness really hits at times when people are most vulnerable."

In a dark place

Suffering in silence is how widow Sheree Bull describes it.

She became socially isolated after her partner Brendan Marken died in June, 2016.

"I was in a dark place. He was everything to me. I really was not coping with the loss," she said.

"I went 12 months without being game to sit in the hairdresser chair because I did not want to see my face in the mirror.

"I could not go out to eat because I'd end up getting anxiety attacks. It was really scary.

"I just wanted to be in my own space and did not want to see anybody."

Rockhampton single mum Christie Brown fell into the depths of despair when her marriage broke up after 18 years.

"It just hit me. I did not see it coming," she said.

"People tell me I am a strong person but I wear a mask.

"When I am at home especially at night time stuff like that it is very lonely."

The women have become firm friends since both finally seeking help through Red Cross.

They joined a local neighbourhood centre and take part in activities like arts and crafts.

"Just being here everyone is fighting the black dog of depression," Ms. Brown said.

"I class everyone here as family now. They are awesome."

Ms. Bull said she now feels needed and wanted by socialising at the drop in centre.

"I wanted to get to a better spot, be in a better place," she said.

From desolation to exultation

Retiree Robert Morgan says he is not surprised the survey found so many people suffer alone at home.

Both his parents died 40 years ago when he was just 19. He never married and has no next of kin.

"I ended up in a rooming house," he said.

"Felt very insecure. There was no-one to reach out too. It was very isolating.

"A lot of people say being a man, 'man up'. [I'm] not suppose to feel emotion ... but this sadness comes over you.

"If you go around to all the pubs I guarantee there will be five guys there who are totally alone and their best friend is the bar man."

The 67-year-old finally got the courage to volunteer at a Red Cross charity shop and has not looked back.

"To see others happy makes me feel happy," he said.

"I have gone from feeling desolation to exultation. That is it. Both ends of the spectrum."

Five ways to feel less lonely

- ✓ Meet your neighbours
- ✓ Volunteer
- ✓ Say hello to someone new in your neighbourhood
- ✓ Check on someone who may be in trouble
- ✓ Be kind on social media

Supplied: Red Cross

If you feel in need of support we suggest you ring ...

Lifeline Australia 13 11 14

or

Beyondblue 1300 224 636



HOME UNIT - UNLIKELY FIRE HAZARD

The following is a timely warning by Tim Neary of www.realestatebusiness.com.au. It equally applies to South Australia..

One of the country's leading strata industry bodies has issued a stern fire warning to property managers about people living in apartments, following an ugly and unlikely incident in Victoria's St Kilda last week.

Strata Community Australia said that BBQ gas bottles have become an emerging fire safety threat for Victorian apartment blocks as more and more residents turn their balconies into an outdoor barbecue area.

Fire investigators believe that a leaking gas bottle was the cause of the St Kilda incident, which forced residents to evacuate and left the three-storey apartment block engulfed in flames for more than half an hour.

Strata Community Australia (Vic) general manager Rob Beck said that better safety education is needed.

"Recent apartment fires across the nation caused by barbecues and gas bottles have made it painfully clear that safety isn't being addressed as thoroughly as it should be in Victorian apartments and units," the GM said.

"Ahead of the summer period, where we anticipate apartment owners will be enjoying their outdoor areas as much as possible, it's important that strata schemes take steps to educate their community members on proper safety."

Mr. Beck said that earlier in the month, Queensland police reported that a barbecue on a third-level balcony led to two fires spreading through several floors of an apartment block in Chermside.

He said that getting crucial information on safer apartment living such as this could ultimately save people's lives and prevent costly damage.



"We're encouraging strata schemes and apartment owners to not be negligent of safety when using barbecue equipment in the coming hotter months," Mr. Beck said.

"As we're approaching summer, obviously people in strata accommodation will want to have barbecues on their balconies or in communal areas. We're not saying that people can't have barbecues or use gas bottles, but serious safety incidents like we've recently seen can be prevented with the right information.

"It's extremely important that residents are educated about how to store highly flammable gas bottles in shared complexes to minimise the risks of fire."

The fire joins a string of incidents in recent months relating to barbecue equipment in Victoria and around the country. □

CHRISTMAS ARRANGEMENTS

Our best wishes for Christmas & the New Year, to you and those close to you.

This Christmas we are closing our office from 5pm Wednesday December 20th and opening on Thursday January 4th from 9am.

For accounts due Jan 1st or before, you have until Jan 10th to pay before penalties apply.

If you have an emergency over the break and you need assistance just ring 8333-5200 for up to date details on contractors and emergency services or see the adjacent Emergency Numbers



emergency numbers

Plumbing , Gas, Roof Leaks	8356 2750
Electrical	1300 130 229
Building repairs	0450 395 711
Police to attend - noise/robbery etc	131 444
State Emergency Service storm/flood	132 500

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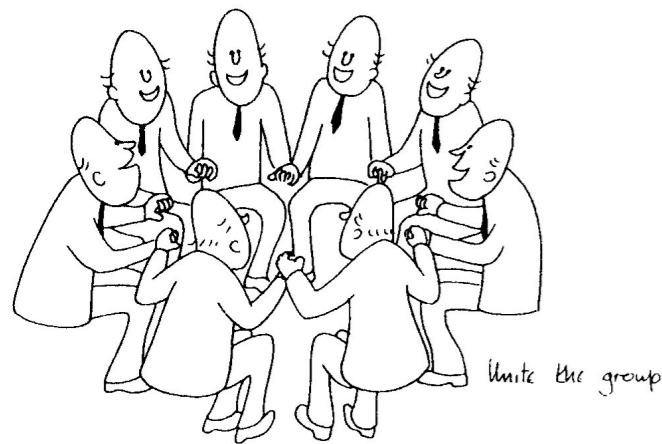
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THREE LAWS OF MEETINGS PART 1

Meetings: The Three Laws



In this article we explore an approach to managing the meeting members. Much of this content appears in the Video Arts training film More Bloody Meetings. It centres around the Three Laws of Meetings. Link to training video web site www.videoarts.co.uk where you can preview the video and support material.

Meeting Laws

A meeting isn't a battleground, but it can be a jungle. We're all capable of behaving differently on different days, at different meetings, with different people—and consequently, we may all need handling differently as the occasion demands. The chair's task is to plot a skilful route through the jungle, however beastly people may behave, and get the most out of the participants.

A meeting is a process, and a successful meeting is a building process, where the chair promotes collaboration and avoids damaging conflict, combining all the positive elements from all the contributions made by different participants, moving forward despite awkward moments to add together all the good bits from suggestions and ideas to reach a positive, useful outcome—or decision.

It's not the chair's task to batter the participants into submission; into accepting either his own or anyone else's views. The aim should be to secure commitment to a consensus. It really doesn't matter whether the meeting is formal or informal, peer-group or mixed levels of responsibility.

Everyone attending has a part to play, otherwise they shouldn't be there. The chair has to make them play to the best of their ability, and as a team; to maximize each individual's involvement, and get the best return from the meeting.

If you fail to build the right decisions, which people understand and agree with, then you will find it much harder to get people to implement them later. If people leave a meeting committed, they will be prepared to cope with any difficulties which might arise. There's no point in reaching a decision which nobody feels happy about, or which leaves half the participants at the throats of the others.

Unite the Group

Chief danger	Aggression
Techniques	Let off the steam Don't take sides Bring in the others Stick to the facts

All too often, meetings become bogged down with conflicts between a couple of individuals. Some conflict is inevitable, and a healthy thing. The knack is to harness it for the good of the meeting, not to let it pull the place apart. And remember, the meeting should be a contention of ideas, to find the best solution, not of people.

LET OFF THE STEAM

It's important that people give vent to their feelings, whether positive or negative. It's pointless to say "Let's keep feelings out of this", because they're already there and, as like as not, already expressed. The key thing is to let people let off steam without letting them get carried away. Don't be afraid to ask what's wrong.

"What's the trouble, Marcus?" "What do you mean?" "Well you sound a bit angry about something"

But having got the feelings in the open, the Chairman should never get himself involved, and not let anyone else get involved either. Otherwise it will quickly turn into a skirmish. Anger will make people behave irrationally. They'll become pig-headed just for the sake of it. But if you let the person with a gripe get it out of his system and into the open, he'll soon calm himself down and become more relaxed, and more receptive to facts and reasoned arguments. He'll start to behave rationally.

DON'T TAKE SIDES

Don't get personally involved, and be constantly alert to signs of tension or withdrawal. Not everyone expresses aggression in the same way, and you no more want people withdrawing and sulking any more than you want them ranting and raving.

Don't take sides, and avoid any allocation of blame, which will merely promote more aggression and get you involved in an argument. If you feel someone needs a good dressing down, this is best saved till later and in the privacy of your office. The chairman who loses his temper will quickly lose his credibility and the respect of the meeting.

Good humoured laughter can help keep a meeting cool and defuse tensions, acting as a useful safety-valve. But laughter should never be at the expense of particular participants or combatants.

Ideally, you shouldn't let fights start in the first place, but if they do, don't join in, and know when to pull in the reins, and bring the aggression to a constructive conclusion. "Hold it Doug. Delivery dates for out-of-stock goods are a real problem for Marcus. We'll put it top of the list."

BRING IN THE OTHERS

Aggression often conceals a positive desire to get something put right. Find out if there is a real problem to be ironed out, first of all by asking the person what his problem is, then by bringing in other participants—non-combatants—to contribute to an appreciation of the scale of the problem.

"Brenda, what computer difficulties are you having in your department?"

Don't try to jump to conclusions or solutions, but probe the scale of the problem and if it's justified, build it into the overall trend of the discussion. It is equally important not to shut out the aggressor altogether when you bring in the others, but just start to calm him down.

STICK TO THE FACTS

When you bring in non-combatants, or probe to explore the cause of the aggression, make sure you stick to facts which will help illuminate and elucidate. The last thing you need is 'opinions'. Opinions will merely prolong the agony, since they are likely to be either pro or anti the aggressor. But facts, as they say, are facts.

"How many times has it happened this month?" "Well, in my opinion."

"No opinions for the moment, Doug. Let's stick to facts." It helps to ask a specific question rather than a general one;

"How many times" rather than "Does it happen often?". The less value-laden the question, then the more likely you are to get the kinds of answers which will help lessen any tension.

For more information and other useful tools visit

http://www.unitcare.com.au/bp_strata_meeting_laws.html

Next edition: Focus the group

BEST PRACTICE - MEETINGS: LAST YEAR'S BUSINESS PART 3



Meetings: Minutes of Previous Year

In this, and the following sections, we take you through the agenda of a community corporation AGM.

Minutes of the previous AGM, this item follows the opening preliminaries, an extract from our pro-forma minutes follows...

MINUTES:

Ask the Secretary to read.

"Can I have a motion from a member who was present at that the previous meeting to confirm the Minutes? "

Will someone Second the motion please?.

All those in favour? Against? I declare the motion carried".

You may want to ask members if there are any corrections.

It was resolved that the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on ___/___/___ be taken as read & accepted as a correct record.

Business arising: Any matters that need to be readdressed will be discussed & recorded under common property maintenance, under another relevant agenda item, or under other business.

Moved _____ / Seconded _____ Motion carried.

Hints

As chairperson:

- ✓ ensure you have a copy of last years minutes at hand
- ✓ have the Secretary (if present) to summarise the minutes to refresh the owner's memories
- ✓ meeting law does not require those voting to be have been present at the previous meeting

Meetings: Correspondence

This item follows the passing of last years minutes. An extract from our pro-forma minutes follows:

CORRESPONDENCE: The correspondence for the year was reviewed and tabled. It was agreed that any matters arising be deferred for discussion under the relevant agenda item.

Hint

As chairperson:

- ensure you have all the correspondence on hand - ask your group's Secretary for help
- suggest owners pass the documents around if they wish to view them
- avoid lingering over this agenda item unless a matter is of importance to the majority of those present
- make a note of any matters arising that need to be addressed later in the meeting. This ensures that owners are acknowledged while enabling the meeting to move on.

Meetings: Financials

In this, and the following sections, we take you through the agenda of a community corporation AGM.

Financials: This item follows the tabling of correspondence. An extract from our pro-forma minutes follows...

FINANCIAL STATEMENT:

Ask the Treasurer to read/give his/her financial statement.

Ask the Treasurer to move for the receipt and adoption of the financial statement.

Second. All those in favour? Against? I declare the motion carried.

The Corporation's financial statement of accounts for the current period, as circulated to all members, was tabled and reviewed. Owners were encouraged to comment. It was resolved that the financial statement of accounts be received.

Moved _____ / Seconded _____ Motion carried.

Tax: Legislation now requires that monies held in Trust Accounts are to earn interest, and as a result an annual tax return is required. .

For more information and useful tools visit

http://www.unitcare.com.au/bp_community_meetings_mins_prev_year.html

Next edition:

Appointment of Manager / Appointment of Officers

Proforma Minutes

MINUTES:

It was resolved that the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on ___/___/___ be taken as read & accepted as a correct record.

Business arising: Any matters that need to be readdressed will be discussed & recorded under common property maintenance, under another relevant agenda item or under other business.

Moved _____ All agreed.

CORRESPONDENCE:

The correspondence for the year was reviewed and tabled by the Secretary / Manager. It was agreed that any matters arising be deferred for discussion under the relevant agenda item.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT:

The Corporation's financial statement of accounts for the current period as circulated to all members was tabled and reviewed. The Manager encouraged owners to comment.

It was resolved that the financial statement of accounts be received.

Moved _____ All agreed.