

## **Take home message to feed into high school children before they find a career.**

As a child develops into a teenager and transitions into the older teenage years, each person should have the insight to ask their parents or guardian, how they were treated in the first 5 years of their life. If I had of known about my childhood abandonment issues earlier in my life, I would have understood why my attraction to females also pounded my subconscious mind.

Abandonment issues have impacted on my life more than anything else. Not knowing about this for 37 years has caused me to struggle with the demands of life going forward.

My example below unravels my mental health, experienced with depression.

### **Episode 1**

I had my first episode of depression when aged 24 in 1999. This occurred after a series of horrible events over the course of about 6 months lead me down the path of the following: (1) relinquishing a great career opportunity (I had the responsibility of managing a south western local government town planning department after 9 months of full time employment as a Planning Officer (graduating mid 1998), (2) moving from a regional town to a capital city, (3) having a relationship of 4 years fall apart; (4) dropping further study commitments and (5) losing potential income that would have seen me become very wealthy (I said no to a pay rise from \$28,000 to around \$45,000 in 1998 because I did not want to be abandoned by my ex girlfriend). I simply wanted to be loved – something I missed out on when a baby.

### **Episode 2**

In August 2011, I succumbed to episode 2 of depression. I hurt a female friend at that time and I'm still dealing with the consequences of this. However, precursor behaviour to the above sentences is provided below to give the Productivity Commission a better understanding of my headspace.

I married my ex wife in 2003, that lasted 5 years. In this time I began to be increasingly more giving towards my ex wife, meanwhile she wanted me to become more assertive. I went out of my way to please her and other females consistently.

In 2009, after spending much of my life having an intense attraction to females, visiting massage parlours in seeking love from complete strangers along with pleasing women consistently at my own expense, I turned into an aggressive person. I did not care about my integrity, nor my headspace. I just wanted to hurt females and when my marriage broke down, I began to adopt a different persona, mixing business with pleasure and having quick relationships with numerous females. I had some dominance over the opposite sex for once which felt delightful. Something I did not possess as my intense attraction to the opposite always relied on pleasing the opposite sex.

However, in September 2011, I found out the underlying cause of the behaviour in my life. I am the youngest of 4 children, all born between 1969 and 1974. For periods of

6 weeks at a time in November and December of 1974 and 1975, I was separated from my mother and looked after by my late grandmother. My mother suffered from post-natal depression and she had time out from her responsibilities. I then understood why I had such a fondness for physical contact and receiving love from the opposite sex.

### **Episode 3**

When in a state of depression, more depressive thoughts take over and can prolong the pain. That has certainly occurred in my life with myself buying an investment property in late 2012 for \$575,000 that is now worth \$125,000. Since buying that property, I had to sell three other assets, losing \$300,000 in equity. I'm still in debt of about \$115,000, having begun to pay off the loan that was at \$320,000 in July 2016.

I'm still working which is great so I'm still earning an income. Thankfully, my employer has been very supportive in giving me less complicated tasks.

I also now live with my parents who are both in the 70s, one retired and the other close to that outcome.

**Take home message.** Make sure the high school curriculum embeds into a teenagers mind finding out if there has been any traumatic periods from the age of 0 to 5. Was there any separation period from the family or a death in the family or was toilet training difficult.

Teach teenagers about mental health issues, or even perhaps primary school children. I had no awareness of my mental health issues until episode 2 of depression. I'm sure this has begun already with the delivery of social media issues into the headspace of a child.

Oliver James in a book entitled, They F\$\$\$ You Up, hits on this issue at page 154 of his book (from what I recall).

“In both animals and humans, if a particular part of the brain is stimulated in early childhood it gets bigger and develops more connections between the neurones. The greater the frequency and intensity of stimulation, the more sophisticated that area of brain becomes. Also, if frequently repeated, the stimulation creates a pattern which becomes stable and not easily susceptible to change. The sum of these patterns from our early childhood becomes the physical basis of our adult personality, mental health and intellect.”

I also found Grow in 2012 and became an active member in this mental health self help group for 5 years. It assisted me more than any psychiatrist or psychologist appointment to unpack the conditioned behaviour in my life and start to live in a much better manner. It taught me to stand up for myself more and be assertive when I need to be.