

KEEPING PACE

August 2018



PACE IS MOVING TO A NEW OFFICE

In September PACE will be moving from Seaton to Port Adelaide. The new office is located behind headspace at 78-80 St Vincent St. Early intervention has always been a strong focus for PACE, and the move will enable us to work more closely with headspace in providing services to young people. Although the move will be a significant change for the PACE team it won't change much for our clients. We will still be able to see clients at Centacare's Seaton office, and all groups which are currently held at Seaton will remain at this location. We will also be able to see clients at the new office, which will be convenient for clients who live closer to Port Adelaide than Seaton.

Welcome to the August 2018 edition of Keeping PACE.

I hope you are keeping well this Winter. I know some people enjoy Winter but I don't. It's cold, rainy and the days are short. Actually I don't mind the rain, but I don't like the cold, and I really miss the sunshine. I took my dog Sally for a walk on the weekend and although it was cold, the sun was shining, and it was great to feel the sun on my shoulders and back. It's amazing what a difference a little sunshine makes. Research has shown a significant link between Vitamin D and mood, and sunlight is the best source of Vitamin D, so in Winter I try to get out in the sun as much as possible.

We recently had some good news in PACE when we were told that we will be re-funded for another twelve months, ensuring that our service will continue until at least the 30th of June 2019. The last two funding extensions were only six months at a time, and the uncertainty about our future caused significant anxiety for many of our clients. With many other mental health services losing their funding, it was a relief to find out that we will be here for a while longer. The previous six monthly extensions of funding also made it difficult to book programs and presentations in advance, so the twelve month extension will make this easier. We have already booked two Be BOLD - Break the Mould positive body image programs for high schools, and we are in the process of arranging several community presentations.

Until next time, look after yourself.

Shane

Team Leader, PACE

PACE Service - Centacare Catholic Family Services

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LOVE YOUR BODY WEEK – September 3 – 9

Love your body week is the Butterfly Foundation’s annual positive body image initiative. Many Australians are unhappy with the way they look, and young people in particular are susceptible to developing a negative body image. Love your body week aims to engage with schools to promote body acceptance and celebrate diversity.

For more information or to get involved visit the Butterfly Foundation website:

<https://thebutterflyfoundation.org.au/support-us/love-your-body-week-for-schools/>

MENTAL HEALTH WEEK – OCTOBER 7 - 13

Mental Health Week is an annual, national event that aims to improve community awareness and interest in mental health and wellbeing. The Mental Health Coalition of South Australia (MHCSA) co-ordinates events and activities across the state. There is still a stigma associated with mental illness, and the best way to reduce this is to increase awareness and understanding of mental health issues.



For more information or to get involved visit the MHCSA website:

<http://www.mhcsa.org.au/mhcsa-events/mental-health-week-2018/>

CONFRONTING THE FAIRYTALE FILTER



Recently ABC News posted an excellent online article about author Jill Stark’s battle with anxiety and panic attacks. In the article Jill talks about how her anxiety was fueled by comparing herself to the unrealistic, airbrushed images she saw on social media, and the nasty internal voice which constantly put her down for not measuring up. Jill talks about how people try to present an image on social media which shows them living a perfect life and happy all the time, which she calls the “fairytale filter”. She encourages people to be more honest about their lives and what they are feeling. To read the article click the following link:

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-08-02/jill-stark-on-anxiety-and-ditching-the-fairytale-filter/10056662>

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PLEASE STOP SAYING “I’M SO OCD”

We’ve all heard someone say “I’m so OCD” because they need things to be done or arranged in a particular way, or they are extremely fussy when they clean the house. You may have even said it yourself. But is being fussy, organised or particular about things the same as having OCD? The simple answer is no. Obsessive Compulsive Disorder is a serious mental disorder which affects about 2% of the population. As the name suggests it is characterized by obsessions and compulsions.

Obsessions are unwanted thoughts, images or urges which trigger intense feelings of distress. They are usually about something catastrophic happening, such as someone being seriously hurt or killed. Most people have these types of thoughts from time to time, but they are able to let them go or dismiss them without becoming distressed. People with OCD cannot get rid of the thoughts, and this becomes extremely distressing for them. The thoughts seem real. For example, if someone without OCD thinks that they might have left the iron on, they might worry about it, but the worry won’t consume them. They will be able to think it through and realise that they might not have left the iron on at all, and if they did it probably won’t cause the house to burn down. When someone with OCD has this thought they might be convinced that they HAVE left the iron on, and the house WILL burn down. They won’t be able to let the thought go, and they will experience extreme distress as a result.

“OCD is a serious mental disorder which causes extreme distress, not only for people who have it, but also for the people around them.”

Compulsions are mental or physical rituals designed to eliminate the obsessions or reduce the distress they cause. Compulsions can be deliberate actions to deal with the obsessions, or avoidance of situations that trigger them. A person with OCD often knows that the rituals will only provide temporary relief, but they don’t have any other way to cope with the intense distress caused by their obsessions. People who don’t have OCD engage in rituals too, such as bed time routines, religious rituals, or practicing a new skill, but these rituals have a positive effect. The rituals associated with OCD are not positive, they are extremely time consuming and torturous, and people with OCD wish they didn’t have to do them. For the example above, a person with OCD might feel compelled to check that the iron is switched off and unplugged many times before leaving the house. They might even take the iron with them when they go out to ensure that the house doesn’t burn down.

OCD is more than just being fussy or particular about things, and when someone says “I’m so OCD” it actually minimises the seriousness and perpetuates the misconceptions about the disorder. OCD is a serious mental disorder which causes extreme distress, not only for people who have it, but also for the people around them. It has a huge impact on a person’s life, and over time can become debilitating. So unless you’ve been diagnosed with OCD, please don’t use those three letters to describe your behaviour. It’s unfair to those who actually have the disorder and struggle with it every day.

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