

FAITH TALK

Life through
a new lens

REVIEW

*Raised by
Wolves*

MY STORY

The cycle of life

Coping through COVID-19

Finding hope and meaning in the pandemic



SALVOS

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NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH MONTH



If you want your children to be
intelligent, read them fairy tales.
If you want them to be more intelligent,
read them more fairy tales.

Albert Einstein
Physicist
Nobel Laureate 1921





The Salvation Army is about giving hope where it's needed most.

What is The Salvation Army?

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church.

Vision Statement

Wherever there is hardship or injustice, Salvos will live, love and fight alongside others to transform Australia one life at a time with the love of Jesus.

Mission Statement

The Salvation Army is a Christian movement dedicated to sharing the love of Jesus by:

- Caring for people
- Creating faith pathways
- Building healthy communities
- Working for justice

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**[04]
Feature**

**Coping through
COVID-19**

**[10]
Faith talk**

**Life through
a new lens**

**[12]
My story**

The cycle of life

Mental health matters

October is Mental Health Month in Australia.

One in five Australians are experiencing a mental health illness, with the impact of the pandemic exacerbating some of those conditions.

Mental wellbeing is something we all need to be aware of, both for ourselves and for those around us.

In our main story we look at the impacts of COVID-19 on mental health, and how people can manage those challenges and still find purpose and meaning in life.

Our 'Faith talk' continues this theme, offering words of hope and the assurance of God's love for those who are weary and need help to see life from a different and energising perspective.

In 'My story', Jennifer talks about the impact the Salvos made on her as a little girl, and how she has given back by helping raise funds, and awareness, through a unique cycle challenge.

We pray this edition brings you some peace in the knowledge that help is out there for everyone and nobody needs to face mental health issues, or any of life's challenges, alone.

Simone Worthing
Assistant Editor

Coping through COVID-19

Finding hope and meaning in the pandemic

October is National Mental Health Month in Australia.

An initiative of the Mental Health Foundation Australia (MHFA), the focus will be on advocating for, and raising awareness of, Australian mental health.

One in five Australians are experiencing a mental health illness. The MHFA wants to promote mental health and increase public awareness of mental illness, and to develop and deliver mental health education programs to support Australians of all ages.

The theme of the month is Mental Health Matters.

The Salvation Army, through its local programs, Positive Lifestyle Program, and social services (including homelessness, family and domestic violence, alcohol and other drugs, and disaster, recovery and emergency services), offers assistance and referrals to those facing a range of mental health issues.

In each edition this month, Salvos Magazine will look at different aspects of mental health and the help that is out there, for everyone.

This week, we kick off with an interview with Majors Robyn and Howard Smartt, Co-managers of Pastoral Services for The Salvation Army in Australia.



PHOTO BY ARMAND KHOURY ON UNSPLASH



WORDS

SIMONE WORTHING

"For many people, living in the pandemic is like trying to do a jigsaw puzzle without a framework," says Robyn Smartt, a clinical counsellor. "They thought there was a framework in which to move, but the pieces on the edge are all messed up."

Robyn and Howard Smartt co-manage Pastoral Services for The Salvation Army in Australia. They are both seeing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic impact the mental health of a broad range of people and exacerbate existing issues in many others.

"We are seeing so much uncertainty around the future," Robyn says. "Much of this anxiety comes from not being able to control their own environment, find meaning in what is happening or see an end in sight – so to stay in the moment is hard and unsettling for many."

Howard, a registered psychologist, agrees. "We don't have a clear picture of how life will work and is meant to be, once we come through this," he says. "Without seeing a bigger picture and purpose, without having something to look forward to and a positive sense of what the future might look like, people struggle."

Howard shares that, throughout the pandemic, he has seen heightened anxiety, and a deeper sense of grief and loss in the people he talks to. The grief may not be recognised or diagnosed, but it's a heaviness that people are feeling, a tiredness that they can't really explain.

There has also been an increase in tension in families where both partners are working from home, and their children are home-schooling. Parents are also tending to work more than they normally would, with ►



PHOTO BY TYCHO ATSMAN ON UNSPASH

It's normal to feel 'hedged in' at times – experiencing a range of emotions that can affect our mental health.

the 'boundary' of the commute largely gone, and easy access to 'the office'.

"Additionally, there is increased anxiety among older teenagers, with some experiencing feelings of despair," he says. "They are worried about their education, future jobs, their future in general.

"And in many households, there is also an underlying anxiety of making ends meet and balancing the budget on a daily and weekly level. Without knowing where this will all end up, people are reacting to everything around them."

LOSS OF CONNECTION

The social disruption resulting from the pandemic, combined with the often-repetitive

nature of life under lockdown or travel restrictions, has, had, and is having, challenging implications for people's mental health.

"As relational beings, people need something to look forward to – when they will see their family next or hug their grandchild or have coffee with friends," says Robyn. "Video calls have been great, but they are not the same, and some of those disconnections we will be facing for the long haul."

Howard explains that, even with many necessary and understood lifestyle changes – such as mask-wearing and online meetings – it's a lot harder to pick up facial cues and can emphasise the sense of isolation people are feeling.

And people are feeling isolated, the ache of loneliness and, for many, the scary black chasm of depression. For many in Melbourne who (at the time of writing) are living in their second, and extended, period of hard lockdown, some of these feelings are even more intense.

NORMAL REACTIONS

"So much of people's response to the pandemic is normal under such conditions," says Robyn.

It's normal to feel a range of emotions, from anger and frustration to loneliness and fear; from sadness and anxiety to being overwhelmed. It's normal to feel resentful, teary, irritable and tired.

It's vital to remember, though, that there is help available for everyone, including through local GPs, mental health professionals, telephone crisis support services, and a range of community and national organisations (see box).

Nobody has to go through whatever they are feeling and facing, alone.

POSITIVE RESPONSE

As hard as it is sometimes, and as much as we may not feel like it, looking at what we can do to help both ourselves and others during this time can change our perspective and give us motivation, energy and hope.

"Taking a moment even to think about what is likely to make a positive difference in how we're managing our lives – even resolving to eat better or drink less alcohol – is helpful," says Howard.

"Take it a step further and think about what is not just good for me, but good for society. The pandemic has shown that there is more that unites us than divides us, so if we can focus on reinforcing that, and creatively contributing to others, we will be strengthened in the process.

"It can be heavy and hard, but we can intentionally choose the positive. This doesn't mean being unrealistic or trivialising what is happening around us – but seeing the good in things and in people and practising gratitude.

"It's when we examine what is really important in our lives, what our personal values are, and we begin investing our time and energy there, that we identify with them and they change us."

CELEBRATING GOODNESS

There have been so many examples of caring and reaching out to others throughout the pandemic: neighbours helping others in their street, random acts of kindness, the selflessness of so many healthcare and other essential workers, greater understanding of and response to the marginalised in our communities, and generous donations to agencies helping others, including the Salvos.

"If we can celebrate and be thankful for those taking risks on our behalf and make sure we know why we are grateful to them and for their work, we can help lift so much of our own anxiety and sadness," says Robyn.

"If we can take the initiative, however small, to see the positive, celebrate the good we see in those around us, and check in with others, we will start to feel better about ourselves and what we're going through as well.

"We all need hope and meaning, and perhaps even more so in a pandemic. I often quote this Bible verse to people, from Philippians chapter 4 verse 7: 'And know that the peace of God (a peace that is beyond any and all of our human understanding) will stand watch over your hearts and minds in Jesus'."

"My prayer for others is that God's peace would protect them and help them at an emotional and 'head' level as well."

WHERE TO GET HELP?

Beyond Blue: **1300 22 4636**

Coronavirus 24-hour helpline:
1800 512 348

findapscyhologist.org.au or call
1800 333 497

Lifeline 24-hour telephone crisis support:
13 11 14



Scan here for more
on finding meaning.

Raised By Wolves

An epic battle between
atheists and people of faith

WORDS

MARK HADLEY

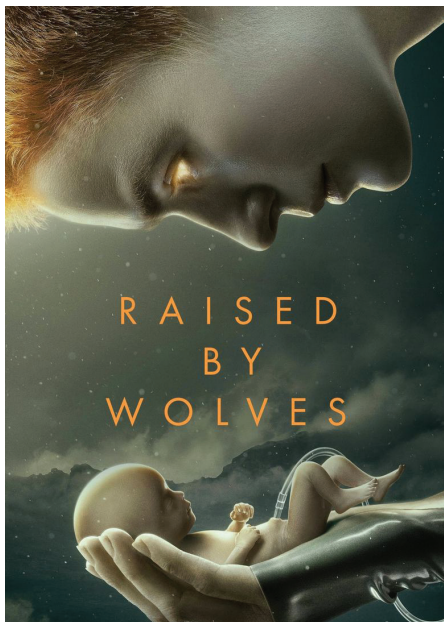
Ridley Scott is a venerated name in the annals of science fiction history. He's directed numerous benchmark films – *Alien*, *Blade Runner*, *The Martian* – and that would be enough for anyone. But what happens when he applies his director's flair to a high-concept television series? An epic battle between atheists and people of faith.

Raised By Wolves is set in a possible future where a polarised conflict has devastated the earth. On the one side, atheists vehemently opposed to anything but cold hard fact. On the other, believers in a higher power, determined to cleanse the world of their ice-cold enemies. The damage is so extensive, though, that both sides make plans to travel to the uninhabited world to rebuild their versions of civilisation.

It's in this context we meet two androids: Mother and Father. They have been entrusted with 12 embryos who they will raise as complete atheists. As Mother says, "It was belief in the unreal that destroyed the earth".

However, their abilities to care for the resulting children are unsuccessful and only a single boy survives. And young *Campion's* life is complicated still further when a ship carrying hundreds of Sol (sun) worshippers arrives.

Scott's division of humanity into atheists and believers is deliberate and stark. Mother is characterised as a heartless killing machine who despatches her victims with shrill screams.



The worshippers of Sol are presented as a peaceful community who love their children and are determined to rescue *Campion*. But as the series progresses, Scott begins to mix up their black and white hats. Mother displays a capacity for love and an instinct that will do anything to see *Campion* thrive. It also becomes clear that the religious community is built on a caste system, corrupted by self-interest, and contains a leader responsible for numerous sexual assaults. After a few episodes it becomes unclear who the 'wolves' are in the show's title.

Raised By Wolves clearly aims to convey that there is good and bad on both sides. What Christians might need to hear in particular, though, is that atheists love their children too. It's very easy to picture those who preach a godless universe to be as cold as the rhetoric they espouse. But neatly categorising them as the enemy allows us to just as easily forget our responsibility:



"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ...'" (Matthew chapter 28, verses 18-19) – atheists included.

It seems Scott also believes faith isn't anathema to rational thinking. Even before he meets believers, Campion instinctively learns to pray. This ties in with the research behind *Born Believers*, by developmental psychologist and anthropologist Dr. Justin Barrett, who demonstrates that children enter this world with an intuitive knowledge of the

divine: "[Richard] Dawkins has suggested a view of the developing human child's mind that assumes the young mind is a blank slate just waiting to be filled in ...[But] those of us who study religious thought and actions – scientists and scholars – do not see religious ideas as intruders into human nature but as a wholly expected extension of the way humans are naturally put together (Justin L. Barrett, *Born Believers: The Science of Children's Religious Belief*, 2012)."

And so, Campion grows up holding rational thinking in tension with his faith, realising there are things he doesn't know that rest in the hands of an omnipotent God.

Raised By Wolves, rated MA15+, is free to watch on Binge under a trial plan, and well worth considering for those interested in the culture wars between atheists and believers. Its strongest message, though, can be viewed right here. We're free to oppose every argument offered by those who oppose the good news about Jesus Christ, but we must speak that truth in love. After all, atheists are not the enemy, just people who've yet to meet God.

Mark Hadley is the culture writer for Salvos Magazine.



Life through a new lens

Words of hope for the weary and broken

WORDS

SANDRA PAWAR



Suffering with mental health problems is a serious matter. It is something that can affect our whole being, sometimes for days and weeks at a time. It can cause us to feel down and unable to get out of bed; it can cause us to miss the beauty surrounding us and the hope that can be found in life.

To those who need to take medication or consult a doctor and or a psychologist and or a psychiatrist in order to help keep their mental health in check, I applaud you for taking those steps and for doing all you can to keep yourself well by using medical science. It is not easy, but it is worth it. Today, I am outlining additional available help in this struggle with mental illness – including God in your life as well as using medication and seeing mental health professionals.

“

You are not alone, and there is a life of hope awaiting you.

”

I write in the hope that a fresh wind can break through to your heart and mind and fill you with hope of a new and beautiful day.

In the Book of John in the Bible, some incredibly life-giving words are spoken by Jesus. He says, “I came that they might have life and have it abundantly” (John chapter 10, verse 10).

These words breathe life into me when my heart and mind feel weary and broken. They remind me that Jesus has so much more in mind for my life, and for all his children in this world. He has more for you than sadness, pain, struggle and feelings of heaviness.

Jesus has come so that we can have a life that is abundant and full. Even during those incredibly difficult and hard days that we all experience, he is reminding us that our lives can be more than those hard days. He is reminding us that we are not equal to the sum of our hard days. I am so thankful for that.

In her book, *Your Beautiful Purpose*, author Susie Larson writes, “I marvel at how he [God] lovingly takes our broken pieces, our tangled-up fears, our worst mistakes, and creates a mosaic of beauty that impacts the world.” These words give me such a boost of encouragement and remind me that God loves me, even in my mess, and that he can use my life to create something beautiful that impacts the world in which I live.

If you are willing, and if you allow Jesus to come into your life, he will help you flourish, he will help you heal, and he will help you become whole once again.

Our journey towards mental health is not a one-off event – rather it is a long journey towards health and wholeness. You do not need to embark on this journey by yourself. Jesus says, “Come to me all who are weary and carry heavy burdens and I will give you rest” (Matthew chapter 11, verse 28).

You are not alone, and there is a life of hope and beauty awaiting you. Will you allow Jesus to journey with you, and give you a whole and full life? He is ready to embrace you.

Captain Sandra Pawar is a Salvation Army officer (pastor) in Sydney.



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

The cycle of life

Giving time to others makes the world go around

WORDS

JENNIFER SHORT

My parents both had heroin-dependency issues when I was a little girl. Our neighbours owned a bakery, and I remember going next door most afternoons to get leftover bread to eat.

My parents separated when I was six, and there was a short period of time when they shared the care of both my older sister and I.

When we stayed with Mum, she often didn't have enough money to feed us. It was tough for her as a single mum with the issues she faced.

“

I knew it was time to give back, and to combine that with a personal challenge as well.

”

Mum reached out to The Salvation Army for assistance and received immediate help. I remember going to the Salvos and getting some 'little cards' [food vouchers] that enabled our family to buy what we needed.

Whenever we went shopping after visiting the Salvos, Mum wasn't as restrictive about what could go into our trolley. We could buy fresh produce and extra food. It was a happy time, like Christmas Day.



I really don't know what would've happened if the Salvos hadn't been there. We probably would have gone hungry more often.

I went on with my schooling, studied at university and am now a lawyer. My parents also became drug-free.

Last year, I saw a social media ad promoting the Salvos' Red Shield Ride from Sydney to Melbourne. I'm an avid cyclist, so was immediately drawn to finding out more and participating.

I am always up for cycling challenges and started looking into it. It also brought back memories of my early years and how the Salvos had helped our family. I knew it was time to give back, and to combine that with a personal challenge as well.



Red Shield riders and crew members outside the Melbourne Cricket Ground last year on completion of their 10-day journey from Sydney to Melbourne. Jennifer is in the middle, seventh from the right.

I found the ride incredibly moving, as well as physically challenging. I pushed myself every day, which was quite emotional as well because you always discover a bit more about yourself in those conditions. The organisers kept us on the move at the end of each day too; there was always someone from the local Salvos sharing about what they were doing in their local area. I loved it.

In Canberra, all the riders attended the Red Shield Appeal launch. A Salvation Army client told the story of how much the Salvos had helped him through his heroin addiction and now raising his little girl.

I was so moved by this. I went up to him and shared my story, told him that I was just like his little girl and now I am a lawyer and have

a happy life. It gave him a wave of hope that he was on the right track with his daughter.

It was great to 'give back' through the ride. I made heaps of friends and we keep in touch.

What is so lovely in this day and age, where everything is so fast paced, is that the Salvos are there when people's lives take a downturn; and that they are so willing to give their time to others. This is what makes the world go around.



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

Chicken kotleti (from Ukraine)



Ingredients

500g chicken mince
1 cup Panko breadcrumbs
½ cup milk
2 tbsp sour cream
1 tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
1 egg
1 small onion (grated)
½ cup plain flour
olive oil

Method

Place Panko breadcrumbs in a large mixing bowl. Add milk and let stand for 5 minutes.

Add the chicken, sour cream, salt, pepper, egg and grated onion to the bread mixture and combine well.

With wet hands, make oval-shaped patties from mixture and coat on both sides in flour. Place on a tray or plate lined with baking paper until ready to cook.

Heat 2 to 3 tbsp olive oil in a frypan. Add kotleti. Cover and cook on medium heat for about 4 to 5 minutes on each side until golden.

Funny things kids say



I was on the phone with my wife discussing what to have for dinner when our seven-year-old informed us that, “salad is ruining my life”.

“Which ‘soon’ do you mean?” asked my six-year-old nephew. “The long or the short one?”

“I’m born to snack,” declared my daughter, aged four.

“I miss the hug life,” five-year-old Alex told his Nanna.

Bible byte

“A cheerful heart brings
a smile to your face;
a sad heart makes it hard to
get through the day.”

Proverbs chapter 15, verse 13
The Message Bible translation

Wordsearch

S F D S W H V L W Y S N U G L
S A R N E J A O U M L N X A B
E D O I G I C P I F I I C U R
N V U H E D T L P V R O M E C
D O T P P N E I E I R E T A G
N C I R M S D R N P N H E N F
I A N O W T S S I U G E I H J
K T E D N A Y C H U M R S T C
K E B N L O E E A Q A M G S S
Q S G E S R E L P C N V O S T
A M B A S S A D O R S Z H C N
D A I L Y C I T N E H T U A E
S N O I T A R B E L E C J B V
G O O D W I L L A I C A F O E
S H U P I Y I M G V Y E B Z Y

ADVOCATES
AMBASSADOR

AUTHENTIC
CARING

CELEBRATIONS
CHEERFUL

COMMUNITIES
DAILY

ENDORPHINS
EVENTS
FACIAL

FAMILY
FRIENDS
GOODWILL
HAPPINESS
JOY

KINDNESS
LAUGHTER
RECIPROCAL

ROUTINE
SMILES
UNIVERSAL

Quick quiz



1. When is World Smile Day?
2. Who created the smiley face, and when?
3. What is World Smile Day for?
4. What do smiles promote?
5. What are smiles the universal sign of?

Tum-Tum

On which page of this week's *Salvos Magazine* is Tum-Tum hiding?



Answers: 1. Friday 2 October. 2. Harvey Ball in 1963. 3. Smiles and kind acts. 4. Good will and cheer. 5. Happiness. **Tum-Tum:** is poking out at the top of the hole in the rock on page 5.

Did you know?

- A baby octopus is about the size of a flea when it is born.
- Bees can recognise human faces.
- The average person walks the equivalent of five times around the world in their lifetime.



Have you taken care of your Will?

Like ripples in a pond, a gift in your Will to The Salvation Army can impact more lives than you could ever imagine

- ☐ Send me a FREE copy of your Wills information booklet
- ☐ I am interested in leaving a gift to The Salvation Army
- ☐ I have included a gift to The Salvation Army in my Will

Name

Address

State Postcode

Email

Phone

Best time to call ☐ AM ☐ PM

Send to (no stamp required): The Salvation Army Wills and Bequests, Reply Paid 229, Sydney South NSW 1234

When having your Will made or updated, please consider including a gift to The Salvation Army.

Please contact The Salvation Army's Wills and Bequests team to find out how you can start or continue your legacy of generosity.

Together, we can give hope where it's needed most long into the future.

For a free copy of our Wills information booklet, contact us on 1800 337 082, email willsandbequests@salvationarmy.org.au or complete and return the coupon.

salvationarmy.org.au/wills

