

# HMM

HOODIES  
MAGAZINE



HOODIES ISSUE 9 - DECEMBER 2023

EDITORIAL

Back in June of this year I sat down at my lap top and began trying to take my daily LinkedIn pieces to my own platform and now nine months later here we are!

Over the course of the last nine issues we've talked to industry leaders, inspiring men and women trying to make a difference, we have had some of this countries hardest working and smartest write articles for us and we've gone from being a PDF on my laptop to a genuine and quality online magazine that boasts a readership of more than 35,000 a month and is read in the US, the UK, New Zealand, France, Italy, Canada, Ireland and Sweden to name a few.

This month we talk about the changing face of the CBD, we talk tea with Troy Benjamin, we of course talk politics, we discuss the death of right wing conservatism, music, food, wine, culture and tech...all going together to make this without question our best issue yet, but I would say that because it's true and this whole thing is only heading in one direction and that's up!



So take a few hours to kick back, relax and enjoy Issue 9 of the hottest new magazine going around, Hoodies. Why Hoodies? Because it matters!

Cheers  
Ben

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FASHION

WITH

LUCY LAURITA



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" NEVER STOP CREATING. "

# Boardroom to Zen: Mastering the Art of Stress Relief and Self-Expression Through Fashion

## The Transformative Power of Fashion

Imagine stepping into your office, a boardroom, or even a casual brunch, and feeling a wave of confidence and calmness wash over you. That's the magic of fashion!

It's not just about trends or making a statement; it's about how you feel in your skin and clothes. In this journey through the world of fashion, we'll explore how your wardrobe choices can significantly uplift your mood and reduce stress, guiding you from the hustle and bustle of the boardroom to the zen of your personal space.

## The Psychology of Fashion: More Than Just Clothing

Picture this: you're in a sharp suit or a sleek dress, and suddenly, you feel more powerful and ready to tackle any challenge. That's 'encllothed cognition' at play, a term coined by researchers Hajo Adam and Adam D. Galinsky. They found that what we wear affects our psychological processes. It's like slipping into a costume and adopting the traits associated with it.

Have you ever pondered the impact of colours on your mood? Think about the tranquillity of a blue sky or the refreshing vibe of a lush green meadow.

This isn't just a coincidence; it's the essence of colour psychology.

Different shades can stir up a variety of emotions within us. Opting for calming colours or vibrant colours that spark joy and confidence can significantly boost your mood.

By thoughtfully incorporating these colours into your wardrobe, you can subtly yet effectively set the tone for your day.



## Style as a Dynamic Expression of Self

The clothes you choose to wear are more than just fabric; they're a reflection of who you are.

Whether you find confidence in a sleek, slim-fit ensemble or relish the comfort of something more loose and flowing, each style has its way of boosting your self-confidence.

And remember, you're not confined to just one style. Fashion is an evolving journey, and it's perfectly fine to mix and match.

One day you might feel your best in a tailored outfit that enhances your figure, and the next, you might prefer the laid-back ease of a looser fit.

It's all about dressing in a way that resonates with your style, making you feel both confident and true to your unique self.

### Fashion in the Boardroom: Dressing for Success and Well-being

Gone are the days when power dressing meant stiff suits and uncomfortable shoes.

Today, it's all about blending professionalism with personal comfort and style. From a long flowing dress to a well-fitted casual shirt or a classic plain t-shirt, paired with sleek, clean sneakers, these days, confidence translates into trust in the modern world.

These choices can convey a sense of professionalism while also showcasing your approachability and modern style.

It's about choosing garments that are not just of good quality but also resonate with your aesthetic.

The key is in the quality and condition of these pieces – a crisp, well-maintained t-shirt can project just as much confidence as a traditional blazer, especially when paired thoughtfully.

This new era of power dressing champions the idea that you can look authoritative and still prioritise your comfort and individuality.

Selecting your work attire isn't just about adhering to a dress code; it's about making a statement.

It's about finding pieces that speak to your professional role while keeping you comfortable to keep the stress at bay.



### Festive Fashion: Celebrating Life with Style

There's something about festive fashion that can instantly lift our spirits. Be it the sparkle of holiday sequins or the cheerful hues of a summer dress, these pieces carry the essence of celebration and joy. They remind us to embrace the beauty of the moment and the joy of life.

Who says you can only wear those sparkles during the festive season?

Sure, wearing Christmas earrings in March may cause some confusion, but incorporating elements of festive fashion into your daily wardrobe can bring a sense of joy and playfulness to your regular days. We're talking fun, shiny and bright elements that make you, and probably the people around you, smile.

It's about breaking the monotony and sprinkling a little bit of celebration into every day.

### Interior Style: Designing Your Personal Zen Space

Just as fashion can influence your mood, so can the space you live in. Your home should be a reflection of what makes you feel peaceful and happy. It's about creating a haven that soothes your soul and clears your mind.

Envision a space that warmly embraces you with a palette of your favourite hues, a variety of textures that soothe your soul, and cherished mementos that spark joy.

Integrating elements like lush greenery can do wonders for your mood. Plants are not just aesthetic additions; they are known to purify the air, reduce stress, and enhance your overall sense of well-being.

Imagine a little oasis with leafy companions, where each plant adds a touch of tranquillity and a breath of fresh air to your haven.

### The Influence of a Clean and Organized Environment:

A tidy and well-organized space does more than please the eye – it can significantly influence your mental health and productivity.

Clutter often leads to a cluttered mind, while a clean, organized environment can promote clarity and calmness. This sense of order can help you focus better, reduce anxiety, and make room for creativity.

It's about creating an environment that not only looks good but feels harmoniously balanced and purposefully arranged for your comfort and efficiency.

## Lighting: Setting the Tone for Focus and Energy:

The right lighting in your personal space is crucial for setting the tone of your day. Bright, natural light can invigorate your mind and enhance your focus, making it ideal for work and creative pursuits. On the other hand, softer, warmer lights can create a relaxing ambience, perfect for unwinding and rejuvenating.

Adjusting the brightness and colour temperature of your lighting can help shift your energy levels and concentration throughout the day, aligning with your activities and mood.

## The Role of Music in Mood and Productivity:

The power of music to transform our mood and productivity levels is remarkable. The right playlist at an appropriate volume can be a true game-changer. Upbeat tunes can energize and motivate, while softer, instrumental music can aid concentration and focus.

The volume is key – it should be balanced enough to uplift without overwhelming. Tailoring your music to your tasks and mood can create an auditory backdrop that enhances your experience in your personal space.

## The Importance of Breaks and Movement:

Incorporating regular breaks and movement into your routine is essential for both your physical and mental well-being. Periodic movement, be it a short walk, some light stretching, or a change of scenery, can refresh your mind and prevent burnout.

These breaks are not just pauses in productivity; they are vital moments that recharge your creativity and focus.

They serve as reminders to listen to your body and mind, giving yourself the care and attention needed to thrive in your personal and professional life.

## Transitioning to Zen: The Comfort of Self-Expression

In our journey from the office to our sanctuary, comfort plays a key role.



After a long day of meetings and decisions, changing into something more comfortable helps you mentally wind down. It's not just a physical relief but a mental one too. It's like telling your mind, "Hey, it's time to relax now".

Choosing outfits that reflect your style is an act of self-care. It's about honouring your feelings and personality.

Whether it's an oversized sweater that feels like a warm hug or a pair of yoga pants that lets you stretch and unwind, each piece of clothing contributes to your overall sense of well-being.

## Integrating Fashion into Your Wellness Routine

Think of your daily outfit selection as part of your wellness routine. Whether it's choosing an outfit that makes you feel powerful for a big presentation or selecting a soft, comforting fabric for a day of self-care, each choice is an act of mindfulness.

The key is to find harmony between your clothing and your lifestyle. It's about clothing that doesn't just look good but feels good, aligning with your daily activities and overall wellness goals.

## Dressing for a Happier, Healthier You

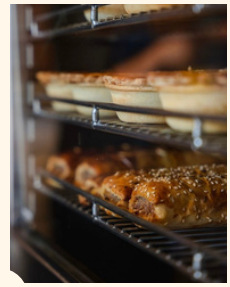
Remember that fashion is more than just a superficial aspect of our lives.

It's a powerful tool for stress relief, self-expression, and personal well-being.

By making mindful choices in our wardrobe and our living spaces, we can create a harmonious balance that nurtures both our physical and mental health.

So go ahead, and dress in a way that celebrates you, your work, your comfort, and your joy!





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hoodies

to be best  
point of v  
**life**  
living be  
existen  
experie



# TROY BENJAMIN

## Blak Brews

Troy Benjamin is a proud Tati Tati, Wadi Wadi, Muti Muti and Wamba Wamba man who was raised in Djillong (Geelong) on Wautharong Country and so he should be proud. Not only is Troy proud of his indigenous heritage but he's also achieved a hell of a lot in his life. He's been a successful hospitality business owner, he's run radio programmes and now he's on a mission both personally and professionally to bring indigenous tea into our lives. Troy set up, owns and operates (with the help of his wife and family) his own indigenous tea company called 'Blak Brews'

Troy knows a thing or two about tea and coffee having run and owned his own cafes. He's also spent a considerable amount of time on radio so he knows a few things about communications and how to best tell a yarn so when he set up his own tea company he knew he had some hard work ahead of him, but he also knew what message he wanted to deliver about his tea. He wanted his tea to be about coming together, about having conversations that crossed cultures and that his tea and his family's tea was of this land. See Troy's tea is made with ingredients all found here in Australia, they're natural, they're part of the earth his ingredients belong to the land, which gives us the opportunity as consumers and as Australians to be part of the natural connection to the land.

We as non indigenous Australians have often heard about how indigenous people belong to the land, that they're connected to it and here we have a product of the land. How many times have you sat down for a brew and talked about all manner of things with family and friends? Solved the problems of the world or helped solve genuine problems for those around you or you yourself while having a brew? Now imagine there was a brew that was made entirely with natural ingredients, made by an indigenous man and his family and then think about the types of conversations we could have about what really needs to happen for indigenous people.

Troy and I both made a deal when we chatted that we wouldn't get political but imagine if we forgot all the politics and actually talked about what was genuinely important to our indigenous peoples over a brew made by Troy? Blak Brews isn't just about opening conversations about the plight of our indigenous people Troy sees his tea as a way to unite us all and that the ceremony of having a tea is an opportunity to create moments of happiness and joy. What Troy has done and what more people need to understand via buying Troy's tea is that he's given us an opportunity as non indigenous Australians to connect to the land ourselves, to take it in, to be part of it and create our own joy and sense of unity via a product that isn't about politics or division.

# TROY BENJAMIN

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If you get to meet Troy you'll be drawn in by him, you'll be engaged by him because he has this kindness and authenticity to him, but some of the things he says are profound and you find yourself thinking there should be more like him. The beauty of Blak Brews and what Troy has created in his product is you get Troy when you drink his tea. You get the genuine connection, the authenticity, the kindness and the simple ceremony of drinking tea brings us the unity Troy want us to have while having a brew.

Having worked and owned Cafes along the famed Banana Alley in the Melbourne CBD Troy was introduced to the idea of tea via his wife who herself was interested in essential oils. This in turn lead to meeting the creator of Australian Tea Masters, Sharyn Johnston, who had studied indigenous ingredients for tea many years previously, it was this that lead Troy to coming up with the idea of Blak Brews and forming his own Indigenous Tea Company.

Now in 2024 Troy's name will go up in lights, how I can't say, but believe me when I do say now is the time to get hold of and get behind Blak Brews because it's going to be huge, but regardless of where Troy goes or how successful Blak Brews becomes when to talk to the man himself you are brought into his world of creating joy, of creating unity done really by him being himself. Some products are just products, you buy them because they serve a purpose, they fulfil a want or need, but Blak Brews is so much more than just another product you buy. It's actually connected to the land, connected to the genuine heritage of Australia and made by a man who you could sit have a brew with while time became irrelevant.

It's true that our lives are busy, that we don't give ourselves the opportunity to reflect nor to take time out, but we should and we should do it with a brew made by Troy because it gives us the all the opportunity to connect to the place we all call home.

[www.blakbrews.com](http://www.blakbrews.com)



# diary of a working Mum

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Welcome to school holidays! This is not a whack at the education department for not having our kids at school 24/7 rather it's how do we cope for the next 7 weeks when we're working and not going to the Gold Coast or heading for the Pyrenees on holiday.

Well I cope and I don't. I'm in the office two days a week this year and next year three which if you'd offered me pre covid I would've said OMG yes, but now I'm like meh I'm not a fan of having to front up three days a week. However it is what it is so for the next seven weeks it's me and Dona man juggling the kids.

Dona man is obsessed with his phone and says he's working but whatever we've been together for so long now if he was texting another woman I'd be like woohoo, but I'm not that lucky (that's not really true I do love Dona man, sometimes) So anywhere he's on his phone from pretty early and I have horses to feed, so kid wakes up, kid wants food, kid gets food, Dona man gets coffee and I say...Right I'm going to the horses is anyone coming with? No is the answer 9 times out of 10 which in some ways I don't mind because I'm not having to think about anyone but myself and my horses for the next hour, although I worry about everything, constantly so that's not entirely true, but whatever.



Schulferien

So after picking up horse poo, giving horse drugs, feeding said horses and getting things ready for the evening feed I head home hoping I don't have a car accident, but what if I did, would Dona man come and pick me up or would the tow truck driver, who would do the Christmas presents, who would feed my horses and my kid if I was in hospital, but as I'm running this whole thing through my head I arrive home having had none of it happen, phew close call.

I head inside and on what will be a 30 degree day kid is sitting in front of the heater she's pulled out in her pjs eating Fruit Loops, (don't you dare judge me!) Dona man has gone into his office still staring at his phone and says he's working or staring at boobs, I can't be sure. I announce I'm working as well and tell the kid she needs to get dressed, not anywhere near being a teenager she grunts and ignores me until I pull her heater away after which she demands she's cold and suddenly full of energy runs to her bedroom to retrieve a blanket!

Now we don't allow iPads during the week so the TV is blazing away as I try to get some much needed work done. Ten minutes later said kid comes in with the line of; "I'm bored!" This is day one of seven weeks of holidays! I shout for Dona man who has put down his phone with some sort of news he's finds wildly interesting and comes into to share it with me. I of course don't find it as interesting but nod the appropriate amount for him to feel good about himself, meanwhile kid is still bored. Dona man decides they can make Christmas cookies which is what they do for the next hour or so freeing me up to get some shit done.

Cookies are baked, icing made and they actually taste really good, Dona man can actually cook by the way, but we're heading for boredville again so it's time to take the dogs out for a walk, which we all do. Lunch is next and neither Dona man or myself have actually done much of what we needed to do from a work perspective, but we have alleviated some of the day one school holiday boredom.

Dona man works for himself so he will indeed be working all over Christmas and the new year but I am taking two weeks off, but once we're both back working and me heading into town three days a week school holidays will get worse before they get better. Having said that though the biggest piece of advice I can offer to all those working mums and dads is try and take some time off with your kids these holidays.

No one in ten years time will care you worked late on a project, no one will remember you went to that special dinner and no one will care you took an extra week's holidays over Christmas that year, but your kids will. Your kids will remember everything, what you missed, when you wouldn't kick a ball with them, when you didn't read them a story and while not all of that can be helped and yes school holidays are a pain in the arse I'd rather be giving my kid good memories she'll have forever.

Good luck parents, may god have mercy on our souls and Merry Christmas!



*Lamaro's*  
**HOTEL**

[www.lamaroshotel.com.au](http://www.lamaroshotel.com.au)



# The Crucial Link Between Regular Sleep Cycles and Dementia Risk

## Introduction:

In our fast-paced modern lives, where time is a precious commodity and productivity is highly valued, one aspect often neglected is the importance of maintaining a regular sleep cycle. Sleep is not just a time of rest; it plays a critical role in our overall health and well-being. Recent research has shed light on the intricate connection between disrupted circadian rhythms and the increased likelihood of early-onset dementia, highlighting the vital need to prioritize our sleep.

## The Basics of Circadian Rhythms:

Before delving into the association between sleep and dementia, it's crucial to understand the concept of circadian rhythms. Our bodies operate on a biological clock that regulates various physiological processes over a roughly 24-hour period. This internal clock, known as the circadian rhythm, influences sleep-wake cycles, hormone production, and other essential functions. Disruptions to this natural rhythm can have profound effects on our health.

## The Importance of Regular Sleep Cycles:

A consistent sleep schedule is fundamental to maintaining a healthy circadian rhythm. When we adhere to a regular sleep routine, our bodies align with the natural day-night cycle, optimising the release of hormones such as melatonin, which helps regulate sleep. Regular sleep also promotes a balance of neurotransmitters and supports cognitive functions, memory consolidation, and emotional well-being.

## Research Findings on Sleep and Dementia Risk:

Recent studies have illuminated the potential consequences of irregular sleep patterns on cognitive health, particularly the increased risk of early-onset dementia. A landmark study published in the *Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery & Psychiatry* found a significant association between disrupted sleep and a higher likelihood of developing dementia later in life. The research followed individuals with irregular sleep patterns over several years, demonstrating a clear correlation between sleep disturbances and cognitive decline.

## The Mechanisms at Play:

The link between irregular sleep and dementia risk is not a mere coincidence. Disruptions to circadian rhythms may contribute to the accumulation of amyloid-beta plaques in the brain, a hallmark of Alzheimer's disease. Additionally, inadequate sleep can impact the glymphatic system, responsible for clearing waste products from the brain. When this system is compromised, toxins build up, potentially accelerating the onset of neurodegenerative conditions.



## Tips for Maintaining a Healthy Sleep Cycle:

Understanding the significance of a regular sleep cycle prompts the question: How can individuals foster better sleep hygiene?

Here are some practical tips:

### Consistent Bedtime Routine:

Establish a relaxing pre-sleep routine to signal to your body that it's time to wind down.

### Limit Screen Time Before Bed

Exposure to blue light from screens can disrupt melatonin production.

Aim to reduce screen time at least an hour before bedtime.

### Create a Comfortable Sleep Environment

Keep your bedroom dark, cool, and quiet.

Invest in a comfortable mattress and pillows to enhance sleep quality.

**Limit Caffeine and Alcohol Intake:** Both substances can interfere with sleep patterns. It's advisable to avoid them, especially in the hours leading up to bedtime.

## Conclusion:

In the quest for a healthier and more fulfilling life, the importance of maintaining a regular sleep cycle cannot be overstated. As we've explored, disruptions to circadian rhythms not only affect our daily functioning but may also contribute to the early onset of dementia. Prioritizing quality sleep is an investment in cognitive health and overall well-being, serving as a powerful preventive measure against the challenges of neurodegenerative diseases. So, tonight, as you lay down to rest, remember that you're not just sleeping; you're actively contributing to the preservation of your mental acuity and the protection of your future self. Sweet dreams, and a healthier tomorrow awaits.

If you need help with improving your sleep get in touch for a free consultation  
1300610696





# THE TRAGEDY OF CLASSICAL MUSIC

'Music is a higher revelation than all wisdom & philosophy. Music is the electrical soil in which spirit lives, thinks & invests'

BEETHOVEN

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The greatest tragedy of classical music is that not more people love it or even like it. How many movies feature classical music? The tunes everyone knows; The British airways ad, the 1990 world cup anthem, The Warner brothers cartoons, Mission Impossible Rogue nation, The Godfather Part 3... classical music and opera featured throughout and more so why don't people like it or at least go to concerts and the opera more?

Look at Taylor Swift, she's the biggest selling artist in the world, people lose their minds in attempts to get hold of tickets to her concerts, but put a piano recital on and you'll sell tickets, but you ain't selling a stadium out unless Tay Tay is playing Beethoven and she's backed up by Beyonce, so what happened to classical music and why don't more people love it?

The answer is that it used to be cool and popular but times changed. Early 18th century 'Classical' music was the pop music of the day. Harpsichords were the Fender Stratocasters of the day, Castrati were the rock gods and composers were early versions of music producers, but times changed by the end of the 19th century western music was splitting up into jazz, blues, country and the early signs of pop with the Verismo composers; Puccini, Mascagni, Leoncavallo and Cilea laying the foundations of modern music theatre. People had more choice and classical music became the stuff of the elite, which has always astounded me.

I know most arts organisations only survive via rich donors or sponsors but the people working in the arts are far from rich wankers trying to impress. Opera singers are professional lunatics and many adhere to the policy of; 'what happens on tour, stays on tour!' Brass players are total piss heads! At my first ever orchestral rehearsal the lead trumpet player sat on stage with a VB stubby at his feet! Percussionists in orchestras are just the same as drummers in the rock world, chicks love them and the mechs who work behind the scenes are the hardest bunch of men and women you've seen outside Long Bay jail! String players can be a bit touchy and wind players tend to be the most studious people in an orchestra, but regardless of any of it the people that actually work in and love classical music are nothing like the public perceptions of them.

So what do we do to get more people along to an orchestral concert, to an opera to a recital? Well it's not easy I can tell you, but we need to try. Arts organisations are always trying to connect with kids and that's great, but one of the most successful things Opera Australia ever did was get Baz Luhrmann to direct La Boheme. It had some of Australia's best young singers in it and Baz produced it as Baz does with all the emotions of the world; passion, joy, sorrow and utter devastation, it sold its arse off! The same thing happened when Red Bull got involved with the Recital Centre and put on a Bach concert with a couple of F1 cars parked in the foyer, again sold its arse off.

We need to take the wank factor and pretentiousness out of classical music and opera and tell more people it's not as up itself as they think it is. The Verismo operas are undeniably what lead to modern music theatre, which makes billions of dollars, but put on a Puccini opera as a commercial project that aims to make money and you best have a good bankruptcy lawyer.

It's not all bad though we've got people like Max Richter re-imagining Vivaldi and Bach, we've got the genius of Jon Baptiste, the young English cellist Sheku and many many brilliant classical and operatic artists doing their part in building the profile of classical music and opera, even Bradley Cooper is doing his part with his latest movie about legendary US composer and conductor, Leonard Bernstein. Now I know people love a cross over artist, but we shouldn't make the mistake that so called classical crossover artists are within a bulls roar of anything the likes of Jonas Kauffman, Sondra Radanovksy, Richter, Baptiste and Sheku are all capable of. That sounds elitist but when you have seen that unbelievable amount of technical work that goes into being one of these true artists you can't help but roll your eyes a little at those put on stages and in recordings by record companies who are pumping out royalty free music performed by some less than average people.

True artistry is something to be admired and treasured and I think we need to encourage as many people as possible to experience first hand what kind of sheer magic can be discovered in classical music.

## NOT COOL...

I am not cool. I used to be though, but I don't really care anymore. I mean I do care a bit when I look at my daggy t shirts, my Dad runners, my bog catcher jocks, my middle aged paunch and when my 17 year old daughter shakes her head at me rolls her eyes and sneers, but apart from that I just can't be arsed with it. Ok I need to resemble something like a human when I go out in public or to a meeting and it's important to feel like you look good when you go to meetings etc...but it's not about being flash for me, it's about being who I am because, well it took me quite a while to get to where I am. Yes my businesses are important to me but both my magazine and my hospitality recruitment company are based on being who I am not what anyone else thinks I should be, but why is that? Well it's because I'm happy with who I am and the life I lead. Would I like a 1980's Breitling Navitimer? Yep. A 1970 7 litre V8 Chevelle? Yep, but am I going to lose sleep over not having them? Nope.

Much of the life I have is because of my wife. It's fair to say that had it not been for Alan as she is affectionately known I'd be a dribbling middle aged mess of booze, cigarettes and issues not cured by either. So it's sort of her fault I'm not as cool as I was when we met, but she'd unquestionably take uncool Ben over fun for a week and then run a mile Ben, so I blame her and I say thank you every single day I'm alive that she found me. Simon Sinek the inspirational speaker, writer and businessman said everyone needs one person in their life that's there for them no matter what. A person who says I believe in you, I've got your back and if it doesn't work out I'm still here for you, Alan is my person and the reason I can do what I do now.

Being cool can be great, but being who you are and then happy with that is I think a much better concept, but it doesn't come easily. Now I won't bore you with the details of my life because to tell that story you'd need an article longer than Lord of the Rings, but let's just say it certainly didn't come easily. Why would it? Hard things are hard for a reason, triumph over adversity is a real thing, hard work and dedication to what you want is? Hard. As Rocky says... "...it ain't about how hard you can hit, it's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward!" Now I know Rocky isn't everyone's cup of tea, but he's not wrong.



BUT HAPPY

Some people have their break out moments early in life. The story of Roger Waters from Pink Floyd saying we knew this was our time is case in point but it doesn't actually matter when you find your moment of clarity so long as you have it! Legendary entrepreneur, Paul Breen gave me a dose of reality when I said to him I had all these great ideas about how to do this and do that and fix that and he said, yeah great but what problem are you solving?

I cannot begin to tell you how music easier things become when you have clarity on what it is you want to be doing and then someone on your side. Neither of those things on their own guarantee success but they sure as hell put you on the right track, from there its about being obsessive, it's about hard work, it's about never ever ever giving up and it's about being honest with yourself.

Would I like to lose a few kilos? Yep. Should I? Yeah probably, but does it matter that I'm not as cool as whoever or wear the right clothes or say the right thing? Fuck no! I'm me and while I am desperately uncool I'm me, I'm real, no one will ever get anything but genuine honesty and authenticity.

We spend so much time caring about what other people think to get this or do that, when really the answers to everything we ask ourselves lie within who we actually are. Never let anyone tell you who you should be because we only actually get one shot at life and it's our to live, no one else's. So while I can't give you all the answers to your own questions all I'd say is be you, be who you are when no one else is watching because as one middle aged uncool dude I'm telling you it'll make you a whole shit load happier and you'll be amazed what you can achieve.





# HOODIES

## BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY

# SMARTER PROPERTY INVESTING WITH CHRISTINE WILLIAMS

## My Favourite Forced Savings Technique

If I told you to save \$150 in a savings account, every week, at the end of 10 years you will have approx. made \$78,000 plus any interest (if it's not in an offset account).

\$78,000 is a great effort and certainly not something to sneeze at in today's economic climate. It's the kind of money that can make one sleep at night very peacefully and can rescue others from scary situations.

### HOWEVER

If I told you to invest that \$150 per week into holding an asset (ie an investment property) I can promise you - the right property in the right place with the right growth will have eventuated into something far more than \$78,000 worth of savings.

Even a modest investment today of \$300,000 into an established property will see it be valued at \$600,000 in 10 years' time.

That's because history tells us that property value doubles approximately every 10 years. It's happened every single property cycle so it's not wishful thinking or pie in the sky dreaming. What would you prefer \$78,000 or \$600,000?

I know what I would! Imagine if you contributed \$150 per week for a property currently valued at \$500,000. In the same timeline your asset would have grown to \$1m. For the exact same weekly commitment, we have now increased significantly.

To force oneself to put away \$150 every week is challenging even for the most committed. When life throws curveballs, or if we want to splurge on something special, it's so easy to "skip" this week's savings efforts.

**BUT** when we are paying a bill that has to be paid each week (eg a mortgage) - we are more likely to commit. This is why it's like 'forced savings'!

It's forcing you to stay on track!

It doesn't allow you to tap into the funds prematurely (but as an asset in your name you can sell it if you needed to) AND it's ensuring that your efforts will make you far more money than typical savings ever will.

What does \$150 look like to you?

For a tradie it's likely one call out per week.  
For the health conscious it might be swapping your personal trainer session and working out at home  
For those in corporate land it might mean taking lunch from home instead of eating out every day.

All noble swaps that will impact your financial future tremendously. More than you can possibly dream.

I am certainly not saying that you have to change your lifestyle drastically to achieve said results BUT what I am saying that a little commitment today will drastically change your lifestyle for the future.

If you can save \$600,000 over the next 10 years then turn this page over with a smile.

But if you can't, and you don't want to live off tinned spaghetti when you retire - [then click here to book in your complimentary 30 min consultation.](#) There are properties out there for ALL budgets. If you have the borrowing capacity, I can help you find a worthy investment.

Be it a brand new build or an established property, I am happy to find the right addition to start or grow your portfolio.

If this has been food for thought, I encourage you to share this article with a family member or friend. Becoming financially fit and free shouldn't be kept a secret and it's through sharing knowledge that we are able to collectively educate people on how to be strategic with their money that they worked so hard for.

Christine

[www.smarterpropertyinvesting.com.au](http://www.smarterpropertyinvesting.com.au)







**Paul Breen**

## **Is your company's "core values statement" just words on a page or something more?**

When companies start talking about their core values I switch off. Mostly, they are trying to sell you something or convince you that they are better than they actually are. The same applies when they publish this stuff on their website or in their marketing material. In my experience if you feel compelled to describe your core values in a sales pitch then they are, most likely, not true.

Core values are not intended to be used as feel-good catch-phrases. Their purpose is to describe the collective behaviours of the organisation and what is important to it. They're a lot more than words on a page.

One problem is that many companies construct their core values statements on a weekend retreat or during a two hour workshop. They then get hashed around by a couple of senior managers and approved by the CEO. Somebody then types them up, sticks them in a frame in the reception area and they are never referred to again. The problem is that they reflect the "rosy" view of 2-3 people at the top rather than the realistic view of the masses. They describe what the company WANTS to be, not what it is.

If companies were honest with themselves they would acknowledge that their true core values, evidenced through their behaviour, may be vastly different from what they purport them to be. It is human nature to over-state your core values and it's very common to make them aspirational. The problem is that unless they're actually true they're no use to you.

Core values are the embodiment of the collective behaviours of everyone in the organisation. They are rooted in the day to day reality of how you do business and how you deal with (and treat) your partners, customers, suppliers and staff.

I operate my business interests based on three core values only. I have never written them down before nor have they changed in twenty five years:

1. We must continue to innovate even when there is no pressing need to.
2. If we say we'll do it, we do it
3. We must be kind

(NB. Honesty, integrity, respect are all important but if you don't have these then you won't even get in the door. I expect everyone to live and breathe these as an entry point).

I'm not perfect by any means and I screw things up regularly. What these these core values do is help me to stay on track and to force me to regulate my behaviour when I need to.

Being kind is the least understood value on the list. It shouldn't be confused with being nice. The difference is that kindness costs you something every time you give it; niceness rarely costs much. Kindness is about providing help even when there is nothing in it for you. Even when it is painful and it's easier to just ignore the situation and leave it to someone else to fix.

Kindness can manifest itself in many ways. As an example, on a few occasions, I have been compelled, following exhausting all other options, to use brutal frankness to force much-needed change and to make people see sense. People don't always like it and it is certainly not enjoyable to do it. It might even hurt a relationship for a while. Looking back it would have been easier to go along with the status quo and ignore the issue. Sometimes I wish I could do that but as I've gotten older I've realised that I can't. In the end you have to live your values daily and if your motives are pure and your behaviour is consistent people will eventually (and sometimes grudgingly) have to concede that your actions were underpinned by kindness.

So how do you describe your core values – words on a page or a living, breathing representation of the collective behaviours of your organisation?

# get real & harden up

**So as many people know by now I quite like writing and being the middle aged uncool bloke I am I feel I can offer some sort of advice to people so they don't make the same mistakes I did along the way. That's not to say I can prevent people from making mistakes, far from it, we have to make mistakes to learn, but a book I'm writing called; 'Get real and harden up!' Is my advice to anyone wanting to set up their own business or just wanting to live their lives on their own terms.**

**Below and in the coming weeks will be a chapter of the book and ultimately the final full publication, but in the meantime please enjoy the first chapter of; 'get real and harden up!'**

Hello. My name is Ben Logan and I'm going to give you the the advice I wish I'd been given and understood years ago in the first page of my book. When I first started thinking about writing this book I'd originally thought this advice was just for getting your business going, maintaining the rage so to speak and inspiring people to keep going, but really it can be used in everyday life. So my advice? Get real and harden up. That's it. Now obviously there's more to it than those five little words so I hope you continue to read, but the whole point of this book is to show people, you, that if you want to get ahead, if you want to be better than you were yesterday and if you want to really drive success in your life and your business you need 1) a firm grip on reality and 2) you need to be able to cope with serious amounts of rejection and bullshit, hence the advice, get real and harden up.

As I sit here right now I run two businesses, a magazine and a staffing and recruitment company and have a family. Do I make a million dollars a year? Nope, far from it, but do I work on my own clock? Yep. Do I get up at 4am and film myself in ice baths? Fuck no. Do I do school drop off? Yep. Do I try and spend as much time with my family as I can? Yep. Am I obsessed with what I do? Yep. Do I put up with bullshit? Nope. Am I stressed about how my business is running? Constantly. Am I happy? I am unquestionably the happiest I have ever been in my life, but I have good days and bad days, the bad when I'm waiting for payments or feeling totally inadequate about what I'm doing. Do I have a firm grip on what's possible and what's not? Yep...and have I had to harden up along my personal and business journey? Without question. Again there's more to all of this which you'll get as we go along, but the idea is it's our life, it's our business and we need to be ourselves and we need to be authentic. We get so caught up in what the perfect life is via social media when really a lot of what we have and what makes us successful is sitting right in front of us. Admittedly we need to work at what it is we do and what we want to do, but we shouldn't be allowing outside 'influencers' to prevent us from being who we are meant to be and finding the genuine happiness we deserve.

Now, I write the way I talk, so this isn't a lesson in correct grammar and text construction rather it's how I've become happy and despite not making a few hundred million dollars a year (yet) successful! Success doesn't have to be owning a watch more than the average family car, or driving a mid life crisis sports car or owning 25 ponies or having a flash house, success is what ever you want to make it and while we can aspire to all sorts of things success and fulfilment come in so many different ways. The trick to it all is finding your version of success and sticking to it no matter what.

So despite me giving you the advice I think everyone should listen to on page 1 keep reading my book to understand why you should get real and harden up.

# SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZE BUSINESSES ARE THREE TIMES MORE LIKELY TO BE TARGETED BY CYBERCRIMINALS THAN LARGER COMPANIES



Why is Hoodies Magazine so important to Small and Medium Size Business

The Hoodies Magazine is a platform for people and business. Hoodies presents no spin media to the audience that it wishes to serve. Our audience is people, corporations, small and medium size business.

The range of topics is vast and reflects people's lives, futures, and political and business issues that affect their everyday life. SME owners create employment opportunities and products that gives people opportunity to live our aspirational lives better.

Hoodies Mag provides us all with lifestyle information, so readers can take a minute to escape and enjoy the moment. As Australians, we are so lucky that we have that opportunity of life in Australia.

Yes, Hoodies Magazine is the rising voice of authenticity and accountability and no BS. The role of SMEs in our economy is critical to our Australian way of life. SMEs play a vital role in our economy. SMEs outnumber large firms, employ vastly more people, and are entrepreneurial in nature, helping to shape innovation in our great nation.

Cyber security is more important than ever, vast numbers of small and family businesses are being compromised and, in some cases, profoundly damaged, by a range of swindles and cyber-attacks every year. As the digital world continues to grow, so does digital criminality. Nobody wants to be the victim of cyber attackers, but it can be daunting to even begin to understand how to prevent it. I have discovered some critical, proven, yet completely affordable tips and would like to share these with you in this article.

Have you ever been "hacked," cyber-breached? Well as a business owner I have been, it was not pleasant, it was costly, disruptive, and it felt personal. Not only did it affect my business, but it also affected my customers and clients, my family, and my friends. You see, I am reliant on technology to run my business, my communications, my finances, my education and my work life balance.

My house has been broken into more than once, they took physical stuff (a little bit of personal irreplaceable, but not much) and all insured. Easy fix through a claim and great broker. Not much psychological damage either, save for those thieves would not have wanted me to catch them, their damage then, not mine! But being hacked, psychologically invaded, personally disarmed, financially threatened, and completely business disrupted, now that's invasion and personal assault that you would not want to experience.



- 4 Difficulties in detecting cyber-attacks until it is too late. With limited IT staff and inadequate monitoring systems, small businesses might not promptly detect the security breaches, and be in any kind of position of strength to react effectively.
- 5 Challenges in responding to incidents. Without a resolute cybersecurity team, small businesses often struggle to respond quickly and effectively to these cyber incidents.
- 6 Dependency on third-party solutions. Many small businesses rely on third-party IT solutions, which may not always offer the best protection against sophisticated attacks.
- 7 Compliance and regulatory burdens of keeping up with compliance and regulatory requirements can be overwhelming for small businesses with limited resources.
- 8 Inadequate backup and recovery plans. SMEs often lack comprehensive data backup and disaster recovery plans, which can be catastrophic in the event of a cyber-attack.
- 9 Attractiveness to cybercriminals. These criminals target small businesses and individuals as a gateway to larger networks in supply chain attacks.

Ron: Mark, SME's and individuals, do not have big corporate budgets, so how does an SME or an individual afford to deal with the massive risk and impact that these cybercriminals inflict on business and personally?

Mark: This question is at the root cause of why small businesses, families or individuals have not yet moved to establish the best defences possible against cyber-attacks.

Addressing cybersecurity threats as a smaller entity, especially with limited budgets compared to larger corporations, can indeed be challenging. However, there are effective strategies and practices that can be implemented to significantly reduce risk without breaking the bank.

Here are some key approaches:

Education and Awareness:

The first and often most cost-effective line of defence is knowledge. Educating yourself and your staff about common cyber threats like phishing, social engineering, and basic online hygiene can prevent many attacks. Regular training sessions and updates on new threats can be a game changer.

Use of Free or Affordable Tools:

There are several free or low-cost cybersecurity tools available that are quite effective. This includes antivirus software, firewalls, and email filters. Regularly updating software and operating systems also helps in protecting against known vulnerabilities.

Implementing Basic Cyber Hygiene Practices:

Enforce strong password policies, use multi-factor authentication, regularly back up data, and ensure that your network is secure. These practices do not require substantial investment but are critical in safeguarding against cyber threats.

#### Managed Services:

Consider using managed cybersecurity services. Some companies like Sicarius offer packages tailored for SMEs, providing professional cybersecurity services at a more affordable price point than maintaining an in-house team.

#### Compromise Assessments:

Periodically assess your cyber risk and audit your systems. This helps in identifying potential vulnerabilities or signs of attack and allows you to address them proactively. This can often be done with internal resources but is most conducted by externals like Sicarius to ensure an unbiased and expert review.

#### Cyber Insurance:

While this is an additional cost, cyber insurance can be a worthwhile investment, providing a safety net to help cover the costs associated with a cyber incident. Talk to your insurer to see if you can lower premiums because you have engaged in cyber smart programs that do lower risk.

#### Community and Government Resources:

Leverage resources offered by local business communities, industry associations, or government entities. They often provide tools, information, and training at low or no cost.

#### Incident Response Plan:

Have a plan in place for how to respond in the event of a cyber incident. Knowing what to do can minimise damage and reduce the cost of recovery. By combining these strategies, SMEs and individuals can build a robust defence against cyber threats. The key is to be initiative-taking and continuously stay informed about cybersecurity trends and best practices. Remember, the cost of prevention is often much lower than the cost of recovery from a cyber-attack. Please research your options when investing in cyber security measures. It is tough when you do not have all the information or knowledge. Advertisers take advantage of this and offer products or services like VPN solutions to block attackers and malware, which is of course complete rubbish. My advice is to ask questions, research from reliable sources, talk to peers about what they have been doing, and evaluate all solutions regularly to ensure they are the best for what you need. I wish all your readers good luck in their business, and from a cyber security perspective, on how to detect, protect and respond against cyber threats.

Mark, what outstanding information for our Hoodies Magazine followers to protect their Internet, Computer equipment and mobile device usage. I cannot let you go without exploring your brilliant service, which protects the SME market with the idea that we are one we are Australian and in this together.

Thank you, Ron, we at Sicarius identified a huge disconnect between what small businesses needed to be protected and what was available to them. We conducted our own research on existing solutions and found that they were either far too expensive, were not extensive enough, required the customer to have their own skill sets to manage it, or were not able to be provided to organisations of less than 50 users for example, or that earned under 30 million dollars per year. It really shocked us, so we did something about it and developed 'Legion,' something of which we are immensely proud. This is a service designed to be the unseen guardian of your business's digital world. Think of Legion as your business's digital immune system, quietly working in the background to keep everything safe and healthy. We wanted to build a platform for small businesses that was in line with their budget demands, but provided a world class service so that they can detect, protect and respond to cyber threats - without having the knowledge, resources or expertise. This is what Sicarius brings to the table so that the customer does not need to worry.

'What does this mean for my business?' Simply put, Legion is like having an expert team that never sleeps, constantly watching over your digital environment. Legion is built on a foundation of trust and privacy. It is like having a highly trained, discreet bodyguard who knows the importance of confidentiality. Your business's data and interactions are kept private, always. In fact, Legion does not even need to see your company data. Contents of documents or emails are not required for Legion to operate, so privacy is assured. It has been developed by our team at Sicarius, a group of highly specialised Digital Forensics and Cyber Investigators with years of experience in Australian Federal Law enforcement and international arenas.



How does Legion work?

Imagine it as a smart detective that is always on the lookout for anything out of place. It does not just record what happens in your digital space; it analyses these events to detect unusual patterns. For example, if there is a sudden spike in network traffic in the middle of the night, Legion notices and quickly checks if it is a cause for concern. What makes Legion truly valuable is its effectiveness without being intrusive. It is designed to recognize the unique rhythms of your business and only alerts you when something truly requires your attention. This means you will not be overwhelmed with information – only the things that matter.

But here is the key: Legion protects all customers in a distinct way. If a threat is found against one business - then all businesses are automatically protected from it. Think of it like if a group of robbers try to rob one house in the neighbourhood, Legion detects it, stops it and responds - and sends out what it knows about how the robbers work so that all houses in the neighbourhood can see the threat coming loud and clear. Legion acts as your business's digital protector. It ensures that your online presence runs smoothly, keeping potential digital threats at bay, all while maintaining the utmost respect for your privacy. For a small business navigating the digital landscape, Legion is more than a service – it is peace of mind, ensuring that your digital world is always secure and trusted." Mark, again thank you, what a brilliant business community initiative and thank you for your time and your contribution to the Hoodies Community of Individuals and Businesses.

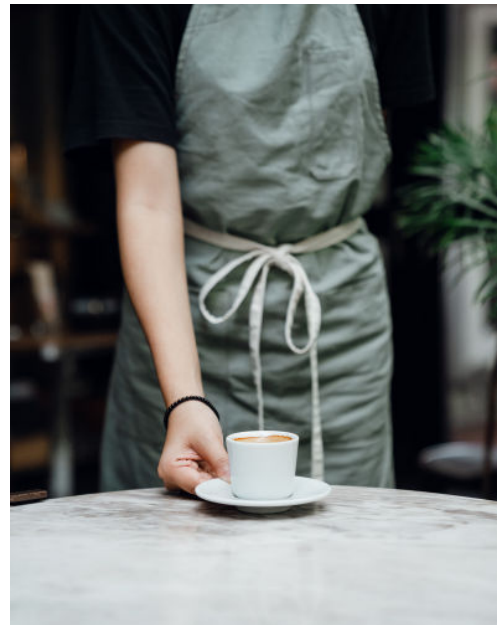
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## The world of hospitality







Hoodies #4

# Caterina Borsato

Well Natale is nearly upon us & one of the things that signals the arrival of the festive season for me is the Italian Street Festa ..... often, unofficially & affectionally known as the Lygon Street Festa, but now dubbed The Melbourne Italian Festa.

And this year, for all intents and purposes it was a different type of cracker! I must admit that I stopped going to the Festa years ago, as it had completely lost its focus.

The history of the festa lies in the fact that Italians love their communities, their culture, their traditions & they need no reason to celebrate & drink & sing & gather in groups for lively discussions & 'far la passeggiata', always dressed to the nines, just like my mother dressed me when I was forced to sit in the front row at church. 'La dolce vita' is alive & kicking, according to the numbers that turned out this year.

The parents, the children, the grandparents, all in tow! Car loads of them descending down on what once was dubbed, Little Italy.

This year was different & the change of venue signalled a new era. No more was Lygon St & Argyle Square the focus, but rather the majestic heritage listed Exhibition Buildings, with the ability to include an outdoor piazza, lined with food & drink vendors, hordes of kids playing games, demonstrations, spritz bars, art & car exhibitions, music etc etc. Indoors there was the Prosecco Queen, who had assembled wine merchants plying their trade with knowledge, tastings & masterclasses. Melburnians simply love that & they do it so well. The organisers said that they needed to attract a younger generation. And succeed they did.

I arrived early to beat the crowds, with my journo friend in tow, the ever delightful & country girl like me, Wendy Hargreaves, and we were immediately ushered to a seat with an impromptu interview with Tony Tardio, 3AW man about town & a proud Pugliese. I guess the other things that Melburnians love is to hear the stories that veterans like us can provide.

This annual event was first held in 1978, organised by a powerful group of traders, known as the Carlton Trader's Association. In those days, Lygon street appeared to be a powerhouse & unified as an Italian community. Who can forget Grinders Coffee house helmed by Giancarlo Giusti, the much loved University Café, (whose founder Giancarlo Caprioli sadly passed in the last week), the Valmorbida's King and Godfree and the iconic Lygon Street Foodstore, run by at the time, Johnny Bogotto, & where John Portelli of the Enoteca Sileno fame did his apprenticeship. This retail shop was so important, that even my mother & father would do the monthly drive from Gippsland in their green VW beetle to purchase fresh parmigiano & of course, fresh & thinly sliced mortadella, always with pepper, which had to only ever be consumed on the day. Italians are parochial about things like that. This deli had tonnes of wheels of parmigiano lined up in the shop, it was one of the few places to purchase fresh mascarpone, and then, tiramisu became the next big thing! You would find lampascioni, prosciutti, cotognata & so much more. Lygon street was the birthplace of coffee culture in the 50s. Then along came Albas, Caffè Notturmo, and then the famed Brunettis. I was super young & a university student when the Festa began & I remember every young Italian girl wanting to meet the next hot bloke on the street & delve into a culture that they were so familiar with. Having toasted cheese & salame sandwiches after a night out on the town was so commonplace at the espresso bars. L'Albas was my favourite! We were secretly so proud to be ethnic. I remember 1978 so well, when the first Festa broke all records, and I was asked to assist a family member & stall holder to sell cut watermelon. I don't recall the weather but I worked til we sold out & the guy made a fortune on that day. Italians have no shame when they are eating & having fun and the drips of watermelon splashed down their fronts was a memory. The waiter's race & the climbing of the greasy pole were other highlights. They are now distant memories. This years Festa did at least pay homage to some of the traditions of Christmas as they had dedicated stall holders selling panettone. .

Now panettone is another food memory that heralds the festive season. You see, the gifting of panettone with vin santo or prosecco or any good bottle of plonk (Riccadonna spumante always comes to mind) means so much more than just a Christmas gift. The old adage, to break bread, gathers true meaning. Btw, currently one of our most popular desserts at the restaurant is our version of bread & butter pudding utilising panettone. However, instead of using white bread, butter & berries, as is the Western tradition, we use panettone, buttered on both sides, licked with a generous spread of Nonna Stella's marmalade, drowned in a runny custard & oven baked. Old dried out panettone is perfect for this as well. Panettone is gloriously scented & enriched with butter, eggs, sugar, raisins & candied fruit. It is made like bread with a fermented starter to raise the dough & acquire its dome like shape as it hangs upside down to cool.

On a side note, Nonna Stella is getting nearing 87 years of age & in order for her to keep plying her traditional jam making trade, I invested in some expensive Japanese knives for her .. Shun to be precise. Can you picture how many oranges & lemons she cuts by hand to keep up on our stocks of marmalade for the year. It's a funny thing, as Italian mammas do not get their knives sharpened professionally, nor do they have sharpeners, they simply bring together 2 knives in a forward & backward motion on opposite sides, and sharpen vigorously. After years of doing this, the blade is buggered as it has worn thin & totally misshaped .. my chef would cringe at the sight but we know this is the way that it has always been done.

For those of you that don't know of panettone's history, there are several legends about this cake. Most probably it was first made in Milano. One story goes like this .. it was originally known as Pan di Toni (Toni's bread). Toni, was a young kitchen hand who worked in the court of Ludovico il Moro, a Milanese Duke during the Renaissance. Supposedly the chef ruined the dessert & Toni came to the rescue with a bread he had made the night before from leftover dough & then adding some of the aforementioned ingredients. Don't Italians just love a romantic story. So I was pleased to see this Christmas bread receive the attention it deserves & being introduced to a whole new generation. The 'To be Frank' version was pretty damn good & better still, it's my local bakery.

Again I digress. All in all, the Festa was good but I did miss the buzz & attitude of Lygon Street.

On this note, I want to send you all love for a fabulous & stress free Natale.

Alla prossima xx

# WINE WITH MELISSA

We are well and truly into the silly season and if you're anything like me you're planning to pop some bottles! Let's take a look at some Australian bubbles that are a little outside the box and see if we can't find you a new favourite!

## 1. Moorilla 'Praxis' Sparkling Riesling

From the Tasmanian winery owned by David Walsh (yes, THAT David Walsh, founder of MONA and all-round legend) comes this cheeky little number that was born to be enjoyed with your prawns and cocktail sauce – with zippy citrus on the palate, nashi pear and red apple on the nose, and just six months on lees, this is as fresh as a daisy.

<https://shop.moorilla.com.au/products/praxis-sparkling-riesling-2022>



## 1. Pizzini Lambrusco

For those of us who cook up a roast pork on Christmas Day this is definitely going to be your go-to vino. Lambrusco is back, baby, but not as you know it. This lovely drop is ruby red, juicy, full-bodied, and vibrant with a slightly lower alcohol content than your average red, with notes of pomegranate and blackberry.

<https://www.pizzini.com.au/products/lambrusco>



## 1. Zonzo 'Zoncello' Limoncello Spritz

For a fun and festive cocktail, this new zesty Spritz from winemaker Caroline Mooney and the team at Zonzo combines their popular Limoncello with King Valley Prosecco. Simply serve over ice and voila! La Dolce Vita in a glass perfect for entertaining and the long hot summer ahead!

<https://www.zonzo.com.au/product/zoncello-limoncello-spritz>





# Phil the Chef & his chocolate fondant

This is where those recipes it's very simple easy mate, and give me my days ahead of time and be ready to cook.

Chocolate fondant is cake that it cooked on a high heat allowing the outside to be cooked for the centre stays warm and gooey.

The twist to this one is Gianduja getting stuffed into the centre of the cake. Gianduja is a mix of chocolate and hazelnut paste this can be done by blanching and blending hazelnuts or to make like easier Nutella perfect for this.

## Chocolate fondant

### Ingredients

200g chocolate 62%  
200g unsalted butter  
200g of caster sugar  
200g flour  
4 whole large eggs  
4 egg yolks

### Method

1. combine butter and chocolate and melt let cool slightly
2. Cream your eggs and sugar. Do this by placing them in a bowl and whisk then till they triple in volume
3. slowly add chocolate mix to egg mix while continuously whisk so all is combined.
4. Add flour and whisk till all incorporated and a thick batter is formed.
5. grab your mould I use a 6x5cm round mould. With butter or spray coat the inside of the mould and dust with icing sugar or coco powder.
6. pour mix  $\frac{3}{4}$  way up moulds and set aside.

## Gianduja

### Ingredients

200 Chocolate 62%  
80g of Nutella  
20g icing sugar

### Method

1. Melt chocolate.
2. mix all ingredients together spread on baking paper in a 1cm layer.
3. place in fridge to set

### To finish

1. Preheat your oven to 200degrees.
2. Cut the Gianduja in to squares and press then into the centre of the chocolate fondant.
3. Place fondant in the oven for 9 min or till centre of fondant has risen.
4. Remove from oven and let sit for 5 min for outer layer of cake to set.
5. Run your knife along the inside of the cake to loosen it and then turn out onto a plate.
6. Serve with your fave ice-cream.

### Notes

Depending on your taste this recipes works with any chocolate I like something around the middle of not too sweet not too bitter Or you can mix it up by making the Gianduja more bitter to offset the sweetness.

# the life of a hospitality recruiter

OK so I've worked in hospitality off and on for 35 plus years. I've washed dishes, cleared tables, run drinks, fucked up orders, been screamed at by chefs, had plates blow torched so I'd burn my hands, worked in London, driven chefs to work because they're so fucked up from the night before, helped set up venues, fixed venues, fixed staffing issues, designed venues, run venues big and small, run multiple venues, had to deal with theft and sexual harassment issues in the work place, had to sack people and deal with owners and boards...there isn't much I haven't seen or done. So with all that in mind when Covid hit I wanted to help hospitality operators re-connect to staff and staff find jobs again.

In late 2022 I thought I'd made the biggest mistake of my life by setting up my own staffing and recruitment company because I had Sous Chefs wanting \$110,000 on 38 hours a week, I had front of house managers wanting \$120,000, head chefs \$150,000 and so on. Employers couldn't and still can't afford those kinds of wages and people weren't anywhere near on the same page about hiring and getting jobs, I thought I was fucked! Slowly things shifted, big catering companies weren't paying huge money for chefs anymore and people wanted back into the industry, but while there were definitely more people looking for jobs the attitudes towards actually working for money had shifted a little. People wanted jobs, but some didn't want to work more than 38 hours a week ever, no matter the overtime pay, penalty rates or cash incentives. Everyone is entitled to work within decent and fair conditions BUT hospitality is brutally hard work. You're on your feet all day and all night, it's high pressure, it makes you angry, it makes you cry, it makes you joyous, but no matter how you cut it its gruelling and shit needs to get done. So if you're not prepared to work hard within the industry it's probably not for you and that's ok, but if you're serious about finding your next role then find an honest and decent recruiter who can help you cut through to what you want to be doing.



**Staff Finder**

finding jobs for people & people for jobs...

**[www.stafffinder.com.au](http://www.stafffinder.com.au)**

Now I know, also from first hand experience that some recruiters suck, big time. They take a CV, might send you a pro forma email and say hey we'll be in touch, but you hear nothing, but there are also a lot of great ones as well. Companies that get the industry, that are in regular communication and take the whole thing seriously for both the employer and the job seeker, but if you're working through a recruiter and they're really trying to help then trust them to do their job! If you're looking for a job in the hospitality sector use every phone call, every email, every text as an opportunity to show the other on the other end why you're worth it!

I will not deal with employers who say... "yeah ok I like chef x, send them in next Tuesday for a trial that will last four hours and we don't pay for trials" Bye Bye. It's the same for staff who role into an interview saying... "Yeah look I've got a few other offers on the table I'll get back to you if I'm interested..." Yeah that's not going to fly either because when you tell me that's what you've said I'll be on the phone to the employer faster than you can say "I'm fucked" to say I've killed you for being a moron!

Yes ok recruiters work for commissions but all of us that take it seriously. Absolutely we have targets to meet, sales targets to hit and so on, but we all came from inside the industry and we're here to help connect employers and job seekers. No, employers aren't always going to use a recruiter to fill roles but we can help facilitate better results and ultimately find better people. It's the same for the jobseeker, good recruiters will want to understand what it is you want to do and then match your skills to a job. We're not here to waste anyones time, we're here to deliver results so lets us help!

There are so many great technological advancements for the hospitality sector, but no amount of tech can yet actually judge the character of a person. Yes an algorithm can grab hold of key data, but it can't judge if a person has empathy, if he or she has work ethic and if they're going to become a valued member of the team, only humans can do that. Yes absolutely employers can nail exactly who and what they want in their teams, who they want to run the show, but owners and managers are also busy so why not let a recruiter help find you the right people?

Regardless of whichever recruiter you use from an ownership or jobseeker perspective tap into their expertise. If they're dicks don't use them, find someone else, but when you find the right one for you use them. Be honest with them, keep them informed about where you're at and what you're doing, don't see them as an enemy because if you're a jobseeker invariably they can pick up the phone to someone that really knows what your previous work has been like and get the truth.

From my perspective and as a hospitality recruiter I set up my business to help as many people and jobseekers as I can because as much as I have tried to deny it I am a passionate hospitality person. I love the industry, it's given me so much and know I genuinely want to give back to it by connecting the right people to the right job. Recruiters aren't all that bad and the majority of us are just trying to make a living and help so give us a chance I guarantee you'll be pleasantly surprised.





# Mandy Williams

Queensland Hospitality: A State of Progress!

By Mandy Williams

Queensland, often lauded as "beautiful one day, perfect the next," unquestionably lives up to its reputation as a breathtaking place to call home. My personal journey mirrors the diverse roots of many Queenslanders—I hail from Victoria, born in the historic town of Ballarat, and later relocated to Diamond Creek in Melbourne during my primary school years. In 1985, our family, consisting of all six of us, embarked on a significant move to sunny Brisbane as my father took on a new role in the Sunshine State, and I prepared to begin year 8.

A few years after our relocation, Brisbane assumed the spotlight as the host city for Expo 88, a World Exposition held from April 30 to October 30, 1988. Titled "Expo '88 - Leisure in the Age of Technology," the event coincided with Australia's bicentennial celebrations, showcasing themes of leisure and technological progress. The transformed South Bank of the Brisbane River, once an industrial landscape, morphed into a vibrant exhibition space with pavilions from over 50 countries. The enduring legacy of Expo 88 persists in the thriving South Bank area, integral to Brisbane's identity as a contemporary and culturally rich city. The former expo site has blossomed into the South Bank Parklands, a dynamic cultural and recreational precinct featuring parks, hotels, hospitality venues, museums, and multiple entertainment zones, all running parallel to the Brisbane River, offering connectivity to other precincts up and down the river.

Reflecting on my own trajectory and Queensland's history, I graduated in 1989—the year the internet dawned in Australia—embarking on a career in retail management in Brisbane. Nearly a decade later, after exploring diverse cultures through travel and living abroad, I found my passion in marketing and public relations within the thriving tourism and hospitality sector in regional Victoria. This transition unfolded during a pivotal era when the food and wine scene was exploding in regional Australia. The backpacker market, gastro pubs, food and wine events, and regional tourism destinations and experiential products were gaining momentum, ushering in a time when traditional marketing strategies coexisted with the influence of the internet and digital transformation. It's remarkable to consider the distance we've covered since then and where we stand today!



Incredibly, the hospitality and tourism sector has undergone remarkable growth despite the recent challenges. According to Stannards reports, today, the Australian tourism/hospitality industry is valued at around \$22 billion, showing little signs of slowing down. However, this success is shadowed by the closures of some of our favorite venues, the strain on operators, razor-thin profit margins, and a scarcity of skilled professionals. Navigating this terrain is undoubtedly challenging. It's clear that we must proactively prepare for a more sustainable future, adopting a robust and deliberate strategy to confront the complexities and challenges that are very real and ever-present today.

After spending a decade as owner/operator of two award-winning venues with my husband, Andy, and juggling family life in regional Victoria, my professional journey has taken a few twists and turns. Today, I draw from my experiences as an advisor and change consultant, aiming to offer a nuanced and comprehensive approach to cater to the diverse needs of my clients and contribute to the industry's future success. With a strategic mindset, a creative collaborative approach, and a mix of hands-on experience and thoughtful marketing strategies, I aim to connect the dots for many. My expertise centers around untangling complex situations, providing straightforward yet compelling solutions that embrace the latest technology, focus on purpose-driven outcomes, and consider the holistic aspects of people, place, brand identity, storytelling, and results-oriented delivery for today's industry.

In the current Queensland landscape, particularly as we anticipate the opportunities tied to the 2032 Olympics, there is significant groundwork ahead. It's imperative that we metaphorically lift the hood and critically assess our approach to the substantial developments and events unfolding in Queensland over the next nine years and beyond. Today, our focus needs to center on building solid foundations, offering innovative services, and cultivating a highly skilled workforce as we approach the runway toward 2032. We must fine-tune our standard of service, and product offering creating meaningful and memorable experiences that leave visitors traversing the state eager for more. It's a collective responsibility, and we all need to start preparing for this now.

While there is no denying the abundance of hospitality and tourism business opportunities throughout Queensland, we must be realistic about how to serve and sustain this growth. Critical shortages of hospitality workers, intensified by the pandemic's impact on skilled migration, pose a considerable challenge for the industry. To address this, we need to reassess limitations imposed on businesses by nonsensical immigration rules, such as new regulations halving the number of hours for someone on a student visa. It simply doesn't make any sense. While the skills are available, supporting the business sector and allowing full-time hours for study and work emerges as an obvious solution.

Another challenge to tackle is housing and accommodation availability and affordability for hospitality and tourism workers. The Queensland population has increased by 2.2% (104,000) over the last 12 months, leading to significant changes in property values and affordable rental availability. This raises a new predicament—while we need more skilled hospitality workers, where will we house them? And how can they afford the ever-increasing cost of rental properties across the state?

When I speak with hospitality and tourism business owners, a common thread of concern emerges—how to increase prices on menus to offset the rising cost of goods and keep customers returning while remaining profitable?. It's hard to fathom that the majority of small business owners aren't paying themselves a wage and are merely holding on by a thread, week by week, hoping for a miracle.

Across Queensland, like many parts of Australia, we are seeing more and more shops and offices become vacant, fundamentally changing the very culture of our high street, city, and suburban and regional experiences. Lower foot traffic and diminished vibrancy in some precincts have turned them into ghost towns, with landlords unlikely to put in new tenants and happy to let them remain vacant with no intention to spend a cent on upgrades needed. Often living abroad or interstate, they don't see first hand the impact this is having in some of these communities, not to mention neighboring businesses, suffering the consequences. Some precincts have fared better than others, largely due to the operators themselves, reimagining how they connect and engage with their community, creating a village-like atmosphere.

From a deeply human-centered perspective, my ongoing concern for the mental health and overall well-being of the hospitality workforce stems from personal experiences. I've encountered numerous alarming situations, both within my own team and among those I hold dear. At the core of hospitality professionals is a genuine dedication to service, to making people feel extraordinary and well-cared-for. Sadly, many grapple with the demanding and often erratic schedules, sacrificing precious moments with loved ones in their own lives. While some find solace in their hospitality family, bonding over shared daily challenges, there's a collective need to address this issue more effectively. It's crucial that we work together to discover solutions, ensuring the survival of the hospitality industry, making it a respected career choice for the next generations.

So, what might a solution look like? How can we evolve?

In my daily engagement within this sector, I consistently pose these questions to industry professionals. Undoubtedly, Australia and Queensland, in particular, offer unparalleled opportunities. We are indeed a fortunate country, yet it's imperative to embrace the notion that the old ways are no longer effective. It's time to adopt new approaches, listen to those actively engaged on the ground, and foster collaboration between government policy makers and business owners. We have the capacity to enhance our practices, imagining a future where our Australian culture remains inseparable from the rich tapestry of hospitality. Let's ensure that this integral part of our identity continues to flourish, innovating and adapting for a better, more sustainable future.

**Mandy Williams is Director of 'Mandy Williams Consulting' & is a Hospitality Consultant to the Coffee Commune.**

# mental health in the hospitality industry...



“What the fuck are you doing mate? Hey? Are you a fucking idiot or something? Get the fuck out of here you stupid cunt and don’t come back into the fucking kitchen! Ya fuckwit!”

That’s nice isn’t it? Or how about this...

“I’m sorry I didn’t order that. Are you calling me a liar? Listen do you know who I am? I know the owner ok and I’m going to have you sacked! You’re just a waiter ok so don’t think you’ll ever be anything else! Go and get me a table mate ok, I know the owner and he’ll sack you if you don’t get me one right now!”

How would you be feeling after all that? It doesn’t matter how hard you are, what age you are, whether your male or female none of what hospitality people sometimes inflict on one another or have to often put up with from customers is any good for anyone in the industry.

I have to admit being the hard arsed grumpy bastard I can be when the hospitality world started talking about mental health I was like oh fuck off just get on with it, but when I started to hear of people getting onto anti depressants instead of the years of alcohol or drug abuse they’d been carrying on with I started to think hang on Houston we have a problem.

The old school reality of hospitality was work extremely hard from the morning til the next day, get fucked up most nights and go back and do it again. Hard work, drugs, booze, smoking, long blacks, random affairs and not much else are ok for a time but done for too long will destroy you and done into middle age will kill you. On top of all that if you add in depression you have a toxic mix that won't care if you're 18 or 60 you'll be thinking the chefs knife in your wrist is a better option than doing any of it again the next day so what do we do?

The modern hospitality world has to adapt, yes I know there are huge pressures on owners, on managers, on people in both front and back of house and we ultimately have to get the job done, but we also need to know our people. We need to give staff and people in the industry the opportunity to vent, to say hey that's not cool, to have a system by which they can make their issues known without fear of retribution and in which they'll be taken seriously and supported. I know there are those in the industry that will undoubtedly roll their eyes and say yeah yeah just fucking get on with it and do the job, but I guarantee every single person that currently works in the hospitality industry will personally know someone or know of someone that has killed themselves that was no longer able to cope with the pressures of the industry.

More than 70% of hospitality workers have admitted that mental health is an issue faced by many within the sector and that up in the last 12 months there has been 27% increase in the number of calls to suicide help lines like Life Line. So the industry unquestionably needs to do better and no longer see mental health as an excuse for not getting the job done.

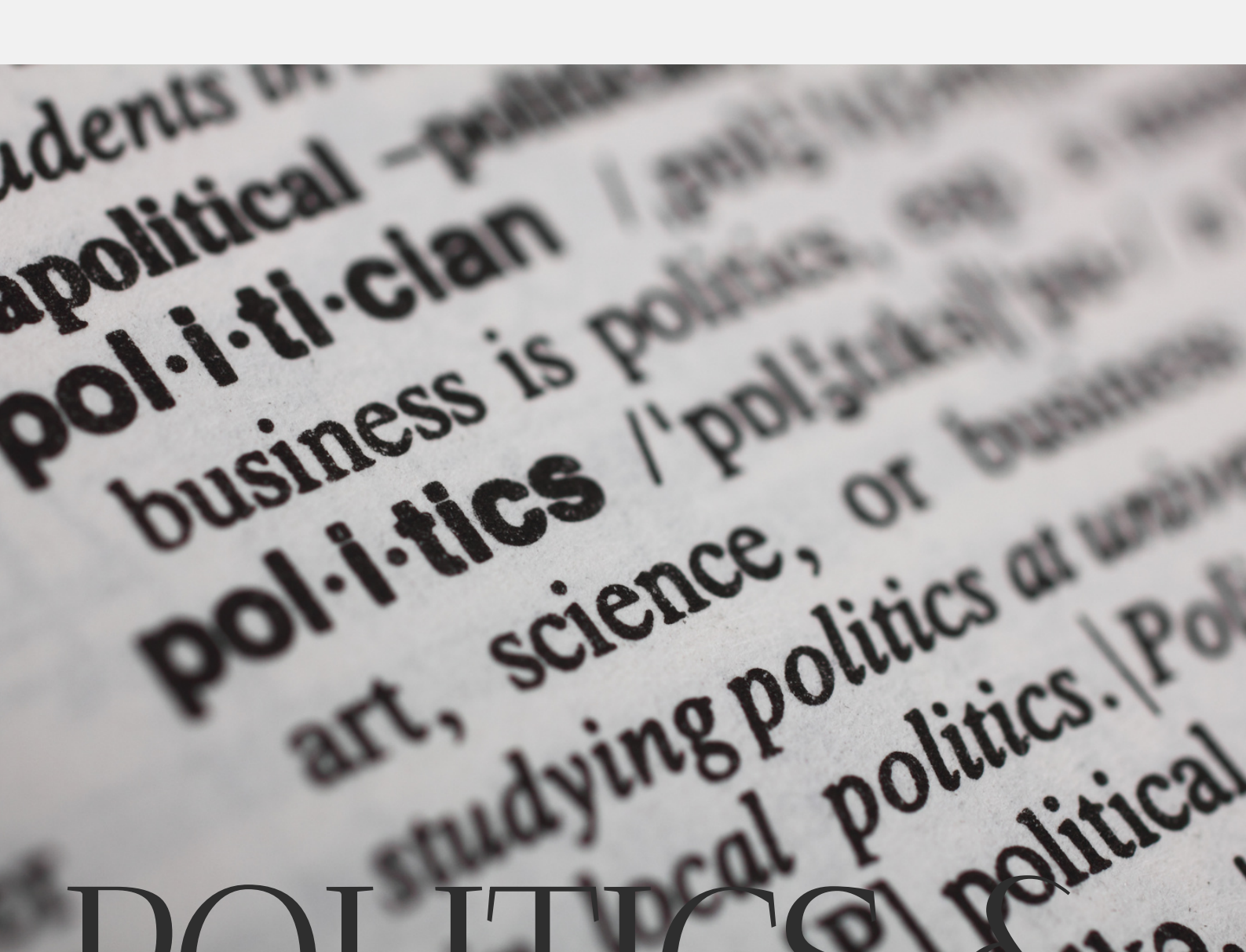
One of the key issues within the sector is that hospitality is brutally honest and its never been and will never be for the fainthearted. There are no doubt people from all manner of industries that play the mental health card as a reason for not coming to work or for not getting something done so there can be some trepidation from owners, managers etc when a staff member does indeed point to mental health as a reason for not coming to work or getting something done, so to make sure that's not an issue we need to talk to our teams constantly to make sure they're ok. That doesn't mean were fawning over them calling them to check on them it's simply checking in on them, how are you going with things, understand where they're at and what they've got going on, we're not prying we're supporting our teams.

If we do have a team member come back to us saying they're in trouble and need help then have a process and system in place to make sure they're ok and get the professional support they need. The modern hospitality world is no longer one of sexual harassment, screaming matches and regular insults, the industry has moved on and now to support the next generation of hospitality people we need to understand what mental health is all about.

If you are struggling with mental health issues call or get in touch with one of the extraordinary organisations listed below. When I struggled with mental health I called Life Line. You can call or contact whoever you feel most comfortable with, but just make fucking sure you call someone before you think the knife in the kitchen is a better option!

**Life Line 13 11 14**

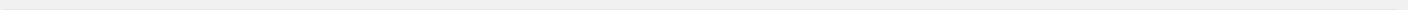
**Beyond Blue [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)**



# POLITICS & SOCIETY

Hoodies Issue 9

December 2023





# the changing face of the Melbourne CBD

Bike lanes, safe injecting rooms, empty offices, Christmas shopping crowds down on previous years, south bank a shadow of its former self and parts of the CBD getting so dangerous people will avoid it all costs.

I don't want to say bah humbug to Christmas because I like Christmas, but walking through the Melbourne CBD recently it's hard not to ask what the hell happened? In the lead up to Christmas 2019 I was helping run Di Stasio Citta and the Thursday before Christmas I can honestly say I have never worked as hard in my life, ever! Hundreds of people from 11am all the way through to 12.30am it didn't stop, food, booze all in plentiful supply and it was crazy! Now I'm too old these days to be able to deal with anything like those crowds again, but walking around the CBD in the lead up to this Christmas I'm not sure I'd actually be as busy as I was back in 2019.

Ok restaurants are busy and there are people around but nothing like we've seen and there's something else about the CBD nowadays, the number of people out begging for money has unquestionably gone up. Walk into the heart of the CBD and not only do you see countless empty shops, but outside the convenience stores and the empty shops you'll see people begging. Holding up signs saying they're not looking to buy drugs rather they just want enough money to get a bed for the night. Walk down into Elizabeth Street and you walk into one of the most dangerous and best avoided streets in Melbourne. Between Collins Street and Flinders Street Elizabeth Street is a scene out of the 1980's Bronx, drugs, homelessness, crime, mental health issues and another example of how badly pedestrian only walk ways can go in inner city areas.

The once heralded lanes of graffiti and street art are now just tacky and dirty. Laneways that still attract tourists, but also now attract bag snackers and the homeless who prey on those not watching their belongings. One big issue in the CBD is garbage, bins overflowing and in some cases vandalised beyond repair left behind for someone else to worry about. A key issue with rubbish is that one bin is the job of that company, that bin is the job the other company and so on and when a business owner doesn't pay their bills to the bin company they go on stop which means no bin collections. How many bins don't get picked up on a weekly basis because a CBD business owner has got behind on their invoices?



As I said I don't want to paint myself as the Grinch, Melbourne still has a lot to be proud of in the CBD....ummmm, well we're getting a green wedge project from the Lord Mayor that will cost \$300 million, that's a good thing. We're getting a new Southgate, a new Arts centre and we got one of those flying fox line things to zip across the Yarra on, that was cool. We're getting new stations, eventually and hey footy will be back at the G in March next year that's a good thing as well. Yeah nah, really what we've got is not much, our CBD is a shadow of its former self, we can't park anywhere in the CBD, parking fees have gone up, the streets are dirty and walk round the wrong corner and you'll lose your bag or worse, the council have fried the CBD and as ever we're the ones that suffer.

It's not even really a case of wokism anymore it's a case of the council have gone down a path of wanting to extend their charter into things they have absolutely business getting involved in. In addition to moving away from keeping streets clean and safe we have a Lord Mayor who gets around in a \$150,000 BMW at rate payers expense with trips coming in for a total of around \$30,000. Not only does her Lord airless need a chauffeur driven BMW she also needs to fly across the world for green energy summits to learn more about bike lanes and green energy projects.

Isn't it ironic that we have a Lord Mayor going to all these green energy summits across the world so she can come back full of ideas about how best take up said green energy initiatives when her and her fellow councillors have done nothing but choke the CBD of life and been totally unable to offer genuine initiatives to bring it back to its former glory.

Where are the proposals for better rubbish removal? To do away with these ridiculous bike lanes? To help the homeless not by enabling drug dealers by planning so called safe injecting rooms rather by offering drug rehab facilities and if they aren't available establishing them independently of the state government! Work with local traders to bring life back to the city, offer rental assistance packages that aren't full of red tape and bureaucracy, real initiatives for real and achievable outcomes for the betterment of the CBD!

I really don't think it's rocket science, but until we have a council that actually wants to make a difference now rather than leave a legacy then it's just more of the same and that's just sad, bah humbug!

# the fight for chapel street

In case you missed it Fitzroy Street in St Kilda is pretty much stuffed as is Acland Street also in St Kilda, but both may be on the rise again. To deal with why their stuffed is to look at what the local council did to both streets, but before that lets wind back the clock a few years and have a look at what Fitzroy Street and Acland Street used to be. Years ago St Kilda in general was a place you'd go for a fight, a burger, to buy drugs, to use hookers and to stay away from if you didn't fancy any of that. Then it got grungy cool with the likes of Ronnie Di Stasio opening restaurants there, then it became the place to cruise through on a Friday and Saturday night. Acland Street was a hype of activity with cafes, cake shops and book shops and Fitzroy Street while still a bit not quite family friendly was a place to be seen and to watch those walking by. Let's also not forget that Stoke House and Donovans are right on the water and St Kilda Beach itself has been a draw card for years, but then the council got involved.

The council in their infinite wisdom said they wanted to beautify St Kilda. Put huge and useless tram stops down the middle of Fitzroy Street and cut Acland Street off to traffic totally so trams, bikes and people could co-exist. Then they decided parking restrictions and hiked up parking fees would be a good idea and then came the bike lanes! With local council thinking St Kilda should become akin to Amsterdam out went cars and in came bike lanes. Now bike lanes throughout the CBD and inner city areas are a huge bone of contention and god help you if you critics a bike rider, but while bikes absolutely deserve their space on the roads do we need to cut back on the main form of human transportation over more bike lanes? I'd suggest not.



Now going back to what I said about St Kilda being on the rebound it's now the case that the local council plans to pay the rent for a set period of time to new traders and in addition one of the people credited with making St Kilda actually what it was, Ronnie Di Stasio is opening a new gallery space above his iconic restaurant Cafe di Stasio, which may not sound like much but when you know of the reputation and vision of Ronnie you'll know he doesn't mess around nor do things by half so watch this space! So hopefully new life will be breathed back into one of Melbourne's favourite suburbs via at least some people with vision, but over in Chapel Street we see history about to repeat itself.

So I make no secret of the fact Chapel Street was a hang out of mine. Chasers Night club, Revolver, Cafe e Cucina, the Jam Factory, cafes, bars, shops the place back in the day pumped! Every wog that drove a lowered V8 Commodore would drive it up and down Chapel Street on a Friday and Saturday showing it off to anyone walking by. It was awesome! However even before Covid hit Chapel Street fell victim to small retailers taking a lot of their clothing online and didn't need customer facing shops anymore, empty shops became the norm and then Covid hit and wiped out all those cool bars, the cafe culture and what shops were left.



Now Chapel Street has one of the highest vacancy rates in Melbourne and with Jam Factory not due to reopen for months the street is shell of its former self so what do they council want to do? Revitalise it. Local council have come up with plans to 'redo' Chapel street via a series of green spaces, bike lanes, less on street parking, closing of entire streets and basically cutting Chapel Street itself off to life.

Do Councils not talk to one another? Do they not look back at historical data or plans and say wooooo let's not do that or is it a case of well we just know better? The plans of what the council have in mind for Chapel Street are readily available on line and I'm not in the business of publishing fiction so won't post them here suffice to say they are very pretty but basically useless and will put the final nail in the coffin for current Chapel Street Traders, but instead of just criticising the council plans let's look at what else they could do to help local traders and rebuild Chapel Street.

- Do what's happening in Acland Street pay traders rent! Instead of shelling out millions on delusional planning put the money into new traders
- Be an actual advocate of local traders and be their voice in government to help alleviate tax pressures
- Go to local traders and instead of not listening engage with them and work out a real plan of change
- Work with developers not on lining their pockets but on planning and buildings that attract people to the local area
- Actually get community minded and bring life back to the street
- Work with and initiate conversations with well known traders and or companies that sees them set up shops, cafes or venues along the street
- Understand what soul means

I'm not a town planner and I can't read an architectural drawing to save my life all I know is for local traders to succeed and for life to return to the once mighty Chapel Street people with passion, with an understanding of business and who want to see life return to the street need to get involved at a council level rather than it be left up to another out of touch and souls local council.



# Azzaro Style

423 Clarendon Street  
South Melbourne

[www.azzaro.com.au](http://www.azzaro.com.au)



# migration in the real world...

My parents were English and came to Australia with their own families not long after the Second World War as the ten pound poms. Both my sets of Grandparents put down roots in Sydney and then proceeded to slog their guts out for years to come to build better lives for their children. A modern England is nothing like the war torn mess it was in 1944, but the point was hundreds of thousands English people left their homeland for a fresh start. Greek and Italian migrants also flooded Australian shores to make the 1950's one of the most productive decades in Australian history. It's hard to imagine what Australian society would be today without the huge influx of migrants after the Second World War.

In March 2020 the world faced a once in a generation health crisis the impacts of which are still being faced and will be faced for decades to come as a result of government and bureaucratic incompetence on a level not seen in the history of the western world. Now books can be and will be written about the Covid years by people much smarter than myself but with many parts of the world at war, with countries economically disadvantaged by the covid crisis and with a dire need to fill jobs thus reigniting a multitude of industries how are we not using migrant workers better?

The Australian federal government in recent weeks has decided to cut official migration by half which has the Karens and the Williams of Australia pontificating that it's the right call because migrants take jobs away from Australians. Well back in the real world of people who know what it takes to actually get things done most will tell you that Aussies aren't that keen on doing the jobs taken by migrants. Walk in to the local jobs office armed with kitchen hand jobs, cleaning jobs, factory jobs and see how many takers you get.

The idea that we are seeing a cut to migration in what is unquestionably a worker shortage beggars belief really especially when all Australian governments seem to be doing is continuing to put pressure on building, education, childcare and medical sectors as well. Now I am fully aware that all those sectors require trained and skilled professionals but again how are we cutting back on migration when these are the industries under the pump?

There are those that will argue that we don't have homes for migrants, that their presence here will put pressure on already over stretched social support networks, but really? If we put in place systems and key criteria that enable the country to avoid these potential issues then why not increase migration? We don't want to bring people into the country that are going to be a burden on said social support networks, we want them working, contributing to society rather than claiming benefits and seeking social housing. Australia absolutely has a moral and global responsibility to help refugees where possible, but I'm sorry those are the numbers we should really be cutting back on given the out of control issues currently faced. We need better pathways and procedures for refugees coming into Australia and ultimately get them employed in the industries struggling most with unskilled labour, without putting pressure on social support networks.

The post covid world was society's best opportunity in a generation to facilitate real and significant change for the betterment of society at large yet as 2023 draws to a close we have been totally unable to make any advancements in pretty much anything. Instead we have constant petty bickering on issues that yes in some cases were the cause of current situations but does little to actually help solve any of the issues currently faced. We need better solutions to enable jobs to be filled and industries to again thrive.

There always has to be planning for the future as does there need to be planning for the now and it is unquestionably a fine balance for governments, but leaving aside the cataclysmic debt Victoria in-particular has racked up how we see any of these infrastructure projects finished or even begun without more tradespeople as a start? If we aren't going to rely or ask migrants to come to Australia and get stuck in then how are we getting school leavers into trade schools? Where are the incentives? Then where are the incentives for people to take up education qualifications to help teach the kids of tomorrow in the countries most scarce jobs?

There isn't a real and sustainable plan for the future. The whole plan for migration is based on election cycles and instead of governments actually working together and planning for the future we have more division than ever before seen in politics and Australians will suffer for decades to come again because of blind government and bureaucratic incompetence.

I can't imagine what Australia would be without what the Greeks and Italians brought to our shores post the Second World War. Many of us first generation Australians wouldn't be here had our grandparents not decided to become ten pound poms and yet many of our current crop of multi cultural and diverse politicians seem unable to flick through the pages of history and see how vital immigration was could be again to the future of the country.

We need migrants, we need systems and processes in place to facilitate their arrival and then the we need to be able to get them all into work because right now we simply don't have enough people for all the jobs that could help rebuild this country.

# TRIAL BY MEDIA

It isn't for me to pass judgement on anything before a court and also I don't want to get my arse sued by anyone, but what I will say is that trial by media may make networks and media outlets money, but at what cost?

The self righteousness of main stream media especially those from tabloid land is excruciating at best and utterly intolerable at worst. We're reporting on this because people deserve to know the truth about x sports star and that he or she has major addiction issues as a result of an abusive childhood. We're warning you that some of the images in this story are graphic and may cause distress, buttttt we're going to show them anyway because people dig that shit and more people will watch. It's of paramount importance that we show x instagrammer with a pile of coke and ten of their friends because people deserve to know the truth. Or in the case of a certain political staffer, a major network and a series of serious allegations we are so proud of this person for standing up for their rights said a certain media person involved. Now it may well be the case that everyone involved in trial z is hugely supportive of an alleged victim but don't play your support out on TV or on social media because that indicates only one thing, money, you did it and continue to do it for the money.

Of late we have seen numerous men and women cast down as all manner of things and for a variety of alleged offences from sexual assault, to rape, to the use of inappropriate language and so on, the list is quite lengthy but at the basis of it all is none of the alleged perpetrators have been charged with any form of offence, however the media have hit the over drive button and gone to town on them. There may well be footage of x alleged perpetrator chatting someone up that's not their partner or a photo of someone with a bag of what looks like weed but was it? Was it theirs? And is the photo genuine? But in the media's eyes it's all real because while they're not saying it's real they're reporting it so the natural conclusion for the viewer is that it's genuine when it's all quite likely bullshit.



There's no doubt we are obsessed with how celebrities live their lives and social media in particular has made it very easy to connect with celebrities. Within that obsession to be close to or to know how celebs live the media have taken on the role as facilitator and do what ever they can to get whatever dirt they can on anyone even remotely famous. In the case of the certain staffer it wasn't that they were well known it was the place in which things allegedly took place that was the real story. Imagine if a TV producer got wind of something highly inappropriate and instead of calling a camera crew and a presenter in they called police and a counselling service for the alleged victim. It wouldn't make the network any money initially but long term wouldn't people be better off?

I'm not naive enough to think that mainstream media gives a shit about victims of crime or those wrongly accused of any form of crime, no all they really care about is ratings and money and that's the sad fact of it all really. Money and ratings are now judge jury and executioner no matter if your guilty or not or a victim. The disturbing thing in this trial by media thing is that no one really talks about alleged offences until someone turns up on a TV show or in a tabloid magazine pointing the finger of blame at someone.

The Jeffry Epstein thing was seedy beyond belief and yet it took years for him and his minion to face any kind of consequences because the women who made the complaints couldn't get people to listen. Once the women became high profile in the media, which would've taken some real guts, the media went nuts for the story. Jimmy Saville the same, for years Saville did as he pleased to whomever he pleased and faced little or no consequences while he was alive because no one would buy into the stories of the genuine victims, but he's now considered one the worst sexual predators in UK history.

It is a toxic thing is trial by media there are no winners and victims are tossed to the side like they were nothing. Lives ruined when allegations played out in the media were found to be untrue and again people are tossed to the side like their lives were worth nothing. We talk about how important mental health is in modern society and for many of us that's absolutely true, but if it comes to selling advertising space and a ratings win then TV executives would be mental to miss out on that kind of opportunity wouldn't they? It's sad but all too true and there are countless people who have suffered and continue to suffer because money is the ultimate dictator of who is guilty and who is a victim whether any of it is true or not. Being a dirt bag and being guilty of a crime are two very different things, but in media town who cares anyway.

The logo for HM Hoodies Magazine is displayed on a black rectangular background. The letters 'HM' are rendered in a large, white, serif font. To the right of 'HM', the words 'HOODIES' and 'MAGAZINE' are stacked vertically in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. A thin white horizontal line runs across the top and bottom of the text area, framing the 'HM' and the stacked words.

HM HOODIES  
MAGAZINE

# CONSERVATISM IS DEAD!

I think I've said before that its never really been left wingers that have objected to my view points or the views of this magazine, instead it's the right wing conservatives who have yelled the loudest at me and told me in no uncertain terms that I need to change my ways and basically fall into line, well to all the middle aged and old white men out there let me tell you the whole concept of right wing conservatism in its current format it is dead and good riddance to it.

A friend of mine works with indigenous people on a variety of initiatives, those being like finding long term jobs for indigenous people, helping to solve addiction issues, education and women not tolerating abuse and so on. Do you know what the biggest impediments are when it comes to helping solve some of these issues? White men with an opinion. When we talk about women in the workplace or women returning to work what and who are the biggest impediments? White men. In the US women in some states now don't have a choice about their own bodies when it comes to abortion because of? White men. Who has criticised me for my commentary when it came to talking about a successful black female? White men of the right.

Don't misunderstand me not all white men of the right are self preserving middle class bigots, but there are a few of them let me tell you. See the left get whacked for being too progressive and that's probably true, but they get whacked because they try to be everything to everyone and end up being nothing to anyone and unable to make a decision. On the right many of those dudes think a woman's place is still at home, why would we want to learn anything about indigenous history in our schools, why would a parent want to send their daughter to an all girls school (shout out to the Principal of Caulfield Grammar!) and that Australia is for Australians. See the old right wingers have put two and two together and come up with 1950. While they still have photos of Menzies hanging next to photos of the Queen they have forgotten what Menzies actually stood for. He stood for freedom. That's pretty much it, freedom of the individual to live their lives the way they choose without the unnecessary influence of government. How easy is that to understand and also how relevant could it be to today's modern world?



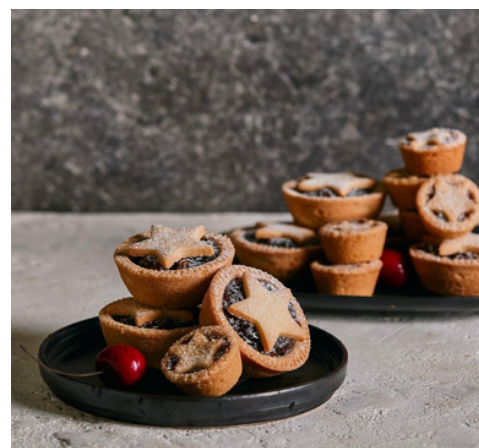
In Europe mainstream media outlets are going nuts over the fact that many countries are turning to so called right wing extremists because they've had enough of the everything to everyone left wingers who have pretty much torched their countries economies. But these aren't right wingers in the real sense of ultra conservatives like the conservatives we have here. These alleged extreme right wingers are in many cases trying to bring some common sense into politics, they're cutting back on infrastructure spending, they're cutting back on international aid programmes, they're holding corporates to account, they're at least trying to refocus on their own countries to alleviate some of the financial and societal pressures their own people are facing. Here some of our conservative parties are fighting amongst themselves as to what's a woman! This isn't to say that the European Right wingers aren't of shall we say traditional and overbearing view points they absolutely are in many cases, but they also have an understanding of common sense unlike our lot!

I've said many times before in the face of economic hardship you need the right and their financial understandings, when society is faced with social crisis you need the left, but what happens when neither side is no longer capable of actually achieving anything? This is why we've seen the rise of the Teals. Highly intelligent and successful women have taken to the political world because they're sick of? White conservative men telling them what they should and shouldn't be doing with their lives, families and jobs.

I know political parties and politicians will say you can't use the referendum result as an indication of how an election would play out, but does anyone in their right mind believe that inner city conservative politics has any chance at all of surviving? I'd suggest not which in turn means conservatives need to do two things 1) Look at where the left are losing support ie in remote areas and where people are really feeling the pain of the cost of living crisis and 2) Go back to the true concept of what freedom of the individual means, not what they're half baked idea of it means now.

The right are indeed taking over in Europe and it would be a brave person to bet against Trump winning again in the US (which would be entertaining and a complete disaster), but here what we're faced with is a left wing government trying its best to get chucked out at the next election and a right wing opposition who hasn't been able to redefine what it actually stands for. The best solution for the right is to ditch all of these ultra conservative white men who are quite literally standing in the way of far too many people and parties actually wanting to make a difference.

Conservatism is dead but let's just hope we remember what freedom is all about because that's really what's important.



# THE YEAR IN REVIEW



Well what a year it's been. A new RBA governor cut from the same cloth as the old one, inflation, a cost of living crisis, supermarket price gouging, the end of Daniel Andrews, the end of Mark McGowan, the end of Anastasia palachecku, the debacle that was the Voice referendum, the endless debate of cutting emissions, the end of the Covid help line, trial by media and war throughout the world yes 2023 has been a year in which the world said goodbye to Covid once and for all, but said hello to more arse covering and self justification than I think any of us thought possible.

The bottom line for me out of this year is that no matter which side of the political fence any of us sit we are all unified in tow things; 1) We are sick and tired of useless over paid politicians making decisions that seem to do little to help solve many of the issues we are all faced and 2) We are more than sick of corporate greed and the average person wearing it! That's not to detract from global events like what's happening in Gaza, or in Ukraine or what unfolded with he Voice referendum, but people are unquestionably hurting and we need to demand better.

As we all head off into Christmas we of course watch petrol prices go up and are told no no that's not price gouging just because it's school holidays it's all just part of the petrol price cycle, of course it is. Christmas supermarket prices aren't price gouging either they're just reactions to increased costs and inflation, of course they are which is why supermarkets are making record profits. On top of the average punter wearing increased pricing and a Federal government not really very helpful when it came to taming the inflation monster our new RBA governor suggested less haircuts, less eating out and less of everything really or else!

As we cast our eyes overseas we have all watched in horror and sadness the events in Gaza unfold in front of us and we have not only seen death and destruction we have witnessed huge divisions within parts of our society as a direct result of the conflict. Jews abused and or attacked in our streets and Palestinians criticised for their stances on the conflict, none of it solves anything and the bottom line is that innocent people have died and will continue to die until there is some sort of resolution.



It would be hard to talk about the year without talking about the Voice to Parliament. So many of us have seen first hand how lost some of our indigenous people are, that they and we need better outcomes and yet we watched the entire issue become a political football that saw the vote face a crushing defeat. TV networks who had heavily promoted referendum vote night specials bailed on everything within an hour of the results beginning to come through and Australians were left to pick up the pieces of an issue that seems to not gain any sort of genuine solution.

The end of the three main protagonists during of the Covid crisis ie McGowan, Andrews and Palalacshcuk put a thick black line underneath the whole Covid mess and said with an exclamation mark, never again! And while we watching all three Premiers step away we watched Albo do pretty much everything he could to make sure he and his party were a one term government. The Libs at a Federal level still have some way to go to be seen as a legitimate alternative but the concept of everything to everyone that labor have run since coming into office has done nothing but see them being not much to not many.

So as the year comes to an end...as we all shake our heads at petrol prices, pay little or no attention to a deluded RBA governors advice, as we get angry at how much our essentials cost, as we watch corporates make record profits and as we watch politicians take more and more incompetent decisions we can all take solace in the fact that dreams are free and that next year it will be a distant memory and the world we will be a much better place. And if you believe that I have some magic beans and unicorn I'd like to sell you.



# THANK YOU

**"ISSUE 9 IS DONE, NOW  
ONTO ISSUE 10 AND  
BEYOND...A VERY MERRY  
CHRISTMAS & SAFE NEW  
YEAR TO ALL"**



That's it for Issue 9!

Thank you to all our contributors as ever, it means so much to me to be able to bring you all together in one medium for people to share your insights and years of experience.

To our sponsors thank you and most of all thank you to you, the reader, this would not be possible without your continued support and encouragement.

We have taken my daily musings on LinkedIn to our own platform and believe me when I say it only gets bigger from here.

I want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas a safe New Year and all the best for 2024.

Hoodies and the wider media company has some huge things planned for the upcoming year so as ever watch this space and continue to ask, 'Why Hoodies?' ...Because it matters!

See you in 2024!

Cheers  
Ben