

When starting a Catering career after secondary school, I would never have dreamed where Life would throw me ahead. Hospitality industry taught me much; how important it was to be an “all-rounder.”

Married, divorced, three gorgeous children and at 8 yrs old my eldest daughter Jacinta contracted a “Viral Encephalopathy” leaving her epileptic & severely brain injured. A crash course and lived insight into a whole new few industries. Jacinta passed away at 12 years old after health complications. I realized, in empathy and thanks to so many, that I really wanted to “give back”. I trained at the AOTC and began in Patient Transport, a year in Melbourne, then was employed in my hometown Geelong with RAV.

It was the best ever job. The Best. I signed up with Peer Support at that time to and contributed to Peer Support in the “Manners Program.” I married a Station Officer Paramedic and was taught by a crew of “hands-on” professionals who excelled in the field. I juggled work life and a little family. I gave time and a listening ear or shoulder. I am a woman of faith and practical priorities. A listener. I then, bore the pain of losing in life, through heartfelt deaths.

Through personal life growth I moved to private industry, re skilled to Ambulance Attendant status and worked in the industry for 15 years. I worked for a brilliant Medical Events company as first responder; front line at music festivals where a “common sense” or hand-holding attitude was needed for patrons. 5 years ago, re-joined as an ACO Lismore and volunteer, ready to embrace the changes and up-skilling in tech & processes. I also put up my hand for Peer Support role again, as I know the importance.

I have worked in Schools; in disability; and now, in a corner of Aged Care. I also manage a micro business; just to challenge my skills and interests in “Celebrancy”. But the heart of my ethos comes from the care of people of all ages. I have volunteered with Red Cross Emergency Services with “Psychological First Aid skills training” and attended events to give a space for people to verbally unload challenges! I have been a parent who has experienced life in black & white with experiences I never thought would ever have to be. I volunteer with Lions International and give hours with Skin Cancer Dermoscopy. There are projects too of “Eye Health”, “Junior Public Speaking” embracing improvements and personal growth for others. Each industry I have worked within, I have embraced the chance and importance of Peer Involvement.

You see, Welfare...it's being a support. Not about your own agenda or needs to relate your own story in life. It's empowering a person to encourage their own well-being and giving a platform for them to thrive. Be it just a coffee, phone call or practical hands-on its important to guide & be there.

Not retired just yet, but knowing the need for the role, I will offer my best. A workload that so many in our industry bare and need a chance...I'm ready for the 3.30 am calls!